Success Through Failure: Daiei, Kadokawa, and the Transformation of Japan's Domestic Film Industry

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Abstract

This dissertation concerns Japan's domestic film industry structure and transformation between 1971-2002. It tracks the generative mechanisms of stasis and change in the major studios' output of narrative feature films to illuminate an underrepresented history in Japanese cinema and media industries studies. From the bankruptcy and dissolution of Daiei Studios, the emergence of Kadokawa Haruki Office, to the development of international co-productions by Tokuma Publishing this dissertation characterizes the transformation of the film industry from a relative oligopoly of vertically integrated studios to a broader system of interconnected conglomerates, cross-shareholding (*keirestsu*) companies that integrate media properties across platform while minimizing risk to any individual company.

Western scholarship of Japanese cinema has trended toward aesthetic analysis of superlative films, auteur studies, or works that highlight the cultural specificity of Japan. Recent studies of Japanese cinema are beginning to interrogate these former approaches, but often focus this analysis on the immediate postwar period, proliferation of film production in the 1950s and 1960s, or the international re-emergence of auteur directors in the 1990s. How then do we account for the success and failures that characterize major transformations in Japan's domestic film industry?

A media industries analysis offers a means of directly addressing the large-scale developments in the film industry, while not losing sight of specific moments and case study examples that illuminate key points of stasis and change. My project joins a growing body of work that appraises the role of media industries that intersect with national, transnational, and political economy of major film industries.

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Introduction

On December 22, 1971 Morita Moto woke up, descended the staircase of famed director Kurosawa Akira's three floor mansion, and discovered him draped over his bathtub unconscious in a pool of red water. Early that morning, after a night of drinking with an associate and retiring for the evening, Kurosawa drew a bath and proceeded to slash his left and right wrists, arms, and neck more than twenty times with a German steel safety razor. Under close inspection the wounds to Kurosawa's neck had been made over the previous two weeks, but this time he slashed his wrists in a more serious attempt on his life.[1] The morbid nature of this act, one that has been obfuscated in the narrative of Kurosawa's life, highlights the duality of the narrative of Japan's film world.[2] On one level an incident like Kurosawa's suicide attempt are meant to be minimized in place of the superlative excellence of his films and the mythic quality of his work ethic. On another level it highlights the central position directors and master filmmakers have had in the construction of Japanese cinema history in popular journals and academic texts.

This project accounts for a gap in scholarship pertaining to Japanese cinema studies in the period between 1971-2002. Specifically, this study addresses the transformation in production processes of Japan's domestic film industry from a vertical integrated oligopoly to horizontally integrated system built on cross-shareholding companies from a variety of industries. On a production level this project uses case studies of Daiei Studios, Kadokawa Haruki Office, Daiei's

[1] "Kurosawa Akira, jisatsu hakaru, yubune no naka de chimamre kamisori de 21 kasho no kizu 'ira ira shiteita: trebi no kikaku de nayamu Kurosawa Pro mo hatan jyōtai.'" *Asahi*. December 22, 1971, Evening edition.

[2] See: Masaaki Tsuzuki. *Ikiru: Kurosawa Akira no sekai*. Tōkyō; 東京 : Marujusha; マルジュ社, 1980. and Desser, David. *The Samurai Films of Akira Kurosawa*. Illustrated edition. Ann Arbor, Mich: UMI Research Press, 1983.

revival by Tokuma Publishing, and Tokuma's sale of Daiei to Kadokawa Holdings as successive case studies to account for the large-scale changes happening systemically in Japan's domestic film industry. This is the first study of its kind to account for the industrial transformations in Japan's domestic film industry in English and Japanese language scholarship for this period. This project directly contributes to studies of Japanese cinema studies. Rather than extending discussions of an auteur or aesthetic analysis this study contributes to the growing field of media industry studies. The goal being to synthesize a multitude of methodologies that can account for the challenges inherent in a cross-cultural study of cinema by utilizing methodologies from area studies, East Asian Studies, and film and media studies.

This study seeks to answer several related questions. What political and economic factors contributed to the industrial shifts of Japan's domestic film industry? What were the underlying components to Daiei Studio's bankruptcy and reorganization? How did these shifts impact the production process and aesthetic practices of films from 1971-2002? What impact did these shifts have on the domestic and international flow of media from Japan and throughout East Asia? What do these shifts clarify about the structure and function of media industries globally?

Kurosawa Akira most noted for the *jidaigeki* period films he produced in the early 1950s and 1960s such as *Seven Samurai* (1954) or *Yojimbo* (1961) continues to be the most noted Japanese filmmaker internationally. Kurosawa's *Rashomon* serves as the central locus of Japanese cinema studies in English language scholarship. Scott Nygren argues that Japanese cinema studies grows out of *Rashomon* winning the Golden Lion at the Venice International Film Festival in the Fall of 1951.[3] Japanese cinema, for nearly the first time, was discussed as a

[3] Nygren, Scott. *Time Frames: Japanese Cinema and the Unfolding of History*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007. pg. ix, 16

distinct art form within world cinema.[4] By 1961, however, Japan's domestic film industry was beginning to limit theater construction, shrink existing exhibition space, and produce fewer films by major studios.[5] There are numerous factors that play a role in the changing demographics of films screening. The proliferation of television as a popular entertainment medium spurred on by events like the Imperial marriage in 1959 or wrestling star Rikidōzan trouncing western combatants in pro-wrestling style matches, along with the popularity of the annual Sumo tournaments held around the country all contributed to the early success of the medium. During this period Kurosawa and other prominent directors began to adjust their production style and relationship with studios. For instance, Kurosawa's *The Bad Sleep Well* (1962) was the first picture in the director's career that was not completely financed by Toho Studios. Kurosawa was ordered by Toho to shoulder the burden of production costs which pushed the director to form his own independent production company, Kurosawa Productions. Films such as *High and Low* (1963) and *Red Beard* (1965) were the first in a series of co-productions between Kurosawa Productions and Toho. *Red Beard*'s difficult production ultimately severed relations between Kurosawa and frequent collaborator Mifune Toshiro.

The immediate reactions to Kurosawa's suicide attempt swirled around the events of his recent production struggles and the precarious nature of the film industry. In short, Kurosawa's production company Kurosawa Pro was in the red, recent television film productions were not making traction, and the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios that same month had shaken the stability of

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[4] "Japanese Film Cops Venice Fete's Top Prize; Par's 'Carnival'." *Variety*. September 12, 1951, 184 edition

[5] "Kinema Junpo Besto Ten: Nihon Eiga." *Kinema Junpo* 1, no. 304 (February 1, 1962): 7–59. pg. 57-59

the film world in Japan. Kurosawa's most recent film *Do'deskaden* (1971), his first color picture, focused on a community living in a trash heap at the outskirts of Tokyo. This rather simple and introspective work achieved critical praise like Kurosawa's previous films but faltered significantly at the box office. The film. ranked third on *Kinema Junpo*'s "Best Ten List" for pictures of 1970, but between Kurosawa Pro and Toho Studios the film was 15,000,000 yen in debt.[6] Kurosawa admitted his confidence was shaken by recent production on film commercials, a television documentary *Poem for a Horse*, and the failure to come up with a sustainable idea for a new television production. In the past year Kurosawa formed a production company with three other major directors Ichikawa Kon, Kobayashi Masaki, and Kinoshita Keisuke called *Yonki-no-kai*. The goal of the studio was not too dissimilar from the initial efforts of United Artists to provide a distribution/production venture for stars to have greater control and autonomy over their work than the studio system would allow for.

Development on an entry in the *Yonki-no-kai* television series was proving to be a significant challenge for Kurosawa. All other associated directors had selected their film topics and were beginning pre-production efforts as Kurosawa was at a loss for the theme or source material. The night before his suicide attempt, a drinking partner noted that he had suggested a specific source material for the television production with Kurosawa haphazardly agreeing to research it. This never came to fruition. Whether it is due to Kurosawa's needed recovery or other factors Kurosawa was unable to produce a film and the slot ultimately went to another director. Not surprisingly, in the weeks before his suicide attempt Kurosawa was increasingly irritable toward friends and co-workers.

[6] *Kinema Junpo Best Ten 80 kai zenshi - 1924-2006*. pg. 190

Within comprehensive studies of Kurosawa this incident is usually noted with a single line of text before quickly moving on to Kurosawa's rehabilitation directing *Dursula Uzala* in 1975, noting the relationship the director developed following a career award and retrospective hosted by Moscow in 1970.[7] Moreover, the grand color epics of *Kagemusha* and *Ran* are used to signify the evolution Kurosawa's storied career into a more independent and introspective late-stage period.

Since Richie and Anderson's publication of *Japanese Cinema Art + Industry* in 1959, Kurosawa occupies the central locus of all studies pertaining to Japanese cinema. Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto's *Kurosawa*: *Film Studies and Japanese Cinema,* in part, attempted to delve into the centrality of Kurosawa's position through reinterpreting each of his films in chronological order through the lens of Japanese cinema studies position within academia. As Yoshimoto notes, "By many Japanese, Kurosawa is regarded as the most Westernized Japanese director. As a testimony to this view, we can point out that Kurosawa's name is often written in katakana, a type of Japanese syllabary usually used to write Japanese words of foreign origin."[8] For Yoshimoto, Kurosawa serves as a symptom of Japanese cinema for the west. He is a means of problematizing Japan's self-image and the West's image of Japan at the same time. The challenge for Yoshimoto with this work is to characterize why it is important to canonically review each of Kurosawa's films to present a way forward or new direction for the study of Japanese cinema.

[7] Yoshimoto, Mitsuhiro. *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*. Asia-Pacific. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000. pg. 343

[8] Ibid. pg. 54

The foundation of the text is that Yoshimoto will review the works of one of the "Big Three" (Kurosawa Akira, Mizoguchi Kenji, and Ozu Yasujiro). At the time of preparing the study in the late 1990s and the monograph's publication in 2000, Mizoguchi's films were in relative scarcity or lost limiting the means to comprehensively review his works. Since that time several prints and home video releases have minimized this weakness. At the same time, it is puzzling Yoshimoto does not take Ozu as the central author of his work when he notes that the "new studies of Ozu have not changed the basic framework of the scholarship on Japanese cinema. Instead, 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."[9] In this it seems almost crucial to devote space to reframing the perception and cultural readings of Ozu's Japaneseness to move beyond the institutional limitations of equating the director with exoticized notions of Japanese family life and cultural specificity. The crux of Yoshimoto's rationale for the text is that while Kurosawa is a central figure in film studies, by analyzing each of his films in a separate chapter, "Kurosawa and his cinema are therefore defamiliarized as a way of coming to grips with the disciplinarity of film studies and, however limited it may be, as a first step toward the reinvention of a field of Japanese cinema studies."[10]

Yoshimoto's work is noble effort to expand conceptions of Japanese cinema studies in the academy. His monograph serves as a base text for any undergraduate course screening a Kurosawa film. Unfortunately, Yoshimoto does not problematize how a case-by-case textural study of a directors' films presents a means of reinvention or new direction for film studies. Similarly, the critical engagement of each work is openly admitted by the author to be subjective,

[9] Ibid. pg. 4.

[10] Ibid. pg. 5.

but quickly reveals in the table of contents which films concern the author as "major" versus "minor works. For instance, *Seven Samurai* is nearly forty pages or ten percent of the total text where *Kagemusha* and *Ran* together only run ten pages. Noting these limitations is not meant as simple criticism, but to highlight the near impossibility to overcome the central nature of Kurosawa's works in western conception of Japanese cinema and as artifacts of auteur study.

Film and media studies is built in part on the great-man theory of historical writing. Within the field of Japanese cinema studies, particularly in English language studies, Kurosawa Akira looms large as a central figure of study. Throughout this project specific individuals, Nagata Masaichi, Kadokawa Haruki, Tokuma Yasuyoshi, and even Kurosawa Akira will be mentioned by name repeatedly. This is a particular challenge in conducting a media industry studies approach of studios, films, and filmmakers. Often the study supplants central analysis of a director onto a producer or a studio mogul. Within this study and in the process of conducting research and writing this document I view these individuals as symptoms of the industry and stand-ins for the efforts of many within a specific company or conglomerate. There is the individual that includes their personality, decisions, and humanity. However, there is also the executive whose name is often synonymous with the actions of a company. This is particularly true for companies where the name is that of the founder as in the case of Kadokawa or Tokuma.

Even Yoshimoto when discussing the space between *Dodeskaden* and *Dersu Uzala* offers only a small notation on Kurosawa's darker period. "About a year after its (*Dodeskaden*) release, Kurosawa attempted to take his own life. Fortunately, his self-inflicted wound was not fatal, and he was able to go back to filmmaking in 1973 with his next film, *Dersu Uzala*."[11] Yoshimoto notes in this chapter that *Dodeskaden* was the only successful/completed film of the Yonki no

[11] Ibid. pg. 343.

kai, completely obfuscating that the major work of the group, the television drama films, were being fast tracked and only Kurosawa was at odds with how to continue. Similarly, Kurosawa's suicide serves only as a sinew to his successful return to filmmaking, rather than address the instability and precarious nature of the film world to say nothing that Kurosawa's return to film production came about only as a result of receiving funding from Mosfilm and international funding sources for the remainder of his career.

The relative glossing over of Kurosawa's suicide attempt in 1972 is an exemplar of the narrative construction of Japanese cinema history. However, to move towards a different form of analysis, it is important to highlight the centrality individuals such as Kurosawa and aesthetic analysis as a foundational element in the discourse of Japanese cinema. However, it belies the history of Japanese historical and literary tradition that chronicles importance of failure or defeat.[12]

Within studies of film definitions of success and failure are often vague or refer to specific point in the production chain, most often as it relates to the exhibition of a feature film. However, in engaging with media industry studies it is important to understand how media products frame discourse in everyday events like how we measure "success" or "failure."[13]For the purpose of this study the terms each hold a dual meaning. In traditional aesthetic studies of

[12] The most noted example of this is the 10th century war scrolls *Tale of the Heike*. Lengthy scholarship of this phenomenon is explored by Ivan Morris. See: Morris, Ivan. *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan*. 1st ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975. Another notable scholar in this discussion is Yamaguchi Masao whose work in structural anthropology and political questions concerning the emperor system also focused on the nature of failure in Japanese history. His monograph concerning failure in the Showa Period (1926-1989) is particularly useful in thinking through socio-cultural definitions of failure. See: Yamaguchi, Masao. *"Zasetsu" no Shōwa shi; 「挫折」の昭和史*. Tōkyō; 東京 : Iwanami Shoten; 岩波書店, 1995.

[13] Havens and Lotz., pg. 5

film “success” or “failure” are often defined by the level of critical attention paid to a film, filmmaker, or series of products. This includes positive reviews by critics at the time of release, award nominations and wins, and circulation within academic discourse. In this study films that fit this description will certainly be included among case studies and films mentioned. However, a primary concern for this project is to also consider those films and film studios producing films that may not account for the highest critical praise but are significant for their contribution to the flow of media in the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, our definition of “success” and “failure” must also encompass the economic definition of these terms that include their money-making abilities during pre-ticket sales and exhibition, annual box office rankings, and position within reader and audience polls.

A media industries approach offers a means of working beyond the auteur trap inherent in most of the Japanese cinema scholarship in English and Japanese up to this point. As Timothy Havens and Amanda D. Lotz note, “Media industries warrant understanding for several reasons first, they are increasingly important sectors of the American and world economies, second they contribute to political discussions, debate, and our views of the world, and third, they contribute to our everyday lives in ways there are sometimes obvious and sometimes subtle.”[14] The value of this form of study extends analysis beyond aspects of style and aesthetic, which still offer valuable critical insight, to incorporate the context for how and why media objects come into being at the point they do and where structural changes occur.

This approach differs slightly from a traditional political-economic or culture industries approach in that it is less focused on the direct engagement between media and government

[14] Havens, Timothy, and Amanda Lotz. *Understanding Media Industries*. 2nd edition. New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. pg., 5

oversight or the mere circulation of texts in the case of a culture industries approach.[15] As Gillian Doyle describes, "The general aim is to make intellectual property, package it and maximize revenues by selling it as many times as is feasible to the widest possible audience and at the highest possible price."[16] The emphasis on intellectual property that connects with brands of a corporation help to access analysis of a studio and its process. In the case of this study the founding, establishment, and bankruptcy of Daiei Studios; foundation and establishment of Kadokawa Haruki Office as a major film production company, and the revival of Daiei by Tokuma Publishing to pursue international co-productions. A media industries analysis offers the best means of accounting for the studio, the films, and the individuals that serve as representatives of the company.

An important text that inspires this project is Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano's monograph *Japanese Cinema in the Digital Age.*[17] Wada-Marciano's work is a reaction to the preponderance of work regarding East Asian media flows, but that have simultaneously de-emphasized the role of the auteur. This combined with a transformation in technology, access, and exhibition patterns

[15] The term critical political economy has been used by some writers to distinguish their perspective from the work of classical political economists such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and their followers. Critical political economy, however, is much more concerned with levels of power and control with relation to the economic market. This connects with Karl Marx assessment that political economy meant examining the dynamic forces in capitalism responsible for its growth and change. The cultural industries approach deals primarily with the industrial production and circulation of texts in core industries like film, broadcasting, music, print, video/computer games, advertising and marketing. See: David Hesmondhalgh, *The Cultural Industries* London ; Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2013. pg., 42

[16]Ibid. pg., 3

[17] Wada-Marciano, Mitsuyo. *Japanese Cinema in the Digital Age*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012.

Wada-Marciano argues that these changes have made it possible for auteur-based artistic works to re-emerge in the changing topography of the post-studio era of the late 1990s.[18]

A foundational question for this derives, in part, from a point made by Wada-Marciano in her introduction, "The cinema's resurgence, however, had less to do with the contributions of talented directors than with structural changes that were already underway in the film industry, starting in the late 1980s.[19] Wada-Marciano points to these changes, but does not develop them as the focus of her text is films post-1997 with the intent to emphasize the importance of director or single-creator based media works. Her statement and arguments points to a larger issue at play in the analysis of Japanese media industries. Wada-Marciano's statement points to larger issues for scholars that the 1970s-1980s is a time of great change, but dismal in terms of aesthetic, cultural, or commercial importance. Film and media culture of the 1970s-1980s are immensely important for scholars like Wada-Marciano to counterbalance the efforts of up-and-coming directors on the international stage like Kitano Takeshi, Koreeda Hirokazu, Iwai Shunji, and Kawase Naomi. In pointing towards the 1980s as a period of great structural change Wada-Marciano encourages further scholarship on what these changes were, whether they were limited to the 1980s, and what specific facets of Japan's media were involved?

Prior to the 1970s Japan's domestic film industry was a relatively stable oligopoly. Five major studios (Toho, Toei, Shochiku, Daiei, and Nikkatsu) maintained majority control of narrative feature films produced, distributed, and exhibited in Japan. This stability was maintained by the industry's control on all levels of production. Like Hollywood studios prior to

[18] Marciano, pg. 12 The author specifies 1997 as being a key year noting the international success of Kitano Takeshi, Kawase Naomi, and Miyazaki Hayao's respective films of that year.

[19] Ibid., pg 13

the *Paramount v. United States* decision[20] film studios in Japan were able to maintain a majority monopoly on the most popular form of media entertainment of the postwar throughout the country.

Unlike the Hollywood system, Japan's domestic film industry did not violate antitrust laws and was not mandated to breakup production, distribution, and exhibition chains. Rather the process by which studios began to dismantle their production units, work in cooperation with other studios, and lean on independently produced films as the primary means of their production model happened at a much slower and deliberate pace. The financial solvency of Japan's film studios was not questioned to a great degree. However, following a peak in the late 1950s film theater attendance dissipated and the total numbers of theaters diminished to a quarter of what they had been by the early 1970s. Throughout the changes in the exhibition side of Japan's domestic market there was a relatively consistent mechanism of production and distribution in operation for the major studios. In this system the five major studios were able to stave off strong competitors or independent producers.

In the early 1970s, however, owing to poor financial management, mismanagement of resources, and a lack of focus on the matters of film production Daiei Studios announced bankruptcy in the fall of 1971. The generative mechanisms in Daiei's downfall I argue is an important series of events in a multifaceted shift of Japan's domestic industry from a relatively stable studio system to a fractured conglomeration of firms and holding companies that greatly increased co-productions and collaboration between the remaining major studios that underscore

[20] See: Conant, Michael. "The Paramount Decree's Reconsidered." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 44, no. Fall (1981): 79–107. Conant details the inner workings of the case and the impact the legal ramifications the decision had.

the role transmedia brands, production systems, and soft power cultural capital play in contemporary consumption of Japanese media goods.

Since the 1970s Japan's media industries have become increasingly market driven through neo-liberal economic policies that encouraged the restructuring of media systems from vertically integrated to horizontally integrated ones that facilitated the growth of Japanese media conglomerates built on the *keiretsu* system of inter-dependent companies. However, scholarship on the nature of this reorganization has been minimal in critical media studies. Specific areas of investigation include the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios in the early 1970s, the establishment and dominance of Kadokawa Pictures in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the role of company heads and promotional figures in media industries, and the capacity for transnational productions and international co-productions that help rethink cinema studies of Japan and offer additional non-western based analysis within media industries studies.

Japan's domestic film industry offers a prime means of complicating historical analysis of cinema and media industries studies. Japanese cinema history runs parallel with the invention and innovation of world cinema with the first Lumiere films screening in 1896 at a venue in Chiba, followed closely by domestic reproductions of Kabuki and Bunraku "puppet-theater" plays by 1899. However, within this lengthy history, as noted by the opening example primary focus has been placed on directors, auteurs, stars, and "masterpiece" works of aesthetic brilliance. As a means of expanding and reframing studies of Japanese cinema in a western context I seek to balance the emphasis on aesthetic analysis by developing a model that incorporates media industries study into an East Asian cinema and non-western film context. In this project I will be balancing the writings that have been conducted in English and Japanese on

Japanese cinema as well as the state and history of media industry studies to see how and where these models complement one another and where further attention is needed.

As culture industries increasingly become the motor of the economy of late capitalism, as information about these industries become a model of labor, and the consumption of culture industries is becoming a form of production unto itself, exploring the interaction of the culture industries and their media forms has become a more urgent task than ever.[21] It is here that Jameson's work is helpful in thinking through the economic goals Japan in the latter half of the twentieth century. Ernest Mandel, initially used the term late capitalism to think through the explosive economic growth of the United States, Germany, and Japan in the aftermath of World War II. Jameson extends this discussion in his accounting of the postmodern situation built on the industrialization of agriculture in the third world that made possible for first world economy to build their economy around knowledge and information rather than agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. Jameson locates these changes originating in the 1950s but emerging in greater degree by the 1970s.

This line of thinking is particularly useful in the context of Japan's history, industrialization, and increase of cultural production throughout the High Economic Growth Era.[22] Due to Article IX in Japan's revised constitution war making was banned as a means of resolving international disputes. This meant Japan could no longer maintain an active military or

[21] On the role of culture industries in the construction and consumption of media, see in particular the work of David Hesmondhalgh in *The Culture Industries* (London: Sage Publications, 2019) For the cultural determinant of late capitalism, the work of Fredric Jameson in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991) and in *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings of the Postmodern, 1983-1998* (London: Verso, 1998).

[22] A period of sustained economic growth that began in the mid-1950s and lasted until Japan's economic bubble burst by the early 1990s.

navy, only a self-defense force. This refocused national efforts away from war making or defense spending and toward economic developments pertaining to private enterprise and business.[23] During the 1950s the salaryman became the symbol of the modern productive individual in Japan and was a frequent focus within the filmmaking of the period. 1970s and 1980s offer a unique moment to address the structural changes in Japan's domestic film industry. Building on the scholarship in Japanese cinema studies it accounts for the emergence of filmmaker like Suo Masayuki or Kitano Takeshi in the 1990s, while similarly extending the importance of training grounds like softcore pornographic films out of Nikkatsu in the 1970s. Moreover case studies of this period account for the implementation and establishment of neoliberal economic policies of the successive administrations from Sato and Tanaka in the early 1970s to Nakasone's close relationship with the Reagan administration in the 1980s. Using case studies from Kadokawa and Tokuma Publishing's revival of Daiei further clarify the role media companies played in the expansion of multiplatform marketing, Kadokawa, and soft power diplomatic relations, Tokuma, in the 1980s that would become central to the method of film, media production at the start of the twenty-first century.

This dissertation will address through specific case studies the mechanisms that transformed Japan's domestic film industry from a vertically integrated studio system that function as a closed network into a horizontally dis-organized collection of former film studios, television, communication, and media companies all sharing risk and creating feature narrative

[23] Laura Hein accounts for this shift toward primarily economic efforts starting in the 1950s through an account of six Japanese economists who influenced national political life built on the idea of developing a strong economy devoid of military component and creating an educated and politically active populace. See: Hein, Laura. *Reasonable Men, Powerful Words: Political Culture and Expertise in Twentieth Century Japan*. First edition. Washington, D.C. : Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

film by committee. Through accounts that traces the material and cultural specificities of Japan's industry and surrounding media forms, this dissertation aims to understand the mechanisms by which stasis and change operate within late capitalism, particularly in the Japanese context that offer a counter to the prevalence of western cinema case studies. The objective is to develop an analysis that historically situates the materially particular and move toward wider study of media transformations. There are several components to this analysis that I will outline.

First, focusing on the rupture or dissolution of the studio system this dissertation analyzes the ways Japan's domestic film industry functioned as a relative oligopoly in the period following World War II; a medium that allowed for the communication between studios to take place within the space of a capitalist economic system that was reinvigorated in the postwar period from the end of the occupation in the mid 1950s to the bursting of the economic bubble in the early 1990s. Starting with the bankruptcy and dissolution of Daiei Studios, one of six major film companies, this dissertation points out the ways the specificities of this particular industry to absorb the loss of a major component while evolving through the implementation of modified production, distribution, and exhibition practices that ultimately served to keep the major studios solvent as the nature of the industry transformed. This first section points to the particularities of how Daiei's downfall gave rise to a system of production and consumption built more and more around the sharing of resources and implementation of a vast *keiretsu,* interconnected system, of shareholders and media companies that maintain the stability of Japan's media oligopoly.

This project differs from recent monographs such as Marc Steinberg's *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan* or Alexander Zahlten's *The End of Japanese Cinema: Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies* that look at a similar period of

media history in Japan.[24] Both writers situate the organization and collaboration within the framework of Japan's domestic film industry, Steinberg's conception is structured as a response to the function and form of media convergence as defined by Jenkins[25] to illuminate a much lengthier and robust history of transmedia communication that provide fluid narrative expansion from a source character to paratext and back again. As such communication within the industry is built on a system of transmedia storytelling that offers a complex consumption experience.[26] While the content of Zahlten's analysis does link to the relative time period of this project, the theoretical consideration is built around the formation of genre with an emphasis on how genre stands in for transformations in labor.[27]

Predominantly histories of Japanese film of this period concentrate on the transformation of film style and auteur's working within the studio system. An another approach is to note how deeply films are influenced by or offer parallels to cinema movements in other countries. Successive comparisons include direct connections to French New Wave in the 1960s, disaster cinema in the 1970s, and studio driven Hollywood productions in the late 1980s-1990s. There

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[24] Marc Steinberg, *Anime's Media Mix: Franchising Toys and Characters in Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Alexander Zhalten, *The End of Japanese Cinema: Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017)

[25] Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: University Press, 2006.

[26] For Steinberg the major case study is the initial release of *Testuwan Atomu* (Atro Boy) in 1963 as a television adaptation from the manga series, coinciding with a series of products all branded with the lead character's image.

[27] Zahlten's focus is on four areas or as he defines it, industrial genres, including the; Pink Film, Kadokawa Film, V-Cinema, and Subgenres (Violence, Finances, Sex, and True Accounts) See: Zahlten, Alexander. *The End of Japanese Cinema: Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2017.

are extensive works on the influence of foreign actors on the production and development of Japanese cinema during the postwar during the Supreme Command of Allied Power's (SCAP) occupation of Japan from 1946-1952. Another thread of study is the role separate media forms have on the manifestation of Japanese cinema. The major connection between English language scholarship is, they are all aesthetic and social histories of Japanese cinema. The root causes for this have been outlined in greater detail by Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto who locates the institutional history of Japanese cinema in the United States within the humanities broadly and area studies in particular.[28]

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is important to note the major works that have framed analysis of Japanese cinema studies, media industry studies, and political-economic discussions pertaining to the production and flow of media to properly situate the objectives and goals of this projects within the triangulation of these debates.

On a content level this work most heavily draws from a Japanese cinema studies background. My own training first in area studies and then film and media studies further situates the construction of this project within these debates. My training has equally been informed by the role of transnational flows of media and global capitalism. At the outset the most noted text in English on Japanese cinema studies has been and remains Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson's *Japanese Film: Art + Industry* initially published by Tuttle in 1959. Even today scholars such as Abe Mark Nornes and Aaron Gerow note the importance and rigor of the work

[28] For greater discussion on the academic positioning of Japanese cinema studies within United States and English language institutions see: Yoshimoto, Mitsuhiro. *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*. Asia-Pacific. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000. pgs.7-50 In the opening chapter Yoshimoto dissects the lack of home for Japanese cinema studies as a unified or individual field often being situated in area studies or modern language departments followed by comparative literature, English, and film departments.

for initial scholars of Japanese cinema.[29] This stems in part from the lengthy history of understanding Japanese arts as a direct extension of national culture, style, and identity. The most notable work in the United States remains Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946) that served, in part, as a means for U.S. citizenry to shift away from war-time propaganda perspective of Japan as uncivilized barbaric enemies.[30] Equally in Japan there is a lengthy history of publications under the heading of *nihonjinron*, or theories of Japanese identity, consumed with relative vigor.[31] Darrell William Davis attempted to demythologize this approach in his monograph that through case studies addresses the construction of a monumental style that attempts to define a particular Japanese vision of itself through the film medium in the years prior to the Pearl Harbor attack.[32] Davis' approach is a variation on a theme, using case studies to provide a means of clarifying an identity of Japanese.[33]

The other strand of analysis that developed in the 1980s was a textural or formal analysis of film texts led by David Bordwell in monographs like *Ozu: A Poetics of Cinema*. This project

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[29] Nornes, Markus, and Aaron Andrew Gerow. *Research Guide to Japanese Film Studies*. Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies ; No 65. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2009.

