Review Of "The Poetics Of Japanese Verse: Imagery, Structure, Meter" By K. Kawamoto

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After the so-called golden age of the 1950s and the era of politically artistic experimentation in the 1960s, the Japanese film industry appeared to fall into the doldrums, bolstering, both at home and abroad, an image of Japanese cinema in decline if not disarray. In the 1970s and 1980s there were occasional Japanese successes on the foreign festival circuit, but they were mostly the products of such established masters as Akira Kurosawa (1910–98) and Shōhei Imamura (b. 1926), a fact that only helped support the impression that what was new in Japanese film, excepting perhaps the work of Jūzō Itami (1933–97) and Yoshimitsu Morita (b. 1950), was not good. Japanese movies, for the most part, stopped appearing at international film festivals. When I arrived in Japan in 1992 and began seeing the work that was not being introduced abroad, I was surprised by the level of quality and range of styles—until then I, too, had believed in the decline of Japanese cinema. Nevertheless, it was difficult to convince colleagues abroad or even young Japanese—who even today consider the domestic output boring and poor in quality—of this excellence.

The situation abroad has changed in the last decade, especially after the success, at film festivals and/or the box office, of a new generation of filmmakers, including Shinji Aoyama (b. 1964), Ryūsuke Hashiguchi (b. 1962), Shunji Iwai (b. 1963), Naomi Kawase (b. 1969), Takeshi Kitano (b. 1947), Hirokazu Koreeda (b. 1962), Kiyoshi Kurosawa (b. 1955), Takashi Miike (b. 1960), Hideo Nakata (b. 1951), and Masayuki Suπ (b. 1956). Also, there is the strong interest in Japanese anime (animated films), with the work of Hayao Miyazaki (b. 1941) and Mamoru Oshii (b. 1951) leading the wave. Japanese cinema is now visible at almost all the world’s film festivals, not only because recent successes have prompted festival programmers to invite more Japanese works but also because independent Japanese filmmakers, still at a disadvantage in a domestic market dominated by major studios, have come to look on foreign film events as a crucial means of gaining prestige and publicity at home. Accomplishments abroad, however, have only come about because of changing perceptions of Japanese cinema and its cultural context. Japanese motion pictures of the 1950s and 1960s earned praise abroad because they were defined as art cinema (as opposed to popular cinema) and because, in a bipolar fashion, they verified universal values of humanism while also confirming impressions of Japan as exotic and unique. Perhaps some recent films—such as Suzaku [Moe no Suzaku; 1997], Naomi Kawase’s quiet portrayal of rural life that won the Camera d’Or for best new director—were a sign of the changing times.

A New Festival Generation

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Recognizing “Others” in a New Japanese Cinema

Aaron Gerow

A new festival generation...
at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival—owe a little of their success to a congruity with such old perceptions; but a work like Takashi Miike’s Audition [Ōdishon; 1999], a gruesome horror film that won a couple of prizes at the 2000 Rotterdam Film Festival, does not. Nowadays not only is Japanese popular cinema, from gangster movies to horror films, earning attention abroad, so is work that fundamentally criticizes the universal humanist paradigm.

Foreign film festivals, as well as movie audiences abroad, now see different qualities in Japanese cinema. It is not my aim here to analyze the frameworks of foreign reception of Japanese cinema or to take up the still numerous problems international film festivals represent. Rather, I want to focus on the films themselves to delineate the different qualities that recent Japanese cinema constructs. In particular, I want to discuss Japanese cinema’s new attention to “others” in Japan, ranging from non-Japanese to other Japanese, and its effort to acknowledge difference within Japan against a background of a crisis in self and identity. Perhaps not all of these qualities are those that draw the attention of non-Japanese viewers, but they provide one perspective on the transformations experienced by recent Japanese cinema and its changing place in the international film world.

A Different Cinematic World The film critic KAshô Abé has written of a radical change in Japanese film culture in the late 1970s identifiable at the point at which major film critics, most of whom had been active since the 1950s, began declaring Japanese cinema uninteresting, if not bad. It seemed as if films that fit their cinematic criteria were no longer being made. Abé says that what these commentators valued was “story” and “theme,” but one can supplement those criteria by noting that many continued to praise films with strong humanistic values and a political concern for social issues, such as those made by Yôji Yamada (b. 1931; e.g., the recent Class to Remember [Gakko] series). Many young Japanese of the post-1970 generation, however, became disillusioned with the possibilities of politics and the universal ideal of humanism, especially after the Asama Sansô incident in 1972, committed by Japanese Red Army cadres after murdering more than a dozen of their own comrades. For the sociologist Masachi Ôsawa, this disillusionment helps mark the shift from the age of ideals to the age of fiction, as many Japanese gave up on the idea of changing reality and preferred instead to experience their own simulated realities (such as at Tokyo Disneyland, which opened in 1983). In film, this shift was manifested in the appearance, first, of Kadokawa films, movies produced by Kadokawa Shoten Publishing Co., Ltd., that emphasized spectacle over story and were driven by massive multimedia marketing campaigns; and second, of such 1980s films as Shûsuke Kaneko’s (b. 1955) Summer Vacation 1999 [1999-nen no Natsu Yasumi; 1988], which focused on a small, closed world cut off from reality.

Transformations in the film world were also supported by changes in criticism. Led by Shigehiko Hasumi (b. 1936) and others, new critics from the 1970s on rebelled against 1960s criticism’s focus on politics to argue that films should be looked at as films, even if that meant bracketing off political and social issues. Cinematic form was more important to a movie than story or film content because that was what made it cinema, and many directors embraced this conceptual trend. Hasumi’s writings on Yasujiro Ozu (1903–63), which focused on Ozu’s testing of the limits of cinema, not on his concerns for the Japanese family or a changing Japan, were particularly influential2 and sparked some young artists like Masayuki Suô and Naoto Takenaka (b. 1936) to formally emulate Ozu in their first films. The filmmakers Nobuhiro Suwa (b. 1960) and Shinji Aoyama, who went to college in the 1980s, have spoken of how, at the time, motion pictures to them were focused on the “how” of cinema, not the “what.”4 Directors who came to prominence in the 1980s, such as Kaïzô Hayashi (b. 1957), Yoshimitsu Morita, and Nobuhiro Ôbayashi (b. 1938), frequently appeared to be concerned more with formal issues than with the stories they told.

Japanese cinema changed even more in the 1990s, though not by returning to the formulation of cinema from before the mid-1970s; one still sees in recent films the aversion to dominant political narratives, especially a universal humanism. There are many ways to conceptualize this change in the 1990s. Suwa and Aoyama describe it as a rejoining of the “how” and “what” of cinema, now conceived as indivisible. Others see it as an even more fundamental breaking down of Japanese cinematic conventions and narrative structures, a trend epitomized by the early films of Takeshi Kitano, which, as the products of a cinematic “amateur” (Kitano had no formal directorial training), violated many of the existing “rules” about form and storytelling. Some critics locate the change in 1989, when such directors as Kitano, Junji Sakamoto (b. 1958), and Takahisa Zeze (b. 1960) debuted; others like Suwa and Aoyama see the 1995 Aum Shinrikyô terrorist attack on Tokyo subways as a turning point, a reminder to filmmakers that there was something out there that still needed saying.

Discovering Ethnic “Others” What many filmmakers thought still required saying, I would argue, was a reconsideration of the “other”—the status of other people, as well as non-Japanese—in Japanese cinema and society. If 1980s cinema often descended into a narcissism of cinematic form and a closed society, 1990s Japanese film sought to break
out of that cocoon to explore encounters with those outside the personal and the national self using filmic styles designed to respect these others.

This is evident from the number of recent films that focus on minorities in Japan or on peoples and cultures abroad. Whereas only very rare works before 1970, such as Nagisa Oshima’s (b. 1932) Death by Hanging [Kabuki kei; 1968], even mentioned, for instance, the existence of resident Koreans (zaimichi Koreans), quite a number of new films, including Masashi Yamamoto’s (b. 1956) Junk Food [Junku Fida; 1998], Yōichi Sai’s (b. 1949) All Under the Moon [Tsuki wa Dotchi ni Dete Ir; 1993], Katsuhiro Otomo’s (b. 1954) World Apartment Horror [Warudo Apartment Horo; 1991], Masato Harada’s (b. 1949) Kamikaze Taxi [Kamikaze Taxi; 1995], and Takahisa Zeze’s Rush! [Rush!; 2001], seek to counter the ideology that Japan is a racially homogeneous nation by focusing on zaimichi Koreans, foreign workers from Asia, and others among the variety of peoples, languages, and cultures that inhabit the archipelago. These “others” within Japan need not be of foreign nationality: for instance, a number of Sai’s works, including the recent The Pig’s Retribution [Buta no Makur; 1999], take up the cultural differences of Okinawa. The increase of films shot in Okinawa in the 1990s, from Kitano’s Sonatine [Sonachiru; 1993] to Yūji Nakae’s (b. 1960) Nabi’s Love [Nabi no Ko; 1999], epitomizes the interest of recent filmmakers in what lies outside the dominant definition of Japanese identity. This concern has been augmented by the fact that “minority” filmmakers, such as zaimichi directors Yōichi Sai and Tetsuaki Matsue (b. 1977; Anmyou Kimichi; 1999), have turned their cameras on themselves and their own people. With, for example, the Welsh-born director John Williams making his award-winning debut film, Firefly Dreams [Ishihan Utusukusha Natsu; 2001], in Japan with Japanese actors, it is getting harder to define “Japanese” cinema.