[30] Benedict, Ruth. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1946.

[31] An early notable example in this field of study is famed author Tanazaki Junichiro's, *In Praise of Shadows* initially published in 1933. Tanizaki, Jun'ichirō. *In Praise of Shadows*. New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books, 1977.

[32] See: Davis, Darrell William. *Picturing Japaneseness: Monumental Style, National Identity, Japanese Film*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1996

[33] Davis focuses on the 1930s in the years leading up to the planned attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 as a through line to the increased interest in *nihonjinron* style books and articles that were being mass produced in the 1990s as Japan's economy supremacy was toppling in the wake of the economic bubble bursting and national conversations of what it meant to be Japanese were being revisited in a similar manner as the 1930s.

extended work Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson had undertaken with *Classical Hollywood Cinema*. Equally it was a means for Bordwell to dig deeper into an analysis of films outside a western context applying the same emphasis on formal strategies. In this case rather than emphasize a style of a specific country or system like Hollywood, the focus was on a single director, Ozu Yasujiro.[34] It was not until the 1970s that Ozu achieved a high level of international acclaim in the United States, spurred on by screenings in New York, film festivals, and Donald Richie's text *Ozu* originally published in 1974. Bordwell and Davis approach Japanese cinema from two different locusts as a means of dislodging the prominent method of English language film analysis up to that point; using aesthetical analysis as a mechanism to define Japanese culture through an international lens. Richie famously never learned to read Japanese script to maintain a level of distance between himself and his object of study.[35] Bordwell's emphasis on formalism also helped him sidestep the cultural specificity of the subject of his analysis to provide the most objective interpretation of Ozu or any filmmaker's style.

Even Catherine Russell's monograph, *Classical Japanese Cinema: Revisited*, published in the past ten years is structured around four major directors; Ozu Yasujiro, Mizoguchi Kenji, Kurosawa Akira, and Naruse Mikio.[36] This does not take away from the rigor of Russell's scholarship but highlights the seemingly closed system of English language scholarship

[34] Bordwell, David. *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*. London : Princeton, N.J.: BFI Pub; Princeton University Press, 1988.

[35] Richie, Donald. *Ozu: His Life and Films*. First edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

[36] Russell, Catherine. *Classical Japanese Cinema Revisited*. 1st edition. New York: Continuum, 2011.

pertaining to Japanese cinema studies that emphasizes and recapitulates analysis on a handful of filmmakers.

In the past decade there have been strides to shake-up and differentiate approaches to film scholarship, but they are often variations on a theme. Aaron Gerow and Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano both undertook projects that delved into early histories of Japanese cinema focusing on the 1920s-1930s.[37] However, both were limited by the paucity of materials due to the destruction of most films from this period. Gerow transforms his study from a textual analysis to a discursive analysis, precisely because the texts he would address no longer exist beyond pamphlets, still images, and the writings surrounding cinema of that period. In this sense Wada-Marciano and Gerow focus on who Japanese cinema conceived of itself through writings on cinema. An extension of that is the recent publication by Alexander Zahlten and Marc Steinberg's *Media Theory in Japan* that works to expand the role theory and writing on cinema played in Japan throughout the 20th century.

Frequently in works by Richie, Russell, and McDonald western theorists attempts at understanding Japanese culture through a western lens are funneled through western theoretical concepts, the most notable being Roland Barthes' *Empire of Signs*. *Media Theory in Japan* offers translated writings by several noted theorists in Japan, but it equally notes the impact of western theoretical ideas in a Japanese context such as the importance of Marshall McLuhan's writing in the 1960s that spurred on the "McLuhan Boom."[38] Another component of focusing on specific

[37] See: Wada-Marciano, Mitsuyo. *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. and Gerow, Aaron Andrew. *Visions of Japanese Modernity: Articulations of Cinema, Nation, and Spectatorship, 1895-1925*. ACLS Fellows' Publications. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

[38] Steinberg, Marc, and Alexander Zahlten. *Media Theory in Japan*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

eras in Japanese film studies is the prevalence World War II has in the structure of Japanese cinema history. Works by Peter B. High have gone to great lengths to examine the nature of wartime Japanese and colonial cinemas offering a great connecting bit of scholarship on an often-obfuscated era. In the wake of works by Noel Burch, Richie, Bordwell and other texts on wartime and post-war era SCAP led film policies offer a model on exploring the bumpy and non-linear developments in Japanese film history.[39] However none of these efforts explore the dynamic relationship between art and commerce through a media industry studies perspective.

The tradition of Japanese language scholarship on Japanese cinema is perhaps even more closely associated with aesthetic or social analysis. The most prominent work is Tanaka Junichiro's five-volume set published in the mid-1970s.[40] It is structured chronologically with an emphasis on major historical shifts the cover the birth of cinema, the rise of silent film and movement to the talkies, post-war filmmaking, the golden age of filmmaking in the 1950s, and the arrival of the image age in the 1960s and 1970s. In form the text is comprised of brief notations of individuals films and the respective cast and crew members involved. Less than an analysis or short review the notation is merely a reference to the film. In the time just before home video and well before the internet these volumes serve as a record of Japan's cinema film entries. These brief notations are punctuated by short entries of specific developments in a studio's history such as the movement of Shochiku's studio from Kamata to Ofuna. What the analysis lacks in depth is made up for by the vast number of materials and reference points to works throughout Japanese cinema history.

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[39] See: Kyoko Hirano's *Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo* and Hiroshi Kitamura's *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan*.

[40] Tanaka, Jun'ichirō. *Nihon eiga hattatsushi*. Chūkō bunko. Tōkyō; 東京 : Chūō Kōronsha; 中央公論社, 1975.

Like Tanaka's history Sato Tadao, a prominent cultural critic, has written numerous articles and books on Japanese cinema. Perhaps most notable Sato completed a four-volume history of Japanese cinema series in the mid to late 1990s. Similar to the Tanaka set Sato's focus is on those pictures that offer significant artistic progression, often belying the failures, setbacks, or cinema that might be relegated to popular mainstream films. The overwhelming majority of cinema texts written in Japanese encompass director, star, or best of complaints written by cultural critics or journalists. Academia in Japan on Japanese cinema is even more limited than the United States with very few schools having a dedicated media studies or film studies background. Most filmmakers and writers on Japanese cinema graduate from literature or law departments.[41]

Darrell William Davis and Emilie Yeuh-yu Yeh *East Asian Screen Industries* map the landscape of media industries throughout major regions including Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The work focuses on the contemporary structures of screen industries in each region with emphasizing television and then film. Their chapter on Japan's media structure is based around modeling the *keiretsu* system or firms tightly conglomerated through cognate businesses, and shared board members across affiliated companies.[42] This is fleshed out with a case study of Kadokawa Holdings, Inc. With a large graphic, the authors sketch the organizational relations between affiliated companies in Kadokawa Holdings that offer a transparent and specific

[41] In my own experience as a graduate research exchange student I was placed in a contemporary literature department analyzing the works of early 20th century authors in Japan, known as the *Shirakabaha* or *White Birch Society*. Most emphasis was placed on interpretative analysis of the meaning of a text, characters, and plot. Very little time was spent discussing the context, history, or politics of the period in which these works were produced.

[42] Davis, Darrell William. *East Asian Screen Industries*. International Screen Industries. London: BFI, 2008. pg. 65

organizational flow for this conglomeration. One of the difficulties to this approach is that shortly after publication components of this structure change or disappear as with Kadokawa Holdings US, Inc. closing in 2009.

This overview offers a window into the complex web of companies and corporations that make up the media landscape of Japan. This work encourages further study on how this structure came to be, what impacts it has on the media produced, and the dynamic of power between the various companies in a system of cross-shareholding. This model can be extended with greater emphasis on the historical, political, and economic impacts on the development of film studios like Kadokawa. Addressing more of the mechanisms of change in the Kadokawa company leading up to their acquisition of Daiei Studios in 2002 will offer a means of better understanding media industries in Japan.

In developing an approach to writing film history Robert Allen and Douglas Gomery included industrial analysis as a subsection of writing an economic film history. They define industrial analysis as an approach that, "seeks to understand economic variable, leaving questions of sociology and ideology to others…On the plus side, industrial analysis does provide a powerful tool to analyze the behavior of corporation in our modern world. On the negative side, industrial analysis is limited to economic terms."[43] This history of this form of study has a broader history than what is presented by Allen and Gomery. Media Industries analysis has grown and developed over thirty years since the 1980s. Janet Wasko in the inaugural volume of the *Media Industries Journal* offers a succinct overview of media industry studies in western scholarship. Wasko notes that the formation and notable membership of the Media Industries

[43]Allen, Robert Clyde. *Film History: Theory and Practice*. New York: Knopf, 1985. pg. 138

Scholarly Interest Group at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies is an indication that engagement with media industry studies is growing.[44] At the same time she points to multiple works that indicate an industry focused history, study, and form of analysis has a lineage in the western academy. This includes works like Benjamin Hampton's *History of the American Film Industry from Its Beginnings to 1931*, Thomas Guback's *The International Film Industry*, and Tino Balio's, *The Film Industry* also point.[45]

The benefit of incorporating media industries studies into an analysis of Japan's domestic film industry is two-fold. First, within western studies of Japanese cinema very few have focused on the nature of the industry its development and transformation. The majority of studies have come either from a background in literary textural analysis or popular film journals. The most prevalent among these writers are Sato Tadao and Yomota Inuhiko who have published ample works on the history of Japanese cinema, specific films, and filmmakers. They have also each had collections of their writing published in English that follow a similar pattern to the writings of Donald Richie emphasizing aesthetic, film style, and filmmaker.[46] Second, within media

[44] Wasko, Janet. "Learning from the History of the Field." *Media Industries (Austin, Tex.)* 1, no. 3 (2015). https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.15031809.0001.312. pg. 67

[45] Hampton, Benjamin B. Benjamin Bowles. *History of the American Film Industry from Its Beginnings to 1931*. New York: Dover Publications, 1970, Guback, Thomas H. *The International Film Industry: Western Europe and America since 1945*. Indiana University International Studies. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969, and Balio, Tino. *The American Film Industry*. Rev. ed. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.

[46] Satō, Tadao. *Currents in Japanese Cinema: Essays*. 1st ed. Tokyo : New York: Kodansha International ; Kodansha International/USA : Distributed by Kodansha International/USA through Harper & Row, 1982. and Yomota, Inuhiko. *What Is Japanese Cinema?: A History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019. Sato is noted in Japanese language writings for his four volume *Nihon eigashi* (Japanese Film History) texts that are organized chronologically up through the late 1990s, but also thematically around major films and filmmakers. The Yomota text is itself a translation of his text *Nihon eigashi 110 nen* (110

industries studies non-western cinema represents a minority of case studies or focus within specific articles, case studies, or monographs. Two prominent texts, edited volume *Media Industries: History Theory and Method* and the co-authored *Understanding Media Industries* provide an overview of the current boundaries and goals for this area of study.[47] What stands out in these volumes is an emphasis on media industries outside cinema or film production, a higher frequency of Hollywood based case studies, or anti-imperialist studies looking at media production as a counter narrative to Hollywood's global totalizing effect.

Thomas Schatz questions the centrality of the film text and the process of creation as a central concern. For Schatz media industries studies should not position the analysis of cultural texts at arms distance with a political-economic approach. Rather, "media industries studies demands that we integrate these two vital and complementary (if seemingly contrary) ways of seeing and assessing the media. It demands that we consider not only media ownership but also the means and modes of production as well as the products themselves."[48] In my own pedagogy it is this confluence of art, commerce, and industry that has informed the questions, research, and organization of this project.

Years of Japanese Film) that again chronologically details major movements and shifts of filmmakers and film style.

[47] Holt, Jennifer, and Alisa Perren. *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method*. Chichester, West Sussex ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. and Havens, Timothy, and Amanda Lotz. *Understanding Media Industries*. 2nd edition. New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

[48] Schatz, Thomas. "Film Studies, Cultural Studies, and Media Industries Studies." *Media Industries (Austin, Tex.)* 1, no. 1 (2014). https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.15031809.0001.108. pg. 40 Schatz own *Genius of the System* attempt to reorient studies away from a purely auteur focus in the 1980s, by incorporating a larger scope focusing on studios and middle level producers as it related to a studio's "house style" during the 1930s-1940s Hollywood studio system. See: Schatz, Thomas. *The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era*. 1st Metro pbk. ed. New York, N.Y.: Henry Holt and Co, 1996.

Chapter 1 addresses the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios as a key generative mechanism in restructuring most Japan's media industries. This historical survey of the business practices of the company, the union disputes at the time, key national economic and political developments that all contributed to the dissolution of one of Japan's major film studios. Allen and Gomery have noted the importance of incorporating histories of failure in film studies as it clarifies great context for how and why a change takes place rather than a narrative of success that unifies the invention of a technology, film style, or production pattern that becomes a norm for the industry.[49] This is further supported by Hesmondhalgh's analysis of the culture industries that, "failure is far more common than success. There are great pressures to produce certain kinds of text rather than others."[50] He goes on to say, "arguably, though, the consequences of not succeeding in growth and integration are greater in the cultural industries than in many other industries because there is very high failure rate for smaller companies."[51] It is useful to look at Daiei's failure in this context as it sheds light on the precarity of production and the longevity of even large companies to survive.

Daiei's bankruptcy is unique in the history of Japan's film industry in that no other major film studio since the Pacific War had shut down or been mandated to close, but highlights shifts that were happening to all major studios in the 1970s. At the center of this discussion is founder and president of Daiei, Nagata Masaichi. Nagata had been a masterful communicator between film studios and Japan's imperial government to establish Daiei and usher it into prominence during the latter portion of the United States led occupation of Japan. Exploring the potential for

[49] Allen, Gomery., pg. 110-113

[50] Hesmondhalgh, David. *The Cultural Industries*. 3rd ed. London: SAGE, 2012., pg. 8

[51] Ibid., pg. 31

international distribution, Nagata championed Japanese cinema at major film festivals, including the Venice International Film Festival where Kurosawa Akira's *Rashomon* was awarded the Golden Lion, the top prize of the festival. This win signaled a fervor for more Japanese cinema international that was met with Mizoguchi Kenji's *Ugetsu* and color spectacle *Gate of Hell.* Furthermore, the outgrowth from this event altered the production practices of every other major studio for the coming two decades.

Chapter 2 introduces a key company in the shift of Japan's film industry from a controlled oligopoly into one where companies outside the film world were allowed greater access. Kadokawa is unique in that the inception of their film company follows Daiei's bankruptcy. Moreover, of all the new or independent film productions of the period Kadokawa saw the quickest and most sustained success throughout the 1970s, 1980s and into the 1990s. This chapter focuses on the company's history and impact young company President Kadokawa Haruki had on his father's publishing company through the establishment of Kadokawa Pictures. This chapter assesses shifts in the marketing and production of films in Japan through a close analysis of what has been dubbed the Kadokawa Media-Mix. It is an analysis that combines a study of the company with a study of the mogul, Kadokawa Haruki, extending Jennifer Holt's argument in *Empires of Entertainment: Media Industries and the Politics of Deregulation, 1980-1996.*[52] The goal being to position company president Kadokawa Haruki as a celebrity and a symptom of Japan's corporate culture in the style of David O. Selznick, Robert Evans, and Ted Turner. This discussion will also detail the function and performance of the Three Kadokawa Maidens (Kadokawa *san-nin musume* – Yakushimaru Hiroko, Tomoyo Harada, Watanabe

[52] Holt, Jennifer. *Empires of Entertainment: Media Industries and the Politics of Deregulation, 1980-1996*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2011.

Noriko). In closing this chapter will help clarify ways Kadokawa offered a blueprint for co-productions and mixed media marketing that ultimately ran its course for Kadokawa Haruki Office, became a mainstay in Japan's domestic media production by the start of the twenty-first century.

Chapter 3 extends discussion of industry shifts beyond Kadokawa Pictures to address parallel developments in the film industry. This chapter analyzes the expansion of Tokuma Publishing's revival of Daiei Studios in 1975 and subsequent pursuit of international co-productions between Japan and mainland China. The argument is framed within a discussion rationale for co-productions and the flows of media between nations states. Writing by Holt, Bergfelder and Rose were useful to comprehend the benefits of co-productions and the specificity of co-productions between Japan and mainland China.[53] Case studies include *Mikan no Taikyoku* (1982) and *Tonko* (1988) both produced by Daiei Studios under Tokuma Publishing. This chapter will also detail efforts by Kadokawa to similarly explore large scale transnational film production in films like *VIRUS* (1980) and *Heaven and Earth* (1990). This analysis is framed by a discussion of the nature of transnational media flows and Japan's position within East Asia via other nations including Korea, Taiwan, and mainland China. Koichi Iwabuchi's *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese transnationalism* and Nissim Otmazgin's, *Regionalising Culture: The Political Economy of Japanese Popular Culture in Asia*[54] both offer models to think through the flow of media throughout East Asia. This chapter

[53] Holt, Jennifer, and Alisa Perren. 2009, Bergfelder, Tim. *International Adventures: German Popular Cinema and European Co-Productions in the 1960s*. Film Europa. New York: Berghahn Books, 2006., and Rose, Caroline. *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations: A Case Study in Political Decision-Making*. Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies Series. London ; New York: Routledge, 1998.

preconfigures the case studies in Iwabuchi or Otmazgin's accounting for the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and mainland China that serve as a basis for distribution throughout the region.

It is my intention to explore the background developments between Japan and China that led to these initial co-productions through a discussion of the first Japanese films to be exhibited in Japan following the Pacific War such as Takakura Ken's *Manhunt* (1976), produced by Daiei as one of the first films produced after its revival by Tokuma, first released in China in 1978. The chapter concludes by noting the boundaries of both Kadokawa's transnational productions and Tokuma Daiei's international co-productions failing to become a successful model for film production. This failure led to a reorganization of the companies with Kadokawa ultimately purchasing the rights to Daiei Studios, inheriting their film library under the leadership of Nagata Masaichi and the films produced by Tokuma Publishing.

In the concluding portion I address the effect these generative mechanisms of stasis and change have had on media industry practices in Japan during the early twenty first century. This discussion will be filtered through Kadokawa's acquisition of Daiei, development of multi-platform media productions, the use of nostalgia and corporate intellectual property branding as directions for future research.

[54] Iwabuchi, Kōichi. *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2002 and Otmazgin, Nissim. *Regionalizing Culture: The Political Economy of Japanese Popular Culture in Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014.

Chapter 1 – The Lights Go Out: Bankruptcy of Daiei Studios

In 1971 Daiei Studios shuddered its doors, laid off its employees, and sold its assets becoming the first major studio in Japan's domestic film industry to dissolve since the end of World War II. Daiei's closure did not come about due to a government directive or legislative action, but through the financial management of resources, misuse of personnel, and an inability to adapt to the contemporary industry climate.

Up to this point no major consideration of Daiei's failure has been considered when looking at the generative mechanisms of the reorganization of Japan's domestic film and media production. As detailed in the previous chapter this dissertation focuses the form and function of Japan's media oligopoly in the major period of industry reorganization from the early 1970s to early 1990s. This chapter focuses on the initial period of this transformation through an analysis of Daiei Studio's bankruptcy. Daiei's bankruptcy offers a template for how the industry succeeded through failure. Henry Petroski notes that failure offers a lot of lessons and means of understanding material. "Failure is thus a unifying principle in the design of things large and small, hard and soft, real and imagined."[55] This chapter will delve into the specifics of Daiei's establishment, success in the transnational flow of Japanese cinema, and ultimately its bankruptcy. This discussion will be framed by the economic and political climate of this era from the late 1940s-1970s along with the immediate reaction of the major studios to understand how Toho, Shochiku, Toei, and Nikkatsu as they adapted their production to the changing environment.

[55] Petroski, Henry. *Success through Failure: The Paradox of Design*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. pg. 5

Japanese film studies tend to emphasize what Allen and Gomery refer to as the "Masterpiece Tradition."[56] Most texts on Japanese film history identify and aesthetically evaluate significant creative figures and their works of art. Minimal attention is paid to non-aesthetic elements such as the technological, social, or economic factors which do not help the establishment of a film canon. The emphasis on individuals or 'exemplary' films is a barrier which has prevented scholarship from exploring more of the economic shifts of nearly any period in Japanese cinema history.

This is true of a majority of Japanese and English language scholarship. Sato Tadao's four volume series *Nihon eiga shi*[57] provides a comprehensive decade by decade breakdown of major films, events, and figures in Japanese film history while limiting commentary to only those films which were exceptional or worthy of critical merit. The criteria of which is never defined by a specific method but left to the subjectivity of the author. This would be less of an issue if a variety of comprehensive film history texts were available or as widely published as Sato's work, but currently this is not the case.[58]

English language scholarship seems to follow a similar pattern. Texts such as *A New History of Japanese Cinema* by Isolde Standish or *Time Frames* by Scott Nygren which frame aesthetic analysis around issues such as gender and power or in the case of Nygren's book

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[56] Allen and Gomery, pg. 67

[57] Satō, Tadao. *Nihon eigashi*. 増補版..; Zōhoban. Tōkyō; 東京 : Iwanami Shoten; 岩波書店, 2006.

[58] Aaron Gerow, "Review: Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History," *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 28, no. 1 (1994). where the authors indicate that of general histories, "Such film histories can still be useful, but they may be read less for the facts they provide, than for what they don't provide." pg. 130 Similar to Sato Tadao's work, Tanaka Junichiro's five volume *Nihon eiga hattasushi* provides a very similar listing and short synopsis of 'great' films which come out from his long history as a film journalist.

temporality.[59] In terms of content and source material these texts are well researched, but often re-affirm a criterion of 'great directors' and 'great films.' Many of these figures emerge from the work done by Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie in *The Japanese Film: Art & Industry* published in 1960.[60] Their book to this day has been routinely cited as a shining example of the best all-around text on Japanese cinema history.[61] Richie's follow-up text, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* similarly attempted to cover the major movements and transitions in Japanese cinema history. In reference to this period Richie writes, "In 1971, Daiei turned turtle, dragging Chairman Nagata with it."[62] This is Richie's only reference to Daiei's bankruptcy and in large part to the events of this period. As a result, models for this study have to reach outside the context of Japan and look for models either in Hollywood or western scholarship that is concerned with the nature of studio developments and failure.

A model that informs this chapter and project is Richard B. Jewell's second volume in a two-volume study on RKO, *Slow Fade to Black: The Decline of RKO Radio Pictures*. The monograph is structured chronologically between 1942-1957. Moreover, the chapters are organized by the successive owners of the study during this period. Following Holt's model of

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[59]Standish, Isolde. *New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Film*. New York: Continuum, 2005. and Nygren, 2007.

[60] Anderson, Joseph L., Donald Richie, and Akira Kurosawa. *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry*. Revised edition. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1983.

[61] Nornes, Markus, and Aaron Andrew Gerow. *Research Guide to Japanese Film Studies*. Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies; No 65. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2009. pg. 103-131 Where Anderson and Richie's book is listed as the first entry in the "Best of the Best" section of general histories on Japanese cinema.

[62] Richie, Donald. *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film: A Concise History, with a Selective Guide to DVDs and Videos*. Revised and Updated edition. New York, NY: Kodansha International, 2012., pg. 209

addressing the qualities of a mogul, Jewell focuses a fair amount of attention on Howard Hughes role in the company as an owner involved in production, but equally contributed to the downfall of the company. The length of this downfall is extended over successive stock trades and buyback during the early 1950s until the studio is ultimately sold to Desir Arnaz and Lucille Ball's Desilu productions in 1957. Jewell notes, "it was surely a sad day for many when the RKO sign on the old watertower, with its distinctive lightning bolt trademark, was replaced by a sparkling new one that read: DESILU!"[63] The trajectory of RKO's downfall plays like a version of Daiei's bankruptcy in miniature. What would ultimately take thirty years for Daiei, happens to RKO in the span of five years with Howard Hughes selling his company to a syndicate of businessmen with a background in oil for twenty weeks, then buys back stock ownership of the company twenty weeks later, and ultimately sells the studio to a television production studio where the lot is renamed. What is useful in the Jewel model is an emphasis on the role of ownership in a studio environment and the factors involved in the decision making of what films to make and directions to take based on a confluence of economic and artistic concerns. Many of the same challenges existed for Daiei through their inception, bankruptcy, revival by Tokuma, and ultimate purchase by a media conglomerate, Kadokawa Holdings, by the start of the twenty-first century.

As noted in the introduction this chapter address the generative mechanisms pertaining to Daiei studios formation during World War II, expansion in the immediate postwar period, and their dissolution at the outset of the 1970s. I argue that Daiei is a key element to understand the nature of stasis and change in Japan's film industry and why collaboration between the studios

[63] Jewell, Richard B. *Slow Fade to Black: The Decline of RKO Radio Pictures*. First edition. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016., pg. 210

has been essential to the oligarchical control of popular media production in Japan, necessitating a reorganization of the industry following the studio's collapse.

Daiei was founded in January 1942, a month after the Pearl Harbor attack, as the Dai Nihon Eiga Seisaku Kabushiki Gaisha. Daiei Film is the result of government efforts to reorganize the film industry during the Pacific War to rationalize use of resources and increase control over the production medium. 1942 was a turning point in World War II. Resources were scarce in Japan with film materials at a premium. Temporally this is the same period when the high watermark of wartime film production *The War at Seas from Malay to Hawaii* was released. However, the details and framing of Daiei's creation merit discussion as it provides a strong example of how the relative control of power, the oligopoly of the industry solidified in the waning years of World War II and throughout the postwar period.

Against the initial government plan to consolidate all film studios into two companies, Nagata Masaichi, an executive at Shinko Kinema, maneuvered for an alternative plan to create three studios. Peter B. High characterizes the development of Daiei as a cunning manipulation by studio head Nagata Masaichi brought on by material scarcity and anxiety by the industry. In the middle of 1941 Japan was struck with several logistical and material limitations as the war effort increased and international relations were strained. Relying on western nations like the United States and Great Britain for raw materials made the acquisition of oil and more importantly for the studios nitrate compound a necessity for state promotion of Japan's empire.[64] Even with local production such as the Fuji Film factory established in 1930, it was not enough to handle the output of tens of films per month by each studio. By summer 1941 relations between the United

[64] Baskett, Michael. *The Attractive Empire: Transnational Film Culture in Imperial Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008. For more discussion of Japan's propaganda project of inculcating Japan's colonies into the promotion of a pan-Asian empire led by Japan.

States and Japan soured to such a degree that chief of the Information Bureau, Kawazura Ryuzo declared "We can no longer provide the civilian sector with even one foot of film stock."[65]

The impact of material shortage on the industry was the catalyst for reform and more closely aligning the studios with the government during wartime. The political consequences required that studios work in coordination to ensure their survival as material resources diminished the ability to continue as a functioning industry. By the end of August the government demanded a reduction of the industry to two feature film productions companies, along with one other for culture (documentary) films. The remaining film companies would produce roughly two films per month. With this decree Nagata Masaichi knew that without presenting an alternative plan he would soon be out of the film industry.

Peter B. High frames Nagata Masaichi as the master manipulator in these negotiations as the one who develops a close relationship Kawazura, head of the film association, and binding the idea of competition as the main means by which the studios should remain solvent and provide options to the industry. "In a two-company system, Nagata told them, there is likely to be compromise in any number of areas. But if you put together a system of three companies, you can be sure of a healthy competition as to which can turn out the very best product."[66] High is more specific indicating that Nagata was really playing to the Information Bureau's sensibilities by noting that with Toho and Shochiku as established companies, with their own histories, they would be more difficult to control.[67] However, if the government were able to cobble a new

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[65] High, Peter B. *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War, 1931-1945*. Wisconsin Studies in Film. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. pg., 315

[66] Okada, Susumu. *Nihon eiga no rekishi*. Sanichi Shinsho. Kyōto; 京都 : Sanichi Shobō; 三一書房, 1957. pg. 298.

[67] Ibid. pg., 317

company from the remaining smaller companies. In High's estimation this third company proposed by Nagata would be a central component of Japan's film propaganda and promotion machine. Nagata emerged with something to show for his efforts. When the Greater Japan Motion Picture Company (Dai Nihon Eiga or Daiei) came into existence with Shinko Company as its controlling constituent, Nagata was made Daiei's managing director. Toho and Shochiku, which had hoped to evenly divide the film world amongst themselves, bore an understandable grudge against the "smooth-talking opportunist" Kido's favorite epithet for Nagata).[68]

Nagata's perspective of events is presented in a far more pragmatic and economic manner to suggest that the only option for this industry was to have the separate studios merge. He notes that of the major studios Shochiku and Toho were financially soluble to a degree that it was assured that would prosper from a merger.[69]

His efforts were successful and in 1942 Shinko Kinema, Diato Eiga, and the production component of Nikkatsu merged to form Dai Nippon Eiga Seisaku Kabushiki Kaisha, more commonly known, and marketed as Daiei. Well known novelist Kikuchi Kan served as the first president with Nagata continuing as an executive. Like all major studios Daiei had production house in Tokyo and Kyoto separating their resources between present day (*gendaigeki*) and period films (*jidaigeki*) respectively.

By the mid 1950s international audiences of Japanese cinema might assume that Daiei studios was the most prolific of Japan's film industry. This perception is easy to understand as the large output of Japanese cinema throughout this period were overwhelmingly produced and

[68] High., pg. 320 Within a year of this victory for Daiei, Nagata was arrested by police detectives over accusations of bribing Information Bureau officials. High characterizes the arrest less for the bribery and more for the personal image making Nagata had developed as a flamboyant opportunist that was out of step with "National Unity" for the day.

[69] Daiei kabushikigaisha. *Daiei Jyu Nen Shi*. Tokyo: Daiei kabushikigaisha, 1951. pg. 10

distributed by Daiei. On a basic level the films *Rashomon* (1950), *Ugetsu* (1953), *Golden Demon* (1953), and *Gate of Hell* (1953) all played a significant role in the expansion of Japanese cinema internationally, opening the door for other studios to explore their own international export strategies. The date of their release is also no coincidence. Nagata Masaichi made a tour of the United States, unique at the time as Japanese were not legally allowed to travel internationally without special clearance. Nagata's tour in 1954 had a goal to study, "the action pictures from the United States, the sophisticated love stories from France, the English comedies, [and] the Italian realistic dramas." Through this tour, Nagata concluded that the most effective approach for Daiei internationally would be to continue the export of samurai, jidaigeki period films. A belief that "a series of stories of old Japan told in a 'humanistic' style and 'with a delicacy of composition and refinement of gesture.'"[70] The selection of more samurai films was not difficult to deduce, even prior to Nagata's tour. Both *Rashomon* and *Ugetsu* had made a splash at the Venice International Film Festival. Each taking the Golden and Silver Lion respectively for the years they were submitted for competition, 1951 and 1953.

Rashomon's success at the Venice film festival opened avenues of exploration for Japanese film to be screened in international venues. However, the successive releases of *Ugetsu, Gate of Hell,* and *Golden Demon* served as an actualization of Nagata's plans to increase the visibility of Japanese cinema worldwide. Within the Hollywood, Daiei Studios worked with Edward Harrison a press agent and publicist for *Rashomon,* who had developed a company for foreign film distribution. *Rashomon,* as a result, serves as the standard for all other releases that followed. The push for the films in 1954 were preceded by a decent level of marketing and

[70] Balio, Tino. *The Foreign Film Renaissance on American Screens, 1946-1973*. Wisconsin Film Studies. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010. pg. 120-121

exposure, including a six-page photo spread titled, "Exquisite New Films from Japan," that were working "to establish a product identity" for their exports and "to show that *Rashomon* was no beginner's luck."[71] The first film in this series, *Ugetsu*, premiered in New York at the Plaza theater on September 7, 1954.[72] *Ugetsu*, an adaptation of Ueda Akinari's ghostly tales, centers on four individuals, two couples, with an emphasis on the choices of the husbands in each. Bosley Crowther, long serving critic for the New York Times, notes, "steeped in a cultural climate so misty and rarefied that an awareness of what was happening in the picture was not at all easy to perceive. But the sensuous details are intriguing, the acting is hypnotically formalized-especially that of Machiko Kyo, the ghostly princess – and the whole composition of it is a challenge for the student of films."[73] The successive release and success of *Ugetsu* following *Rashomon* provided enough critical endearment to suggest a high level of artistry in Japanese cinema at the time. Arthur Knight said, "At the moment Japan's studios seem to be doing the most interesting, most creative job of movie-making in the world….While our Occidental films have leveled off at a plateau of technical perfection, the films from Japan are exploring psychological and aesthetic paths that are in their implications, not merely new but revolutionary."[74] This direct cross-cultural comparison characterizes a large portion of the western response to the films released at this time. At the same time, it presented a challenge for film producers in Japan. Very quickly the

[71] "Exquisite New Films from Japan," *Life*, November 15, 1954, pg. 89

[72] This premiere coming roughly a year and a half after the domestic release of *Ugetsu* where the film attained a great deal of critical success where it ranked third in the "Best Ten" listing from *Kinema Junpo*, Japan's longest running film, criticism magazine. The film came right behind Ozu Yasujiro's *Tokyo Story* and included Mizoguchi's other release of the year, *Gion maiko* at ninth.

[73] Crowther, Bosley, *New York Times*, September 12, 1954.

[74] Knight, Arthur, *Saturday Review*, December 11, 1954, pg. 26.

success of *Rashomon, Ugetsu*, and *Gate of Hell*, which was awarded best foreign language film at the Academy Awards, shaped an myopic image of Japan as an ancient culture with long standing artistic values.

The presentation of Japan through period films served two functions. The first offered an artistic representation of Japan to the world in the immediate aftermath of Japan and the United States reestablishing diplomatic relations following the Supreme Command of Allied Powers occupation of Japan until 1952. The second is it offered international audiences a means of seeing Japan removed from a contemporary context, one clouded by World-War II and the propaganda used to characterize Japan as both backwards and violent in nature.[75] Daiei distributing *jidaigeki* or period films internationally offered a means of artistically representing the nation of Japan removed from the stigma of contemporary events while simultaneously illustrating a lengthy and rich cultural heritage. *Gate of Hell* for instance balanced its 12th century setting with a technically advanced application of color film photography. Arthur Knight noted at the time that, "Japanese technicians spent three years in Hollywood mastering the techniques of color; to this they added centuries of accumulated wisdom in the psychology and philosophy of color."[76] This reflection on the film is once again a two-pronged approach of praising the film, praising the technical advances while maintaining a hierarchy on the technical prowess of Hollywood along with a deep, rich cultural tradition in Japan.

The reactions by critics and commentors on these early films are what led Kurosawa Akira and other directors to lament the focus on Japanese period films. For Kurosawa he

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[75] Dower, John W. *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. 1st ed. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

[76] Knight, Arthur, *Saturday Review*, September 12, 1954.

regretted *Rashomon*'s international success in a way as it provided a distorted vision of Japan to international audiences. It also had the potential of limiting viewers appetite for other films. He wished instead that one of his contemporary set films had been distributed or attained success first, providing a plurality of options and showing the range of cinema that could potentially emerge from Japan's studio system.[77]

However, with the minimal success of films like *Golden Demon* or a lukewarm critical response to Mizoguchi's *Street of Shame* (1956) by critics like Bosley Crowther it was easy to dismiss the international distribution efforts of Daiei and suggest a limited focus.[78] However, more recent scholarship also points to the efforts of Daiei Studios and studio head Nagata Masaichi as having a much larger and varied international distribution plan, regardless of the critical reaction to isolated film releases.

In reviewing the international distribution efforts of Daiei between 1949, when Nagata makes an initial trip to Hollywood, and the difficult rollout of 70mm production *Buddha*, Howard suggests that Daiei was interested in selling a wide range of films to many different territories in the global film marketplace.[79]

Beyond the efforts of press agent Edward Harrison to secure international distribution rights for early Daiei successes like *Rashomon* and *Ugetsu*, Daiei also worked with connections in Walt Disney's Buena Vista International for the release of *The Phantom Horse* (*Maboroshi no*

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[77] Kurosawa, Akira. *Something Like An Autobiography*. Illustrated edition. New York: Vintage, 1983. pgs. 180-9.

[78] Balio, 2011, pg. 124

[79] Howard, Christopher, "Beyond *Jidai-geki*: Daiei studios and the study of transnational Japanese cinema," Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema, 3:1, (2012) pg. 5-12

uma, 1955) and Mizoguchi Kenji's *Princess Yang Kwei-Fei* (Yokihi, 1955). Howard argues that the films following *Gate of Hell*'s international release, "consisted of a *Meiji-mono* (including a striking baseball scene), a children's film and an adaptation of a classic Chinese historical romance suggests, however, that Daiei was certainly interested in finding foreign markets for a broad range of color films beyond decorative *jidaigeki*.[80] These releases within the United States hint at the direction Daiei and Nagata had hoped to achieve with the success of their early films.

Unfortunately, these efforts did not produce a pipeline of Daiei works that resulted in longstanding relationships with United States distributors on the west or east coast. Similar barriers appeared in efforts to produce internationally appealing "culture films," like documentary filmmaker Imamura Sadao's year-long production on the Japanese Alps. With a crew of thirteen people, Imamura's project was more ambitious than similar documentary work being conducted in the United States but failed to make an impact at either the 1957 Cannes Film Festival or screenings in Europe. Similar productions shot in India, made in conjunction with Run Run Shaw, *Himitsu no kuni: Indo* (1958) and *The Long Nose* (1958) did not achieve much domestic acclaim in Japan or with foreign buyers.

The failure of these efforts was followed by further attempts to attain international success in the same manner as Toho with their early *kaiju* monster films *Warning from Space* and the *Gamera* series. Again, these efforts were not recognized or purchased in the same level as Honda Ishiro's *Godzilla* and subsequent sequels that were dubbed and screened in theaters and global television markets.

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[80] Ibid., pg. 8

With the challenges and setbacks of securing distribution to the United States, Nagata reoriented Daiei's efforts toward inter-Asian distribution channels. After a tour of non-Communist countries in East and Southeast Asa in 1953, Nagata subsequently formed the South-East Asian Film Producers Association, with Run Run Shaw acting as vice-chairman. The major activity of the association was to organize the Southern-East Asia Film Festival (still in existence as the Asia Pacific Film Festival). Nagata, through Daiei, saw the festival as a conduit for Japanese films to be released in diplomatically friendly nations within Asian markets. The inaugural prize of the festival, for instance, went to *The Golden Demon* (1955) which had received a lukewarm reception by United States critics. The film set in late Meiji-era Japan, directed by, Shima Koji, was noted for its distinct color pallet, but criticized for the high level of melodrama and emotional range.

Daiei also invited opportunities to collaborate with other nation-states. Beyond the documentary work with Run Run Shaw, Daiei and Pathé overseas were backers for *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) with the Japanese sequences being shot by Daiei production staff and crew for the most part. Pathé Overseas also distributed a number of Daiei's productions including films by Mizoguchi Kenji and Ichikawa Kon following his transfer over to Daiei in the mid-1950s.

Tanaka Junichiro, wrote a biography of Nagata, details the challenges that Daiei faced in the production and distribution of tentpole film, *Buddha* (1961), for release in 70mm. With Hollywood diving into the large frame widescreen format with biblical films like *The Ten Commandment*s (1956), Nagata similarly sought to engage with a spiritual theme. Tanaka notes that in attempting to portray the life of Buddha, Daiei faced serious backlash from

representatives throughout Asia, including representatives to Japan.[81] Daiei's follow-up attempts at 70mm spectacle films further met with challenge after challenge as *The Great Wall* (1962) fell far short of expectations domestically and internationally.

The high ambitions of Nagata and Daiei to pursue international features repeatedly met barriers to long-term success or continued works between companies. This raises obvious questions as to what can account for the barriers between Japanese cinema at this time and international audiences. Daiei, one of the six major studios, had attained a level of critical and box office success that helped it as a major force in Japan's domestic film production. It is easy to characterize Daiei's subsequent international destruction efforts as dismal. However, within the domestic sphere Daiei was able to carve out a distinct space within the industry with critical and financial success from established filmmakers like Mizoguchi, Kon, and Masumura. They were also successful in establishing long running franchises including the blind swordsman series *Zatoichi* and the kaiju monster pictures *Gamera*. As an international picture company Daiei continually ran into barriers to great for the company to brand itself as an international success.

At the center of Daiei Studios is Nagata Masaichi. Other studios could point to a legacy and history of quality work as is the case with Shochiku, Toho, or even Nikkatsu established in 1912. As a result, Daiei serves as a distinct studio within the structure of Japan's studio system. Daiei is established through the merging of multiple smaller studios during the government's usurping of the film industry. For the majority of studio's history Daiei's company slogan was, "Daiei is Film!" (*Eiga wa Daiei!*) The slogan is quick, catchy, and leaves an impact on each trailer,

[81]Tanaka, Jun'ichirō. *Nihon eiga hattatsushi*. Chūkō bunko. Tōkyō; 東京 : Chūō Kōronsha; 中央公論社, 1975., pg. 10-12.

newsreel, or poster image displayed throughout metropolitan areas of Shinjuku or Shibuya. As a subtitle to this slogan, it would not be a stretch to argue that "Daiei is Nagata." At each step from the company's formation to bankruptcy, Nagata is the primary force through which all the studio's development, expansion, and dissolution occurred throughout 1942-1971.

Nagata offers a means to reconfigure our focus away from the work of directors within studios than the actions, choices, and behavior of the moguls that defined the Japan's domestic film industry from its inception. Jennifer Holt, in her study, notes the value that focusing on moguls, their personalities and behavior, play in the choice and directions of media industries.[82]

Nagata was born in Kyoto during the winter of 1906 and died in the fall of 1985 at the height of Kadokawa Haruki's grip over the mainstream film industry. Growing up Nagata's family owned a textile and fabric dying business. At around the age of three Nagata's family business caught fire and burned to the ground. It forced the family to begrudgingly move to another part of the city and begin rebuilding their business. This bitter experience is one of the first major memories Nagata had as a young child and one which shaped the high level of ambition he exerted throughout his career.

He attended Tokyo Keizi University but dropped out before finishing his degree. This was due in part to the death of his father, at the age of 47, due to a cerebral hemorrhage. While Nagata believed his family to be in good health, the death of Nagata's father was an immense setup, further encouraging Nagata to drop out earlier in order to rebuild the family business.

In 1925, Nagata began his professional career at Nikkatsu studio working as a location manager eventually becoming the head of the Kyoto studio. After conflicts with the president of Nikkatsu, he left the company in 1934. Nagata's departure also marked the first instance of his

[82] Holt, 2011, pg. 92

ability to shape his own luck, stealing off multiple Nikkatsu stars and talent to for Daiichi Eiga, the precursor to Daiei Studios.

Daiichi Eiga was a short-lived studio creating major works with Mizoguchi Kenji like, *Sisters of Gion* (1936) and *Osaka Elegy* (1936). Soon after Daiichi Eiga folded, without much fanfare, and Nagata moved over to Shinko Kinema, once again becoming head of the Kyoto studio. With the outset of the Pacific War and the government reorganizing all art industries, that included putting all film studios control under the industry, Shinko kinema was combined with other studios.

Nagata played a pivotal role in the establishment of Daiei Studios during wartime. More than a crafty dealmaker, Nagata is thought of as the biggest gambler in Japan's film world. The government's consolidation of the film industry down to Shochiku and Toho studios left many in the industry scratching their heads as to the future of the industry. According to Hoshikawa Seiji, Nagata met this industry change with sheer anger. In the mid-late 1930s Nagata had ascended to the top of Shinkyo studio becoming the production head of their Kyoto studio.[83]

Nagata knew that domestic resources of film were scarce, and the industry depended on robust import export of raw materials to produce nitrate film. While other studios existed, Nagata logically predicted that the resources of Nikkatsu, Daito, and Shinkyo studios would have the best opportunity to merge in an appeal to Japan's government board. In these negotiations Nagata's forcefulness had no equal to ensure that a third company would be authorized by Japan's central intelligence agency. On January 27th, 1942 Nikkatsu production studio, Shinkyo

[83] Hoshikawa, Seiji. *Daiei Kyōto Satsueijo Katsudōya Hanjōki*. Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shunbusha, 1997. pg. 7-8

kinema, and Daito Eiga merged to establish Daiei Studios, (*Dai nihon eigaseisaku kabushiki geisha*).

The early part of Nagata's career was plagued by scandal, however, as he was arrested and served time, in part for the dubious efforts to secure funds for the new studio. Bank rolling from Nikkatsu and Daito the new studio had roughly 700,700,000 yen cash available. However, following the merge with Shinkyo, Nagata listed Daiei's initial investment with an additional 400,500,000 yen. This level of cash from three struggling studios was put on the radar of the Bureau of Information. With the concerns pertaining to Daiei's initial cash-flow and loans, Kikuchi Kan, not Nagata, assumed the role of Daiei's first company president.

Kikuchi Kan was deemed a more palatable public persona for the company as he was already a famed author and respected member of the literary establishment in Japan. Kikuchi's work was influenced by styles from Ireland and a blending of distinct characteristics from western and Japanese culture. He helped form the two most prestigious literary prizes in Japan, the Akutagawa and Naoki Prize. Kikuchi notes that, "As President there was not much I could do, but I thought it would be good to read the screenplays of every film in production, and because I thought I could do that I chose to be president."[84] For all these reasons Kikuchi could maintain a respectable face, while Nagata was able to run Daiei as a shadow president for the final years of the war.

In position as a secondary figure within the leadership of Daiei, Nagata's insatiable drive was focused on the early production efforts of Daiei to produce hits that could rival or breach the top productions of Toho and Shochiku, which had less infrastructure change throughout the war period. It was during this time that Nagata was marked with the moniker, "Rappu" which has a

[84] Ibid., pg. 31

duel meaning of a trumpet or a horn, but more disparagingly as a scoundrel, spy, or villain. Nagata spent the length of his career promoting Daiei, looking for avenues to explore. Notably, Nagata looked to Hollywood for distribution models, but also storytelling and production methods. Nagata was never above pursuing an opportunity that could raise his profile within the film world of Japan and internationally regardless of method or approach. As Nagata noted, "I much prefer an interesting lie, to a boring truth."[85]

The "Rappu" of the film industry further articulates his vision for Daiei studios in the forward to a book commemorating Daiei Studio's 10th Anniversary in 1952.

> "Daiei Motion Picture Company was founded in 1942. Ten years have elapsed since. No word in my poor vocabulary is sufficient to manifest my deep emotion at this writing, as I look back at the long, tortuous path we stumbled along through these years – years of bitter struggle for mere survival during the way, followed by years of unspeakable hardship during the postwar confusion, then a bit of better luck, and now, gradually, the days of security and soundness. In the course of these thorny years, how many times had I to tell myself to five up in despair, how often did I find myself pushed against the wall without hope. But somehow the Goddess of Mercy was generous enough to be on my side at every critical moment. I saw her smile at me through the darkness extending her warm, helpful hands towards my poor self, and then, I found within myself a man revived with faith and courage to start all over again. Nothing makes me feel more gratified than to note that Daiei today not only stands erect on its own feet in the front row of the motion picture industry of Japan, but that there is even the possibility of a day to come when Daiei's name will be established, he world over. The aim of this publication is not merely to keep on record in book form, but it is hoped that it be our scripture to re-collect from time to time our joys and sorrows in the bygone days, and thereby enable us to find enlightenment to achieve something worthy of our existence at this day as well as in the years to come. Would you, my friend, please accept this book with my hearty appreciation of your constant support rendered to us in the past years without which Daiei could have never seen the security and prosperity of today. Thank you. October, 1951"[86]

[85] Ibid., pg. 56-57

[86] Matsuyama, Hideo, ed. *Daiei Jyunenshi*. Tokyo: Daei kabushiki gaisha, 1952. pg. 4

The tone and nature of Nagata's foreword is striking for several reasons. First, it is the first notable memorialization of Daiei studios by Nagata and the company attempting to set down a narrative history of the studio. Second this foreword is written one month after *Rashomon* wins the Golden Lion award at the Venice International Film Festival and only a year from when *Gate of Hell*, *Ugetsu*, and other films make their international debut. The critical success, acclaim, and awareness for Daiei domestically and internationally is arguably at its apex when this book is published. Nagata bolsters the international importance of Daiei Studios reproducing congratulatory letters from Samuel Goldwyn and Walt Disney. Disney, in particular, notes the relationship between Daiei, Disney, and Nagata.

"Dear, Mr. Nagata: On the occasion of the celebration of your 10th Anniversary it is indeed a pleasure for me to extend heartfelt congratulations to you and the fine organization you have built for the production and distribution of motion pictures in Japan. We are pleased to have had our pictures introduced to the Japanese people through the Daiei Motion Picture Company and look forward to the continued successful distribution of our features and short subjects under contract with you. With Kindest regards, Walt Disney. September 5, 1951."[87]

Both notes point to the highest level of professional success, acclaim, and way Nagata wanted his public image to be presented to Japan's film industry. This is also the most potent box office period for Daiei and really the only point where the studio was at the forefront of critical and financial success. The next section will detail how the same efforts that provided Daiei success and acclaim in the 1950s were foundational elements in their downfall and bankruptcy by the early 1970s.

[87] Ibid., pg. 10

The late 1950s marked the paramount for theater construction, attendance, and box office receipts. In 1958 alone it is calculated that the entire population of Japan went to the movies nearly twelve times on average that year.[88] From that point the industry experienced a marked decrease in attendance and box office receipts followed by a major ramping down of theater construction and film productions.

By the start of 1970 Japan's domestic film industry had experienced continual financial downfall over the course of a decade. Theaters dwindled from their peak of nearly 7,500 in 1960 to a low of just over 3,000.[89] Similarly attendance dropped, and profits decreased from a record high of nearly 30 billion yen in 1958 to around 16 billion by 1970.[90] The loss is often tied to the influence of television and the competition between the two mediums quickly drew movie goers away from their stores. Attempts to revitalize audience interest through widescreen formatting double and triple billed attractions, all failed to raise interest with a continual decline in all areas.

From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, 400 to 500 films were released per year. Up until and including 1964 the majority of productions nearly 90% of those reported in Japan were produced by one of the five major studios. In 1965 nearly 50% of films began being released by independent or other financed groups. It is beyond the scope of this paper to account for the factors involved with this switch, but it does indicate that significant shifts were occurring in terms of financing, distribution, and exhibition making it possible for groups beyond the six major studios to enter the industry.

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[88] Akira Iwasaki, Shinbi Iida, and Michio Ninagawa, "1958 nen do sokeisan," *Kinema Junpo*, no. 225 (1959).

[89] Tadao Sato, "Financial Statement 1971," *Kinema junpo*, February 01, 1972. pg. 72

[90] Yoshio Shirai, "Financial Statement 1970," *Kinema junpo*, February 01, 1971. pg. 70

One of the first notable changes occurred with the bankruptcy of Shin-Toho Studios in 1963 which limited the major studios to five including: Shochiku, Toho, Daiei, Toei, and Nikkatsu. While this was a shake-up in terms of the number of major studios it did not have an immediate effect on the business or the structure of the industry which remained vertically integrated from production to exhibition.

The structure of the industry at this time was relatively like the Hollywood studio system which not only controlled levels of distribution but kept directors and stars under-signed contract. For Hollywood this system came crashing down following the ruling in 1948 of United States v. Paramount Pictures, Inc. which effectively ended the monopolistic control of the industry over exhibition rights and suggested an opportunity for independent film exhibitors and to emerge. In Japan, however, the film industry was never forced to break-up vertical integration by rule of law or other decree. Instead, the industry was slowly chipped away by financial and economic struggles.

From 1969 to 1971 a steady decline in terms of attendance, box office receipts and films produced continued unabated. Within that time nearly 400 theaters closed up. However, theaters which primarily played Japanese films remained relatively stable around 1,300 throughout the country. Similarly, the number of total films steadily decreased dropping 10% by 1971. Newspaper and film journals began suggesting Japanese film had entered a period of shock and disruption.[91] Fears arose regarding the amount and types of films being produced. At this time Nikkatsu and Daiei Studios feared the worst in terms of revenue.

The two companies reached an agreement in March of 1970 to jointly distribute their films and exhibit them at both Nikkatsu and Daiei theaters starting in May under the distribution

[91] "Gekido-ki no Nihon eiga," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 16-18, 1970.

moniker Dainichi Distribution.[92] This was an attempt to shore up lost revenue and market their films in a new light. Very quickly this endeavor failed and within a year both companies were making drastic changes. For Nikkatsu a decision was reached in July of 1971 to drastically cut production costs on major projects. At the time the company employed over three hundred full time workers. Neither Nikkatsu nor Daiei had reached a position on what to do but hope still existed that through efforts like double billing the companies would be able to stymie or reverse failing attendance rates.[93]

This hope was short lived as by the end of 1971 Nikkatsu had switched all production efforts into roman porno or pink films. Within a year the company doubled the number of films produced the year prior and helped to inject new life into their company. Several interesting aspects are emerging with this switch. First the financial feasibility of studio productions that were non-pornographic in nature had a harder time selling and in the case of Nikkatsu was not providing the profits need to sustain business. At the same time the shake-up at Nikkatsu does not provide a very specific connection to the developments of Kadokawa Shoten entering film production. At best Nikkatsu's switch revealed the continued upheavals taking place in the film industry and set the stage for the equally dramatic developments at Daiei Studios.

Throughout Daiei's history it was noted for producing award winning films such as Kurosawa Akira's *Rashomon* and Mizoguchi Kenji's *Ugetsu Monogatari*. Throughout the 1960s Daiei went through similar struggles as the rest of the industry trying everything from double and triple billed features, widescreen, and promotional campaigns to secure audiences. This would all

[92] "Saihenki ni kita hogakai," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 10, 1970.

[93] Izawa, Jun. "Tachinaoreru ka Nihon eiga: nihon date ga inochi tori?," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 10, 1971.

come to an end by November of 1971 as Daiei officially declared bankruptcy. This was all precipitated by a series of escalating events. First in May of 1970 company head Nagata Masaichi proposed the sale of Daiei's headquarters in Tokyo and Kyoto to prevent more dire circumstances. By January of the following year Nagata Masaichi stepped down from running other business interests like Lotte to focus all energy on 'revitalizing' Daiei. Within two months major layoffs and voluntary retirements at the company saw the dismissal of over 250 employees. By November the worst had been realized with announcements that productions on all films were being suspended, all employees were being let go, and the company was preparing for bankruptcy.[94]

Like the reorganization of Nikkatsu, Daiei's bankruptcy and loss as one of the five major studios cemented the rift of domestic film and immediately caused speculation as to the future of film in Japan. At the time Vice President Matsuda Tatsujiro proclaimed that, "Daiei and Nikkatsu had lost. Toho, Toei, and Shochiku had won. However, even the three winners are exhausted and losing breath."[95] This period arouse great fear in the industry and did not provide a clear map for the future. In addition, the next few years did not raise hopes of shoring up losing attendance or keeping theaters in business.

1975 was the first year since the end of World War II that foreign films achieved a higher box office gross than those produced in Japan.[96] The number of theaters had reached an all-time low of 2443 a loss of around 60% since their peak in 1960. Similarly, in less than five years theater attendance had dipped over thirty percent. At the same time the industry was seeing a

[94] "Daiei tsuini zennin kaiko Daiei kaisan," *Asahi shimbun*, November 30, 1971.

[95] "Nihon eiga ni shourai wa aru ka," *Asahi Shimbun*, December 28, 1971.

[96] Yamane, Sadao. "Financial Statement 1975," *Kinema junpo*, February 15, 1976.

steady inflation of box office receipts even with the demise of theater numbers, attendance, and a major studio.

From 1972 to 1975 distribution gross for film from Japan rose steadily, jumping by nearly 50% to 22.9 billion yen. The direct cause for the inverse in attendance and rising profits is related to a markup in ticket prices which was unabated until the 1990s reaching a peak of around 1800 yen. On a numbers level the steady rise in profit gave hope to the industry. Still, a publishing company entering film production as an active entity was viewed as an interesting experiment, but within a short period of time those thoughts would begin to change.

In just under three years from Daiei's declaration Tokuma Shoten, a publishing company established in 1954, announced they had purchased and were the parent company for a new Daiei Studios.[97] The announcement made in April 1974 was the start of a new era in film production and distribution models. Rather than develop a new studio, Daiei would function primarily as a production company, but also rent out studio lots, and garnering partnerships with other companies to produce their films.

Due to the rather limited size of the company Daiei would only release a small amount of films at a given time. However, quickly two films were green lit for production. By January of 1975 the company's first new pictures were to be *Waga seishun no toki* and *Kinkanshoku*. Both films were released within three months of the other with *Kinkanshoku* receiving large critical acclaim after its debut on September 06, 1975. The film would not reach the tops of the box office, but its critical reception was high enough that it ranked third on *Kinema Junpo*'s annual "Best Ten" list for the year.[98] From 1975 to the end of the decade Daiei would release only eight

[97] Tokuma, Yasuyoshi. "Daiei no o-na- ni natta," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 28, 1974.

films in total all distributed by one of the remaining major studios.[99] While their production output remained small Daiei's trajectory from bankruptcy to reformation provides a unique model to compare with the rise of Kadokawa Jimusho that will be addressed in the following chapter.

Rather than a significant legal decision or dramatic shift in every company of the domestic film industry of Japan, the bankruptcy of Daiei and their subsequent purchase by Tokuma Shoten provided a viable model for Kadokawa Shoten to conceive of entering the film industry. The timing of these events is also important for their impact on the industry and Kadokawa Shoten in particular. *Kinkanshoku*, released by Toho, appeared in theaters only three short months from Kadokawa Haruki's press announcement to found a film studio on December 5, 1975.

Daiei's bankruptcy provided an opportunity for the industry to explore new options of film production in an era where only inflated ticket prices seemed to shore up company loses. Daiei provided a blueprint for Kadokawa Shoten. Rather than pay for the overhead of a distribution and exhibition company, this new system encouraged small companies to partner with others to finance, distribute and exhibit films. Tokuma Shoten's purchase of Daiei provided a successful test run for a new production and distribution pattern which laid the groundwork for a publishing company like Kadokawa Shoten to enter the film industry. The major difference between the two companies was the full integration of marketing between Kadokawa Shoten and

[98] Kinema Junposha. *Kinema junpo besuto ten 80-kai zenshi, 1924-2006.* Tokyo: Kinema Junposha, 2007. pg. 226

[99] "Daiei's 8 Pix Since its Revival Under Y. Tokuma," *Variety*. May 9, 1979.

Kadokawa Jimusho that helped provide the box office success that Tokuma Shoten's Daiei had been unable to achieve.