By taking a new look at “others” in Japan, the Japanese film industry is in part responding to the increased globalization of both image culture and the movie market. While Japanese filmmakers have recently shown a strong interest in Asian films (especially Hong Kong cinema and South Korean blockbusters like Swing), Japan has found important markets for its movies in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and recently South Korea. Coproductions, which often involve mixed casts, are on the rise, as are Japanese films shot abroad in Asia. Not all filmmakers, however, have uncritically jumped on the bandwagon glorifying globalization. Takashi Miike has been one of the central filmmakers both exploring “others” in Japan and actively taking his camera out of the country into Asia, yet much of his work evinces a profound sadness about the prospects of a globalized image culture. He has shot films in Okinawa (Bodyguard Kiba [Bedugado Kiba; 1993]), Taiwan (Rainy Dog [Gokudou Kuro Shakai—Rainy Dog; 1997]), China (The Bird People in China [Chigoku no Chojin; 1998]), and the Philippines (The Guys from Paradise [Tengoku kara Kita Otokotachi; 2001]); and even his films set in Japan, such as The City of Lost Souls [Hyoryu-gai; 2000], feature a cornucopia of languages and ethnicities. Yet what is interesting about Miike’s work is that instead of concentrating on the assemblage of different nationalities, he points his camera at second- or third-generation Japanese who face the ideology of Japan as a racially homogeneous nation by focusing on zaimichi Koreans, foreign workers from Asia, and others among the variety of peoples, languages, and cultures that inhabit the archipelago. These “others” within Japan need not be of foreign nationality: for instance, a number of Sai’s works, including the recent The Pig’s Retribution [Buta no Makur; 1999], take up the cultural differences of Okinawa. The increase of films shot in Okinawa in the 1990s, from Kitano’s Sonatine [Sonachiru; 1993] to Yūji Nakae’s (b. 1960) Nabi’s Love [Nabi no Ko; 1999], epitomizes the interest of recent filmmakers in what lies outside the dominant definition of Japanese identity. This concern has been augmented by the fact that “minority” filmmakers, such as zaimichi directors Yōichi Sai and Tetsuaki Matsue (b. 1977; Anmyou Kimichi; 1999), have turned their cameras on themselves and their own people. With, for example, the Welsh-born director John Williams making his award-winning debut film, Firefly Dreams [Ishihan Utusukusha Natsu; 2001], in Japan with Japanese actors, it is getting harder to define “Japanese” cinema.

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Characters in Ley Lines and The City of Lost Souls escape to the beach or the sea, only to die there. Death on the beach is also a prominent motif in Takeshi Kitano’s work, such as Sonatine; A Scene at the Sea [Aru Natsu, Ishiban Shizukana Umi; 1991]; and Fireworks [Hana-hi; 1997]. In fact, quite a number of recent films, from Satoshi Isaka’s (b. 1960) Focus; Focus; 1996 to Naoe Gōzu’s (b. 1953) Falling into the Evening [Rakkasuru Yigata; 1998], feature characters who flee to Japan’s coast and perish. One senses, especially in Miike’s and Kitano’s work, a strong desire to escape Japan, particularly given how bleak the Japan they depict can be. However, their characters often fail. One is reminded of an episode of the British television program The Prisoner that one of the characters in Shinti Aoyama’s Helpless [Helpless; 1996] discusses: the character Number 6, confined to a Kafkaesque prison Village, escapes the Village only to be thrown back in its midst. Perhaps to many filmmakers, Japan is like the prison Village, impossible to escape even with the supposed transcending of boundaries that globalism promises.

It seems that, to many film producers and audiences, Japanese identity itself is too restricting. One can sense behind such films depicting minorities and foreign residents of Japan a certain dissatisfaction with official definitions of Japanese identity available to young people. Just as some Japanese teenagers are adopting black hip-hop music and elements of African-American culture as an alternative identity framework, so the popularity of, for instance, Isao Yukisada’s (b. 1968) Go [Go; 2001], a teen-rebel movie presenting a zaimichi youth in the James Dean mold, likely indicates both a desire to identify with non-Japanese and empathy with the hero’s goal of “destroying national boundaries.” The representation of such “others” in recent Japanese film is thus a means of not only critiquing ideologies of Japanese homogeneity but also discussing alternative identities.

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Horrifying “Others” and Empty Selves

The boom in horror-movie production in the late 1990s, spurred by the enormous success of Hideo Nakata’s Ring ([Ring; 1998]), reflects both the attraction of “others” and the potential problems behind such attraction. Worldwide, the horror genre has historically oscillated between using the monstrous “other” to reconfirm who “we” are and allowing expression of affinity with those who are not “us” (witness the romantic attraction vampires hold for many). In a country in which social structures tend to be restrictive, indigenous monsters, ranging from Godzilla to ghost cats (bake-neko), have often been sympathetic, themselves frequently the victim of human folly or the injustice of authorities, only becoming monsters as a means of revenge. New “monsters” like the Ring series’ Sadako or Junko in Shūsuke Kaneko’s Crossfire ([Kurosaya; 2000]) are also not unsympathetic figures, being portrayed as somewhat innocent victims of a society that rejects or even demonizes that which is “other” to a supposedly homogeneous society. There are limits, however, to this sympathy for the “other” in many horror movies. Unlike the ghost cats of old, who disappeared once revenge was wreaked, Sadako really does not have a specific object of hatred and thus continues killing forever. Given that she kills through a mysterious videotape, whose viewers die within a week of seeing it, she is in effect the manifestation of our fears of image technology, of a world where reality has been lost to virtual reality. Her ubiquity and continuity ultimately make her more evil than sympathetic, an evil that never really implicates the viewers. Even when “normal” society can also end up seeming monstrous, the audience is usually excused from that accusation. While contemporary horror may exhibit some empathy for the monster/other, a monster is still a monster, and different from “us.”

What makes the horror films of Kiyoshi Kurosawa so devastating is that they definitely do implicate “us” in the monstrous, breaking down the boundaries between “self” and “monster” to reveal the frightening emptiness of the ostensibly “normal” self. In his accomplished Cure ([Cure; 1997]), Mamiya is not much of a “monster”: he is a young amnesiac who can remember neither who he is nor even what happened minutes before. Ostensibly, Mamiya has mastered a form of mesmerism that can spark others to kill, yet in Kurosawa’s hands, his total lack of “self” (of identity, memory, etc.) becomes a means of exposing the utter emptiness in all of us. Mamiya makes it clear that we, who are also empty, are equally monstrous, since in the film it is the “normal” people who do the killing; even our representative of good society, the detective Takabe, becomes like Mamiya in the end. The emptiness of existence in a world without depth is a common theme in Kurosawa’s universe, where people can either fade away, as in the nonhorror film Barren Illusion ([Oinaru Gen’ei; 1999]), or become just a shadowy mark on a flat wall, as in Pulse ([Kairo; 2001]). What is so frightening is that this emptiness can, as Mamiya stresses, also be so tempting; in it, we can forget all our troubles. Kurosawa turns the audience’s desire to be scared back on itself by presenting people who effectively wish their own emptiness/destruction. The people in Pulse die and fade away not because Death, having invaded the Internet in that film, attacks them but rather because they want to die. We, it seems, are the real monsters wreaking havoc.

The “Other” and the New Self

Given the way the city in Pulse gradually becomes depopulated, it seems as if the entire world wishes to fade away. Kurosawa’s film seems to cite a number of contemporary discourses on youth culture that stress the intense ennui, the “endless everyday” of existence. Such discourses also serve as part of the background for the surge of films exploring the personal self, for if dissatisfaction with dominant definitions of Japanese identity has led to explorations of “other” identities, the blandness of the contemporary self has prompted some young filmmakers to use the cinema as a medium of self-discovery, as a means to establish a more substantial self. In especially experimental or documentary work, one sees a significant number of productions in which the filmmaker or his or her family is the object being filmed and explored. Naomi Kawase’s films before Suzaku, especially Embracing ([Ni Tsutsumarete; 1992] and Katatsumori [Katatsu- mori; 1994]), are prominent examples of this trend. Embracing is actually a personal documentary about Kawase’s search for the father who abandoned her when she was a baby, and Katatsumori is about the great aunt who raised her. Turning the camera on these relatives is much like the double-exposure shots of Kawase in the mirror in Embracing: an attempt to clarify the image of the self and where it came from. This personal approach to filmmaking extends even to her recent feature-length Hotaru ([Hotaru; 2000]), whose heroine, Ayako, is very much a mirror image of Kawase. However, what makes Kawase’s personal work different from that of many other “self-discovery” film-
Shinji Aoyama (courtesy of Bitters End, Inc.).

makers, who often fall into a form of narcissism, is the genuine affection for other people that is apparent on screen. This concern for others stems in part from her recognition of their place in her personal makeup, but as her narration in Memory of the Wind [*Kaze no Kioku*; 1995] stresses—“I want them to understand that I am here. . . . I want them to call my name” —the “other” is also needed to recognize and certify her existence.