Chapter 2 – Kadokawa, Media Mix, and Shakeup of the Industry

This chapter concerns the emergence, success, and downfall of Kadokawa Shoten and Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho (Kadokawa Haruki Office) as they entered Japan's domestic film industry between 1975-1993 encompassing the initial announcement of Kadokawa Pictures, by then President Kadokawa Haruki, through their final major film, *Rex: Kyoryu Monogatari* (*Rex: A Dinosaur Story*) released in 1993. Over the course of this eighteen-year period, Kadokawa Pictures produced sixty-seven films, comprised of fifty-three live action films and fourteen animated features. They achieved their peak production output in 1984 with ten feature films released in a single year. Over the course of this period the company averaged nearly four features a year. During this time Kadokawa Pictures developed from a unique experiment to the most consistently high-grossing film company within Japan's domestic film industry. The growth of the company was not met with uniformed success. Many critics felt Kadokawa was the signal of a death of the film industry, a commercialization, or cheap imitation of the critically lauded films of the 1950s and 1960s. This criticism is perhaps most succinctly symbolized with Kurosawa Akira snubbing Kadokawa as he attempted to congratulate the director at the Tokyo premiere of *Kagemusha*.[100]

[100] Obayashi, Nobuhiko. "Boku No Kadokawa Eiga-Dansō." *Eiga Geijutsu*, no. 370 (Winter 1994)., pg. 34 Obayashi notes the chilling event which can be interpreted several ways. On a macro level there is a dismissal of the young producer by the venerated director. On a simpler level it feels like a direct criticism of the recent efforts produced by Kadokawa, most recently *G.I. Samurai* (1979). Kurosawa's film *Kagemusha* (1980), set during the Warring States period lasting from the end of the 15th century to the end of the 16th, focusing on a fictionalized account of Takeda Shingen's battle with the three unifiers of Japan; Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and Tokugawa Ieyasu. *G.I. Samurai* whose original title, *Sengoku jietai*, could more closely be translated as "Warring States Self Defense Force" is a science fiction tale, based on Hanmura Ryō's novel of the same name. The story features a "time-slip" plot where members of Japan's self-defense force of the present are transported back to the Warring States period and face off against notable figures like Sanada Masayuki (portrayed by Kadokawa Haruki), Ashikaga Yoshiaki, and Takeda Shingen. Kadokawa's film preceded Kagemusha by four months, releasing in December 1979. However, both films were distributed by Toho. The

As this chapter demonstrates Kadokawa built their success on a variety of methods under the moniker of the Kadokawa Media-Mix. However, I argue that the media-mix is only the most recognizable component of these efforts. The underlying component of Kadokawa Pictures success was the ability to utilize an "industry-mix" providing the foundation for the more comprehensive *keiretsu* system that develops in the 1990s and early 2000s of cross-sharing resources, profits, and failures. Most crucial to Kadokawa Pictures initial founding are three successive components; Kadokawa Haruki being appointed president of Kadokawa Shoten following his father's passing, leveraging the publishing apparatus of Kadokawa Shoten to adapt their most successful novels, and an industry still reeling from the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios looking for opportunities to maintain solvency through the remainder of the 1970s.

In the preceding chapter I outlined the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios, one of Japan's six major studios, and the mechanisms that led to the studio's downfall. Daiei studios has been underrepresented in the discussion of how it functioned within Japan's media industry landscape, save for their early efforts in the 1950s with *Rashomon* and films submitted to international festivals. The impact of the studio's bankruptcy was not a direct assault on the other studios, but was a signal that the industry must either adapt and evolve or eventually atrophy. The first and most immediate reaction to Daiei's bankruptcy is the reformation of Nikkatsu studios from a "traditional" studio to one that focused solely on softcore pornographic or "pink" films. In the past decade scholarship on "pink" films has been an emerging component in the analysis of

proximity of release between the two films, contrasting with the pedigree in which they were produced adds an additional layer of iciness to Kurosawa's dismissal of Kadokawa and echoes more broadly the sentiment of the "respectable" film world toward Kadokawa at the time.

Japanese cinema.[101] The goal of this scholarship has been a cohesive project to highlight the skill and quality of films that were often listed or separated in initial theater runs as purely exploitative films. This works often attempt to reframe the films as a training ground for talented young directors, like Suo Masayuki or Kurosawa Kiyoshi, who go on to have lengthy and successful careers in "legitimate" narrative feature filmmaking. To accomplish this goal, however, the auteur is fore fronted and the shifts in the industry and decisions by the studio are minimized or ignored. This is not a critique of these works as failures, but again highlights that the dominant preoccupation with initial scholarship on Japanese cinema, particularly in English language publications, is to highlight the aesthetic success and the technical proficiency of a host of directors. In the coming section we will instead focus on the studio personnel and industrial landscape of Nikkatsu and the other studios which provide a space for a new studio, Kadokawa Pictures, to emerge and succeed during a volatile and uncertain period for the studios.

From 1970 to 1972 a steady decline of attendance, box office receipts and films continued to slide at a steady rate. Within that time nearly 400 theaters were unable to maintain business and closed. However, theaters which primarily played Japanese films remained stable around with around 1,300 venues throughout the country. Similarly, the number of total films steadily decreased 10% by 1972. Newspaper and film journals began suggesting Japanese film had entered a period of shock and disruption.[102] Fears arose regarding the amount and types of

[101] Two texts offer a deeper aesthetic and historical analysis including Sharp, Jasper. *Behind the Pink Curtain: The Complete History of Japanese Sex Cinema*. Illustrated edition. Godalming: FAB Press, 2008., and Zahlten, Alexander. *The End of Japanese Cinema: Industrial Genres, National Times, and Media Ecologies*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2017.

[102] See:"Gekido-ki no Nihon eiga," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 16-18, 1970.

films being produced. During these pitfalls, Nikkatsu and Daiei Studios were teetering on the edge of bankruptcy.

The companies reached an agreement in March of 1970 to jointly distribute their films and exhibit them at both Nikkatsu and Daiei theaters starting in May under the distribution moniker Dainichi Distribution.[103] This was an attempt to shore up lost revenue and market their films in a new light. Very quickly this endeavor failed and within a year both companies were making drastic changes. For Nikkatsu a decision was reached in July of 1971 to drastically cut production costs on major projects. At the time the company employed over three hundred full time workers. Neither Nikkatsu nor Daiei had reached a position on what to do but hope still existed that through efforts like double billing the companies would be able to stymie or reverse failing attendance rates.[104]

This hope was short lived as by the end of 1971 Nikkatsu had switched all production efforts into roman porno or pink films. Within a year the company doubled the number of films produced the year prior and helped to inject new life into their company. Several interesting aspects are emerging with this switch. First the financial feasibility of studio productions that were non-pornographic in nature had a harder time selling and in the case of Nikkatsu was not providing the profits need to sustain business. At the same time the shake-up at Nikkatsu does not provide a very specific connection to the developments of Kadokawa Shoten entering film production. At best Nikkatsu's switch revealed the continued upheavals taking place in the film industry and set the stage for the equally dramatic developments at Daiei Studios.

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[103] "Saihenki ni kita hogakai," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 10, 1970.

[104] Jun Izawa, "Tachinaoreru ka Nihon eiga: nihon date ga inochi tori?," *Asahi Shimbun*, July 10, 1971.

Along with the reorganization of Nikkatsu, Daiei's bankruptcy and loss as one of the five major studios cemented the rift of domestic film and immediately caused speculation as to the future of film in Japan. At the time Vice President Matsuda Tatsujiro proclaimed that, "Daiei and Nikkatsu had lost. Toho, Toei, and Shochiku had won. However, even the three winners are exhausted and losing breath."[105] This period served as a basis for fear in the industry and did not provide a clear map for the future. In addition, the next few years did not raise hopes of shoring up business as theater patronage continued to decline and venues were shuttered.

Kadokawa Haruki's introduction to film production offered an innovation of standard forms of production, distribution, and advertisement. Many of the marketing practices, such as adapting a popular novel into a film, had been a standard form of film production for years. Keiko McDonald has suggested, "It could well be said that of all the world's cinemas, the Japanese is unique in its closeness, early and late, to the nation's literature."[106] The purpose of this is not to demonstrate Japan's unique connection between films and literature, but to point out an interconnected system which had been part of the media landscape for decades.[107] The connection between literature and film is at the heart of Kadokawa Shoten's potential for success in the film industry. In the early 1970s Kadokawa Shoten made significant changes in the type and format of its publications and along with the structure of the company.

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[105] "Nihon eiga ni shourai wa aru ka," *Asahi Shimbun,* December 28, 1971.

[106]McDonald, Keiko I. *From Book to Screen: Modern Japanese Literature in Films*. Armonk, N.Y: Routledge, 1999. pg. ix

[107] In fact, part of the clamor around early "New Wave" films by Oshima Nagisa and Yoshida Kiju (Yoshishige) at the time in 1960 was that their scripts had been written directly for the screen and not an adapted work as was the standard process. See: Susumu Okada, "Watashi wa nuveru vague," *Kinema Junpo*, no. 263 (1960).

Kadokawa Shoten was founded just after the end of World War II, in November 1945, by Kadokawa Haruki's father, Kadokawa Genyoshi. The company thrived during the early 1960s, but its image specializing in serious national literature put it at disadvantage in the emerging "pocket book wars" of the early 1970s.

Kadokawa Haruki started at his father's company in 1965 when he was 23 years old. The early phase of the prodigal son's work for Kadokawa Shoten was marked by decreasing profits and financial instability for the company. According to Kadokawa, Kadokawa Shoten was constantly recording losses.[108] Kadokawa was inspired by the success of the book, film, and soundtrack for *The Graduate,* released in Japan during the summer of 1968, to pursue a mixed media marketing strategy for the first time.

The first opportunity Kadokawa Haruki was able to deploy this type of synchronization of media platforms was with the translated novel and film premiere of *Love Story*. The book was initially published in the United States on February 14, 1970, Valentine's Day, coinciding with the theme of young love at the center of the novel. The film adaptation was released in the United States just prior to Christmas on December 18th, 1970. Produced by Paramount, the film was an instant success building on the long-term success of the book's publication and sales ranking, still at number one on the New York Times best seller list the week of the film's premiere. Starring Ali MacGraw and Ryan O'Neal the film tapped into the mass consciousness through a mixture of melodrama, tragedy, and romance. Years later the American Film Institute would list it as number nine on their "100 Years…100 Passions" list promoting the 100 greatest love stories in American cinema as determined by voting members. Throughout 1970 owing to

[108] Kadokawa, Haruki. *Waga tōsō: Furyō shōnen wa sekai o mezasu*. 初版..; Shohan. Tōkyō; 東京 : Īsuto Puresu; イースト・プレス, 2005., pg. 132

the chemistry between the two leads, the success of the source novel, and the tagline "Love means never having to say you're sorry" propelled the work to the peak of the cultural zeitgeist.

The success of the novel and film within the United States increased international interest and the potential for worldwide financial success. For Kadokawa Haruki, *Love Story*, offered the first major opportunity to showcase his talents within the publishing world, garner respect in his company, and gain the confidence of his father that he could be a worthy successor to the company's leadership. Encouraged by the low costs of translating books, Kadokawa Shoten purchased the Japanese publishing rights for *Love Story* in 1970 for under three hundred dollars. The work was translated by Tsutsui Masaaki, under the pen name Itakura Akira. However, the first work credited to Tsutsui Masaaki under his real name or pen name does not appear until 1973. Kadokawa Haruki suggests that it was actually him using the same pen name to translate *Love Story* as a test of his own linguistic understanding of English.[109] Kadokawa and others have noted this story in various lengths that make it difficult to confirm the truth, but an ongoing quality of Kadokawa in the publishing and film world is a great deal of self-promotion and myth making. To recount from Kadokawa this pen name was comprised three individuals, but for Kadokawa this was his only use of the name. The translated novel was published just prior to the March 6th, 1971, premiere of the film adaptation in Japan. Like the success the novel and film had in the United States, 1971 became, in-part, the year of *Love Story*. The novel sold a million copies in its first year of sale and the film adaptation was the highest box office performer of foreign films in Japan for 1971 grossing over 300 million yen. The film grossed nearly 100

[109] Kadokawa, Haruki, and Takashi Shimizu. *Itsuka giragira suruhi Kadokawa Haruiki no eiga kakumei*. 四六判並製 edition. Tōkyō: Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, 2016. pg. 18-19

million more yen than the next highest grossing foreign film release, *Elvis: That's the Way It Is* (1970).

Kadokawa Haruki notes his close working relationship with film distributor Cinema International Corporation (CIC) on the advertising campaign. CIC had only recently been established following a flight between Gulf+Western chairman, Charles Bludhorn, on a light with Henri Michaud, president of Paramount International where they suggested a joint venture with MCA-Universal's Lew Wasserman a joining of their international distribution efforts. The company was incorporated in latter 1971, but *Love Story* served as a test example for this joint distribution effort. Kadokawa seized the opportunity to play a role in the framing and promotion of *Love Story* throughout Japan.

Even though the book translation became a million-seller, one of Kadokawa Shoten's biggest successes, Kadokawa Haruki claims it was published against much resistance from inside the company, especially his father. Kadokawa Haruki's resistance against his father and the antagonism he characterizes their relationship helps feed into the constructed image of the young son as the savior of the company.

There is a certain serendipity to Kadokawa Haruki entering the publishing world and tacitly connecting with film distribution with *Love Story* coming out of Paramount Pictures. In the 1970s Paramount was finding its footing again after a recent corporate buyout by Gulf+Western with Charles Bludhorn being established as chairman. Bludhorn was open to motivated individuals stepping into larger roles. Beyond the success of specific pictures or acquiring big name actors, in the vogue of the company's history as the Lasky Players Corporation, Bludhorn's most compelling and curious executive decision was selecting Robert Evans as head of Paramount Pictures daily production efforts. Robert Evans was a young,

devilishly good looking, but failed actor starting a new phase in his career. After bumming through roles in *A Man of a Thousand Faces* opposite James Cagney and Dorothy Malone, Evans was at a crossroads knowing he would never become a true leading man. He figured the only way to stay relevant in the industry and use his straight-talking abilities was to get on the other side of the camera and behind a studio desk. Starting small, producing several off Broadway plays Evans proved he was adept working with talent and moreover the money he was able to get into a room with Charles Bludhorn soon after Gulf+Western's acquisition of Paramount Pictures. In a relatively short meeting Bludhorn took a chance on Evans and in short order was managing the bulkhead of Paramount's fledgling productions.

Evans is a useful figure when thinking about the timing of Kadokawa Haruki's ascendency in the publishing and film world. Evans was an outsider to the industry, but like Kadokawa, would show he had a knack for understanding business personalities and the sensibilities of talent. He was also a natural showman, self-promoter, and had one of the biggest egos in the industry.[110] Evan's first major success came through the parlay of *Rosemary's Baby* into a feature film career. In a move that offers similarities to Selznick wooing Hitchcock over to the United States to make *Rebecca*, Evans was successful in bringing Roman Polanski over to Paramount under the auspice that he would be directing Robert Redford in the existential sports film *Downhill Racer*. Evans was able to convince Polanski of the potential greatness for *Rosemary's Baby* to be more than a "devil-worship" film and one that offered greater depths into

[110]Evans, Robert. *The Kid Stays in the Picture*. Large Print edition. Prince Frederick, MD: RB Large Print Recorded Books, 1994. Evans is a prime example of the personnel both Thomas Schatz in *Genius of the System* and Jennifer Holt in *Empires of Entertainment* focus on when repositioning the development of media away from a director-based focus. In both studies the producer, studio head, and mogul offer a means of disrupting previous focus, but it frequently is associated with a larger than life, flamboyant personality such as Selznick, Turner, or Kadokawa.

the nature of human suffering. The immense success of the film and psychological reaction of the audience to Mia Farrow's performance and along with the strong composition of the film made Polanski a key director in the industry, but it burned a fire in Evans to become a more known quantity throughout Hollywood.

For Evans, *Love Story* was the vehicle to turn the tide on his lackluster earnings compared to other major producers in the studios at the time. Shortly after falling for Ali MacGraw and quickly wedding, Evans purchased the rights to *Love Story* with MacGraw to star. With Ryan O'Neal on board Evans knew there was a good an opportunity as any to parlay the adaptation into a successful feature film run. Throughout a variety of industrial analysis studies like Thomas Schatz *Genius of the System* or Tino Balio's *The American Film Industry* there is frequently a key moment, decision, or choice made by a studio and most often a producer which unlocks the argument for the author. For Schatz we see the ability for David O. Selznick wooing Alfred Hitchcock from Britain and providing the means for him to direct *Rebecca* which changes his fortunes from a talented, but risky independent producer to a genius success story. For Robert Evans this event occurred in the winter of 1970, just prior to the release of *Love Story*. Until this point Evans had yet to show a controlling capacity for Paramount Pictures. Gulf + Western, who had recently acquired Paramount, was beginning to wonder if the industrial headaches they suffered were worth the 5% of total business revenue the studio provided the conglomerate. In the office of Charles Bludhorn and Robert Evans rumblings of the studio being shuttered began to ramp up. The film industry was fearing a downturn with the box-office failings at Twentieth Century Fox following the disastrous theatrical run of *Cleopatra* that year. In this environment the board of directors were having an emergency meeting to axe Paramount and protext the stock. It was here Robert Evans walking with Charlie Bludhorn made a snap decision. He notes,

"Walking through the Revolving doors of the Sherry-Netherland, I had a kamikaze flash. 'Give me a half hour with the board, Charlie, a half hour."[111]

Robert Evans called in a favor from Peter Bart to have Mike Nichols take an afternoon and helm filming of a short presentation for his boss to deliver to the board of directors at Gulf + Western. "Need you, Mike," said Peter. "We've got a lousy actor, but a helluva presenter."[112]

Again, Evans had a dismal run-in front of the camera, but in 1970 Evans had to use the abilities he had to keep Paramount on life support, pacify the nerves of the higher ups at Gulf + Western, to have a chance of success with *Love Story*.

Borrowing a studio set from the television serial *The Young Lawyers*, Evans marveled at the assured direction of Nichols, wishing he had worked with someone of his skill during his actual acting career. As a presenter Evans offered a manicured humbleness as he surveyed the dismal state of Hollywood's domestic film industry and the opportunity for success Paramount could provide to movie goers and Gulf + Western's stock price. Evan's personalized Paramount's cost-savings measure noting several times that filming was not being conducted in his office. "I'm here at the studio borrowing a set from *The Young Lawyers* and that's where we are now. As a matter of fact, I don't have an office at the studio anymore. Last year we packed up our gear, cut down our staff, tightened our belts, moved into small offices, little offices, in Beverly Hills."[113] The humble tone of Evans' presentation belied the cunning and guile in the word choice, pauses, and sense of glamour Evans' persona brought to the screen. In the most saccharine moment of the presentation Evans almost whispers,

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[111] Ibid., pg. 190

[112] Ibid., pg. 191

[113] Ibid., pg. 193

> "But right now, we're approaching Christmas and Paramount's Christmas gift to the word is…*Love Story*. *Love Story* opens all over America on Christmas Day. *Love Story* is a strange phenomenon, it's the first time in motion picture history that a picture is being release while the book is still the number one book in the nation. I Shouldn't say that. It's the number one book in the world. It's the first time in literary history that a book has been number one in the United States, France, England, Sweden, or for that matter whatever county the book has been published in. I think *Love Story* is going to start a new trend in movies a trend toward the romantic, toward love, toward people, toward telling a story about how it feels rather than where it's at. I think *Love Story* is going to bring the people back to the theater in droves."[114]

Evans' presentation proved successful and assuaged the fears of Gulf + Western for the coming year. It also offered the first real opportunity for Evans to have face time with the board of directors at Gulf + Western, promote Paramount in hyperbolic terms, and harness the power of the screen for commercial and personal success. The qualities that Evans highlighted regarding the literary and potential box-office success offers a complimentary model Kadokawa Haruki began to develop simultaneously with his own translation and publication of *Love Story* in Japan. Robert Evans should not be seen merely as a mirror for Kadokawa Haruki's personality or bravado, rather it should highlight the similar difficulties facing Hollywood and Japan's domestic media industries at the end of the 1960s leading into the 1970s. For Hollywood the breakup of theater chain ownership and poor financial returns on large scale epic films were offering a space for smaller, conservative pictures relying on character and story to enter back into the mainstream of entertainment.

Recent discussion of this era often focuses on the birth of New Hollywood with *Bonnie and Clyde* or the emergence of film school brats like Coppola, Spielberg, Scorsese, and Lucas. Parallel to this emphasis on directors is the role a producer like Robert Evans played in revising studio methods to produce smaller films but buttress them with a media-mix in adapting popular

[114] Ibid, pg. 194

novels where the promotion of the film functions as an extension of the novel rather than a separate release that happens to be adapted from a source novel. The timeline for Evans' success at Paramount and in Hollywood is parallel to the rise of Kadokawa Haruki but did not match the output Kadokawa would achieve by the early 2000s when both completed their final theatrical outings as producers.[115]

Following the success of *Love Story* in Japan, Kadokawa Haruki worked to publish *The Strawberry Statement* (translated as *Ichigo Hakusho*) by James Kunen to coincide with the film's release in 1971. Kadokawa Shoten then introduced Frederick Forsyth and his novel *The Day of the Jackal* (translated as *Jakaru no hi*) to be timed with the film's release in 1973. Kadokawa Haruki oversaw the publication of several extremely successful novelizations of films, such as of *Le Grand Meaulnes, Me, Natalie* and *Stiletto*. Additionally, Kadokawa Shoten published most of these books as small paperbacks or *bunkobon*, which were growing increasingly popular. Working feverishly to produce the translated novel by the time of the film's release domestically in Japan was the foundation to Kadokawa's development of the media-mix marketing strategy at the heart of his production process.

Slightly unusual for the time, priority was given to the paperback edition, decreasing the length of time between the hardcover sales window. Kadokawa published colorful paper covers, rather than the standard black and white which were more noticeable on displays leading to increased sales. During this period Kadokawa Haruki began to publish books by younger authors, targeting a younger demographic with science fiction and mystery genres with a heavy emphasis on entertainment. These efforts invited criticism from the literary establishment for the

[115] Evans with *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* (2003) and Kadokawa with *Yamato: Otoko-tachi no Yamato* (2005).

company's seemingly frivolous strategies. Literary figure Nagai Tatsuyo stated that "Kadokawa Shoten's make-up has changed completely. I have no desire to publish my complete works there," and author Nosaka Akiyuki expressed that "I can't stand selling books the same way you sell ramen soup or convenience store goods."[116] The publishing world pejoratively labeled this approach as "cinema books" or even "abnormal."[117] This type of vitriol is the characterization Kadokawa Shoten and more specifically Kadokawa Haruki would be directed throughout his career. That even in the face of successful marketing and rising profits, Kadokawa Haruki produced cheap thrills. This is important considering the space he would claim to stake out in the film industry producing films of mass appeal as opposed to critical success.

In 1975 Kadokawa Haruki began intensifying coordination of book and film releases. Since 1971 the company had published paperback versions of mystery author Yokomizo Seishi's books, highly popular since the 1950s. In 1975 Kadokawa Shoten published what was called the "Yokomizo Seishi book fair," a re-issuing of twenty-five Yokomizo books. The event timed it to coincide with the release of the ATG produced film *Murder at Honjin Manor House.* The film was based on a Yokomizo novel, to whose advertising budget Kadokawa contributed money.[118] The amount was strikingly small, around 20,000 yen, but his emphasis on the contribution is presumably proof of how his cross-marketing strategies developed. The project was very successful with 2.5 million books sold in just two months. "Fairs" would become a staple of Kadokawa Shoten and the method was soon picked up by other companies. However, its success

[116] "Zakka Shoho to hanpatsu mo," *Asahi Shimbun*, January 10, 1979.

[117] Shinji Yamakita, *Kadokawa Haruki no kozai : shuppankai, eigakai o yurugaseta otoko* (Tokyo: Tokyo Keizai, 1993)., pg. 45

[118] Kadokawa, 2005, pg. 137

probably had a more far-reaching effect by giving Kadokawa Haruki the in-company clout to embark a more ambitious endeavor with film production.

In October of 1975 Kadokawa Genyoshi passed away from cancer at the age of 58. By November Kadokawa Haruki had taken over as head of the company. On the 4th of December Kadokawa Haruki gave a press conference announcing his plans to enter film production at the rate of two films a year, and on the 8th of January 1976, his birthday, Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho was founded. From the outset the Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho not only expanded the reach of Kadokawa Shoten to include film production, but also diversified its opportunities by importing goods like Queen Elizabeth Whiskey.[119]

As noted in the end of the previous section a Kadokawa Haruki did not embark on these expansions without a model. With the initial restoration of Daiei Studios by Tokuma Shoten and their partnership with Toho to distribute films, Kadokawa Haruki was able to foresee a different method of film production than had come before. Similarly, Kadokawa Jimusho's involvement importing whiskey also had models from previous studio executives; in particular, former Daiei Studios president Nagata Masaichi.

Nagata Masaichi is an interesting figure with regards to Kadokawa Haruki. Nagata did not start out in publishing but joined film company Nihon Katsudo Shashin (later Nikkatsu) in 1925 following his graduation from college. Quickly, Nagata outgrew his station as head of the Kyoto division and went through a succession of positions; founding the short-lived Daiichi Eiga then becoming head of Kyoto based Studio Shinko Kinema. At the encouragement of the

[119] Kadokawa, "Hi wa kyochi ni ari."; Haruki Kadokawa, "Hi wa kyochi ni ari," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 8, 1987.

government Nagata was able to successfully help establish Daiei Studios on January 27, 1942 establishing a three company system along with Shochiku and Toho.

Nagata's interests while serving officially as president of Daiei Studios were often divided across a variety of business enterprises including his turn as president of Lotte, head of several baseball teams financed by Daiei, and owner of prize-winning racehorses. Also, on a more personal level Nagata was able to influence his image through personal characterizations about his life and career. Nagata took in active role in shaping who he was through diverse business practices and personal memoirs. In 1953 he published, *Eigado masshigura* which in addition to describing his professional life also took great time detailing trips and experiences abroad in Europe and the United States.[120] Similar to Kadokawa Haruki's exploitations of searching for and finding the battleship Yamato or sailing around the world in a replica of the *Santa Maria*, Nagata helped sculpt his image through these extraordinary experiences that average citizens could only dream of.

These examples closely mirror the professional and personal actions of Kadokawa Haruki and suggest that the decisions made were less the result of a singular figure in control. Rather, Kadokawa's strength lies in the ability to recognize patterns of business that were successful and develop them within established modes of commerce. In this case the production, distribution, and exhibition of narrative feature films of Japan, but extending this process into a synchronized media promotion that intertwined book, film, and radio simultaneously with each Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho production.

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[120] Nagata, Masaichi. *Eigadō masshigura: denki Nagata Masaichi*. Tōkyō; 東京 : Surugadai Shobō; 駿河台書房, 1953., pg. 89-112. Additionally, throughout the book pictures are included which place Nagata at various places around the world such as an Indonesia for a film event, in the U.S. to meet the heads of Paramount, and even with his wife in a very composed family setting.

The discussion up to this point has provided a since of the space for how, where, and why Kadokawa pictures could enter Japan's film industry. As noted in the previous chapter not all pursuits directly led to financial or critical success or even provided a clear direction for the industry to pursue. The following case studies are meant to clarify the factors that went into the successful development of Kadokawa's media mix and production system. In keeping with the theme of this project additional case studies address failures or mistakes within the media mix-system and those entries which do not fit the narrative developed by Kadokawa Haruki. The first two case studies will focus on the production and factors involved in establishing the media-mix process for Kadokawa with *Inugami no ichizoku* (*The Inugami Family*, 1976) and *Ningen no Shomei* (*Proof of a Man*, 1977). This analysis will continue with a refinement and look at the implementation of idol-star performers as the face of the company with Yakushimaru Hiroko, Harada Tomoyo, and Watanabe Noriko, dubbed the *Kadokawa san-nin musume* (Three Maidens of Kadokawa), were at the center of Kadokawa's most ambitious marketing and production methods throughout the 1980s. Finally, we will look at points of breakdown and erasure within the Kadokawa system by assessing Masumura Yasuzo's final theatrical release and only film for Kadokawa, *Kono-no no nanatsu no oiwai ni* (*Lullaby of Death*, 1982) and Kadokawa Haruki's final directorial effort and production under the heading of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, *Rex Kyoryu monogatari* (Rex: *A Dinosaur's Story*, 1993). Both films point to the fissures in the media-mix the system and the challenges the to sustain success and the longevity of the company under Kadokawa Haruki's control. The preceding sections have provided an overview of the domestic film environment and history Kadokawa Shoten up to the establishment of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho. Turning now towards the first feature film releases by the company will help fill in the specific actions of company and Kadokawa Haruki's position within it.

At his press conference in December 1975, Kadokawa announced that his first project would be an adaptation Yokomizo Seishi novel, *Yattsuhaka mura* which would be distributed by Shochiku. By May 24th he held another press conference announcing a retreat from the Shochiku deal and new plans to produce another Yokomizo based story, *Inugami-kei no ichizoku*[121] The story is a combination detective-mystery that follows the Inugami family as one by one members begin to show up dead in following the passing of family head Inugami Sahei and his unexpected decision to pass the family fortune to an outsider named Tamayo.

Inugami-kei no ichizoku was an attempt at what Kadokawa called a media mix strategy, combining print media, film, and music as an overall package to be sold to the general public.[122] This strategy necessitated a very specific kind of public, one as broad and undivided as possible. It made it necessary to initially invest significant amounts of money to generate this level of unification and coordinate the various industry branches. In terms of the film itself it encouraged the move towards a blockbuster strategy. As a means of cross-marketing it took the step from selling a specific film to selling an aura that is much less specific to its medium.

Inugami-kei no ichizoku opened after an intense advertising campaign that, for the first time for a film from Japan, focused on radio and television commercials and mobilized unusual synergies such as inserting theater ticket coupons into ten million Kadokawa books. As a result, *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* became one of the most successful films of the year. Produced for 220

[121] Ichikawa Kon notes that the film shoot for *Yatsushaka mura* had begun and Shochiku did not require the financing of Kadokawa to complete the project. "Kadokawa felt offended, and he decided to co-operate with Toho after talking to many people." Quandt, James. *Kon Ichikawa*. Cinémathèque Ontario Monographs 4. Toronto: Cinematheque Ontario, 2001., pg. 349

[122] Yamakita, *Kadokawa Haruki no kozai: shuppankai, eigakai o yurugaseta otoko*., pg. 48 Kadokawa also claims the media mix strategy comes from reading *Mein Kampf,* but as noted earlier *The Graduate* had provided a substantive example of an effective marketing approach.

million yen and distributed by Toho, it opened on October 16, 1976 as an exclusive single bill. The Kadokawa Jimusho was the official producer of the film, while 170-million of the 220-million-yen budget had been provided by Kadokawa Shoten. It eventually made 1.3 billion yen in gross, stimulating book and record sales of the soundtrack. Although industry use of pop stars' music in films had been common since the 1960s, marketing soundtracks to be sold as separate records was unusual at the time.[123] The annual critics' poll in *Kinema Junpo* magazine rated *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* as the 5th best film of 1976. At the same time, as a foreshadowing of attitudes to come, the critics' poll of *Eiga Geijutsu* magazine voted it 4th on its "worst of the year" list. The duality of response between critics is expressed very succinctly in Kadokawa's famous quote, "I love Japanese film; I hate the Japanese film world,"[124] which became a near mantra and way for Kadokawa to establish a public persona that seemed to despise the very system he was actively moving to the center of.