Here one can see that the attention given to the “other” in recent Japanese cinema is not directed exclusively at either non-Japanese or those who are different from standard definitions of Japanese identity but includes any “other” person who is important in exploring increasingly troubled self-identities. Shinji Aoyama’s films have been important for their concentration on the problem of relating to such immediate “others,” seeing in it a microcosm of sociopolitical relations. Many of his characters are empty: this is literally the case with Saga, the detective in *An Obsession* [*Tsunetai Chi*; 1997] who has lost a lung; others, especially young people, such as Kenji in *Helpless*, Yôichi in *Two Punks* [*Chinpira*; 1996], Shimano in *An Obsession*, and Rika and Shingo in *Shady Grove* [*Sheidi Gurôbu*; 1999], all share an aimlessness and sense of meaninglessness in their lives. By focusing on issues of trauma, memory, and mourning in works like *Eureka* [*Tsurika*; 2000], Aoyama locates the source of this emptiness in postwar history, especially in Japan’s inability to deal with its war responsibility, which has burdened a young generation with a horrific legacy without the knowledge or tools to cope with it. His solution to this emptiness includes promoting the act of mourning (although always in a personal way that shuns dominant politics) but also concentrates on establishing self-existence through relations with others. This is evident in the concluding narration read simultaneously by both Rika and Shingo in *Shady Grove*:

Until then, I did not understand the meaning of my own existence. Why was I here? Then I heard someone’s voice. . . . And I learned that voice was his/hers, and the voice and the body became one. Now there is something certain. As long as he/she exists, I exist too. Because I am looking at him/her looking at me.

In Aoyama’s films, the “other” confirms one’s existence, but this is never an easy task. One of the central questions in *An Obsession*, posed by Shimano, is “Do you know how love can be proved?” In the end, Shimano can do that only by committing double suicide with his lover, Kimiko. Communication, and thus contact with the other, is always a difficult task in Aoyama’s work.

**Antihumanism and the Detached Style**  Part of the reason for this difficulty is that Aoyama—and, I would argue, many other contemporary filmmakers—no longer accepts the humanist assumption that people are at heart all the same and can easily communicate based on that shared essence. When a golden-age director like Tadashi Imai (1912–91) portrayed “others,” such as the mixed-race children in *Kiku and Isamu* [*Kiku to Isamu*; 1959], he did so on the premise that his audience could understand and sympathize with their fate. The post-1970s rejection of established politics by many young people, however, also led to a repudiation of the metanarratives or universal truths these politics were based on, such as “humanity” and “progress.” Aoyama resolutely declares that his is a “materialistic cinematic practice that runs counter to what is generally called ‘depicting humanity’ or ‘depicting sympathy.’” Far from assuming a shared humanity that can allow communication with the “other,” Aoyama asserts an impenetrability of the “other” as the basis of a different politics. Rejecting the political work of 1960s Japanese New Wave directors, such as Nagisa Ôshima and Shôhei Imamura, Aoyama, stating that a true new wave is “nothing other than a discourse dueling over the sole point of how to treat the other from a political perspective,” argues that such politics must recognize the unknowability of the “other.”

Quite a number of recent films appear to share this stance. Two, Ryôsuke Hashiguchi’s *Like Grains of Sand* [*Nagisa no Shindobaddo*; 1995] and Nobuhiro Suwa’s *M/Other* [*M/Other*; 1999], actually take as their central theme the problem of invading another’s world, in effect advocating a position of respecting the other’s right not to be known. *Like Grains of Sand* focuses on four high school students who, while fumbling through the conflicts between heterosexual and homosexual love, end up invading each other’s private space and feelings—especially Uehara, who not only interrogates others about their feelings but also breaks into other people’s homes. The film makes apparent the pain and confusion caused by such invasions. In *M/Other*, a man living with a woman suddenly brings home his son one day after his ex-wife is hospitalized. He did not consult with his lover about this, and the boy ends up monopolizing her life as the man increasingly expects her to take care of him. Their relationship itself is on the verge of breaking up. Interestingly, this drama takes place in an International Style house that has windows not only on outer walls but between rooms; here the ease of seeing an “other” becomes a sign of invading that person’s world. As if following up on that problem of vision, both films adopt a style that
tries to respect their characters’ right not to be known. The camera is kept at a distance from the actors, rarely moving into the close-ups that, in most films, are used to provide access to character psychology or emotion. The shots themselves are rather lengthy, refraining from the directing of spectator vision through editing that usually functions to clarify or explain what characters are doing. Finally, both films refrain from using point-of-view shots, a technique that, by showing us what a character sees, lets us, you could say, “stand in her shoes” and understand her perceptions. Suwa and Hashiguchi, in a sense, remain detached from their characters, treating them like real people we can only approach from the outside, without ever hoping to know exactly what they think or feel.

It is for this reason that I call this approach to cinema the “detached style.” It is one of the dominant styles of recent independent Japanese cinema, and one can see it in the still, deadpan acting of Kitano’s characters, who are so external we rarely know what they are thinking; in the long shot, long takes of Koreeda, who in a film like *Maborosi* [*Maboroshi no Hikari*; 1995] does not even let us see the face of his heroine during her most emotionally anguished moments; or in the actions of Kenji in *Helpless*, who kills a cook and a waitress in a roadside cafe, without the film ever clarifying why he does so. It is a style that understates the dramatic, refrains from explanation, refuses to psychologize, and in general makes the viewer work hard to understand what is going on. Some could argue that this cinematic attitude is a continuation of the traditions of an Ozu or a Mizoguchi, who employed a restrained use of cinematic technique to focus on the quiet details, not the big dramas of life. However, few of the recent films in the detached style share these golden-age directors’ assumptions of humanity or Japaneseness. In addition, the detached style is defined in part through its rejection of the styles of dominant cinema and television, styles that take narrative clarity as their priority and thus make an extra effort to explain what is going on—even to the point of letting the audience know what the characters are thinking and feeling when that is narratively important. The detached style rejects the emphasis on explanation and thus creates a world that is, on the one hand, more opaque and uncertain and, on the other, populated with people who gain a certain freedom from their detachment from others.

Recent Japanese cinema’s attention to “others” thus does not stem simply from a recognition of new “others” in Japanese society; it is an effort to acknowledge that there are “others” who do not fit dominant Japanese definitions of identity and thus are not knowable in the usual ways. While some films demonize these unknowable others, other works respect or even celebrate their inaccessibility. Since these “others” can be other Japanese, recent cinema also recognizes difference within Japan on the ethnic and even individual level, breaking up a homogeneous Japan by rejecting assumptions that all Japanese share a mutual self-understanding. This vision of the world is not without complications, especially if the “other” is also sought out in cinema as a means of recognizing the self, rescuing it from emptiness. This is what makes communication so necessary and yet so difficult in the films of Aoyama, Suwa, and others. Such young directors seem to say that, in a world where a shared humanity can no longer be assumed, we can only communicate with others by first recognizing their basic, ineluctable difference. Perhaps foreign film festivals, in recognizing this new Japanese cinema, are in some part also acknowledging its inherent differences from the traditional definitions of Japanese cinema.

**Notes**

4. See the dialogue between Suwa and Aoyama, “Cinema as a Natural Phenomenon,” in the official catalogue of the 2000 Viennese International Film Festival.
5. *Zanrenjî koji*, literally “children left behind,” refers to the large number of children, either orphaned, abandoned, or lost, who were left behind in China or Manchuria when their Japanese parents, who had helped colonize those areas before and during World War II, were compelled to return to Japan after the war. These children were largely forgotten until improved relations with China helped some of them and their families return to Japan thirty or forty years later. That they were raised in China and married Chinese made it difficult for them and their children to adjust to Japanese society.
7. See, for instance, the influential work of Shinji Miyadai, *Owari naki Nichijô o Bhero: Onna Kanzen Kohakuwa Makyou [Live Endless Days: A Complete Manual for Overcoming Aum Shinrikyô]* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo Publishing Co., Ltd., 1995), which understands contemporary youth as perceiving the world as an endless string of boring days. This kind of thinking serves as one of the backgrounds for Pulpis’s death-desiring characters.
9. Ibid., 168.
10. I should note that some have criticized directors like Shinji Iwai and Hirokazu Koreeda for an aestheticism (in Koreeda’s case, derived from the detached style) that ends up reconfirming national ideologies. See Shinji Aoyama, Yutaka Yasaki, and Kazushige Abé, “Kenzaika Suru ‘Nihon’ to ‘i Jiko” [“The Self that Manifests Itself as ‘Japan’”], *Cahiers du Cinema Japan* 19 (1996): 84–100; or my essay “Consuming Asia, Consuming Japan,” in *Censoring History*, ed. Laura Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000).
AWARDS

Praemium Imperiale
The five winners of the 13th Praemium Imperiale, given by the Japan Art Association to honor excellence in culture and the arts, were announced. This year’s recipients are the Korean painter Lee Ufan, the French sculptor Marta Pan, the French architect Jean Nouvel, the American jazz saxophonist and composer Ornette Coleman, and the American playwright Arthur Miller.

Kikuchi Prize
The winners of the 49th Kikuchi Prize, sponsored by the Association for the Promotion of Japanese Literature and awarded to individuals and organizations that have demonstrated notable innovation and creativity in any sphere of cultural activity, were announced. They are the writer Saiichi Maruya; the animated-film director Hayao Miyazaki; the North American major-league baseball player Ichiro Suzuki; the film critic Juzaburo Futaba for his six-volume work Seiyu Shinema Taikai: Boku no Saitenhyou [A Compendium of Western Cinema: My Personal Rankings]; the Mainichi Newspapers investigative team that exposed a renowned amateur archaeologist’s fabricated discoveries of Paleolithic stone tools; and the sta‡ of NHK’s Project X, a television documentary series featuring unsung men and women who played major roles in groundbreaking projects in postwar Japan.

Order of Culture
The government has announced the recipients of the Order of Culture and those who will be honored as a Person of Cultural Merit in fiscal 2001. The five people awarded the Order of Culture are the scientist Hiroo Inokuchi, the artist Tadashi Moriya, the social anthropologist Chie Nakane, the virologist Kumao Toyoshima, and the sculptor Toshio Yodoi. The fifteen people named a Person of Cultural Merit include the former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata, the conductor Seiji Ozawa, and the novelist Shitaro Yasuoka.

HISTORY

Early Yukio Mishima Play Discovered
The manuscript of a previously unknown play written by Yukio Mishima (1925–70) when he was just fourteen years old has been discovered. Titled Ro-tai [Journey], the forty-page play takes the Annunciation as its subject. The autograph manuscript pages were found scattered among various papers that Mishima’s family donated to the Mishima Yukio Museum, Yamanashi Prefecture, in 1996. This priceless document is early evidence of Mishima’s literary genius.

Arts Plan 21 Initiated
The Agency for Cultural Affairs has launched the Arts Plan 21 program to encourage cultural activities in such fields as film, ballet, and opera, with the goal of fostering distinguished works in each field. The Agency will request funding in the fiscal 2002 budget. Arts Plan 21 also aims to cultivate promising artists capable of world-class achievements and to promote projects that encourage children to participate in cultural endeavors. One factor leading to the creation of Arts Plan 21 is the marked decline in private-sector funding of cultural and artistic activities as a result of Japan’s continuing economic recession.

MISCELLANEOUS

Society for the Study of Manga Founded
Together with a number of scholars, critics, and manga [Japanese comics] artists, Kyoto Seika University, the only Japanese university with a School of Cartoon and Comic Art, has established the Japan Society for Studies in Cartoon and Comics. The society will be based in Kyoto, and its main activities will consist of promoting manga-related research and scholarly exchange, collecting and exhibiting relevant materials, and organizing scholarly networks. A society journal will publish members’ research reports; and dictionaries, manuals, and compendia will also be produced, with the aim of furthering scholarly inquiry. In addition to scholars, critics, and artists, the society will also accept manga-art aficionados as members.

Public Art at a Construction Site
Beginning in September 2001, contemporary public art will be on display at Tokyo’s multibillion-dollar “Roppongi Hills” redevelopment site, scheduled for completion in the spring of 2003. Designed to harmonize with the surrounding environment, the exhibition is intended to win the public’s acceptance.
of and interest in the colossal redevelopment project. The exhibition anticipates the fall 2003 opening of the Mori Arts Center, a museum of contemporary art and culture being established in association with New York City’s Museum of Modern Art. It is planned to use the full 500-meter length of the hoarding around the construction site to project a series of large moving-image installations. The display will feature themes from Japan’s urban environment.

(N: Aug. 24)

Ghibli Museum Opens

The Ghibli Museum, operated by the studio of the animated-film director Hayao Miyazaki (b. 1941), well known for his Mononoke-hime [Princess Mononoke; 1997] and other films, has opened in Mitaka, Tokyo. In addition to exhibits based on Miyazaki’s films, the museum also features displays that give visitors an idea of the complex process involved in making animated movies, as well as a theater showing short films made exclusively for the museum by Studio Ghibli. One of the most popular features is a giant Catbus—modeled on the bus-type car from Miyazaki’s film Tonari no Totoro [My Neighbor Totoro; 1988]—which children can climb on and ride.

(A, M, N, S, Y: Oct. 1)

Animated Cartoons Are Language-Learning Aids

Gakushū Anime no Yakata (The Palace for Learning with Animated Cartoons) is a Web site that offers visual mnemonics, in the form of animated cartoons, for remembering kanji, hiragana, and katakana. The site can be used to teach for remembering kanji, hiragana, and katakana. The site can be used to teach children memorize kanji—can be accessed at <http://www.sabah.edu.my/meiko/>.

(N: Oct. 26)

OBITUARIES

Shinji Sōmai, 53, film director, September 9. He dropped out of university and joined the Nikkatsu studios, eventually going independent in 1979. He worked on productions of the late avant-garde playwright and filmmaker Shūji Terayama and others and in 1980 debuted as a film director. Sōmai’s films, for example, Stray Cat to Kikanji [School Uniforms and Machineguns; 1981] and Taiju Kurabu [Typhoon Club; 1985], frequently starred ingénues who had little acting experience but from whom his uncompromising direction drew superb performances. Sōmai’s film A, Haru [Wait and See; 1998] received the FIPRESCI (International Federation of Film Critics) Prize at the 1999 Berlin International Film Festival.

(A, M, N, S, Y: Sep. 10)

Hatsuko Kikuhara (born Hatsu Nuhohara), 102, master of musical accompaniment for juta (traditional Japanese ballads), professor emerita of Osaka College of Music, September 9. A grande dame of the Japanese musical world who still performed professionally after reaching the age of one hundred, she devoted her life to conveying the traditions of the shamisen and koto to younger generations. At a young age she began studying formally with her grandfather and father, who also were koto and shamisen masters, and at age twenty-eight she adopted the stage name Hatsuko Kikuhara. The novelist Jun’ichirō Tanizaki was one of her father’s shamisen students, and she is said to have been the inspiration for Shunkin, the eponymous blind shamisen teacher in Tanizaki’s famous novel Shunkin-shō [A Portrait of Shunkin; 1933]. Kikuhara was named a Living National Treasure in 1999.

(A, M, N, S, Y: Sep. 13)

Shinchō Kokontei II (born Kyōji Minobe), 63, rakugo (comic monologue) performer, October 1. An incomparable rakugo performer, he also appeared as an actor on television and the legitimate stage and in films. The second son of the master rakugo artist Shinchō Kokontei V, Shinchō Kokontei made his debut in 1957, using the professional name Shūta Kokontei. Rising in the rakugo world at an unprecedented speed, he became a headliner and assumed the professional name Shinchō in 1962. The quick pace, clarity, and lively grace with which he delivered his comic monologues won him a wide following. His legitimate-stage performances had a distinctive depth and originality.

(A, M, N, S, Y: Oct. 1)

Yoritsune Matsudaira, 94, composer, October 25. A pioneer in Japanese contemporary music, and dean of the Japanese musical world. Born in Tokyo, he began to study piano and musical composition while a student in the Department of French at Keio University. He made his debut in 1930 with a piano recital of modern French music and his original works. His distinctive compositions—an eclectic fusion of gagaku (traditional court music), twelve-tone techniques, and indeterminacy—earned him international renown. He fostered the development of many younger composers, including his own son, Yoritaka Matsudaira. His works include the opera Genji Monogatari [The Tale of Genji]. He was named a Person of Cultural Merit in 1996.

(A, M, N, Y: Oct. 29)
Makoto Nakamura’s Posters

Raymond Vézina

Japan is one of only a handful of countries whose poster designers are known the world over. Their numbers include Yūsaku Kamekura (1915–97), Kazumasa Nagai (b. 1929), Ikkō Tanaka (1930–2002), Shigeo Fukuda (b. 1932), Tadanori Yokoo (b. 1936), Eiko Ishioka (b. 1939), and Makoto Nakamura (b. 1926), our focus here.

From a taxicab on a rainy day more than twenty years ago, while I was in Japan to study some of its poster creators, I saw Makoto Nakamura’s magnificent poster for the perfume Mai. It presented a sumptuously made-up woman’s eye framed by a fringe of bangs and a folding paper fan. Hanging nearly five meters (sixteen feet) above street level on a dark, painted wall, the mainly golden-hued poster produced an amazing effect under the waterfall of rain. I thought at the time that the graphic designer who could create such an image deserved to be studied. Two decades later, in the autumn of 2000, a three-month grant from the Japan Foundation made such study possible.

Accompanied by my wife and collaborator, Mineko Suzuki, I stayed in Japan from October 2000 to January 2001. I was able not only to obtain publications unknown to me but also to search the Tokyo Art Directors Club (ADC) archives and consult documentation at the Shiseido Corporate Museum, in Shizuoka Prefecture. During the research, interviews with Nakamura himself were essential. He patiently responded with careful precision to many questions left unanswered by earlier publications.

Translated from the French by Michael Larouche. Raymond Vézina is a professor in the School of Design, University of Québec at Montréal. His research on the theme “Study of Shiseido’s Posters by Makoto Nakamura” was supported by a 2000 Japan Foundation fellowship.

Early Years

Born in 1926 to a well-to-do family of traders in Iwate Prefecture, Makoto Nakamura became interested in photography at the age of thirteen and even had a darkroom in his parent’s home. From 1944 to 1948 he studied graphic design in Tokyo. Why, at the height of World War II, did he choose to study graphic design and in a city like Tokyo? “Even if public opinion was optimistic at the beginning of the war, we felt that something grave was going on and that we would perhaps not live very long,” Nakamura told us. “I therefore decided to do at that moment what brought me the greatest pleasure, to study visual communication.” Since the most eminent teachers were in Tokyo, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (now the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music) was the logical choice.

In January 1947, when he still had a full year of studies to complete in order to receive his degree, he offered his services gratis to Shiseido Co., Ltd., which proposed to pay the travel expenses he incurred while working as an assistant.