While much of the success in the news media attributed the film's financial success to the individual marketing accomplishments of Kadokawa Haruki a significant number of factors helped ensure the film's success at the box office. The film was released at a time when Yokomizo Seishi was experiencing a popular revival due in part to the publishing fairs by Kadokawa Shoten. The story had also been adapted before in 1954 and released by Toei Studios.

The film was able to secure well known director Ichikawa Kon who was happy to take on

[123] The soundtrack sales for *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* were not as successful, do in large part to the lack of a song with vocals. This changed with the next release *Ningen no shomei* where Joe Yamanaka would sing the title track which provided much better results. This formed a pattern of attaching a title theme song, often sung by the star, with each film many of which became substantial hits.

[124] Quandt., pg. 387

the project as he had been interested in directing a detective story.[125] Ichikawa relied on established and experienced staff trained within the studio system infrastructure of the past. Kadokawa Haruki encouraged more headlines, underlying his opposition to the film industry, when he sued one of the producers, Ichikawa Kiichi for embezzlement of 1.1 million yen when several bills were charged to fictional addresses.[126] Such fictional bills were seen as common practice in the film industry, but it seems Kadokawa intended to set off a warning shot towards insufficient accountability and informal industry practices. Here Kadokawa attempted to link business practices with an oppositional identity that sought authenticity through channels of the legal system.

Following the success of *Inugami-kei no ichizoku*, all the major studios lined up to work with Kadokawa Jimusho. Aaron Gerow argues that following the release of the film the majority of marketing strategy fall under the heading of *taisaku*, epic, or blockbuster film. This is due in part with the budgets, foreign locations shots, and marketing strategies which soon made *taisaku* the central focus of picture releases.[127] It must be noted that releases such as *The Towering Inferno* released in 1974 which raked in over 36 billion yen or the success of *Shinkansen daibakuha* and *Nihon chinbotsu* the following year played a part in the types of films being readied for release.

It was with the next production that Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho fully implemented the media-mix and adjoining business strategies that would become lastingly definitive for the

[125] Ibid. pg. 349

[126] "Inugami-kei no ichizoku de kokuso," *Asahi Shimbun*, November 26, 1976.

[127] Quandt., pg. 387 This plays a significant role for the films discussed in chapter three produced by Kadokawa and Tokuma Shoten under a revival of Daiei Studios.

identity of Kadokawa Jimusho. *Ningen no shomei,* directed by Sato Junya, was predictably timed with the "Morimura Seiichi book fair" to stimulate sales. A soundtrack with the title song sung by Joe Yamanaka was released as well. However, Kadokawa prompted a much more drastic shift in the film's production by using every major studio in separate roles. Nikkatsu would house the production infrastructure, Toei would handle advertising and distribution, and Toho would provide the exhibition facilities. Previously, the majors had been able to keep every element vertically integrated, but the success of *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* put the oneness on studios to rethink their business models and fall into line with more diverse methods. The budget was set significantly higher than the previous film. According to *Asahi Shimbun* it was more than double the budget of *Inugami-kei no ichizoku*. The size of the budget alone spoke to Kadokawa Jimusho's entrance into the realm of blockbuster.[128]

Like *Inugami-kei no ichizoku, Ningen no shomei* was to be released in theaters usually reserved for foreign films as a single bill. This not only meant a different theater, but different exhibition model as well. Foreign releases were subject to free booking, as opposed to the block-booking system for films from Japan. This meant that a distribution company would let a film run if it was profitable before scheduling the next film. If a film was successful, the chance for longer box office runs and higher profits increased.

On the other hand, in the block booking system a film was guaranteed a standard running time of several weeks. This could soften a box-office failure and avoid the financial disaster of having a film taken out of theaters for a poor run in its first week. However, even if every screening of a block booking film sold out another film would replace it to keep pace with the booking schedule. From a marketing perspective, free booking provided the film with an

[128] "Geijutsu tsugu: Kadokawa eiga," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 13, 1981.

exceptional and exclusive image; it created an additional buzz and provided a fashionably aura alongside contemporary blockbusters *Jaws* and eventually *Star Wars*.

Kadokawa supported the aura of the foreign by making it the first Japanese-produced film with location shooting in New York, and including American stars such as George Kennedy in the cast. The film opens with the murder of a young black man, Johnny Hayward, (played by Joe Yamanaka) in the elevator of a luxurious hotel during a fashion show. Police inspector Munesue (played by Matsuda Yusaku) finds that his own history entangled in the plot as the victim, Johnny Hayward, was the son of Yasugi Kyoko (played by Okada Mariko), the fashion designer hosting a show the night of the murder. It is later revealed that Kyoko had a relationship with a black soldier from the U.S. and killed Johnny to hide her past while also securing independence from her new husband (played by Mifune Toshiro). Throughout the film the action cuts between present day Japan and New York along with flashbacks to the beating and murder of Munesue's father by soldiers during the U.S. occupation. One of the soldiers is revealed to be New York detective Ken Shuftan (played by George Kennedy) who Munesue eventually works with.

Ningen no shomei is infused with personal trauma grounded in the past. All the characters in one way or another relate to the World War II or rather the U.S. led occupation of Japan that followed. It presents the duality of relations between the United States and Japan by portraying luxurious "western" consumer goods as examples of success and prosperity alongside the ambivalence of personal relations and history. The fashion shows which open the film and appear at various points feature "foreign" models only and run for a full five minutes of screen time with no discernable exposition or connection to the story. These lavish portrayals suggest an ideal of the west, yet nearly every scene shot on location in New York is set in the slums of

Harlem. Even detective Munesue when given the opportunity to attack and kill his father's murderer can only shoot at a mirror reflecting Shuftan. The ambivalence of relations between east and west is not resolved through the representation of iconography or interpersonal relations. The film draws up these feelings of ambiguity but fails to re-shape the power dynamic between the United States and Japan. If anything, Japan is reaffirmed as the enemy in the final scene with Detective Shuftan being stabbed on the streets for being a "Japanese Lover!" (*Nihonjin bikime!*)

Kadokawa advertised *Ningen no shomei* more heavily than *Inugami-kei no ichizoku*. An independent advertising agency was employed for designing the campaign materials to create a stylish feel that would contrast with what the advertising sections of the major studios usually produced. Promotion began in March 1977 with the announcement of an open scriptwriting competition for the film, offering prize money of five million yen, but the choice ultimately went to veteran Matsuyama Zenso. It was paired with an open audition for the role of Johnny Hayword that eventually went to Joe Yamanaka.[129]

The release was set for October 1977, and from June onwards print advertising commenced. In August the theme song was released along with radio and television ads. The advertisements featured the catch phrases "Should I watch the movie after reading the novel, or read the novel after I have seen the film?" and the cryptic "Mother, what about my hat…" were broadcast 6,500 times on twenty television channels, and 4,000 times via radio.[130] By October supposedly 90% of all Japanese were informed about *Ningen no shomei*.[131] These marketing

[129] The open audition process would become a staple of Kadokawa Jimusho hiring practices. While there is discrepancy as to whether they are staged or open auditions all three of the "San-nin Musume" (Yakushimaru Hiroko, Watanabe Noriko and Harada Tomoyo) were chosen in this manner.

[130] "Dokusho no aki ichiban: Ninki no shomei," *Asahi Shimbun*, October 10, 1977.

[131] Kadokawa, "Hi wa kyochi ni ari."

strategies not only provided awareness, but helped to infuse the product. Connecting the novel with the film created on a fundamental level a need for consumers to purchase both. At least in terms of marketing the two items were meant to be inseparable and watching one without reading the other or vice versa suggests a lack in the interest of the consumer.

Shot with a budget of nearly 650 million yen the film raked in a gross of 2.25 billion yen.[132] In the first five years after Kadokawa Haruki took charge of the company, the sales volume tripled, and by 1978 the formerly mid-range Kadokawa Shoten was ranked ninth among companies in terms of sales.[133] Despite a troubled book market in which nearly half of the books on the market were returned to publishers unsold, Kadokawa Shoten had succeeded in actually increasing sales.[134]

With *Ningen no shomei*, the Kadokawa companies successfully built on productions and marketing practices of the past and incorporated them to achieve new success for the domestic market. Despite the success, or partially because of it, established film criticism virtually loathed the film. Even more than *Inugami-kei no ichizoku*, it was pointed out at as a prime example of the *imeji-ka* of film that Kadokawa was supposedly implementing. On the critics poll of *Kinema Junpo* it ranked 50th on the list, yet it was the second highest grossing Japanese film of the year and third for all films released only falling behind the remake of *King Kong* and *Hakko dasan* respectively.

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[132] Komura, *Kinema Junpo Best Ten 80 kai zen shi (キネマ旬報ベスト・テン 80 回全史)*. pg. 247 and Yamakita, *Kadokawa Haruki no kozai : shuppankai, eigakai o yurugaseta otoko*. pg. 27, 82

[133] Yamakita, *Kadokawa Haruki no kozai : shuppankai, eigakai o yurugaseta otoko*. pg. 107

[134] Ibid. pg. 33

The early success of *Inugami Kei no Ichizoku* and *Ningen no shomei* provided foundation for the Kadokawa Haruki Office to be viewed as a production company with a legitimate production capability. Leveraging their publishing catalog and advertising practices as a life buoy for the major studios, Kadokawa Haruki Office. The missing element in the first two productions were having a face that could be recognizable across multiple media platforms. We often think of brands ability to be replicated across media environments. Media companies like Paramount, MGM, or Disney are known for their products in equal or lesser measure with the image of their company and the branded logos that represent them. Kadokawa Haruki Office chose a blazing phoenix symbolizing a rise from the ashes of the film industry, but also recalling efforts by Japan economically to rise from the ashes of World War II. While the imagery is dramatic, it did not have the pop culture sensibility to sell tickets, move albums, or get people to purchase or re-purchase paperback books.

For all the negative perception of Kadokawa Haruki disrupting the status quo of the film industry many of his films received favorable reviews, particularly from the public. *Ningen no shomei* finished fifteth on the Kinema Junpo critics poll but was ranked eighth in the annual readers' poll. There was an appeal to younger audiences that was undeniable. Nearly 72 percent of the audience was in the 16 to 24 age bracket and overwhelmingly female, the exact audience that was thought to be waning from Japanese film.[135] Even if the audience had not read the novels they were adapted from they could take pleasure in the visual iconography of a scene. Kyoko's fashion show, in *Proof of a Man*, goes on for a full five minutes with no narrative exposition or plot importance, signified for critics the superficial quality of Kadokawa Haruki Jimsho. The same might be said for Kadokawa Haruki's directorial debut, *Yogoreta eiyu* (*Dirty*

[135] Yamakita, *Kadokawa Haruki no Kozai*, pg. 28

Hero, 1982) which features professional motorcycle racing sequences more than ten minutes long with extended portions of slow-motion photography. The importance of noting these critically derided scenes is that Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho tapped into an aesthetic immediacy for youthful audiences taking in these early Kadokawa features. Kadokawa Haruki even placed himself in cameo roles in all the early Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho features unifying himself with the image of his brand and company. Shirai Yoshio would argue that in these early pictures, "you can't see the face of the director or the actors. To say more, you can't even see the film All you can see is Kadokawa Haruki's image."[136] Kadokawa Haruki's central location within the production and marketing of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho would remain fixed throughout the run of their major feature films up through 1993. However, by the early 1980s Kadokawa Haruki moved his exploits behind the camera, relocating the face or image of the company on youthful idols.

The most unifying component of Kadokawa Haruki Office's production and marketing practices came through the refined use of idol performers in their double-billed youth films. Throughout the 1980s the Kadokawa san-nin-musume comprised of Watanabe Noriko, Harada Tomoyo, and most well-known Yakushimaru Hiroko provided the image, voice, and foundation for all marketing components associated with Kadokawa Haruki Office's most successful film productions. Throughout the first half of the 1980s the san-nin-musume acted, sang, modeled, led commercial advertisements, attended public events, and many other promotions fulfilling the multifaceted idea of an aidoru, or idol, in Japan. Idols are a central development in Japanese media culture and are basically stars nonspecific to any medium or function. In this way they are

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[136] "'Kadokawa' Tataki, soshite Yurimodoshi," 22, Yoshio Shirai in the Sunday Mainichi, September 19, quoted in Suga, "Imeji Tuijusha-tachi no Guko," pg. 22

not beholden to a specific media platform but are characterized by a general energy. Beginning in the late 1960s, as the drawing power of traditional film stars waned, popular singers were crossed over into film as a way of heightening the potential of new films or media content. The highest profile being Misora Hibari who had started in a pop duo Za Pinattsu (the Peanuts) and appeared in successful monster films like *Mothra* produced by Toho in collaboration with Miora's talent agency Watanabe Productions. The signifying difference between idols of previous generations and the efforts by Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho to manufacture their own stars was the measure of control Kadokawa would have over their initial careers.

Part of Kadokawa's success in this way was breaking up long established discourses on the nature of business in Japan's domestic film industry. He pitted his liberalized, capitalist idea of open competition and transparent business models against the feudal business practices based on a village mentality that are represented by a group oligarchical mentality of the remaining major film studios Toho, Shochiku, and Toei. Kadokawa was in practical purposes the first company in Japan's film industry to regularly use written work contracts, which even in the 1970s were still unusual in an industry that largely functioned through personal relations and oral agreements.[137] It was, much like the court action against producer Ichikawa after the *Inugami Family,* a conscious and public endorsement of a socioeconomic model that deliberately dissociated itself forms he past. Kadokawa simplicity drawing on a discourse described by Marx but also mentioned by Maruyama Masao, who posited "every kind of rationalization and abstraction as adverse to group-oriented practices and customs,"[138] when explaining the failure of bureaucratic institutions vis-a-vis Japanese villages of the nineteenth century. This is as much

[137] Something still practiced by Tokuma Shoten in their relationship with Ghibli Studios.

[138] Zhalten., pg. 265

a rejection of business practices as it is a distinguishing from the structure of Kadokawa Shoten under Kadokawa Haruki's father. While Kadokawa was pluralistic in his use of multiple studios to produce, distribute, and exhibit films throughout Japan, he wanted the ability to manage and maintain the image of his youthful performers as the central locus of the media-mix. There was also a measure of image containment for the idols at the same time. They would barely appear on television shows, instead marketed by Kadokawa films, albums, repackaging of Kadokawa film tie-in novels, photobooks, posters, and Kadokawa's own magazine *Variety*. Also, not having to rely on a talent agency, but housing the idols within Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, provided a measure of image control other idols did not have up to this point. Yakushimaru Hiroko became Kadokawa's first and most successful attempt to create an idol star on its own terms. Even the way the actresses were selected to join the company and star in their initial films with Kadokawa were treated as an event through public auditions.

Following the release of the first two films Kadokawa was working to find a fresh face to star alongside Takakura Ken in an action picture with a degree of melodrama titled *Yasei no Shomei* (*Proof of the Beast*). Takakura Ken was most notably seen in the west for his starring role in the Sydney Pollack film *The Yakuza* opposite Robert Mitchum. Within Japan, however, Takakura was effective as the lead actor in many Toei produced gangster or *ninkyo eiga* films. He had also received much acclaim showing his softer side in Yamada Yoji's film *The Yellow Handkerchief* which had one best film awards by Kinema Junpo and Japan's Academy of Film. This would be the first production to have a major star in a central role. These auditions were presented as authentic opportunities for young women throughout Japan to have an opportunity to become a contracted star for Kadokawa and be at the center of the media-mix experience.

The first audition was promoted through the winter of 1978 with a deadline of February 18th for young girls, ages 10-13, to submit an application and headshot. In total 1,224 people applied and over the next week the audition was whittled down to nine candidates. Ten days following the submission deadline, nine candidates assembled for Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho's first public audition at the Ginza Yamaha Hall in central Tokyo. The building situated in the heart of Ginza, Tokyo's famed shopping district, developed in a western style following the Meiji Restoration in the 19th century, is characterized by a glittering glass exterior and boasts a professional concert chamber that caters to pianists, orchestras, and performers from all over the world. The iconography of the audition provided an exceptional level of glamour to the event. During the audition the assembled judges of Morimura Seiichi, the author of *Proof of the Wild*, Sato Junya, the director of the film adaptation, and Kadokawa Haruki deliberated on the potential candidates. Both Morimua and Sato, focusing on the film at hand agreed over another candidate. Kadokawa notes, "I also thought that candidate was right for this part. However, I had to think about creating a future star. That was Yakushimaru Hiroko."[139]

The audition consisted of three portions: examination of the application documents, performing dialogue from *Proof of the Wild*, and a singing demonstration. A live performance of the media mix in miniature. Yakushimaru recalls that she performed the song "Shishūki" (Thinking of Autumn) by Iwasaki Hiromi a hit from the previous fall. "Then a judge called out, 'can you do it in the style of the Pink Ladies?,' to which I replied, "I can't."[140] Yakushimaru even decades later still recalls the audition experience with a bit of disbelief. In 2006 she notes that she went to the

[139] Nakagawa, pg. 94

[140] The Pink Ladies were a pop-duo, comprised of Mie (Nemoto Mitsuyo) and Kei (Masuda Keiko), that attained chart topping success in the late 1970s-early 1980s with hits like "Wanted" and "UFO."

audition with the intention to fail. A photographer had submitted the application using one of the modeling photos he had taken of her. Yakushimaru also recalls that "only Kadokawa focused on me" and noting that she was in complete shock when her name was called out in the concert hall. "I went home, spoke with my family, asking 'what is going to happen now?'"[141]

The public audition was a massive success for the promotion of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, the media-mix, and changing the tide of star production in the media eco-system. The success of the audition encouraged a systematic use of the practice going forward. An audition was setup thereafter to find a person to star opposite Yakushimaru Hiroko for her film *Nerawareta gakuen* (*School in the Crosshairs*, 1981) directed by Obayashi Nobuhiko. However, the most high-profile audition was the following year in early 1982. Kadokawa got wind that Yakushimaru was interested in taking a year break, to attend college, suspending her appearance in film and alerting Kadokawa's plans.

Kadokawa was fearful about this possibility for two reasons. The first, Yakushimaru was just coming off the box-office success in her starring role from *Sera-fuku to kikanju* (*Sailor Suit and Machine Gun*, 1981) directed by Somai Shinji and were planning future films that would capitalize on her increased popularity throughout the popular culture landscape. The second is that Kadokawa realized the company had made no efforts to mint another star or prepare for anyone else to take the place of Yakushimaru if she left or her popularity began to fade.

A nation-wide public audition was quickly promoted in early 1982 with a deadline for applicants set for March 20th. Following a period of deliberation, the company would host another public audition in Tokyo. In the first audition a respectable 1,200 people had submitted

[141] Nakagawa, pg. 96.

applications to have the opportunity to star opposite Takura Ken for *Proof of the Wild*. This time 57,480 applications were submitted for the chance to become the next Yakushimaru. The audition was promoted as an opportunity to appear opposite popular young action star, Sanda Hiroyuki, in *Iga ninpocho* (*Ninja Wars*, 1982) to be directed by Saito Kosei. However, for Kadokawa Haruki, this was really an opportunity to secure the potential futures of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho and the media-mix through the remainder of the decade. Following regional review of the audition applications the final contestants were selected for a public audition, once again held in Tokyo, on April 18th, 1982. Throughout the audition there was once again a split decision on who to selects. Many of the judges were thinking about the best potential actress to appear in *Ninja Wars*. Kadokawa Haruki again focused his attention on who could be a long term start of the company. In the audition fourteen year-old Watanabe Noriko continued to appear as the judges favorite. Her recitation of lines and look seemed to fit the ideal of a period-film, *jidaigeki*, that *Ninja Wars* would become.

Kadokawa Haruki, however, focused on another fourteen-year-old applicant, Harada Tomoyo. Harada came from Kyushu and had studied ballet since she was two-three years old. In the submission materials she had submitted two photos, one a standard profile shot, but the second feature her and her sister Kiwako, sixteen at the time. Kadokawa immediately put all of his interest, support, and power behind selecting Harada Tomoyo. In this case however, most of the remaining judges could not see the young ballet performer being able to portray the physicality needed for *Ninja Wars*. Watanabe was ultimately selected as the winner of the audition and the role, becoming the second of the Kadokawa san-nin-musume.

Even with the audition winner selected and the immediate production plans of the company secured, Kadokawa Haruki, could not shake the talent potential of Harada Tomoyo. In

the moment he created a "special award" to give Harada and also a contract with the Kadokawa company. While Harada was not going to appear in *Ninja Wars* or be the face of the next Kadokawa film, Harada was given the opportunity to star in a television adaptation of *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun*. This offered Kadokawa the ability to hire two stars, but not risk the entire future of his company all at once. The television adaptation was a lower stakes opportunity to build a new star from the ground up and provide a training ground for Harada to make her mark on established media property, filling the shoes of the current Kadokawa star's most successful film property at the time. In a way Watanabe's win at the audition still put her third tier to Yakushimaru and Harada who had been more actively encouraged by Kadokawa Haruki. Several years later Tomoyo's older sister Kiwako would also be selected to join the Kadokawa company and debuted in Obayashi Nobuhiko's *Kare no otobai, Kanjo no shima* (*His Motorcycle, Her Island,* 1986).

The public auditions became a standard practice in the Kadokawa Haruki Jimsho production efforts, however their most notable selections were for Yakushimaru Hiroko, Watanabe Noriko, and Harada Tomoyo. It also points to the satellite of industrial shifts Kadokawa Haruki Jimsho was implementing. The combined marketing efforts of film, soundtrack, bunko-ban paperback reissues were central, but not the totality of the media-mix efforts by the company. Public auditions tapped into the potential for stardom created by the selection of Yakushimaru Hiroko. Young performers, often female, representing an everyday quality were a large part of the appeal. The idea that a person who lived in your neighborhood had the potential to be a star and equally stars being created out of young performers who were not characterized by their glamour or purely their sexuality, but a grounded and charming appeal were a key component to the success of Kadokawa's ascendency in creating popular idol stars.

The structuring logic of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho throughout the remainder of the 1980s was to build the marketing infrastructure around the three idols under contract. From Yakushimaru's debut until Watanabe's final film the Kadokawa-san-nin-musume combined to star in twenty-two feature films from 1978 to 1987. That accounts for one third of all Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho films produced in total from 1976 to 1993. Yakushimaru had the longest tenure with the company staring in eight features.[142] Harada Tomoyo appeared in five feature films as the lead and was a voice actor in two anime released by Kadokawa. Watanabe Noriko also starred or costarred in five features with Kadokawa. However, all three san-nin-musume and Harada Tomoyo's sister, Kiwako, all appeared in cameo roles in *Cabaret* (*Kyabare-*, 1986) one of the final films featuring each and directed by Kadokawa Haruki. However, for each of the Kadokawa san-nin-musume there were films that highlight the development and execution of the media mix with each of the idol performers in the role that elevated them in a lead performance central to the media-mix campaign. For Yakushimaru it was her breakout role in *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* (1981) directed by Somai Shinji, Harada in *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time* (1983) directed by Obayashi Nobuhiko, and Watanabe with *Sunny, Sometimes Murder* (1984) directed by Izutsu Kazuyuki.

Each of these media properties indicates the malleability of the media-mix that can adapt to any genre, performer, and audience. *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* was written by Akagawa Jiro and published by Kadokawa Shoten in 1978. Akagawa was a prominent factor for Kadokawa's idol focused media-mix properties. His novels served as the source material for seven features including *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* (1981), *Detective Story* (1983), *Sunny, Sometimes Murder* (1984), *Love Story* (1984), *Someday, Someone Will be Murdered* (1984),

[142] Kadokawa and Shimizu, pg. 66

Kekkon Annai Mystery (1985), *Early Spring Story* (1985). Akagawa had written *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* simultaneously with the release of one of Kadokawa's earliest films, *Proof of the Beast* (1978) and admitted that while writing the novel Yakushimaru served as the model for the character, even though she was only in middle school at the time.[143]

Sailor Suit and Machine Gun was produced in partnership between Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho and Kitty Film. This collaboration was beneficial for the media mix as Kitty Film began as an offshoot from Record company Polydor (later Universal Music) providing a useful collaboration for Kadokawa to produce their major soundtracks. Kitty Film began producing adaptations of Murakami Ryu's *Almost Transparent Blue* and Hasegawa Kazuhiko's *The Man Who Stole the Sun* (1979). The most successful film Kitty collaborated on was the Toho produced *Dreamy Fifteen* (1980) starring Yakushimaru Hiroko and directed by Somai Shinji who would all work on *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* the following year.

Sailor Suit and Machine Gun was released on December 19th, 1981 as a double bill event with Toei's *Blazing Valiant* starring the young talent Sanada Hiroyuki who had stared in *G.I. Samurai* and *Samurai Reincarnation* and would go on to appear in five more features with Kadokawa. Toei, serving as distributor, leveraged with Kadokawa to offer their second billed film along with distribution for the films. The collaboration between Kitty and Kadokawa offered a natural alignment to produce a soundtrack with the company. The additional factor that heightened the intensity and proximity between platforms in the media-mix that Yakushimaru Hiroko sing the theme song to the film. Prior to *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho would work to collaborate with a popular musician or identify a pre-recorded song that

[143] Nakagawa, pg. 185

fit the tone and style of picture. This was the standard for the first fifteen Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho releases.

Kitty Music had already selected Kisugi Takao's *In the Middle of A Dream* from his forthcoming album of the same name to appear as the theme song for the film, when director Somai Shinji suggested that instead Yakushimaru sing the theme. This change occurred very close to the release date where as late as October Kisugi's upcoming single was slated to appear on the soundtrack. Kadokawa Haruki has recounted dubiously that this had been his plan as far back as Yakushimaru starring in *School in the Crosshairs* Yakushimaru was being considered to sing a theme song for her film. Yakushimaru had been part of a chorus group in school and could use. Kitty Music worked with Kadokawa for Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho to purchase publishing rights for *In the Middle of a Dream* for Yakushimaru to record her own version.

The only major role Kadokawa Haruki played regarding the song was to change the title to *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* without adapting any of the lyrics. The song debuted November 21^{h}, 1981, just a month prior from the film's release and less than two weeks after Kisugi's original version had debuted. The song was an immense success reaching number one on the Oricon sales charts for three weeks straight and ultimately selling over 1,200,000 copies of the single. For someone out of the loop on the song's origins they might be at a loss for the song's title as the term's "Sailor Suit" as well as "Machine Gun" do not appear in the song at all. However, in terms of unifying the media-mix marketing each component of the property was coming into closer and closer orbit.

The most notable image for the media-mix of *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* is Yakushimaru holding a machine gun yelling the phrase "*kaikan*" or "satisfaction" in a school uniform, often referred to as a sailor suit. This image and the title *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun*

solidified the media-mix. Akagawa Jiro's novel was reissued with a fresh paperback cover image of Yakushimru, the poster image for the film featured the actress in close-up holding the weapon, the poster image was replicated on the promotional program, and used subsequently on the soundtrack LP cover along with the retitled *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* theme song sung by Yakushimaru Hiroko. At every point of entry of the media-mix Kaodkawa Haruki Jimusho had been able to successfully tie Yakushimaru and the film's title graphically to each media platform.

Sailor Suit and Machine Gun became the fourth most successful film from Japan at the time. It grossed nearly as much as the high production effort *Virus* (1980) but made at a fraction of the cost. The following year Harada Tomoyo also starred in a television adaptation which served as a training ground for the next Kadokawa idol.

On an aesthetic level the film is notable for Somai's trademark long takes had been a feature in his first two films and was one of the characteristics most noted in reviews of the film. Often his approach was a one setup, one take that forced the actors to know their material and blocking of a scene. In one bravura sequence Yakushimaru hops on the back of a motorcycle that winds through the streets of Tokyo in the middle of the night all in one uncut shot. The nearly experimental nature of Somai's production practices parallel the creative and outlandish plotlines of the film that characterized Yakushimaru's early tenure with Kadokawa. In *Youth of the Beast,* she ends the picture literally charging Japan's self-defense force tanks on the back of action star Takakura Ken, in *School in the Crosshairs* she fights aliens planning to take over her school, in *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* she inherits the role of a yakuza gang leader and is a princess fleeing evil sorceresses in *Legend of the Eight Samurai*. Along with Kadokawa's most successful films Yakushimaru provided the foundation for the Kadokawa san-nin-musme to help redefine

public engagement with popular media through a specific constellation of media branding, spectacle, and realism in the form of young talent selected through open call, public auditions.

A synthesis between each of the media-mix elements is a paratext outside the central locus of film, novel, soundtrack, the promotional movie program. A standard form of film promotion in Japan takes place in several established venues. The first is the promotion one-sheet, *chirashi*, placed in movie theater lobbies that patrons are encouraged to take free of charge in the months prior to a film's release. It is a practice followed by every major studio and to the average movie goer are a simple piece of information displaying a version of the promotional poster that will eventually adorn the lobby walls or marquee out front. On the back the basic information of the film; plot synopsis, cast & crew list, and sometimes a short interview, production note, or selling point of the film will be listed. Next is the promotional trailer prepped by each studio to play before their feature film. Daiei referred to their trailers as "Daiei News" characterizing a newreel approach to promoting their upcoming films. This offered the trailer some bandwidth to display information, images, or sequences that may not appear in the final film. It may even include on set production images. An adaptation of novelist Mishima Yukio's *Les Mesdemoiselles* (1961, Yuge Taro) starring Wakao Wayako and Kawaguchi Hiroshi as young lovers emphasized the talent comprising the film in the trailer. In a brightly lit sequence featuring all the main members of the cast including Daiei star Nozoe Hitomi, and Tamiya Jiro stand in a circle around Mishima on set as they laugh and smile as the voice over promotes the talents of the cast and crew. The third traditional venue to promote a feature is in the daily newspapers announcing the films, locations, and showtimes for the coming week's attractions. The last and perhaps the most important paratext within the promotion of films traditional is the film program that can be purchased in the lobby once the film debuts. The immediate function of

the program is like a gift shop program at a museum offering a tangible connection to the experience the patron had attending the venue.