At that time, Ayao Yamana (1897–1980) was Shiseido’s director of visual communication. His style incorporated silhouettes influenced by art nouveau and art deco; elegant, willowy women represented by a few supple pen strokes and flounces that gave his characters a festive look, as if they danced and dreamed far from the realities of everyday life.

Hired full time in 1949, Nakamura would work more than fifty years with Shiseido, climbing the professional ladder to win international awards and ascending the administrative hierarchy to become executive director of the company’s Advertising Division.

Innovator at Shiseido

While Yamana used drawing techniques, Nakamura used photography. His techniques met with no resistance, since photography had been used before to a certain degree at Shiseido and photos were becoming more and more popular with the general public. Furthermore, with Shiseido’s beauty-care products developing at a phenomenal rate in the prosperous postwar era, the company’s publicity needed to be diversified in order to reach new consumers. Given the huge success of his posters, it was natural that after twenty-two years of working for Shiseido, Nakamura replaced Yamana when he decided to retire in 1969, leaving the position of director of the Advertising Production Department open.

Founded in 1872, Shiseido changed its principal line from pharmaceutics to cosmetic products in 1915, marketing joie de vivre, well-being, elegance, and exoticism. To promote popular product lines, visual communication had to be directed at a general public consisting...
mainly of adolescents and women of modest means. For many years, Shiseido’s corporate magazine offered advice on skin care and how to use the company’s products, content comparable to that of basic classes on cosmetics and skin care. For this same public, Shiseido produced posters and fliers for point-of-sale and mass-transit display, most of them featuring pretty young women. At the same time, prestige products had to be carefully marketed to emphasize their quality. These products came to symbolize a social status sought by many young professionals at a growing number of companies flourishing in the decades following World War II. High-quality posters, Nakamura’s forte, ensured nationwide promotion of the most sophisticated products.

Career Highlights
In 1963 Nakamura received the Japan Advertising Artists Club Members Award for his poster for Shiseido’s international “Forever Enchanting” campaign. This important prize elevated him to the rank of foremost graphic designer of that era.

His 1964 poster for the “Make-up Tokyo” campaign received the gold prize from the Tokyo ADC. The extreme high-contrast effect that Nakamura used for this photo reveals the model’s features almost as a sketch. The result looks a lot like Yamana’s line drawings. (Interestingly, Shiseido Canada reproduced this poster on a flier in the spring of 2001.)

Two years later, a new era began for Nakamura and Shiseido’s visual communication, with the elevation of models to the status of superstars. The musical star Bibari Maeda was chosen for the 1966 summer campaign because of the natural way that she radiated healthy self-confidence and joie de vivre. For the first time, a young woman dressed only in a bathing suit was presented in a foreground close-up, alone on a beach, unconcerned about everyday realities. In fact, Shiseido was offering a paradise of leisure and serenity to an industrious society exhausted by long work hours and lacking vacation time for beach-going. Tanned and vibrant, the model was delivering a message of independence and a new social system. The poster’s success was immediate and unprecedented.

Nakamura first received international recognition in 1976, from the Warsaw International Poster Biennale judges for his 1973 poster for Shiseido Nail Art and Flash Eyes cosmetics. The gold medal given to him recognized the quality of a poster that is now famous all over the world and is still reproduced in most books on posters.

The Japanese prizes awarded to Nakamura are so numerous that a full list would run many pages long. Each year after 1960, the Tokyo ADC and other organizations gave much recognition to his work.

Nakamura’s 1973 choice of another virtually unknown model, Sayoko Yamaguchi, can be counted among the most important decisions of his career. The very sight of her stirred such emotion in him that he decided to avoid contact with her except for a few rare and fleeting moments at official ceremonies. He would give very detailed instructions to his team about poses, locations, moods, makeup, and hairstyles and afterward would work with the pictures resulting from these photography sessions. Appearing mysterious, gentle, and dreamy, Yamaguchi appealed to women and caught men’s eyes.

In 1978, at fifty-two years of age, Nakamura received the Kinugasa Prize (now called the Yamana Prize) for career achievement.

What Makes Nakamura Original
Nakamura’s commercial-product posters are among the best on the international scene because of their content and technical quality. First of all, not only did he constantly use photography in his publicity posters for beauty products but he also introduced in them messages that spoke to clients of elegance, beauty, well-being, dreams, happiness, and even eroticism. Better lenses and better printing technology allowed him to produce images that had previously been thought impossible.

Nakamura knew how to enhance the talent of his close collaborators, whose excellence contributed much to his own success. The early team was very efficient: Hideaki Murase (b. 1939), print- and cropping specialist; Noriaki Yokosuka (b. 1937), photographer; Tsutshiro Inuyama (b. 1935) and, later, Takao Onoda (b. 1942), copywriter; and himself as artistic director. Noriaki Yokosuka collaborated with Nakamura for more than thirty years.

As the years passed, he always continued his search for originality, using cropping techniques, choosing specific elements in photos of models that would catch the eye, surprise, and/or astonish. In his best posters, he chose to show only a veiled face or artistically made-up eyelashes or fingers. These details appeared with such clarity that in certain cases it is possible to see light glistening from each individual hair.

Furthermore, Nakamura was able not only to choose capable models but to direct them with such tact as to draw from them emotions in harmony with the Japanese people’s life at different moments of their history since World War II. In a situation probably unique for models promoting commercial products, Bibari Maeda and Sayoko Yamaguchi became celebrities as famous as film and television stars.
The elegance, originality, cutting-edge techniques, and emotional impact of Nakamura’s posters have often been celebrated by his peers, who bestowed on him the highest honors at local, national, and international levels.

Years of Glory
In 1979 Nakamura became executive director of Shiseido’s Advertising Division, composed of about one hundred and twenty people, a far cry from its humble beginnings of eight people in 1947. In 1982 he began to receive honors that are reserved for the true elite, becoming director of the Advertising/Production Department. Also in 1982 he participated in the important “Poster Exhibition by Ten World Artists” sponsored by the Asahi Shimbun and held at Tokyo’s Takashimaya department store. Other honors were given to him in subsequent years.

In 1984, at the age of fifty-eight, he received a gold medal in New York at the Japan Graphic Design Exhibition. And in 1988 Kodansha published a deluxe, large-format book titled Nakamura Makoto no Shigoto [The Works of Makoto Nakamura], which is widely considered to be one of the most beautiful volumes on the oeuvre of a single graphic designer. The quality of both the information and the color reproduction made this book a success.

The Japanese government bestowed the Medal with Purple Ribbon on him in 1993 in recognition of his professional achievements.

The Ginza Graphic Gallery presented a solo exhibition in 1995 and published a small, sixty-three page book titled Nakamura Makoto. The book includes many of his print projects and a very interesting text by Noriaki Yokosuka.

In 1999 Nakamura was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Tokyo ADC. One reason that fellow poster designer Kazumasa Nagai gave for nominating him was “the visual identity that Shiseido has achieved today was developed under Nakamura’s leadership, which has had a lasting impact.”

Conclusion
Following my research internship, exhibitions are planned to begin in 2002 under the auspices of the Japan Foundation. Thus far, Toronto, Canada; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Mexico City have been chosen as venues; other cities will be added when the tour is organized. In Mexico, the exhibition will be one of the main events organized by Xavier Bermúdez, director of the International Poster Biennale.

Moving the Masses: Rural Poverty and the Village Division and Relocation Campaign in the 1930s

Anke Scherer

Between 1932 and the end of World War II nearly 300,000 rural people emigrated from Japan to settle in Manchukuo—the puppet state in northeast China created from the provinces of Manchuria on March 1, 1932, under the aegis of the Japanese Guandong Army. However, the idea of resettling Japanese farmers in the Manchurian countryside did not originate with the Guandong Army. Even before the official founding of Manchukuo, a group of bureaucrats and academics associated with the agrarian nationalist Kanji Katō (1884–1967) had envisioned the expansion of the “Yamato race” (the Japanese) to the continent, where settlers would live in self-sufficient communities of a rural utopia. The Guandong Army, which was created in 1919 to guard and administer the Japanese concession territories and subsequently became the main power in northeast China, supported the emigration of Japanese farmers. Their settlements were to serve as protection for train lines, industrial plants, and the northern border with the U.S.S.R., and to provide food for the Japanese Army.

Having different motives but a common goal, the Guandong Army and the Katō group lobbied together for state sponsorship of migration to Manchuria. However, the cabinet rejected their first proposal in March 1932 for financial reasons. Persistent lobbying and the appointment of a new minister of finance finally resulted in the drafting of a
small-scale resettlement plan in August 1932. However, plans for state-sponsored mass migration were approved only in August 1936, after a political shift to the right in the wake of the failed coup d’état of February 26, 1936. The historian Kyōji Asada (b. 1931), who has done extensive research on the plans for mass emigration to Manchuria, distinguishes three phases of emigration. During the test phase, from 1932 to 1936, only a few hundred paramilitary settlers emigrated to the continent. The second phase, from 1937 to 1941, was characterized by mass migration. In the last phase, from 1942 to 1945, emigration stagnated and bureaucrats tried to compensate for the lack of farm households volunteering for migration by sending young men aged from fourteen to nineteen as “Young Pioneers for the Development of Manchuria and Mongolia.”

Poverty, Population, and Migration

Japanese had been migrating to places like Hawaii and Brazil since the opening of Japan late in the nineteenth century, but an unprecedented mobilization effort was needed for the movement of several million people. This mobilization was to be achieved through massive government intervention in ordinary people’s thought and behavior, as well as allocation of resources to manage not only the economy but also society itself. Sheldon Garon, professor of history at Princeton University, calls this tool to implement and guide development in a direction desired by the government “social management.”

One of the aims of such government efforts, to directly influence economic and social conditions was addressing the problem of rural poverty in the 1920s and 1930s. As early as 1914, agricultural economists cited so-called rural overpopulation as one of the reasons for the continuing plight of large parts of the countryside. According to this theory, the majority of Japan’s peasants simply did not have enough land under cultivation to use the family’s labor fully, and because little land was left to reclaim, emigration of farm families appeared to be the only solution to their plight. When the “Millions to Manchuria” plan created a demand for farmers to be transferred from Japan to northeast China, the natural answer seemed to be the systematic export of the poorest segment of the peasantry as surplus population. This idea was the conceptual basis of the so-called Village Division and Relocation Campaign (bunson unds), which aimed to send between one-third and one-half of all village households to new settlements in Manchuria in order to revive the village economy.

The Rural Economic Rehabilitation Campaign

To combat the crisis in the rural economy, a Rural Economic Rehabilitation Campaign was inaugurated in August 1932. Principally, this campaign was aimed at increasing agricultural productivity through careful planning, selective financial aid, and close monitoring and control of the whole process. Its main purpose was to revive the rural economy not through outside help but by building on the economy’s own strength by using resources efficiently and reforming agricultural production to incorporate modern methods. To achieve this ambitious goal, local economic rehabilitation committees were to draw up detailed economic plans for their entire villages and attempt to integrate every single household into the process. The campaign was scheduled to run for twelve years and to bring one thousand new villages into the program each year.

The result of these meticulously planned economic measures in the participating villages was not what the planners had envisioned, however. Instead of improving the situation of the poorest peasants, the campaign brought benefits mostly to the middle- and high-income segments of the rural population. This happened because only the latter classes of households had the resources to implement measures like diversification of production, reclamation of new land, and increase of productivity through use of better fertilizers. Thus, instead of helping the poorest segment of the village population, the campaign widened the gap between the owners of middle-sized plots and the local have-nots and day laborers. Although there seems to have been little interest in the issue of emigration to Manchuria in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the failure of the Rehabilitation Campaign to address the financial problems of the rural poor finally made the promotion of emigration to Manchuria an option to be considered seriously from 1936 on.

During the next two years, the notion of improving the overall economic record of the rural economy by eliminating the least productive segment of the population and thus providing more resources for the remaining peasants became quite popular among those concerned with agricultural policies. However, it also became clear that fulfilling the ambitious quotas set in the course of the Millions to Manchuria plan would require more than just the occasional adventurous young villager who was prepared to try to make a living as an agricultural settler in Manchuria. To achieve the goal of resettling an appreciable number of people, the decision to participate in the government’s emigration program was shifted from the individual level to the community level.

This is not to say that the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry suddenly ordered implementation by the villages. Rather, it seems that the movement to make emigration to Manchuria a village policy evolved in the process of the ongoing consultation and planning in the Rural Economic Rehabilitation Campaign. The core of this new village policy was the above-mentioned concept of bunson (village division). This was by no means a revolutionary concept, since it had already been used in the recruitment of colonizers for Hokkaido in the nineteenth century; there was also the precedent of some villages that had collectively decided to send a considerable part of their population to settle in South America in the late nineteenth century.
The Village Division and Relocation Campaign

It is not clear when the term bunson came into being. Most probably it was coined when the first local emigration-support group started discussing its plans with the Ministry for Colonial Affairs. It definitely entered common usage after February 1937, when it was applied to the movement’s famous showcase, the village of Ōhinata in Minami Saku, Nagano Prefecture.

By the summer of 1937, quite a substantial number of villages from the Rural Economic Rehabilitation Campaign had decided to join the movement for emigration to Manchuria by drawing up plans for the division of their villages. While villages worked out their division plans, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry started turning this scheme into the main policy for the emigration movement to Manchuria. Together with the Ministry for Colonial Affairs, it drafted the nationwide “Scheme for Emigration Through Village Division,” which was adopted in June 1938 at a joint conference of all administrative entities in charge of the Rural Economic Revival. On July 13, 1938, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry added funding to its plans to subsidize village-division plans.

According to a formula presented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in 1937, every community could easily calculate its “overpopulation” rate. The formula was based on the assumption that the average household needed one chō (0.992 hectares) of arable land for survival. Subtracting the village’s total farmland area from its number of households revealed the number of “surplus households,” which, divided by the total amount of farmland, yielded the percentage of the putative overpopulation of the village. Sending all the “surplus households” to a settlement in Manchuria reduced this percentage of overpopulation to zero. This crude measure became the basis for calculating the quota of households to be sent to Manchuria in the Village Division and Relocation Campaign. The only problem for the communities was then to identify those “surplus households” and persuade them that the village would be better off if they left it for good. This notion of the so-called surplus population and the resulting quotas added a lot of pressure to the campaign, and rather than being lured by the promised good life in Manchuria, many emigrants were simply bullied into participating through social pressure.

Village Politics

Soon after the first wave of settlers from the village-division campaign had resettled in Manchuria, most participating communities ran into trouble and could not recruit enough settlers to fulfill their quotas, and the enthusiasm for emigration to Manchuria vanished. In any case, active participants in emigration were only a minority, and they usually came from a wealthier segment of the peasantry, which meant that they were not even the actual targets of the promotion efforts. Their activism was ideologically motivated by the desire for change in rural society. Some had an ideological background in socialism, others in agrarian nationalism, still others turned from Marxism to agrarian nationalism. They usually perceived migration to Manchuria as an opportunity to realize their ideas of a better society.

Ordinary peasants were usually less enthusiastic about emigration and had to be lured to the continent by promises of a new paradise. Since the crude mechanism of assessing the number of households to be recruited for relocation confronted local activists with a quota to fulfill even before finding out how many people were willing to go, there are frequent accounts of settlers being pushed into the migration program by peer pressure or even through bullying. Usually the most vulnerable segment of the population was targeted as surplus population—as if getting rid of the poor could eradicate poverty itself. However, those on the margins of rural society (social misfits, sons without the resources to earn a living, day laborers, and unemployed family members) did not have much to leave behind to be pressured to leave and thereby raise the standard of living for the remaining population. The redistribution of property is much too complex a process to be addressed through pure statistics, and in the end the Village Division and Relocation Campaign did not do much to change the social and economic situation in the participating communities.

Furthermore, the Village Division and Relocation Campaign did not come without financial costs for the communities. Rather than enriching the villages, the implementation of the mass migration scheme usually cost a lot of money. Although this was subsidized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, a huge part of the costs had to be paid from the village budget. This happened under the assumption that amortization would follow after the recovery of the village economy, which often actually occurred, but for totally different reasons—in the wake of the war economy. This strain on village coffers was one of the reasons why the traditional village elite of landowners and old powerful families was usually opposed to the mass migration scheme. In their view, it not only wasted their tax money on the village have-nots, it also took away the cheap labor they relied upon to farm their land as tenants or day laborers, as well as workers for their small local enterprises. The absurdity of these measures was heightened by the fact that just when the masses started flowing from the countryside to Manchuria, an economic recovery fueled by demand from Japan’s war on the continent and the military draft created a huge need for labor even in the poorest rural areas.

Conclusion

The Village Division and Relocation Campaign tried to combine the mobilization of large numbers of migrants to Manchuria with the eradication of rural
poverty through social management of population and resources at the village level. However, this form of social management fundamentally altered the nature of emigration, since it was no longer primarily the decision of the individual or the family to participate in the scheme. It became the “village” that made the decision to be part of the Village Division and Relocation Campaign. This social entity then had to draw up a plan for mass emigration from the community and finally recruit the settlers among the villagers to fulfill this quota.

Although devised with the best intentions, the Village Division and Relocation Campaign was basically a failure. After a promising start, it failed to gain the active support of the majority of the rural population. Bureaucratic plans were pushed through even though the situation they were designed to remedy—surplus labor—no longer existed. Since this campaign was part of the highly ideological scheme of mass emigration to Manchuria, plans could not simply be abandoned, and modification of strategy was difficult. Designed to become an endeavor of historic dimensions in state-sponsored and -regulated mass migration, the campaign in the end uprooted and resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of settlers at the end of World War II.

Notes
7. Shunzō Araragi, “Manshū Imin” no Rekishi Shakaikeku [Historical Sociology of “Manchuria Migrants”] (Kyoto: Körosha, 1994).

The Meijin Kurabe of San’yūtei Enchō: An Original Approach to Western Drama in Japan

Matilde Mastrangelo

San’yūtei Enchō (1839–1900), one of the most active performers of the wāgei (verbal arts) genre of the Meiji era (1868–1912), died on August 11, 1900. He performed in the small variety theaters (yose) of Japan’s capital, Tokyo, where audiences went in droves to be amused by the double entendres and humorous situations of his rakugo (comic monologue) declamations, moved by the wide range of human feelings he was able to convey in his ninjō-banashi (tales of human compassion) performances, and frightened by his kaidan-banashi (ghost stories). The atmospheres, places, and episodes of the whole of Enchō’s repertoire were permeated by the capital city’s culture: this is one of the main reasons for the recent increase in interest in Enchō’s career in the Meiji era, during which he produced his most important works. Bringing together elements from the heritage of “classical” Chinese and Japanese literature, episodes of his own invention, and ideas deriving from stories imported from the West, Enchō’s repertoire offers feelings and emotions so timeless that they affect the modern-day reader in the same way they moved the listener of more than one hundred years ago. The aspect of his art that most attracted attention in the Meiji era—an age in which the defining of a standard literary language was of fundamental importance—was the apparent facility and naturalness with which he put into practice the linguistic theories formulated by writers and intellectuals of the time. Indeed, this feature has made Enchō one of the leading figures in the development of modern Japanese literature.