The programs for *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun*[144] offer an insight into how the film and more importantly Yakushimaru Hiroko was being framed as the face of Kadokawa at the start of the 1980s and as the Kadokawa san-nin-musume were being established. The theatrical program published at the end of 1981 coinciding with the release of the feature film is presented in a standard portrait mode with the signifying cover image of Yakushimaru holding the machine gun in her school uniform outfit, with a small, dash of blood in vibrant red on her cheek as she stares directly forward. The title is written vertically in a brilliant yellow that again matches the poster and paperback reissue by Kadokawa Shoten. Within the title however, Yakushimaru's full name is written in the middle in English.[145] No other program from Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho features the name of an actor or director from their previous releases. Even subsequent releases from Harada Tomoyo or Watanabe Hiroko do not list the actresses' name on the program.

The organization of the program at first is quite standard in structure. It features an interview on set with Yakushimaru. It is followed by a profile of young director Somai Shinji interspersed with glossy full color images. Most programs of this era and in the past follow this pattern. They provide the reader with basic information about the film, but give more insight either through an interview, on-set photographs, or a detailing of the themes of the film.

However, with the Kadokawa programs the emphasis continues to be on reifying the media-mix. The first being a detailed description of the recording process for the theme song,

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[144] "Sēra fuku to kikanjū." *Tokyo: Tōei Kabushiki Kaisha Eizō Jigyōbu* Theater pamhlet (1981).

[145] Ibid., pg 1. This image is used as the unifying close-up image for the film poster, paperback, and soundtrack. The central visual iconography for the Kadokawa media-mix.

full lyrics written out, and photographs of Yakushimaru recording the song. The center pages of the program also feature a double page modeling image of Yakushimaru that could be taken out and hung as a poster.[146] There is one point of discord in the media mix. Rather than have it be a repeat of the cover image or another freeze-frame from production, this image has no diegetic connection with *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* in this image Kadokawa is emphasizing the star profile of Yakushimaru and creating the only non-fixed iconography the idol. This is a momentary pause in the selling purpose of the program as it is followed by praise from other Kadokawa crew members including an interview with director Obayashi Nobuhiko detailing the transition of Yakushimaru from an idol in his film *School in the Crosshairs* (1981) to her rise as a star by the release of *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* (1981).

The final pages of the program solidify the purpose of a Kadokawa program and the media-mix. On the last page there are twelve images of Yakushimaru that on the reverse side feature a monthly calendar, providing the purchaser of the program a year's worth of pocket sized Yakushimaru in images from her roles up to that point along with separate modeling images again emphasizing the idol potential of Yakushimaru currently with Kadokawa and into the future.[147] The back cover on both sides smash together the other two tiers of the media mix, besides the feature film. On the inside back cover there are three images of Yakushimaru, two are duplicates of the "Original Soundtrack Album" cover promoting its sale along with an eight pages color image booklet. Below that are dual images of the theme song single releases by Kisugi Takao and Yakushimaru Hiroko.

[146] Ibid., pg. 10

[147] Ibid., pg. 24

Yakushimaru is listed on top and below Kisugi's original song title "In the Middle of a Dream" is listed, but in parentheses a subtitled of "Sailor Suit and Machine Gun" is also included. On the outer back cover the media-mix continues with a full color image of the paperback reissue of Akagawa Jiro's novel *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* that encompasses the top two thirds of the page. It also features the tag line from the novel, "Hey?! I'm going to be head of a yakuza gang!!" along with a listing of the three other novels Akagawa had published up to that point. The lower third promotes Kadokawa Novels in general with a listing of Kadokawa paperback in the top right corner. At each point of the page Kadokawa is empathizing the name of their company while synthesizing the content of the novel, film, and soundtrack as a unified whole to the consumer. The strength of the program is that the marketing of the media-mix can occur all at once, under the guise of a memento that can be an associative connection to attending the film, but over time offer a point of nostalgia for the consumer.

Just over six months later Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho released *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* with a director's cut dubbed the "Perfect Version" that included eighteen minutes of footage removed from the original theatrical release. This re-release shored up a dry spell of new films from Kadokawa and offered a means of continuing the box office success for the film prior to Kadokawa's double bill co-production of *Fall Guy* and *Lullaby of Death* that would be released in the fall of 1982. The program for this version, however, offers a different angle on the promotion of the film. Expanding on the success and popularity of Yakushimaru at first glance one would not associate this program with *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun*.

The booklet is presented in a landscape orientation with a black background. In the middle of this void Yakushimaru is wearing a vibrant blue sweatshirt with a neon green lightning bolt down the middle in an aerobic pose of her kicking both arms and legs out simultaneously.

Below the images is blue and pink lettering exclaiming "THE TIME IS NOW" along with the actresses' name in Japanese and English and on the right hand side in smaller lettering the full title of the film and the title of Yakushimaru's first starring television series *Yosoi no machi* (City of Fashion, 1979) from TBS.[148] Opening the program and the synthesis around the Kadokawa media mix is subordinate to raising the profile of Yakushimaru with this program functioning as a substitute photo booklet of the idol. Beyond the standard interview, plot description, and full color photos from the film are an array of items that focus on the star persona of Yakushimaru.

The first is an interview on her thoughts about being an idol or making "idol films." Following that is a detailed breakdown of Yakushimaru's schedule over the past year. Then, there is a breakdown of information where fans can purchase additional calendars and photo books. This information is surrounded by many more photos separate from *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* including singing, modeling, and attendance at award events. The closing image of the program features Yakushimaru Hiroko, Harada Tomoyo, and Watanabe Noriko all smiling together next to a pool.[149] While the surrounding information pertains to the photo being taken on Yakushimaru's eighteenth birthday, the subtitle of the image is unifying the trio into the Kadokawa san-nin-musmue noting that their next projects, all from Kadokawa, had been completed.

The film programs from Kadokawa were a compact means of highlighting the media-mix process, but also offered outlets to raise the star persona of young idols Kadokawa Haruki

[148] "Sēra fuku to kikanjū kanpeki no ban/THE TIME IS NOW." *Tokyo: Tōei Kabushiki Kaisha Eizō Jigyōbu* Theater pamhlet (1982).

[149] Ibid., pg. 20 The carefully crafted image is meant to suggest a moment of casual levity between each idol member, but it is also an introduction for the concept of the Kadokawa san-nin musume that characterize the media-mix of the mid 1980s at Kadokawa.

Jimusho located their marketing around. As the Kadokawa san-nin-musume branding continued the promotion materials for each actor would expand with Harada Tomoyo not only promoting *The Girl who Conqured Time*[150] or the Kadokawa Book Fair of Tsutsui Yasutaka's novels, but also pen manufacturer Pilot's Paint Markers or Toshiba AM/FM SUGAR cassette boomboxes for *The Closest Island to Heaven* organized around a theme of tourism connected with the film.[151] The program, a standard component of a film's theatrical release, crystalizes the mission of the Kadokawa media-mix to disseminate on separate platforms a unity between a media property. An idea that while each individual component of the media-mix would provide a form of consumer pleasure, without experiencing or purchasing all of the media-mix there would be a missing element, a lack, that further encouraged consumer desire to be part of the promotion. Also, at each entry point, paperback, film, soundtrack the consumer would be further directed to the next property with the program functioning as a distilled signifier of the Kadokawa Media Mix. The success of this process was often built on a measure of control in the production and marketing of materials for the media-mix that when collaborating with the other major studios reveal potential fissures in a process that was being touted as a financial savior for the film industry.

The inaugural Kadokawa film, *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* (1976), offered an opportunity for Ichikawa Kon, following the bankruptcy of Daiei Studios, to pursue a new phase in his filmmaking career. The success of his mystery-drama propelled Ichikawa toward additional "mainstream" films after pursuing independent features with the Art Theatre Guild in the

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[150] "Toki wo kakeru shojo." *Tokyo: Tōei Kabushiki Kaisha Eizō Jigyōbu* Theater pamhlet (1982).

[151] "Tengoku ni ichiban chikai shima." *Tokyo: Tōei Kabushiki Kaisha Eizō Jigyōbu* Theater pamhlet (1982).

immediate aftermath of Daiei's demise. Ichikawa would go on to adapt works from Tanizki Junichiro (*The Makioka Sisters*, 1983), reflect on Japan's film industry through the life and career of Tanaka Kinuyo (*Eiga joyu*, 1987), and even take on an ambitious science fiction retelling of Japan' earliest surviving fictional tale of the "Bamboo Cutter" in (*Princess from the Moon*, 1987). In the final years of his life Ichikawa returned Kindaichi Yosuke mystery stories with *The Noh Mask Murders* (1991) and his final film a remake of *The Inugami Family* (2006). The financial and critical success of Ichikawa's work with Kadokawa provided a space for veteran film directors to receive financial backing and come in from the cold of independent production.

With Ichikawa's initial success and establishment of Kadokawa Pictures it becomes clearer the rationale for Masumura to partner with Kadokawa for what would ultimately become his final theatrical release, *Konoko no nanatsu no oiwai ni* (1982). Masumura, like Ichikawa before him, was a contract director for Daiei Studios. Unlike Ichikawa who transferred to Daiei from Nikkatsu Studios at the end of the 1950s, Masumura started his career with exceptional promise through the Daiei Studios director training system.

A graduate from the University of Tokyo's Law School Masumura spent his early career helping established directors including Mizoguchi Kenji for his final three films and Ichikawa Kon for his first three films for Daiei after transferring from Nikkatsu. This training offered a balance between the types of films Daiei was making in the early 1950s with the type of pictures that would be Daiei's future in the 1960s. Masumura's goal was to shake-up the film industry, an industry he felt had become stagnate in terms of staging and performance.

From 1952-1954 Masumura applied for and was accepted to Centro sperimentale di cinematografia **(**Experimental Film Centre or Italian National film school) in Rome, Italy. There

he was able to watch many films emerging from Italy's neo-realist movement and think much more about the nature of editing, speed, and dialogue pace. This greatly informed his debut film *Kisses* (1957) which Oshima Nagisa and other cultural critics at the time viewed as a starting point for a "new wave" of cinema in Japan. Throughout the 1960s and up until Daiei's bankruptcy Masumura was one of the most assured and steady directors for the company producing up to four pictures a year. The confidence Daiei had in Masumura is reflected in the range of films he was able to help from socially critical works like *Giants and Toys* (1958), reflections on wartime atrocities in *Red Angel* (1966), or even horror films like *Blind Beast* (1969) adapted from an Edogawa Ranpo story. Masumura's versatility proved valuable for long term critical respect.

With Daiei's bankruptcy and dissolution Masumura became an independent filmmaker for the first time in his career. He had never worked for another film company, even on loan to another company, throughout his career.[152] Following Daiei's bankruptcy Masumura completed nine more films that were positioned for theatrical release. In the immediate aftermath of Daiei's downfall Masumura eschewed switching to another major studio and instead explored more independent opportunities through independent productions. His first work was for fellow former Daiei employee and start, Katsu Shintaro, with an entry in the "Hoodlum Soldier" series Masumura had helped originate at Daiei in 1966. Following this Masumura makes three pictures for the Art Theatre Guild (ATG), a bastion of independent filmmaking in Japan, with *Music* (1970) and then his most critically well received film *Love Suicides at Sonezaki* (1978), based on

[152] This is an exceedingly rare note given Masumura's success critically and box-office for a filmmaker of the era. Thinking of Akira Kurosawa who was loaned out to Daiei for the production of the revelatory *Rashomon* (1950) or even Ozu Yasujiro who made two pictures *The Makioka Sisters* (1950) for Shin-Toho and *Ukigusa* (1959) for Daiei Studios offer a counterpoint to the lengthy and dependable output of Masumura solely for Daiei.

the bunraku, puppet theater play written by Chikamatsu Monzaemon. The film was heralded in the press and critics ranked it second on *Kinema Junpo*'s "Best Ten" list for 1978.

By 1981 when production was starting up for what would be Masumura's final film *Lullaby of Death*, the director still maintained a degree of critical respectability and interest in the film community. The film was released on October 9th, 1982 coming on the heels of a summer re-release of Kadokawa's financial blockbuster *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* called the *kanpeki-ban* or the "perfect version" which included an additional eighteen minutes of material and an updated program and flyers to promote the event. A precursor to the release of directors, producers, or alternative cuts of a film in opposition to the "studio" cut initially released to theaters.[153]

Lullaby of Death is a unique if fitting end to Masumura's theatrical film career. Based on a novel by Saito Mio, published in 1981 by Kadokawa Publishing, it focuses on the ramifications of bloodlines and the effects it has on a family. Ostensibly a mystery, thriller the film simultaneously follows a detective attempting to uncover a string of murders and a young woman seemingly responsible for the violence. Through a series of flashbacks, the audience is filled in on Iwashita Shima's character and her early life. Specifically, that her character's

[153] The mainstream marketing of these recuts becoming more folded into the mainstream marketing of major motion pictures. Recent examples of Zack Snyder's *Justice League* (2021) released on HBO Max or rumblings of a director version of David Ayer's *Suicide Squad* (2017) are the most high-profile versions of the commercializing and mainstream folding in of an alternative version of a film. Perhaps the most noted examples of alternative cuts and versions would be a split between George Lucas' original *Star Wars* trilogy and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982). In the former alternative cuts treated as inferior or non-existent in favor of the most updated version. In the latter updated and alternative cuts presented concurrently as official sanctioned by the filmmakers and producers. For Kadokawa it offered an opportunity very reminiscent of the paperback book publication updates. The re-release was an opportunity to produce a new cover, poster, programming, and promotional products to revitalize a property that was still in the public's imagination as a known media property.

mother in a final act of vengeful defiance commits suicide and binds Iwashita's character to a blood revenge against her father, who had an adulterous affair with her mother before leaving her. As a result of the lullaby sung to Iwashita's character during that time, she maintains an almost Pavlovian response to the lullaby that demands bloody retribution.

With the emphasis on blood, longtime cinematographer and Masumura collaborator, Kobayashi Setsuo recounts the production as a bloody affair. "'Get the hose!,' Masumura yelled to the crew," recounts Kobayashi. During one of the murder scenes, "I was saying, 'Is this good?' as I took the hose and manually spritzed the entire room with bloody red." Masumura finally laughed and said, "I think that's a little overboard!" As a result of the blood revenge imparted on the child by her mother "the whole theme of the film became a bloody fight," recounts Kobayashi.[154] It is in these sequences that Masumura's filmmaking resembles some of the vitality and energy of his debut films of the late 1950s. For Kobayshi this vitality remained consistent all the way through their final effort with *Lullaby for Death*. Thinking of the final sequence when all stories are revealed in melodramatic sequence led by veteran actress Iwashita Shima there was decent praise for the staging and blood-amber lighting of the final act. For Kobayashi this spoke to a consistency and integrity between both filmmakers that was sustained over the course of two decades and twenty pictures from the courtroom murder drama *A Wife Confesses* (1961) to his final effort in 1982.

As Masumura notes in the pamphlet for the film, "At first glance this film appears to be a simple tale revolving around the cruelty of three murder cases. However, if we read a little deeper it points to the darkness that enveloped society in the immediate aftermath of the war."[155]

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[154]Masumura, Yasuzō. *Eiga kantoku Masumura Yasuzō no sekai: eiga to no kakutō no kiroku, 1947-1986*. Tōkyō; 東京 : Waizu Shuppan; ワイズ出版, 1999., pg. 371

It is this duality that attracted Masumura to the project. His own career beginning in the immediate aftermath of the war, a consistent struggle to artistically develop and offer new perspectives to Japan's film industry. One of the first public pieces of writing dealt specifically with the "speed" of Japanese cinema and the need for a fresh take to shake up the roots of that story. Nearly thirty years following that publication Masumura was still wrestling with the duality of commercially made products, in the studio system, that could display an aspect of individuality or artistry.

As a product, however, *Lullaby of Death* offers a unique case study in the development of Kadokawa Pictures. Listed as the second billing for a double header with Fukasaku Kinji's *The Fall Guy* both were an experiment for Kadokawa Pictures. After six years of leveraging the production costs and balancing studio rental, distribution, and theatrical production between the major studios, Kadokawa took a chance by sharing the production risk with Shochiku Studios. The experiment was a success in part as, *The Fall Guy* was a box-office success reaching into the top ten of Japanese films theatrically released in 1982 and going on to be listed as *Kinema Junpo's* "Best One" for their annual Best Ten List, published in the winter of the following year.

Lullaby of Death is the first example of a Kadokawa film that following release and relatively poorer critical reception or paratextual sales benefit could be quietly dismissed by the company. What factors account for this dismissal or removal from the company history then? On the surface the superficial factors involved suggest that both *The Fall Guy* and *Lullaby of Death* would serve as the starting point of another successful venture for the young company. Following the success of *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun's* "Perfect Edition" release in July and just prior to the December release of Kadokawa Haruki's directorial debut, *The Dirty Hero*

[155] Ibid, pg. 518

(*Yogoreta eiyu*, 1982), Kadokawa Pictures. Along with *Fall Guy*, *Lullaby of Death* was the first film Kadokawa Pictures entered a joint or co-production effort with another studio. In this case Shochiku studios, which had been a distributor for several films up to this point but did not share in the resources. As a result of this effort the marketing of this double-bill is far more emblematic of a Shochiku release than the media-mix method developed by Kadokawa Pictures.

In the initial advertising of the double bill, far more attention is paid to *The Fall Guy* than *Lullaby of Death*. The only promotional material that offers an attempt at equity or balance is the initial theater one sheet, *chirashi*, that features both films' poster art and a reverse side detailing the cast, crew, and a small production note by the directors.

There is only one newspaper advertisement prior to the release of the *Lullaby of Death* that appears in the *Asahi Shimbun* on October 8th, 1982 the day prior to its release theatrically. The advertisement, like the promotional *chirasi* is split between the two films. However, on that same page a multi-column review of *The Fall Guy* takes up the majority of the page, leading the reader's eyes to the advertisement at the bottom, where *Lullaby of Death* is positioned as the second or minor film of the double bill.

The particulars of the film also indicate a difference between the success of an earlier film like *The Inugami Family* and *Lullaby of Death*. While Masumura had achieved critical success with his film *Love Suicides at Sonezaki* through the Art Theatre Guild, he had not had a box office success since his early days working for Daiei Studios. Similarly, while the film offered an opportunity for acclaimed Shochiku stars such as Iwashita Shima and Kishida Kyoko they were no longer the box office draws during their heyday in the 1970s and 1980s. Finally, the narrative of the film was simultaneously too complicated and simplistic for contemporary audiences who had to keep up with multiple timeline shifts, potential murder victims, subplots

with the investigators, and an immense amount of overwrought melodrama and exposition laden scenes that were not supported with by any of the dynamic camerawork and vitality that characterized Masumura's early career. Perhaps owing to the lack of financial success there is a paucity of material on *Lullaby of Death* currently. It is not mentioned in Kadokawa Haruki's book detailing the history of his film production company, Masumura Yasuzo includes no notes or comments on the film in his writings and biographical work.

In the 1990s Kadokawa's string of success was becoming shakier. All three Kadokawa san-nin-musume had "graduated" from their contracts and left the company, major stars and directors were no longer the focus of the business. Kadokawa's own forays into directing had had mixed results from the critical high of *Heaven and Earth* (1990) to a low with his final feature as company president *Rex – A Dinosaur Story* (1993) featuring a young girl bonding and having adventures with an animatronic tyrannosaurus. At the outset Kadokawa envisioned his foray into filmmaking would be built on critical films, ushering in another new wave of filmmaking, not unlike Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* had for Hollywood. However, in the lead up promotion to *Rex*, director Kadokawa's primary concern was story structure, specifically the film needing to have potty breaks for young children. "Yes, I was thinking of how long until a toilet break is needed. The film is one hour fifty minutes, too long for children to remain still. So the screenplay is divided roughly into three parts of; the child finding the dinosaur egg for thirty-five minutes, the dinosaur egg hatching and becoming big is thirty-five minutes, and finally to the last scene another thirty-five minute."[156] Kadokawa's lament on the financial

[156] "Nihon no eiga kantoku 51 Kadokawa Haruki." *Kinema Junpo*, no. 1110 (July 15, 1993): 159–63. Kadokawa was equally concerned with the budgeting and making the film worthwhile for the budget. "But first as a producer (over director) the average cost for a Japanese film is roughly twenty-five to thirty million yen (2.5 million USD) combined with marketing costs, prints, distribution fees begins to total roughly seventy million yen (7 million USD)."

potential of the film or the structure of the film would be short lived as he was arrested for cocaine trafficking and sentenced to four years in prison, serving just two years, before being released and attempting to mount several comebacks. The immediate outcome of Kadokawa's arrest is that he was forced to step down as head of Kadokawa Shoten and Kadokawa Haruki Office. His younger brother, Kadokawa Tsuguhiko, took over as president for both companies, limiting the number of new live action feature films, pouring more recourses in to animated adaptations of popular Kadokawa Shoten manga.

The popular success and critical displeasure of blockbuster figures has connections with contemporary producer directors in the United States, particularly George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. As Jon Leis notes, "Exactly what historians will make of these two auteurs will have less to do with films per se and more to do with the ways in which their films so influenced a blockbuster-oriented[157] new Hollywood that for over a generation dominated box offices worldwide." Lewis never defines blockbuster in any definitive terms, but it seems to have the same application as its use with Kadokawa Jimusho; big budgets, flashy cross-promotional marketing, and huge box office earnings. Lewis also contends that Lucas and Spielberg exist as a second wave of the auteur theory citing them as almost exclusively "postproduction directors" who do all their work after principal photography.[158] Rather than suggest an alternative model Lewis construes the elements of post-production back to an individual, in this case Lucas and Spielberg.

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[157] Jon Lewis, "The Perfect Money Machine(s)," in *Looking past the screen : case studies in American film history and method*, ed. Jon Lewis and Eric Loren Smoodin (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007). pg. 61

[158] Ibid. pg. 70

Similarly, Kadokawa Haruki becomes the figure head of atrocious quality in the name of box office returns. Rather than staking out a more comprehensive map of various relations, shifts in the market, and developments over time the singular will of the individual supersedes all other considerations. Many critics' evaluations of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, but often referring to Kadokawa Haruki, would claim that he was detrimental to film by consistently tricking audiences into the theaters with ad campaigns and leaving them perennially disappointed. The almost reflex driven disdain of Kadokawa by film criticism had certainly less to do with the specific film texts than exactly the image critics were targeting. However, targeting Kadokawa's image like criticism of Lucas and Spielberg only propels the cycle of auteur focused study.

This chapter has explored the various generative mechanisms within the domestic film industry of Japan to better understand the expansion by Kadokawa Shoten into film production. Corollary to this discussion was to contextualize Kadokawa Haruki within the make-up of his company, the film industry, and the production practices employed throughout his tenure as head of the company.

Through an exploration of the financial state of the film industry it was clear that major downturn had begun to breakdown the tight control of vertical integration held by major studios for decades. The restructuring of Nikkatsu and bankruptcy of Daiei studios indicated that while the film industry was on a financial downturn, the potential for new business was opening.

Looking particularly at the case of Daiei's purchase by Tokuma Shoten provided a blueprint for Kadokawa Jimusho to see how a publishing company could successfully partner with distribution and exhibition companies, effectively changing the chain of production. The next chapter will explore the parallel efforts of Tokuma Shoten to revive Daiei, but redirect focus

away from the domestic sphere and into lavish big budget co-productions with major nations states, particularly mainland China.

At every level the Kadokawa companies worked within established patterns of business. Rather than a trailblazer or unique auteur, Kadokawa Haruki used the resources of his company to shape an image which connects with figures like Nagata Masaichi, George Lucas, and Robert Evans. On an individual level Kadokawa extended his rogue persona through the guise of transparent business practices. On a business level the company created a synergy and anticipation for their products prior to release by combining the desire for novel and film through commercial, radio, and television ads on a level not seen before. Similarly, in the case of *Inugami-kei no ichizoku* and *Ningen no shomei* the production method while more diverse was also an extension of what Tokuma Shoten run Daiei had achieved prior with *Waga seishun no toki* and *Kinkanshoku*.

Kadokawa Haruki provides an image for critics and news media to praise or disparage Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho and Kadokawa Shoten limiting the developments of many to one. Looking at larger developments in the media industry indicates that the company's development is linked much less with an individual than a combined effort by a variety of groups to emulate and expand existing patterns of media production.

Chapter 3: Tokuma, International Co-Productions, and the Revival of Daiei

"It is impossible to shoot a film in China on Chinese History from a novel written by a Japanese." – Representatives of China Film Co-Production Corporation (CFCC) to Director Kobayashi Masaki[159]

This statement refers to the many rejections' Kobayashi Masaki, director of *Kwaidan* and *Harakiri*, received throughout the mid to late 1970s during his efforts to develop a Japanese-Chinese co-production adapted from *Tonko* (*Dunhuang*) a historical novel written by acclaimed novelist Inoue Yasushi. It would be over a decade after these initial efforts for an adaptation of *Tonko* to be released theatrically. By the time the film was set for production director Kobayshi had dropped out of the project, replaced by Sato Junya, and the film's narrative shifted from a multi-perspective look at the history of *Dunhuang* to a spectacular genre picture emphasizing scenery over story and action over drama. More importantly responses like those from the CFCC above are indicative of the underlying challenges and near inability to develop an open exchange or flow of media products between regions.

In this chapter I question the broader flow of cultural products in East Asia through case studies of international co-productions between Japan and China including *The Go-Masters* (1982) and *The Silk Road* (1988) in conjunction with Kadokawa Shoten's transnational productions of *VIRUS* (1980) and *Heaven and Earth* (1990). These case studies are framed within a larger discussion of the establishment of Tokuma Shoten as a film producer, parallel to Kadokawa Shoten and Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho, following Tokuma's purchase of Daiei. These case studies offer a means of exploring the nature of blockbuster filmmaking in Japan throughout the 1980s, extending the production and marketing standards established by Kadokawa Haruki Office in the 1970s. Baked into the production and narrative of these films

[159] "Tonko No Zenbou," *Kinema Junpo*, April 1, 1988. pg, 84

was the capacity for Japan's film industry to highlight the global nature of their productions filming in multiple countries and in the case of *VIRUS* on every continent in the world. At the forefront of this movement was Tokuma Shoten and Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho. However, where Kadokawa emphasized the production location and shooting schedule in blockbusters like *Proof of a Man*, *Virus*, and *Heaven and Earth*, Tokuma sought to establish relationships between nations to finance pictures, but equally ensure distribution globally by making efforts to share risk through international co-productions.

The analysis focuses on the financing, production, advertising, and stories of these international co-productions which attempt to elide past controversies between nations to construct a stable diplomacy between Japan and China. Through this investigation I contend that while the goal may have been to develop bilateral trade based on egalitarian diplomatic relations, the films recycle rhetoric used during the Pacific War by Japan to foster a shared "Pan-Asian" unity. A facet of media industries studies concerns the development and proliferation of international co-productions as it pertains to media globalization and convergence. Analyzing these co-productions reveals the inability to overcome past conflicts even in the face of increasing economic trade, diplomatic exchange, and sharing material resources throughout the region.

In general, an international co-production refers to, "a business arrangement in which production staff and creative workers from more than one country work together on a project with the aim of distributing the final product in each participant's home market and perhaps, beyond."[160] This basic definition emphasizes the process of production and ultimately exhibition.

[160] Havens, Timothy and Amanda Lotz. *Understanding Media Industries*. Second edition. New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017., pg. 231

The focus being on the production process, the crew, potentially the cast, and then the deployment of a media product in multiple regions or nations. However, this definition does not account for the reasoning to embark on a collaboration.

Scholarship on international co-productions within media industries often point to a financial or geographical benefit for two nations or groups collaborating. Holt notes, "the ICAIC has had to rely increasingly since the 1990s on international co-productions outside the region to finance Cuban projects."[161] They also note that, "Peru, for example, sought to encourage creation and promotion of the cinema by integrating filmmakers into regional co-production efforts."[162] This framing points to the importance for certain regions to pool resources in order to complete a production, balance resources, or provide greater opportunity access to equipment, technology, or personnel.

International co-productions often function on a case-by-case basis in terms of the specific components that characterize the collaboration between distinct regions. However, within scholarship on international co-productions, two major categories emerge, the technical artistic and the financial arrangement.

International co-productions have also been sought after funding models in the absence of an autonomous film industry. Tim Bergfelder in his study of popular German cinema notes efforts throughout Europe to produce films following World War II. "By late 1950s ambitious plans to re-establish an autonomous and centralized national film industry had failed. State interventions like UFI handling assets and paralyzing state subsidies had been proven

[161] Holt, Jennifer, and Alisa Perren. *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method*. Chichester, West Sussex ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. pg. 106

[162] Holt, pg. 106

counterproductive."[163] This placed Germany in a delicate position for producing new motion pictures.

These challenges were circumvented through independent co-production agreements between nations. By 1949 France and Italy had signed an agreement, but other nations developed rather slowly initially throughout the 1950s. However, following the establishment of the European Economic Community in 1957, which promoted the removal of trade barriers and a 1961 edict demanding the abolition of all quota regulations, treaties between countries became more common.

This example indicates that member nation's even in the face of economic development require extensive treaties, agreements, and demands between parties to attempt cooperative relations. Bergfelder notes that while co-productions were potentially lucrative, "they also involved bureaucratic procedures for producers."[164] That is the films needed an initial proposal that would appeal in two or more European counties, they needed mutual agreement between two or more European producers. Like the benefits Spain receives being the highest donor in the Programa Ibermedia, higher level support in areas like France and Italy advantaged the production partners of those countries over smaller nations like West Germany.

Frequently the emphasis in media industries analysis is a focus on European or other western nations to outline the scope and function of international co-productions. However, there is recognition that these studies, "would benefit from much more research on larger *and* smaller national industries, labor practices, cultural policy, institution and infrastructures," that would

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[163] Tim Bergfelder, *International Adventures: German Popular Cinema and European Co-Productions in the 1960s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005). Pg. 58

[164] Ibid., pg. 55

expand the scope and understanding of the rationale for international co-production development. Connected with the case studies that inform the chapter it is important to consider the generative mechanisms that facilitated the means for these co-productions and collaborations to occur.