The world of rakugo often celebrates the anniversary of Enchō’s death with Enchō Matsuri—festivals in which his most famous works are performed—while the centenary of his death was commemorated nationally with articles, books, and exhibitions. Thus, there could be no better time to carry out research—thanks also to the support of the Japan Foundation—in both the libraries that Enchō used and the places where he lived, many of which served as settings for his stories.
The Meijin Kurabe
San'yaitei Enchô’s repertoire is so vast that it could be analyzed using any number of approaches. Since my readership will certainly be interested in focusing on the Italian aspects of his work, especially considering that Enchô is not yet well known in Italy, I chose to start with the bon’an (adaptation) genre and leave his other works to future research projects. Enchô’s bon’an works consist of six stories based on Western plots—some of whose authors are unnamed and difficult to identify—transported into Japanese settings and embedded with original modifications and the addition of new episodes of his own invention. The story on which I have chosen to focus, Meijin Kurabe: Nishiki no Maginu [The Talent Competition: The Brocade Ball Gown], has many connections with Europe—Italy in particular. Based on La Tosca (1887) by the French playwright Victorien Sardou, Meijin Kurabe was created around 1890 and first presented in 1891, roughly ten years before Sardou’s story became the inspiration for Giacomo Puccini’s Tosca (1900). Enchô was introduced to Sardou’s plot by Ōchi Fukuchi (1841–1906), a journalist and writer who participated in many official Meiji-government missions to Europe. From the dates of Ōchi’s journeys it can be presumed that he did not see La Tosca in France. However, having read the plot, either in the original French or with the help of an English translation, he had obviously found it so interesting as to bring it to Enchô’s notice and also write his own version for Kabuki in 1891.

The text of Meijin Kurabe published in Enchô Zenshû [The Complete Works of Enchô] is divided into eleven parts. This version was also published in book form in 1893. The version closest to the text used in performance in 1891 was published in sixty-four installments in the Yamato Shinbun between July and December 1891. The introduction to the first installment states that the tale was also being performed at a Kabuki theater during the same period—obviously a reference to the work of Ōchi Fukuchi—and that it was based on a gaikoku no tan, a “foreign idea.”

As in Enchô’s other works, the plot of Meijin Kurabe presents numerous characters whose actions interweave so as to create complicated situations that hold the audience’s attention right to the very end. All the characters are either expatriates or students of the arts, especially popular entertainment, with which Enchô was extremely familiar yet which was considered a lower form of art than other forms of theater, such as Kabuki. The plot of the French play is explicated by the dancer O-Suga and the painter Kanô Marinobu (whose roles correspond to those of Tosca and Cavaradossi), the fugitive Miyawaki Kazuma (who meets the same fate as the political exile Angelotti), and the treacherous magistrate Kanaya Tôtarô (who is as ruthless as Baron Scarpia of La Tosca). O-Suga and Marinobu are aspiring meijin, or masters of their arts; however, they are prevented from fulfilling their aspirations by the corrupt official Kanaya, who, having decided that he wants O-Suga for his own, accuses Marinobu of having aided and abetted Miyawaki and condemns him to death. Miyawaki needs to hide from the authorities because he took part in the antishogunate rebellion led by Ōshio Heihachirô in 1857. Enchô’s use of this political event allows us to situate Meijin Kurabe historically; it “replaces” the fall of the Republic of Naples, which Sardou used as the impetus behind Angelotti’s flight and Cavaradossi’s actions.

One of the most interesting elements common to both the French and the Japanese productions is the jealousy that characterizes Tosca and O-Suga and makes the two principals furious at the idea that their beloveds could find inspiration in beautiful female models very different from themselves. The most remarkable difference between the two plays lies in O-Suga’s behavior in the epilogue. Indeed, while Tosca kills Scarpia to avoid having to suffer the official’s blackmail, when O-Suga discovers that her sacrifices have been in vain she seeks revenge. Pretending that she wants to confess her love, she arranges a meeting with Kanaya and kills him. To demonstrate her loyalty to her husband, she then takes Kanaya’s head to Marinobu’s tomb, where she commits suicide.

The Figure of the Meijin
The whole story is permeated by a key leitmotif: a description of what it means to be a meijin. This description is presented indirectly through the events that befall the leading characters and also through various makura [introductory remarks], during which Enchô expounds the virtues, weakness, and anecdotes of famous masters and indicates the sacrifices to be made and principles to be adopted by anyone whose wishes to emerge as a meijin in an artistic field. According to Enchô, a meijin—master and artiste par excellence—must possess myô, a set of sublme qualities of a mysterious essence that cannot be explained in words. All meijin, or aspiring meijin, must be ambitious yet humble, respectful of the discipline required by the elders, and constant in both their studies and their wish to improve. Meijin must be examples of generosity in the widest sense of the word. They must not be in a hurry to earn from their art, nor must they make economic gain their objective. Their aim must be to pursue the pleasure that derives from artistic creation.

The figure of the meijin appears in many of Enchô’s later adaptations and rakugo genre works. The bon’an works include a longer text, Sashimono-shi Meijin Chôji [The Artisan Chôji], in which the gaikoku no tan was Un Parricide (1884) by Guy de Maupassant. As in the French play, Chôji—whose name derives from the name of the French protagonist, Georges—is a famous carpenter who has made his fortune on his own. Enchô copies Maupassant’s idea of using a child abandoned by his parents and bent on revenge as his leading character, yet he also focuses on a theme beloved by him: that of the master. In no way emphasized in Un Parricide, the theme of the “master” allows Enchô to describe his protagonist by focusing on the ideal behavior of the meijin. Sashimono-shi Meijin Chôji received far more critical acclaim in Japan than Meijin Kurabe and was even republished in San’yôtei Enchô in the Meiji
no Bungaku series. There is no doubt that Sakimono-shi Meijin Chiji must be considered an important point of reference for any study of Meijin Kurabe, since the two works deal with the same underlying theme. Furthermore, although the story of the dancer O-Suga has intrigued scholars wishing to investigate its relationship with Italian opera, no research has ever focused exclusively on Enchō's Meijin Kurabe.

Conclusions

Although they shared the same source of inspiration, Puccini (and obviously his librettists) and Enchō worked at very different speeds. Avoiding ironic comment on the difference between Japanese "efficiency" and the Italian approach to hard work, it is interesting to analyze the two different methodologies. While Enchō set out to create a work in which he was to be the only performer, Puccini had to work together with at least three other people during the composition of his work and many others in the production of the opera. Furthermore, Enchō had no contact with Sardou and consequently did not have to establish any economic agreements in consideration of the author's intellectual property. Nor was he bound to have any changes approved by the author.

Comparison between the French text and the Italian and Japanese versions highlights the many important cultural exchanges between Europe and Japan. At the turn of the twentieth century, Europe was fascinated by Japanese art and culture: one need only think, for example, of the operas of Puccini and Mascagni of that period.

Prior to writing Madama Butterfly (1904), Puccini studied the collection of Japanese instruments belonging to the German barons Kraus and in 1902 had several meetings with the wife of the Japanese ambassador to Italy. He also established important relationships with various Japanese theater companies, such as those of Otojirō Kawakami (1864–1911) and his wife, Sadayakko (1871–1946), who went to Italy on tour. Enchō or Ochi Fukuchi may have been mentioned on these occasions. Indeed, Kawakami certainly knew Ochi Fukuchi and his repertoire—which included versions of La Tosca—but he may not have been aware of Enchō's activity, which, as I mentioned, was part of a lower entertainment circuit.

The tale of Meijin Kurabe is fascinating to study for its connections with turn-of-the-century European theater, as an important testimony of the world of waye of the same period, and as a work in which Enchō summarized his vision of art and the experience that led him to become a respected meijin.

Notes


5. See note 1.


Japan Arts Directory Published

Visiting Arts, a United Kingdom educational charity devoted to the promotion of cultural exchange, is creating a series of country and regional arts directories. To support this important mission, the Japan Foundation served as the Japan partner for the compilation of the Japan Arts Directory. This English-language directory contains about 500 pages of descriptions and contact information for cultural institutions as well as key facilities and groups in such fields as the performing arts, visual arts, literature, and film and other media in Japan. We hope this publication will serve as a reliable source of information on Japan’s diverse arts scene for interested people in the United Kingdom and other nations throughout the world. It will also enjoy wide use in Japan.

Directories have already been published for thirty-nine countries and regions, and the series has been very well received. For more information on these publications, please visit the Visiting Arts Web site:

Heian Japan, Volume 2 of The Cambridge History of Japan

The sixth and final volume of the Cambridge History of Japan has at last emerged into the light of day. More than ten years have passed since the first volume appeared, and more than twenty years since the project was launched in 1978, so it is unsurprising, although nevertheless sad, that one of the editors and several of the contributors have died before they could see the results of their labors in print. What they have given us here is a comprehensive overview of Japanese society in the Heian period (794–1185) reflecting an understanding of history that stretches from court politics to religious practices, cultural production, and intellectual life. Before essaying a judgment, it will be as well first to run through the individual contributions.