In 1971, parallel to Daiei's bankruptcy, diplomatic relations between Japan and mainland China began to thaw for the first time since the end of World War II. By the late 1960s Japan and the United States had expanded their diplomatic relations and even hosted Prime Minister Sato Eisuke in the autumn of 1969 during the first year of the Nixon administration. Prime Minister Sato was primarily there to secure the second renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Secondarily, it was to secure the repatriation of Okinawa to Japan. This meeting and the successful renewal of the treaty was the expansion needed for both parties to benefit in future diplomatic relations throughout East Asia. The most prominent was developing a process of normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and mainland China for the first time since the end of World War II. In February of 1972, at the end of Sato's administration, President Nixon traveled to China and conducted a series of meetings with the leadership. This meeting changed the position of the United States from only recognizing the Republic of China headquartered in Taiwan when the Kuomintang fled from the mainland in 1949.

This meeting was not negotiated through Japanese diplomats and caught the Sato administration off-guard initially and are referred to as part of the Nixon Shocks.[165] The first shock was a ten percent tax on imports, the second was President Nixon's meeting with China

[165] Prime Minister Sato was reportedly golfing at the time of Nixon's arrival in China and when hearing of the news remarked in a detached way, "Is that so?" See: Jacob Schlesinger, *Shadow Shoguns: The Rise and Fall of Japan's Postwar Political Machine,* 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1999). pg. 61

that signaled a sharp change in American foreign policy where friendly ties between Washington and Beijing would diminish the strategic importance of Tokyo. However, the meetings played a part leading to the Japan-China Joint Communique in September 1972.

The process began under Prime Minister Sato, but due to low support and failed economic initiatives in the legislature he was forced to stepdown and call a vote in the summer of 1972 where he was succeeded by Tanaka Kakuei, a dynamic politician, sometimes dubbed a "Shadow Shogun," for his role in successfully working out backroom deals. Tanaka's ascension to Prime Minister gained traction in the summer of 1972 with the publication of a 220-page manifesto titled, *Building a New Japan: A Plan for Remodeling the Japanese Archipelago.*[166] The theme of Tanaka's administration was one of economic utilization, rather than sheer growth which had been foundational components to the economic policies of Yoshida and Sato before him. By the early 1970s, even with the tax disputes, Japan's economy had been on a steady upward surge for nearly two decades. Nixon's eight-day summit with China in February 1972 was a catalyst for Japan to make a similar overture toward diplomacy. With immense support from the Liberal Democratic Party, the opposition parties, and national support Tanaka traveled to Beijing in September of 1972 to establish formal diplomatic relations with China negotiating a "treaty of peace and friendship," signed with Asian brushes rather than western pens.[167] The success of these negotiations and the treaty opened the door for a variety of communication, sharing of resources, equipment, and personnel not possible since the end of World War II. One facet of the transmission of resource occurred in the form of film distribution and exhibition

[166] Schlesinger, pg. 63

[167] Ibid., pg. 67

throughout the mainland. At the forefront of these developments were Tokuma Yasuyoshi, head of Tokuma Shoten, and the revival of Daiei Studios.

In less than three years from Daiei announcing bankruptcy and shuttering their studios, Tokuma Shoten, a publishing company established in 1954, announced they had purchased the defunct studio with an intention of reviving production under the name Daiei.[168] Rather than develop a new studio, Daiei would function primarily as a production company renting out lots and garnering partnerships with other companies to produce their films. At the forefront of the purchase and Daiei's revival was Tokuma Shoten founder and president, Tokuma Yasuyoshi.

Due to the rather limited size of the company Daiei would only release a small number of films at a time. However, quickly two films were green lit for production. By January of 1975 the company's first new pictures were to be *Waga seishun no toki* and *Kinkanshoku*. Both films were released within three months of the other with *Kinkanshoku* receiving large critical acclaim after its debut on September 6th, 1975. The film would not reach the tops of the box office, but its critical reception was high enough that it ranked third on *Kinema Junpo*'s annual "Best Ten" list for the year.[169] From 1975 to the end of the decade Daiei would release only eight films in total all distributed by one of the remaining major studios.[170] While their production output remained small Daiei's trajectory form bankruptcy to reformation provides a unique model to compare with the rise of Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho.

Rather than a significant legal decision or dramatic shift in every company of the domestic film industry of Japan, the bankruptcy of Daiei and their subsequent purchase by

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[168] Yasuyoshi Tokuma, "Daiei no o-na- ni natta," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 28, 1974.

[169] Kinema Junposha, pg. 226

[170] "Daiei's 8 Pix Since its Revival Under Y. Tokuma," *Variety*. May 9, 1979.

Tokuma Shoten provided a viable model for Kadokawa Shoten to conceive of entering the film industry. The timing of these events is also important for their impact on the industry and Kadokawa Shoten in particular. *Kinkanshoku,* exhibited by Toho, appeared in theaters only three months from Kadokawa Haruki's press announcement on December 5, 1975, that he intended to establish a film production company of his own.

Daiei's bankruptcy provided an opportunity for the industry to explore new options of film production in an era where only inflated ticket prices seemed to shore up company loses. Rather than pay for the overhead of a distribution and exhibition company, this new system encouraged small companies to partner with major studios to finance, distribute and exhibit films. Tokuma Shoten's purchase of Daiei provided a successful test run for a new production and distribution pattern which laid the groundwork for a publishing company like Kadokawa Shoten to enter the film industry. Tokuma's revival of Daiei was a bell weather for changes to occur in Japan's domestic film industry throughout the 1970s and 1980s. From the outset, however, Tokuma's interests in film production were not limited to the domestic sphere, but included aspirations for international partnerships, co-productions, and distribution. In the press release announcing Daiei's revival Tokuma closes saying, "I want to see international co-productions with Mexico, Cuba, and the like. We will continue to pursue a life of adventure without limit!"[171] The revived Daiei never developed a co-production with Mexico, Cuba, or the like. However, the impetus for international distribution and co-production are in the bones of Daiei's history. In the 1950s through Nagata Masaichi's tenure, Daiei entered films at the Venice film festival and internationally distributed films like *Rashomon, Ugestu,* and *Gate of Hell* that formed the initial international awareness of Japanese cinema in the postwar. In the 1960s

[171] Yasuyoshi, 1974

Nagata looked to develop a foothold in film festivals throughout Asia and achieved the first co-productions with Hong-Kong in 1955 with Mizoguchi Kenji's, *Princess Yang Kwei Fei* and with Taiwan in 1962 with Tanaka Shigeo's, *The Great Wall*.[172]

The Go Masters and *The Silk Road* produced through Tokuma Shoten's Daiei, offer a counterpoint to the type of regional flow of media products throughout East Asia, by noting the challenge to produce these films, the boundaries presented within their narratives as well as efforts to artificially construct relations between countries that elide the challenges of recent past. Also, co-productions as a form of filmmaking are done so under a variety of conditions making no two co-productions a like. Similarly, while many co-productions are defined at the level of finance the term co-production is equally applied to films that feature international stars, production crew members, or multi-location shooting. That is differences emerge even when the same talent, crew, financers, and nations are involved. In effort to explore the difficulties that face these co-productions it is important to illuminate the connection and division of the countries and their film histories more specifically.

The advertising and contemporary press releases refer to *The Go-Masters* and *The Silk Road* as the first co-productions between Japan and China[173] These films do not, however, represent the first time in which Japanese and Chinese film industries collaborated or were represented in film. Nor were these co-productions the first attempt to foster representations or positive images regarding a shared pan-Asian or shared sense of unity and co-prosperity. That is,

[172] Stephanie DeBoer's chapter "Japanese Cinema and its Postcolonial Histories, Technologies of coproduction: Japan in Asia and the Cold War production of regional place" in Fujiki, Hideaki, and Alastair Phillips, eds. *The Japanese Cinema Book*. London New York: British Film Institute, 2020.

[173] "Mikan no taikyoku - puroguramu" (Toho, 1982). "Tonko No Zenbou."

many films of this period presented an idealized version or goal of the Empire. Pacific War era film provide a point of comparison to the production, advertising, and narrative tactics of the first "post-war" Japanese-Chinese co-productions.[174]

There were also different policies between formal colonies in Taiwan and Korea versus the attitude toward Manchukuo and Manei studio lead by Amakasu Masahiko. Specifically, that Japan held control over film production, distribution, exhibition over their formal colonies limiting the types of images that could be presented, falling in line with a more standard Imperial ruler/subject dichotomy. However, Amakasu was able to run Manei as a relatively autonomous industry hiring technical crew members, actors, etc.[175] These separate policies highlight a variance of ideology within Japan's empire dictated by specific races, geography, and politics. Where film production was restricted in Taiwan and Korea, the mission of presenting Manchukuo as an autonomous country supports a larger goal of promoting Manchukuo to the colonies and the international community as a positive example that Japan's empire is a natural and healthy development for Asia.

While Manchukuo's film industry had been built on technology and personal from Japan initially, over time this was succeeded by Amakasu's goal of creating an independent Manchukuo cinema. This is curious as it both affirms and denies the benefits of being part of Japan's empire. On the one hand the Empire provides a since of solidarity and connection between the region, however the relative autonomy of Manei studios indicate that the need to show local audiences films reflective of their region and language superseded the needs of the Empire as a whole.

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[174] Baskett, pg. 4-5

[175] Ibid. pg. 28-9

The division between film industries and the inability to create a single stable market throughout the region, even with the ideological impetus of presenting Japan's Empire as an appealing entity attest to the difficulties of establishing and promoting images that provide a unity between regions. This is very true when looking at the various forms of international co-productions.

These studies of co-productions highlight the challenges in developing regional ties through the development of media industries. Moreover, it addresses the potential unevenness in the production of a co-production. To what degree are these films collaborative? Are they defined financially? Are they based on the number of crew members there are from respective regions? Do the films' locations, aesthetic qualities, story elements, or actors who appear in them make an impact? Noting the examples above, all these elements are relevant but that they must be determined on a case-by-case basis due to the wide range of factors that contribute to a term like co-production.

The Go Masters was released in the autumn of 1982 with advertising and promotional materials that frame it as a film commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the normalizing of diplomatic relations between Japan and China.[176] In Japanese language promotional materials for the film this point is presented not only as a benign piece of information, but nearly as the subtitle of the film. Similarly, the title credits of the film foreground the collaborative efforts between Japan and China listing Japanese company names followed by Chinese that foregrounds an equality of collaboration.

The treaty promoted by the film was drafted in the fall of 1972, headed by Prime Minister of Japan Tanaka Kakuei and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. The treaty was signed in September of

[176] "Mikan no taikyoku - puroguramu."

that year just seven months after President Nixon's highly publicized visit to the PRC. In order to understand the reasons and benefits for a treaty between Japan with China it will be helpful to note shifts several significant shifts in the diplomatic and economic atmosphere between the countries.

The period of 1945-1972 is frequently characterized as a void in diplomatic relations between Japan and the PRC. Caroline Rose suggests that the PRC was intent on forming diplomatic relations; however, Japan was restrained by US policy dictates and furthermore suggests that the Cold War politics had an influence on the system. That is "bringing China and Japan into the 'subsystems' of the two superpowers and placing them as Cold War 'enemies.'"[177] Rose and others indicate that both Japan and China had a vested interest in working outside this dynamic. For China, Japan represented an increasingly dominant power with rich economic and technological resources at their disposal for trade. Japan was also keen to take advantage of potential trade relations with China as a means of avoiding dependence on the United States, following the end of the occupation, to increase their own economic independence.

Christopher Hughes suggests, however, that throughout the 1950s Japan maintained a politically determined position of diplomatic absence. That the lack of Japan's diplomatic relations with other countries, outside the United States, was designed to perform the role of a defeated nation and accept a practice of "tiptoe diplomacy" before gradually reintegrating economically and later politically in East Asia.[178] This relative absence from active international

[177] Rose, Caroline. *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations: A Case Study in Political Decision-Making*. Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies Series. London ; New York: Routledge, 1998., pg. 43

[178] Dent, Christopher M. *China, Japan and Regional Leadership in East Asia*. Cheltenham, UK ; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2008., pg. 41

diplomacy being an extension of the Yoshida Doctrine, named for Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, placed greater emphasis on the development of economic and technological development in a hardline effort to present a reversal from military armament and aggression during the Pacific War.

The hindrance of diplomatic and trade relations between Japan and China were not solely due to Japan's economic policy nor a sense of confinement or the influence of the United States or the USSR. Major conflicts also arose from the policies of specific cabinets in Japan to recognize of a two-state system in China as opposed to the PRC's claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s, Japan's recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign nation was one source of major conflict preventing easy relations with the PRC. Both Prime Minister Kishi Nobosuke and Prime Minister Sato Eisaku viewed Taiwan as sovereign nation, bolstered by a strong Pro-Taiwan lobby in Japan. Sato, in particular, held anti-PRC stance that prevented official diplomatic relations from being resumed. Zhou Enlai quoted as saying in frustration that Japan must, "Stop treating China as an enemy, Stop attempting to create 'two Chinas,' do not obstruct normalization."[179] Zhou's comments dually suggest that normalization of relations between the countries should be a foregone conclusion, but similarly point toward the inability to overcome specific political issues or historic legacy.

However, throughout the 1960s trade was guaranteed through government sanctioned mandates that allowed private companies and Japanese companies in need of raw materials to do business. This practice was done parallel to a slightly more formal arrangement known as the Liao-Takasaki Trade Agreement, signed in the fall of 1962. The trade agreement established a semi-official five-year agreement of an annual volume of two-way fixed trade.

[179] Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations*. 46

Additionally, issues have arisen over the sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands and equally over the writing of history texts books in Japan as to the degree of acknowledgment that is paid to Japan's role in the Pacific War in China. Over time these issues have been used as a political form of rhetoric for politicians to stir up controversy. On a base level these issues illustrate the relative inability for regions to overcome history.

In the fall of 1972, the Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China was signed. The treaty effectively ended abnormal relations between countries but was only made possible through several specific compromises. First, the issue of sovereignty over the Senkaku islands were ignored as was specific mentioning of the Pacific War or the behavior of either country as a result. The only element that is specifically made regarding the war is an acknowledgement that no reparations will be required of Japan as part of the treaty or in future trade arrangements.[180]

The void or absence of acknowledgement of the war in the treaty, while perhaps understandable, reveals the extreme concessions necessary to establish relations between international regions. That to facilitate the transfer of resources, personnel, and goods issues of controversy had to be shelved or written out of acknowledgement. While the treaty established a means of formally communicating, it did not engender a new future between the countries by addressing the challenges of the past.

This is further proven by the necessity of the 1978 Treaty of Peace and Friendship signed on October 23rd of that year. The treaty consisted of five articles, including an anti-hegemony clause which was strongly opposed by the Soviet Union. For China it was an attempt to promote a sense of independence in the face of the USSR and for Japan it served as a form of

[180] Dent., pg, 42

maintenance of trade relations between the countries for the government and private business which had risen steadily over the course of the past six years.[181] Looking at these treaties in conjunction with larger world events and politics- indicates the desire on the part of Japan and China to seek a workable treaty which would allow for an abundance of trade, transmission of materials, and personnel as a means of economic stability.

While the 1978 Treaty of Friendship and Peace was designed on the surface as an expansion of the ideals laid out in the 1972 treaty, it also served as a counterpoint to political trouble. In the spring Prime Minister Fukura dealt with a dispute over the Senkaku islands following the appearance of Chinese fishing boats that April. The Chinese eventually relented, but a contention remained. Regardless Japan was optimistic about the potential for long term trade agreements in China, which would support higher and longer-term loans and distributions of resources.

This optimism would be short lived, however, with a succession of postponement or cancelation of plant and factory projects. "The Baoshan Shock" for the Baoshan steel complex near Shanghai heralded as the first "symbol" of Sino-Japanese friendship was postponed and later cancelled.[182] This was followed by multiple contracts throughout the early 1980s. By 1982 while transfer of personal in industry related positions had jumped from 9,000 in 1972 to nearly 150,000 a decade later, the postponement and cancelation of jobs made Japanese financers skittish about taking part in any development projects with China. 1982 was also the first year in

[181] Rose, *Interpreting History in Sino-Japanese Relations*., pg. 52

[182] Ibid., pg. 53

which trade between countries dipped for the first time in over six years by nearly fifteen percent.[183]

It is in this strained position between Japan and China that *The Go Masters* was released. However, the film was not alone in promoting relations between Japan and China in 1982. That year a variety of events were planned to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the original joint communiqué. This included official envoys between both countries, the founding of several buildings and factories in the name of the treaty, and increased media attention all around the time of the film's release.

The Go Masters from its inception was designed as a collaborative effort between Japan and China. In an effort to present a true sense of collaboration between the countries production measures were handled on a bilateral basis. The film was principally financed in Japan by Daiei Studios which had been purchased almost a decade earlier by Tokuma Publishing Company and in China through the Beijing Film Studio and the China Film Co-Production Corporation (CFCC).

The CFCC was less directly involved with financing the picture than providing a means of approving the application of travel visa's, overseeing scripts to ensure that they met with co-productions standards, and generally facilitated the partnership between film companies on both sides. The CFCC was founded in August of 1979, just under a year following the Treaty of Friendship and Peace, suggesting that promoting media endeavors and facilitating of co-productions became one avenue China hoped to take advantage of. The CFCC became an essential component needed to conduct business with Japanese film companies.

[183] Ibid., pg. 54

As the first co-production between Japan and China to take place under this process *The Go Masters* in keeping with the theme of commemorating the treaty and in a show of collaboration the listed credits from director, cinematographer, and writer to cast, setting, and story all split between Japanese and Chinese. Each had separate production units, scriptwriters, location shooting. Similarly the films language track is divided evenly between Japanese and Mandarin Chinese with characters accurately representing their linguistic backgrounds.

The film took three years to draft the plot, two years to write the screenplay and another year plus to finish the films shooting, editing, dubbing, and approval by Chinese censors in time for a dual release in the fall of 1982.[184] Long running film journal *Kinema Junpo* introduced the film with a photograph spread and small blurb to characterize the film. The short photo publicity opens with a blurb, "Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of Japanese-Chinese Diplomatic Relations *The Go Masters* is as drama that focuses on a difficult point in the deep 2,000 year relationship between countries."[185] This statement reveals the inherent need on the part of the filmmakers, advertisers, and other parties associated with the film to not only promote the film as a co-production, but suggest a much deeper and important connection between the countries that extend well beyond any living memory.

The need to impress upon future generations the legacy of history and the need to continue relations are expressed in the sentiments of actor Mikuni Rentaro. "Through the images of one generation and its people, this film has a responsibility to educate the next."[186] Mikuni

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[184] Kinema Junposha pg, 107

[185] "Mikan No Taikyoku Gurabia," *Kinema Junpo*, June 15, 1982., pg. 109

[186] "Mikan No Taikyoku Chugoku Loke Repotto," *Kinema Junpo*, June 15, 1982., pg. 106

suggests that his cooperation throughout the project has been to support these themes. In this way the promotional materials, efforts by the writers and creators, crew, and actors position the film in such a way that it speaks to a universal experience between generations and the need to maintain their relationship.

As the English translated title implies the film centers on two gifted Go players and their friendship over the course of thirty years from 1924 to 1956. If the timeline appears very selective it is. Placing the story between these two points allows for the central characters and family members to meet prior to the rise of Japan's militarization and invasion to Manchuria by nearly a decade. Similarly, the film concludes in the aftermath of War's conclusion and following the departure of the United States led occupation and implantation of the more peaceful and economic oriented Yoshida Doctrine in 1954. Through the span of this thirty-year relationship the film presents an opportunity to engage with atrocity, but through the eyes of civilians.

Early postwar Japanese films like *Stray Dog* (*Nora Inu*, 1949) or *Until We Meet Again* (*Mata au hi made*, 1950) are primarily positioned within the context of Japanese citizens' victimization because of intense militarism and the difficulty of post-war reconstruction. However, this film made nearly forty years after the end of the war, presents a different set of considerations. Rather than show the friendship between two soldiers on the battlefield, military officers, or other service-related friendship that would seem to be a natural fit for this time period the screenwriters adapted their original short story about two Go players.

Centering the friendship and narrative on the game provides ready metaphors for the nature of friendship and overcoming difficulty like many sports themed stories. At the same time it essentializes the shared relations between Japan and China by positioning Go as a point of

connection between countries and one of the few means in which friendship can be maintained through the hardship of war, death, and reconstruction.

The film incorporates a non-chronological narrative that recounts the historical past through the memories of the Go masters. These flashbacks begin with Kuang Yishang (Sun Daolin) attempting to track down his friend, Matsunami Rinsaku (Mikuni Rentaro) in Japan just after the end of the war. Through this juxtaposition the friends initial encounter leads to Matsunami taking Kuang's son Aming back to Japan to study Go. During Aming's study Japan invades Machuria which positions Aming ideologically in the place of his birth while geographically located in Japan. Aming's presence provides an opportunity to add a small love story in the film between him and the young Tomoe, daughter of Matsunami. Aming is later killed while in Japan creating a great rift between the Go masters. Aming's death is used to exemplify that it is not the current generation but the next generation who will suffer if Japan and China are unable to overcome their differences and maintain unity. While the metaphor of Go is designed to suggest that there is a lengthy history, the film also indicates that friendship between the two is not natural, requiring constant maintenance. The closing shot of the two friends continuing their initial Go game from thirty years prior is designed as the ultimate sign of reconciliation and bond between men and country. However, a more cynical reading may suggest that future generations are doomed as only those who had a bond and friendship prior to hostility can maintain one after war ends.

The film was reasonably successful upon its release. However, the reviewer for Japan's *Kinema Junpo* at the time focused much more on the fact the film's release coincides so closely with recent issues in the news to the increase of controversy of textbooks history writing as it did

with any other aspect of the film.[187] Similarly, the film did not present a significant marker in the popular box office not breaking the top ten of box office receipts for either foreign or domestic Japanese releases.

The film was critically and financially overshadowed many of the films produced by Kadokawa Haruki including *The Fall Guy* (*Kamata koshin-kyoku,* 1982), a humorous look at the world inside Japan's domestic film industry through the eyes of a low level stuntman and *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* (*Sera-fuku to* kikanju, 1981) featuring a major starring role for young idol Yakushimaru Hiroko as a high-school aged machine gun wielding Yakuza boss.[188] In addition, the highest box office earner in Japan for 1982 and 1983 was Steven Spielberg's *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial. The Go Masters* relatively weak box office suggest that audiences in Japan were less interested in the deep relationship and regional ties between Japan and China, but rather more interested in fast pop entertainment and special effects. Perhaps taking a note from the success of pictures like *E.T.* and *Sailor Suit and Machine Gun* the second co-production between Japan and China would change the focus from overcoming the past to rewriting it in epic fashion. Parallel to the development of Tokuma Shoten was the expansion of Kadokawa Haruki Office developing transnational products that in a similar effort were attempting to expand beyond a domestic audience and achieve wider global exhibition potential.

Kadokawa Haruki Jimusho's most, *VIRUS* (1980) was at the time the most expensive film ever produced in Japan at a reported 2.4 billion yen.[189] The story concerns itself purely with

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[187] "Mikan No Taikyoku Hyohan," *Kinema Junpo,* June 15, 1982., pg. 162

[188] Kinema Junposha., "Kinema junpo besuto ten & kogyo deta zenshi The history of Kinema Junpo best 10 & box office data: 1951-2006." (Kinema Junposha Intachaneru., 2006)., pg. 286-7

[189] "nakyoku de sho no roke," *Asahi* 1979.

foreign relations, or rather the family of man: An international group in Antarctica, the sole survivors of a worldwide virus epidemic hatched in a cold war laboratory, must work together to ensure the survival of the human race. *VIRUS* (1980) was, while a box office success in Japan, an expensive disappointment for Kadokawa due to its failure to take hold in international markets.

Based on a book by Komatsu Sakyo published in 1964, the film adaptation is a curious mix of disaster epic spectacle, foreign relations peace picture, and lavish production featuring location shooting from around the globe. The picture's featured an extensive international cast including Glenn Ford, Olivia Husse, George Kennedy, and even a young Edward James Olmos. Throughout the casting process both the *Asahi* newspaper and weekly *Variety* magazines posted updates on the production's progress.[190] Similarly, from the outset of production Toho and Kadokawa worked to forefront the international sensibility of the film's narrative, but even more so with the extensive location filming taking place on every continent. Over the course of a six-month period production crews worked in tandem around the globe including filming in: Tokyo, Chili, Peru, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and Antarctica.[191] The majority of principle photography took place in a small town, about an hour outside of Toronto, Canada.[192] The *Asahi* newspaper took note of the confusion behind this production with an article titled, "Western Picture? No, Japanese Picture! A blockbuster film shot entirely with foreigners on location"[193]

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[190] See *"Daily variety," Daily variety.* for September 26, 1979 and "kore yoga? ira hoga! gaijin bakari no "hukkatsu no hi" roke," *Asahi* 1979.

[191] "nakyoku de sho no roke."

[192] See: "Virus: Canada Location Shoot Report (Hukkatsu no hi kanada satsuei houkoku ki)," *Kinema Junpo,* no. 783 (1980). pg. 118

[193] "Kore yoga? ira hoga! gaijin bakari no "hukkatsu no hi" roke."

In addition to the extensive location shooting, Kadokawa took advantage of notable jazz musicians and composers to develop a score that would, like *Proof of a Man* (1977), provide a cross over media blitz through record sales and single song title releases. Spending around eight million yen, to hire American singer-songwriter Janis Ian to compose the theme song, "You are Love (Toujours Gai Mon Cher)" which plays throughout the picture with and without lyrics.[194]

The generally accepted distribution gross yardstick for a big hit film was around one billion yen at the time, which gives an idea of the risk Kadokawa and Toho were taking with a production of this magnitude. Kadokawa was obviously aware of this, and aimed for an unusual source of income for film Japan at the time, the international markets. Unlike previous efforts *The Inugami Clan* (1976) and *Proof of a Man* (1977), from its inception *VIRUS* was planned as a worldwide picture. Kadokawa initially planned to employ an American scriptwriter to ensure palatability for a foreign (i.e. English speaking) audience, but the plan was abandoned after the first meeting between, director Fukasaku Kinji, Kadokawa Haruki, and the scriptwriter in Los Angeles.

Although Kadokawa paid 20 million yen just for the first draft discussed in the meeting, it was eventually written by Takada Kôji, with Gregory Knapp employed for the English dialogue. Like *Proof of the Man* (1977), *VIRUS* (1980) was reedited for the foreign market using an American editor from the Neiman-Tiller Organization.[195] In all the international version,

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[194] "Ongaku de senhyohan hukkatsu no hi," *Asahi* 1980.Janice also went on to record other songs for the Japanese market including, "The Last Great Place" and still maintains a following domestically in Japan.

[195] "Daily variety." October 15th, 1980 The same year the Neiman-Tiller Organization received an technical award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for an Automated Computer-Controlled Editing Sound System (ACCESS) for motion picture post-production.

through Alan Wardrope's California Connection Organization, secured screening in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Thailand.[196] Though it amassed an amount of international sales that was unusual for a film from Japan, roughly 6 million yen,[197] it failed to make a box office impact in any of the markets beyond Japan.[198] The film finished second next to Kurosawa Akira's *Kagemusha* (1980), taking in roughly 2.4 billion yen. This is slightly lower than the distribution budget of 2.8 billion. Even with the modest earnings of the international market the gamble on *VIRUS* (1980) ultimately failed to achieve its larger international aspirations.

Even the success of large advance ticket sales in the Japanese box office could not compensate for the enormous costs of an international cast, Antarctic location shooting and an immense advertising campaign. By the late 1980s the large scale blockbuster picture strategy by Toho and Kadokawa, was no longer a profitable enterprise. However, in the wake of this failure Toho was quickly exploring new means of insuring long-term success through animation. That same year Toho released the first *Doraemon* feature film, based on the popular television cartoon show. In 1980 the first feature film of *Doremon* earned 1.5 billion yen. The series creators continued to produce a *Doremon* film every year throughout the 1980s and the animation boom of the eighties would continue and strengthen with the establishment of Ghibli Studios by Tokuman Shoten. For Toho the marketing vigor provided by Kadokawa Shoten and their unique President, Kadokawa Haruki, provided the most high-profile change in the staid marketing and

[196] See: ibid. January 21, 1981 pg. 53

[197] "1980 uchi gai eiga soukaiketsu," *Kinema Junpo*, no. 805 (1981).pg. 117

[198] Kinema Junposha, "Kinema junpo besuto ten & kogyo deta zenshi The history of Kinema Junpo best 10 & box office data : 1951-2005." pg. 271

program picture practices of the 1950s and 1960s. However, by 1988 Kadokawa's productions were beginning to become more uneven balancing between idol films, historical fantasy pictures, and by 1990 a last-ditch attempt of a transnational production with the *jidaigeki* epic, *Heaven and Earth*.

Heaven and Earth (*Ten to chi*, 1990) was the last large-scale film Kadokawa Haruki Office produced and Kadokawa Haruki's fourth directorial feature. It was the largest film the company had attempted since *VIRUS*. Thematically it is a spiritual successor to Kurosawa's *Kagemusha* being set during the warring-states period and featuring a much more serious tone than Kadokawa's earlier *G.I. Samurai.* Production started in April 1989, but moved to Canada (Morely Flats, Alberta) in the fall in order to stage a recreation of the Battle of Kawanakajima, a deciding battle in the unification of Japan prior to the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate at the start of the 17th century.

In a profile by the *Los Angeles Times* Kadokawa was not hesitant to reveal in the attention stating, "All of what I have- as a poet, an adventurer, a director, a man of religion, a businessman-will be incorporated into this movie…In my country, I am considered a superstar."[199] The bravado showcased in the article encouraged a comparison by the other to other notable moguls in film and business including Howard Hughes, but even more dubbing Kadokawa, "The Donald Trump of Japan." Kadokawa did not relent either making a direct comparison and competition with Kurosawa Akira, who had rebuffed him a decade prior. "Kurosawa may have retained his special artistic send of beauty. But his energy and his physical capabilities are gone. He is old. And I am young. I have physical capabilities as well as artistic

[199] "The Donald Trump Of Japan." *Los Angeles Times*, October 15, 1989.

vision."[200] Kadokawa's gamble ultimately paid off with domestic returns more than five billion yen placing it as the highest grossing Japanese film of 1990 and earning over twice as much as *Tasmania Story* starring Yakushimaru Hiroko or the most recent entry in the long running animated Doremon series.[201] The efforts of both Kadokawa and Tokuma Shoten speak to an increased regionalism between major east Asian nations through the 1970s, 1980s, and into the 1990s. Kadokawa's efforts were done primarily through international filming locations and international casts in front of the camera that ultimately served to benefit a high domestic box office in Japan. Tokuma, however, sought to explore greater potential for regional ties through international co-productions.

Discussion of film production is often discussed in a manner that suggests cinema is hermetically sealed and separated by national boundaries at their point of financing, production, and distribution with only specific avenues like film festivals offering a space for international audiences to view these films as representative exemplars of a national film and style. This is a position extended by Duncan Pietrie regarding Scottish cinema that a national cinema functions primarily to mark out a cultural space serving to validate the aesthetic achievements of

[200] Ibid., pg. 1

[201] Kinema Junposha. *Kinema junpo besuto ten 80-kai zenshi, 1924-2006.* Tokyo: Kinema Junposha, 2007., pg. 350 Even with the financial success of *Heaven and Earth*, Kadokawa was unable to surpass or even rank along with the continued critical success of Kurosawa's *Kagemusha* (1980) and *Ran* (1985), both ranked second on *Kinema Junpo's* "Best Ten List" for their respective years along with the former being awarded the Palme d'Or (split with Fosse's *All That Jazz*) and the latter winning the Academy Award for costume design. *Heaven and Earth* was ranked 40th in *Kinema Junpo's* "Best Ten" poll for 1990 and received no critical nominations.

filmmakers, but that this validation occurs only through the appreciation of these pictures by international audiences, primarily in art cinema or film festival communities.[202]

At the same time Iwabuchi Koichi, Nassim Otmazgin, and others have presented alternatives to this interpretation arguing that there are a variety of communities, groups, and individuals that extend or identify beyond the limitations of a national body or what a national cinema can represent. Recent edited volumes by Newman Durovicova argue for a re-evaluate of cinema studies under the lens of transnational cinema. The impetus for this re-evaluation is due to changes in economics and technology of film which have enabled presenting any geopolitical entity within the scale of the world. From the rise of digital technologies, the disruption of financing practice, to the multiple associations individuals can make with film, media, and cultural products that do not represent their country, geographic origin, or heritage all point to a more complex means of navigating how cinemas are evaluated within the academy. At the same time, "the dominant strategy that teaching world cinema most commonly takes is the format of an aggregate of discrete units of national cinemas arranged in a sequence of peak moments."[203] This has encouraged a discussion of cinema on more mobile or uneven levels through the lens of "transnational" cinema.

For Durovicova transnational cinema is, "broadly conceived as above the level of the national, but below the level of the global."[204] This simple definition implies both a hierarchy as well as a selection of tools available to the analytical study of cinema. Cinema will still be

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[202] Harvey, Sylvia. *Trading Culture: Global Traffic and Local Cultures in Film and Television*. Eastleigh, UK : Bloomington, IN: John Libbey ; Distributed in North America by Indian University Press, 2006., pg. 135-8

[203] Ďurovičová, Natasa, and Kathleen E. Kathleen Elizabeth Newman. *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*. AFI Film Readers. New York: Routledge, 2010., pg. X

[204] Ibid., pg. IX

defined by the national as much as it can the global, but transnational cinema has a potential to unlock the messy and complex unevenness of cinema that functions outside such easily packaged or confining labels like national or the potential for a vague or undefined discussion of cinema under the heading of the global. Durovicova suggests that transnational's openness to geopolitical forms or social relations operating on a variant scale, "that gives this key term its dynamic force, and its utility as a frame for hypotheses about emergent forms."[205]

Similarly Koichi Iwabuchi suggests that, "transnational opens up a new perspective on the flow, disregarding the boundaries set up and controlled by the nation-states, the most important of which are those of capital, people and media/images."[206] Borrowing from Hannerz, Iwabuchi suggest that the term, "it is more humble, and often a more adequate label for phenomena which can be of quite variable scale and distribution."[207] This is important for Iwabuchi in his text *Re-centering Globalization* which attempts to account for the regional flow of cultural products throughout East Asia including television, music, and film that emanate from Japan. Iwabuchi's emphasizes that transnational can be viewed primarily as a cultural flow of information and images. That these images are produced from a central location, but through the channels of distribution are adopted by groups that tailor their association with the image to that group under a process Iwabuchi describes as glocalization.[208]

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[205] Ibid., pg. x

[206] Allen, Matthew, and Rumi Sakamoto. *Popular Culture, Globalization and Japan*. Routledge Studies in Asia's Transformations. London ; New York: Routledge, 2006., pg. 18

[207] Ibid., pg. 18

[208] Iwabuchi., pg. 46-7

At the same time the process by which the adoption of Japanese media occurs throughout East Asia recalls John Tomlinson's position on the discourse of Cultural Imperialism. Tomlinson points out with regards to American cultural imperialism as being, "primarily economic denomination associated with the global reach of capitalism but not having the political form of 'colonialism'"[209] as opposed to a more political denomination by the Soviet Union on the Eastern bloc. While Tomlinson's points are made specific to Western world view of cultural imperialism, Iwabuchi frames Japan's position within a similar dichotomy. Referring to a triad of Japan-Asia-the West, Iwabuchi asserts that while Japan is, "unequivocally located in a geography called 'Asia,' but is no less unambiguously exists outside a cultural imaginary of 'Asia' in Japanese mental maps."[210] That is Japan is more aligned in a cultural imaginary with the west, but by the late 1980s and early 1990s becomes the site at which cultural products emanate and flow through to other Asian nations.

Iwabuchi suggests that over the past two decades, "along with the forces of media globalization, the strengthened economic power of Asian countries has led to the intensification of media and cultural flows in Asian Markets, dramatically increasing the circulation of Japanese popular culture in the region and driving hitherto domestically oriented Japanese cultural formation to become more extroverted."[211] Iwabuchi attributes this proliferation to the development of communication technologies such as VCRs, cable TV, satellite, and the emergence of global media corporations throughout the late twentieth century.

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[209] Tomlinson, John. *Cultural Imperialism: A Critical Introduction*. Parallax (Baltimore, Md.). Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991., pg. 4

[210] Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization*. pg, 7

[211] Ibid. pg, 3

Nissim Otmazgin in the wake of Iwabuchi's work and discussion of the transnational mobility of media products and images argues that an increased flow of Japanese products throughout East and Southeast Asia are a sign of regionalization. Otmazgin defines regionalization as, "an indirect, bottom-up process that increases proximity between markets, institutions, and communities within geographical and conceptual domains broader than two states."[212] For Otmazgin the process of regionalization supports the promotion and development of cultural products that create transnational markets and establish collaborative ties between relevant parties in geographically proximate economies and by stimulating collaboration among companies, networks, and individuals involved in the commodification, manufacturing, and marketing of popular culture.

This process is presented in a relatively positive light for both content producers and consumers in that it provides for a more egalitarian system of relations that promote the active agency of consumers throughout East Asia. For Otmazgin popular culture products play a "constructive role in pulling people closer together by providing them with shared experiences."[213] Similar to Iwabuchi's assessment Otmazgin looks to Japan as the model and forerunner in how to construct a developed popular culture industry as a viable alternative to American cultural products. Their positive and rather optimistic embrace of the regional ties throughout East Asia elide the challenges in Japan's colonization, difficulty in enacting political and economic treaties which provide the conduits for the exchange of media and other culture industry products.

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[212] Otmazgin, Nissim. *Regionalizing Culture: The Political Economy of Japanese Popular Culture in Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014., pg, xvii

[213] Ibid., pg, xvii

Masao Miyoshi's writing "A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State," provides an alternative view of the positive perspective held by Iwabuchi and Otmazgin. Miyoshi argues that "colonialism is even more active now in the form of transnational corporatism."[214] That is the effects of colonialism did not end with the removal of governmental and military control of one nation over another, but the social fabric, ability to construct an independent government, and position within the world sphere are all predicated upon the impact of colonial rule. That is in many cases the governments established by former colonies replicate what has come before, without fundamentally questioning the challenges of the past. That, "Old *compradors* took over, and it was far from rare that they went on to protect their old masters' interest in exchange for compensation"[215] This perception of post-colonial existence becomes particularly important when considering the flow of media from Japan throughout East-Asia as less a benign development of international relations or the discovery of "audiences" in new regions, but a replication of earlier practices of disseminating images of an empire.

In this way international co-productions are an enticing example to explore not only the nature of this production, but better understand the difficulty and perhaps impossibility of creating a natural "flow" of cultural products throughout a region. Rather, the history between geographic regions and individual groups along with the legacy of war, trade relations, and economic demands frequently dictate how, when, and why relations between regions are formed or disintegrate.

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[214] Wilson, Rob, and Wimal Dissanayake. *Global/Local: Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Asia-Pacific. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996., pg. 79

[215] Ibid., pg. 80

The second Japanese-Chinese co-production made following the establishment of the CFCC was the 1988 blockbuster *The Silk Road*. The Japanese title *Tonko* or *Dunhuang* in Chinese is the name of a city located in northwestern China along the historic Silk Road.

As a historical site Dunhuang is most well-known for its geographic proximity to the Mogao caves. In the late 18th century, a Taoist priest, Wang Yuanlu, was credited with discovering the Dunhuang manuscripts in a hidden and walled up area of Cave 16. The documents are a collection of religious and secular scrolls dating from the 5th to 11th centuries.[216] The manuscripts are also composed of a wide variety of languages including Chinese, Tibetan, and Uyghur. As a result, the Mogao Caves and Dunhuang have taken on significant for a multitude of academic fields around the global, including Japan.

The film version of *The Silk Road* is based on a novel by Inoue Yasushi who attained a great deal of acclaim with novels of historical fiction set in ancient Japan and throughout Asia. The text was initially published by Kodansha in 1959 during Japan's economic growth period amidst the implementation of the Yoshida Doctrine. As the opening quotation of this chapter indicates, the film production had been gestating for over a decade before approval was received to shoot on location in China and the production could be given a go.

The story is set in the early 11th Century where a group of frustrated students are caught up in a territorial war by the crown prince Li Yuanhao (Watase Tsunehiko) of Xixia who wants to control the Silk Road by decimating the Uighur people. The students are led by the young Zhao Xingde (Sato Koichi) who after being captured and brought under the Xixia army is taken under the wing of commander, Zhu Wangli (Nishida Toshiyuki) as they continue to the East in

[216] Ning, Qiang. *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family*. Honolulu: University of Hawaiì Press, 2004., pg. 1-5

order to confront the Uighur armies. During a skirmish with a fortress Xingde discovers the princess of the Uighur, Tsurpia (Nakagawa Anna) who he hides and later falls in love with. Shortly after Xingde is sent away to learn the Xixia language, but upon his return Tsurpia is engaged to be married to Li Yuanhao. Tsurpia during the wedding ceremony not willing to marry the enemy of her people jumps from his castle walls to her death. In the end Zhu and his army revolt and attack Li but is overrun and he takes his own life. Xingde's final act is to place a scroll of the Xixia language in the Mogao caves along with the necklace Tsurpia had given to him.

In terms of story the film is framed as an adventure tale where a young and wide eyed student experiences an incredible series of events over a short period of time, fighting, falling in love, and learning larger life lessons about power and greed. The high concept melodrama and action foreground the more subtle levels of power and control, the meaning of border crossing, the potential for regions to form ties with one another through the historical legacy of Dunhuang.

On the level co-production *The Silk Road* is a vastly different picture than *The Go Master's.* One of the most glaring differences is *The Silk Road* is not actively associated in its promotional materials, production release, or framing by filmmakers and critics as a commemorative piece between Japan and China. Rather the film's emphasis was on the nearly 45 billion Yen production budget, cast of thousands, and spectacular battle sequences.[217]

While the film is a co-production in the sense that there is location shooting in the northern region of China, the story is set in China's historical past, and the production did receive approval from the China Film Co-Production Cooperation, nearly every other element of the picture suggests that this film is a Japanese product in the tradition of colonial adventure

[217] "Tonko No Zenbou." pg. 81

films. To highlight this point it is important to clarify certain production factors about the film and how they may be applicable to colonial films of both Japan and Hollywood's past.

On the level of production, *The Silk Road* is predominantly supported by Japanese cast and crew. The film was initially proposed over fourteen years prior by Tokuma Yasuyoshi shortly after Tokuma Publishing Company took over and decided to revive former studio Daiei in 1974. Sato Junya, the director, recounts at the time Tokuma proclaiming that, "As head of Daiei I want to adapt Inoue Yasushi's *Tonko* (*The Silk Road*) and Shiba Ryotaro's *Saka no Ue no Kumo*(*Clouds over the Slope*)…First will be *Tonko*. It will be a Japanese-Chinese Co-Production and feature location shooting in China."[218] Tokuma had been a fan of the novel since its initial publication in the late 1950s and felt this would be the perfect vehicle to explore international productions and distribution possibilities. In Tokuma's eyes the only salvation for Daiei was the production of large-scale epics targeting the foreign market.[219]

The film languished to receive an ok by Chinese authorities and it was only after the successful production and release of *The Go Master's* that Tokuma's proposal for *The Silk Road* was opened for consideration. As a result the film saw successive directors come and go with the project, most notable Fukasaku Kiniji, before settling on Sato Junya. Sato of course had directed major portions of *The Go Masters* and quickly became the best and only choice for the successful completion of the picture. In addition to the *The Go Masters*, Sato's pedigree in the action films of the 1970s gave him the pedigree to helm both a co-production and a film featuring an epic scale, large budget, and popular cinematic appeal. However, this time Sato was

[218] Ibid., pg. 82

[219] A slightly ironic interpretation considering that part of Daiei's initial downfall was due to over expenditure and poor management of resources by former President Nagata Masaichi.

not working in collaboration with a Chinese co-director. In fact, down the line major crew members on the film were all Japanese. This extended to the nearly all of the major cast members who had speaking roles and the original language track of the film being entirely Japanese.

The presents a unique conundrum, if we are to view the film as a co-production between Japan and China. Particularly, when compared with the work on the part of the *The Go Masters* to present the appearance of a collaborative effort both in front of and behind the camera. What *The Silk Road* presents then is a Japanese novel adapted by Japanese screenwriters featuring an all-Japanese starring cast, speaking Japanese masquerading as a Chinese historical action-drama. This raises the question, who this film is for? The history is very specific to ancient China so it rules out a general audience, yet it does not feature any Chinese cast members or real connection with the location in which the film was shot. Perhaps the clearest indication of the films minimal level of concern for audience is the didactic voice-over narration which accompanies the film's early opening scenes and final closing sequences.

This voice-over narration makes a certain degree of sense in English language subtitled and dubbed versions which compare the timeline of the Silk Road and the film's narrative to Marco Polo's travels. In an audience specific manner, the voice-over contextualizes elements those unfamiliar with the region or history would need to navigate. To a degree the Japanese audience might similarly need a quick description of the time period and the region. However, by the time the voice-over narration is employed there have already been three separate occasions where the geographic importance of Dunhuang has been explained to the audience. The first is through dialogue in an opening sequence set at Dexing's school, accompanied with a map charting out specific region or domains. The second is through dialogue in a bar scene where

patrons lament the potential money to be earned by developing a linguistic understanding of the Xixia language. Finally, just before the first narration another map of China is overlaid on an image of sand dunes and the main characters on camels, charting the silk road in deep red lines with points signifying major cities along the Silk Road ending with Dunhuang.

The map overlaying the country charting the history, the path of the characters journey, as well as framing the importance of the site recalls colonial films of the past and more recently the exposition tactics of the *Indiana Jones* series to highlight the points on the map that Indy has or will venture to next.

Recalling the scholarship of Shohat and Stam the authors argue that films in this vein penetrate the undiscovered world through the figure of a "discoverer." Often applied to Hollywood films like *The King and I* (1956) or *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), the hero falls to the voyager or a scientist who masters a new land and its treasures as a pretext for ownership that legitimizes the colonizer's act of appropriation.[220] More so, "the camera relays the hero's dynamic movement across a passive static space, gradually stripping the land of its "enigma" as the spectator wins visual access to oriental treasures through the eyes of the explorer-protagonist."[221] In the *Silk Road* the foreign Han character, Xingde overcomes the barriers of the Xixia by learning their language and gaining the love of the Uyghur Princess Tsurpia before her death. In this way Xingde embodies both the hero and the navigator as he learns the language of the Xixia making his way from East to West ultimately arriving at and claiming the creation of Dunhuang Cave 17 as his own.

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[220] Shohat, Ella. *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*. Sightlines (London, England). London ; New York: Routledge, 1994., pg. 145

[221] Ibid., pg. 146

Rather than a cooperative co-production between different regions, *The Silk Road* frames the Silk Road, China, and its history through the narrative lens of Japanese production members and Japanese bodies. The film restricts the bodies and people who can speak for Chinese history. The film ultimately pushes for a connection to be made between the deep historical roots of the Mogao caves, relations between all regions of China, and an underlying association with Japan.

While production of *The Go Masters* and *The Silk Road* on the surface presented a sense of unity or development of relations between China and Japan, the efforts mask the underlying tensions, unsteady political climate, and artificial construction of a deep and long-lasting friendship or deep connection between countries. Noting the active avoidance regarding the sovereignty of the Senkaku islands, the writing of history in Japanese textbooks, and the dispute over Taiwan being recognized as an independent nation are just a few examples which characterize the unsteady balance of diplomatic and trade relations between Japan and China.

On the level of these films as co-productions the need to set the films historically in China or have an association with the recent historical past indicate the narrative limitations of what media could and could not be made following the establishment of the CFCC and impetus by Japanese film companies to explore co-productions with China. At the same time the minimal number of co-productions between Japan and China during this period, just two films in over six years points to the relative lack of success or traction the picture had at the time.

Rather these films point more toward willingness on the part of Japanese production companies, like banks and manufacturing companies, looking to invest in China following the expansion of opportunities for trading personnel, resources, and technology. In this way *The Go Masters* and *The Silk Road* are prime examples of the types of efforts made during Japan's structural changes throughout this period. These international co-productions did not signal a

blueprint for filmmaking practices by Tokuma Shoten during their ownership of Daiei. The only other notable effort was a Japanese-Russian co-production following the lives of a group of castaways in *Dreams of Russia* (1992, *Oroshiyakoku suimutan*). The film starred Ogata Ken set in Siberia during the court of Catherine the Great, directed by Sato Junya from a novel by Inoue Yasushi once again replicating the creative talent pool of *Dunhuang*, but achieving a modest box office return comparatively.[222] The remainder of the decade Tokuma turned toward more modest productions that included Kurosawa Akira's final film *Madadayo* (1993) along with a series of films by up and coming directors including; Suo Masayuki, Anno Hideaki, Iwai Shunji, and Kurosawa Kiyoshi who all played a role in defining what Mark Schilling refers to as the "New Wave of the Nineties."[223] These critically well received films were not enough to maintain Tokuma's continuation of Daiei. In 2002 following the massive success of *Spirited Away* (2001), Studio Ghibli broke off from Tokuma Shoten's production relationship, following the death of its founder. The same year Kadokawa Holdings, under the leadership of Kadokawa Tsuguhiko, was able to broker a deal with Tokuma purchasing the rights to all of Daiei's library of films, including those made during Tokuma's tenure, roughly 1600 films in total.[224]

Looking at more recent co-productions in the work of directors like Chinese director Jia-Zhangke whose early works received a support funding through Shochiku and Office Kitano,

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[222] *Kinema Junpo*. 2007., pg. 366. The film was second in the box office to Tokuma's other major release of 1992, *Porco Rosso* the most recent Ghibli effort by director Miyazaki Hayao.

[223] Schilling, Mark. *Contemporary Japanese Film*. 1st edition. New York: Weatherhill, 1999., pg. 43-52

[224] Davis, Darrell William. *East Asian Screen Industries*. International Screen Industries. London: British Film Institute, 2008., pg. 65

hint at the changing nature of collaboration between regions. Rather than push for equal division at the level of production or spear head the production, certain Japanese production houses play the role of financial support selectively choosing filmmakers or content to support. At the level of narrative these types of collaborations also allow the filmmakers to have more autonomy in making a story reflective of their interest than a narrative constructed as a representation of the unity between nations.

This chapter has explored the nature of history and the role of the nation-state within flows of media and capital throughout a regional sphere through the international co-productions and transnational blockbusters films throughout Asia from the 1970s through the 1990s. At the same time ideas examined in this piece can be explored further through investigation of Chinese language sources to provide a counterbalance of the motivations for establishing the CFCC, providing a better account for Japan and China's push to establish normalized relations and *The Silk Road* and *Dunhuang* in China's domestic release. Looking at the events from the 1970s to 1980s it becomes clearer that Japan's industrial transformation was not defined by domestic, national boundaries alone. Nor did it occur overnight, but through a slow and challenging process that involved a multitude successes, failures, and course corrections. By reviewing the failed attempts, as much as the successful stories, it is possible to see how these shifts in the industry are motivated and take shape.

Conclusion

In the summer of 2021, *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba – The Movie: Mugen Train* broke domestic box-office records in Japan and became the highest grossing Japanese film of all time.[225] Not just for anime, but for any domestic release in Japanese film history. Some of this can be levied at the inflation of ticket prices, but this was still during the midst of a global pandemic. Perhaps most revelatory is that *Demon Slayer* did not come from an independent anime studio, from venerated animation company Studio Ghibli, or even a unique auteur director who broke through with mainstream success. Rather the film is a continuation of a serialized story begun as a manga, adapted for television and streaming services, and then expanded to a feature film. Moreover, the source material is produced by Shonen Jump, the most popular and commercialized publication of manga materials in Japan. The magnitude of popularity for the serialized property left many scholars and critics scratching their heads for how or why this film would achieve such widespread recognition and financial success.

Demon Slayer is prime example of media properties that have been created, developed, and diffused through the interconnected media industries in Japan that have become synonymous with the contents industry[226] by the government of Japan. Critical engagement with Japan's

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[225] *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba – The Movie: Mugen Train* has grossed over 40 billion yen domestically in Japan and over 57 billion yen worldwide on a budget of roughly 1.8 billion yen.

[226] "Content Industry: Current Status and Direction of Future Development." Media and Content Industry Division Commerce and Information Policy Bureau Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry JAPAN, April 2016. https://www.meti.go.jp/english/policy/mono_info_service/content_industry/pdf/20160329001.pdf. The Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (MITI) in Japan has made increased efforts to promote Japanese soft-power cultural properties globally. The note, "the content industry deals with production and distribution of videos (movies, animation, TV programs), music, games, books, etc. As Japanese content is highly evaluated overseas as part of "Cool Japan", Japan's content industry has great potential to penetrate foreign markets further."

content industry was outlined early in the twenty-first century by Douglas McGray in his article, "Japan's Gross National Cool."[227] In this article McCray argues that in lieu of traditional military Power, Japan has utilized the power of brand images and media content to increase global presence in the mode of a manga series, television adaptation, and feature film property. *Demon Slayer* was produced by ufotable anime studio but co-produced with funding from Aniplex and Shueisha who publish the Shonen Jump comic line where *Demon Slayer* originated from. The film was distributed by Toho and exhibited in their theaters, in the same capacity that they had for Kadokawa and Tokuma Shoten's films prior.

Tokuma Publishing's sale and Kadokawa Holdings acquisition of Daiei Studios in 2002 bookends nearly thirty years of industrial transformation in Japan's domestic film industry. On the macro level it is an example of the increased interconnection between media industries of Japan. A trajectory toward greater flow between media platforms; print, television, film, digital, and mobile technologies. On the immediate level it greatly increased the film library of Kadokawa Holdings by adding over 1600 titles from Daiei's original ownership from 1942-1971 along with the nearly 100 films produced by Daiei under Tokuma Shoten's running of the company from 1975-2001. Ironically this means that both *Rashomon* (1950) that introduced Kurosawa to international audiences and *Madadayo* (1993), Kurosawa's last film produced by Daiei under Tokuma Publishing, are now owned by Kadokawa Holding. In the span of thirty year Kadokawa Shoten went from an outsider in the film industry, derided by critics and specifically Kurosawa, to owning the history of one major studio and the bookend films for arguably the most internationally recognized director from Japan.

[227] McGray, Douglas. "Japan's Gross National Cool." *Foreign Policy*, no. 130 (2002): 44–54.

The impetus for this study was to explore the generative mechanisms of stasis and change in Japan's domestic film industry. Daiei Studios provided a useful template for this exploration of failure and success. The bankruptcy and dissolution of the company provided an opportunity for a company like Kadokawa to enter the film industry and embark on a high-profile form of media convergence promotion under the banner of the Kadokawa Media-Mix. Alternatively, it provided a means for Tokuma Shoten to purchase the studio lot and distribution network of Daiei to pursue international co-productions, found Ghibli studios, and offer an opportunity for young directors like Anno Hideaki, Mamoru Oshii, and Suo Masayuki opportunities to develop as independent artists. For each of these individual successes and opportunities these efforts offered a blueprint but did not become a sustainable model in the industry. Kadokawa Haruki's producer fronted efforts faded after a decade and a half due to his arrest and subsequent removal from the company. Similarly, the international co-production efforts by Tokuma did not become a model for the industry nor lead to a paradigm shift in media flows from Japan to East Asian or western nations. In the end the removal of Kadokawa Haruki, promotion of his brother Kadokawa Tsuguhiko coincided with Kadokawa Publishing and Kadokawa Film to increase their cross-shareholding practices with more and more companies forcing a re-branding and name change to the current conglomerate Kadokawa Holdings, Inc.

The boundaries of this project were to address the mechanisms of change from the early 1970s to the start of the twenty-first century. A period that has traditionally been underrepresented in media studies of Japanese cinema and in case studies of media industries analysis. In conducting this study, it does yield a multitude of questions that were outside the scope of this project but encourage further research. Most prominent among these is what is the nature of conglomerate-based media content creation in the 21st century? What differentiates a

cross-branded conglomerates production and promotion of a property like *Demon Slayer* from Kadokawa Pictures Media-Mix? Is there a substantive difference at the point of creation, the number of companies involved in the greenlighting and development of a property, or how the property is marketed and sold to the public? How does a media-conglomerates intellectual property figure into brand image, legacy, and cultural nostalgia? Finally, what are the dynamics and boundaries of Kadokawa Holdings to other major studios, Toho, Toei, and Shochiku currently?

More directly connected with Kadokawa's purchase of Daiei and Tokuma Shoten's library of films is that now all physical media and digital presentations of these films include the branding from one, two, or all three companies. Today on the physical media releases for *VIRUS*, *Heaven and Earth, The Go Masters,* and *The Silk Road* list Kadokawa and Daiei's logo on the spine. It is obviously not a complete erasure as the logo for the original production companies are still present, but for the causal consumer these films would all appear to originate from the same company.

The question then shifts to how Kadokawa Holdings manages its own brand and the legacy of both iterations of Daiei. In this concern are questions of branding, nostalgia, and memorializing the history of both companies. Over the past decade at the Kadokawa Holdings have made explicit note of the anniversaries and used these time periods to continually draft and frame the intellectual property of Kadokawa Holdings. For the 35th Anniversary in 2011, Kadokawa released most of Kadokawa Pictures initial library from 1976-1993 on DVD for the first time and included a brief history written by Iwasa Yoichi that began the memorializing of Kadokawa Shoten and Kadokawa Pictures. Memorializing terms like "Media Mix" and the ensuing impact that strategy has had both on the dissemination of films, paperback books, and

soundtracks in the case of Kadokawa, but ultimately to the mixing of companies that led to Kadokawa Holdings interconnection with hundreds of other companies. In the Fall of 2016 *Kinema Junpo* magazine recognized forty years of "Kadokawa Film" (*Kadokawa eiga*) with a splashy cover image, profile of significant film entries, and new interview with Kadokawa Haruki characterizing his shakeup of the industry. At the same time Kadokawa Holdings regularly holds "Film Festivals" at their theater in Shinjuku highlighting the history of Kadokawa films[228] produced between 1976-1993 and individuals from Daiei's library of films, most prominently film star Wakao Ayako.[229]

The most critical direction that I intend to focus on, building on this work, is to analyze the relationship between outsider companies like Kadokawa and Tokuma with major studios like Toho, Toei and Shochiku through their distribution and exhibition mechanisms. This inquiry is designed to account for the proliferation of multiplatform and multi-national corporations that developed in the 1970s and 1980s. While the 1990s have been characterized by Schilling and Wada-Marciano as a new period for Japanese cinema and an opportunity for independent artists to thrive, the reality is that most of these artists had to function with the support and back of a major studio. Even back in 1996, the hey-day, of the J-cinema revival Suo Masayuki lamented the state of Japanese film companies. During the press tour for *Shall We Dance,* an internationally lauded comedic drama starring Yakusho Koji as a bored salaryman who takes up

[228] In 2021, The Kadokawa Film Festival is recognizing the 45th Anniversary of their founding with an updated remaster of the inaugural film, *The Inugami Family*, and a new high-definition physical media release. https://cinemakadokawa.jp/kadokawa-45/

[229] Wakao Ayako is one of the most critically and commercially successful stars in Daiei's history, who even in the past decade made a resurgence with a series of successful Softbank commercials and appearances on stage and television. https://cinemakadokawa.jp/ayako-2020/

ballroom dancing, Suo detailed this struggle. “The biggest bottleneck is that the film companies own the theatres. If you want to distribute the films yourself, you will find it extremely difficult to get the right venues.”[230] *Shall we Dance* was financed by Tokuma but distributed and exhibited by Toho. Suo’s exhaustion from this process led to a long break between films, but even Suo was unable to chart a new course with his follow-up *I Just Didn’t Do It* (2006) co-produced by Fuji Television, Altamira Pictures, Inc., and Toho who also distributed the film. Even Suo’s most recent feature *Katsuben* or *Talking the Pictures*, showcasing the history of Benshi performers during the silent period, was similarly produced by Altamira Pictures, Inc., and distributed by Toei in 2019. This example points to the malleability of major studios to continually adapt their production methods and financing to the current media environment while simultaneously maintaining control of important nodes of distribution and marketing that encourage further research going forward.

[230] Schilling., pg. 73

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