The first chapter, on the Heian court from 794 to 1070, is by William McCullough, and it presents a mostly familiar narrative of the reigns of Kammu and his successors, followed by the development of the Fujiwara regency, albeit with surprisingly few references to sources, as is true of several other chapters in the volume, too. The focus is on Kyoto, but some attention is paid to the challenges posed by Emishi uprisings in the north, and the chapter concludes with a brief account of foreign relations during the period. There is another section on later foreign relations in the ninth chapter, but it would undoubtedly have been better to consider foreign relations more broadly in terms of trade, scholarship, religion, and diplomacy and at greater length than these two truncated treatments allow; for that purpose Charlotte von Verschuer, who has written several books on the subject, would have been an ideal choice.

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The second chapter, also by McCullough, focuses on the capital and its society. This is packed with information on spatial disposition in Heian-kyō, on the growth and administration of the city, the lifestyles of the aristocratic portion of the population, and so on. Particularly interesting is the description of Fujiwara no Sanesuke’s mansion, Ononomiya-tei, which offers a concrete realization of the more general points made here. There are brief discussions of the markets and the humbler residents, but the first two chapters concentrate on the history of the aristocracy of Heian-kyō, as indeed does most of the volume.

Nevertheless, the next two chapters do force us to turn our attention beyond the city limits of Heian-kyō. Dana Morris, in a chapter devoted to land and society, outlines developments in agricultural technology that led to enhanced productivity, including greater use of the plow and of tools made of iron, and explains the intricacies of the tax structure, which had significant implications for landholding patterns and for the growth of provincial autonomy. The next chapter, by Cornelius Kiley, goes on to discuss provincial administration and land tenure and concludes with a close examination of the relationship between taxation and political activity among provincial elites.

There follow four chapters on Heian culture. The first, by Marian Ury, covers Chinese learning and intellectual life, although it explicitly excludes medicine, mathematics, and calendrical science. It traces the so-called book road, whereby Chinese texts reached Japan, and the organization of Chinese learning in Heian-kyō, and considers the limitations of learning as a route to political advancement. Helen McCullough then gives an overview of aristocratic culture, including diet, calligraphy, and music, concluding with a lengthy section on Heian poetry and prose. After this comes an essay by Stanley Weinstein on aristocratic Buddhism, which is properly keyed to primary as well as secondary sources; Weinstein covers esoteric Buddhism and its relation with the state and then Pure Land Buddhism and its dissemination among the aristocracy, but his discussion of the militarization of the clergy is somewhat brief and does not refer readers to Gaston Renondeau’s monograph Les Moines Guerriers du Japon (1965). In the next chapter on other varieties of religious practice, Allan Grapard explores the gamut of ritual practices in Heian Japan, including yin-yang and rainmaking and carefully
The Poetics of Japanese Verse: Imagery, Structure, Meter

Following such pioneering efforts as Brower and Miner’s *Japanese Court Poetry* (1961), there have been few English-language works on Japanese poetry that combine a broad scope with a rigorous academic approach. Valuable studies of individual poets and poetry collections have gradually appeared in English, but comparative scholars and advanced students looking for works that address a broad spectrum of Japanese poetry or explore fundamental problems of Japanese poetics have had few resources. The *Poetics of Japanese Verse*, a fluid and intelligently rendered translation of Koji Kawamoto’s *Nikon Shiika no Dentō* (Iwanami Shoten, 1991), offers a most welcome improvement to this situation. The *Poetics of Japanese Verse* is exceptional both in scope—including analysis of waka, haiku, and modern shintai-shi verse forms—and in rigor, with original and thoroughgoing discussion of poetic intertextuality and the metrics of Japanese verse. The translation of Kawamoto’s work marks a significant advance in the English-language discussion of Japanese poetry and will serve as a valuable resource for students and scholars of Japanese literature and comparative poetics.

In the preface to this English translation, Kawamoto outlines the fundamental principles and questions that guided his work, beginning with the preliminary assertion that both waka and haiku can be analyzed as “poetry,” on a par with Western and Chinese poems, irrespective of the historical tendency for Japanese poets and scholars to conceptualize each of these verse forms separately. Placing waka and haiku in a comparative perspective, he asks, “How is it that they can be so extremely short and yet function, not as epigrams or proverbs or mottoes, but as ‘serious’ poems?” Turning to the question of metrics, he scrutinizes the irregular structures of these two verse forms (patterns of 5-7-5-7-7 and 5-7-5 syllables or morae, respectively) and asks whether this “syllabic count” can truly function as a poetic meter (p. xii). These questions are addressed in the three main sections of the book, the first of which focuses on the classical and medieval waka, the second on Bashō’s haiku, and the last on questions of meter in verse ranging from ancient to modern.

Both the first and second sections center on the ways in which waka and haiku manipulate highly conventional literary and lexical associations. Kawamoto’s primary aim is to demonstrate how these poems create meaning not through direct reference to some external reality, but through their functions in complex networks of literary associations and conventions. In poetry, he argues, we should expect not an anachronism. The volume is concluded, somewhat predictably, by Cameron Hurst’s chapter on the insei (cloister government) system, which goes on to consider Go-Shirakawa’s relationship with the Taira and, very briefly, foreign relations in the later Heian period, and a chapter by Rizō Takeuchi on the rise of the warriors from their origins to the denouement at Dannoura.

In overall shape, then, this volume rehearses a largely familiar narrative of Heian history, and this reviewer was disappointed that there is little attempt to explore other histories; even Hiraizumi gets no more than a mention, although it is now the subject of Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan’s monograph *Hiraizumi: Buddhist Art and Regional Politics in Twelfth-Century Japan* (1998). It goes without saying that, since the original conception of the *Cambridge History of Japan* in the 1970s, much has changed in the practice of history in Japan as elsewhere, and the unavoidable result of the huge and unexplained delays in getting the essays in this volume into print is that many of them seem somewhat tired already. In terms of methodology or conceptualization of the key issues, it offers little that is new; fresh avenues of enquiry that emerged in the late 1980s and the 1990s are scarcely to be found. In sum, far from representing Western studies of Japan at their best, the volume as a whole is something of an embarrassment and below the standards achieved in some of the other volumes, let alone in the volumes of the *Cambridge History of China*. The history of Japan deserves better than this.

P.F.K.
propensity to create meaning through inter-textual associations. Kawamoto counters these modern biases with a meticulous rhetorical analysis of canonical waka and haiku.

In the first section, Kawamoto focuses on the recurrent poetic topic of “autumn dusk” (aki no yūgure), culminating in the famous “Three Dusks” of the Shin kokinshū anthology. Despite the singular importance of this topic to medieval aesthetics, he points out that “autumn dusk” emerged as a key phrase relatively late in Japanese poetic history. Tracing the roots and paradigmatic usages of this expression, Kawamoto demonstrates the way in which “autumn dusk” gradually crystallized as a poetic topic with its own normative hon’i, or “essential implications,” that subsequent waka and haiku poets would exploit. This section effectively illustrates Kawamoto’s argument that the function of conventional lexical associations in Japanese poetry confounds the standard distinction between “denotation” and “connotation.”

In the second section, Kawamoto demonstrates the way haiku draw upon the lexical and poetic associations established by the classical waka tradition while simultaneously introducing a fresh, colloquial spirit. Kawamoto begins by breaking down each haiku into two component parts: the “base section,” characterized by strong stylistic features and novel language and conception, and the “superimposed section,” often an evocative phrase drawn from the waka tradition, which offers the reader clues on how to interpret the base. The division between base and superimposed section is marked in each translated poem through use of italics. This structural analysis provides the underpinning for Kawamoto’s detailed rhetorical analysis of numerous individual haiku, centering on an exposition of the rhetorical tropes of hyperbole and oxymoron.

The final section of Kawamoto’s study shifts the focus from rhetoric to metrics. While nearly all Japanese verse breaks down into “lines” or “verses” (ku) of five or seven morae, Kawamoto argues that these moraic divisions in themselves do not constitute meter. Rather, in actual vocal performance, these strings of morae are typically enunciated in quadruple (4/4) meter through the insertion of fixed and moveable rests or the elongation of certain morae. After an extensive survey of metrical theories from the Meiji era (1868–1912) onward, Kawamoto proceeds to a detailed analysis of the placement of stresses and rests in a number of verse forms, including shi, tanka, haiku, early modern folk poetry (konsai kayō), and modern shintai-shi verse. Although this is the most technical section of Kawamoto’s study, it is significant in returning our attention to Japanese poetry as a voiced tradition, and it may serve to stimulate debate about the history of poetic recitation. Scholars of ancient and classical poetry should be particularly interested in Kawamoto’s theory regarding a shift from mixed triple and quadruple meter to straight quadruple meter occurring between the time of the Man’yōshū and the Kokinshū—between the mid-eighth century and roughly 1205—(pp. 274–83).

The main text is preceded by a helpful introduction by Haruo Shirane and followed by an appendix on the Japanese mora, an appendix with verse translations of Tōson Shimazaki’s (1872–1943) shintai-shi Oyé and Yashi no Mi [Coconut], notes, a bibliography, and an index. Kawamoto’s text is translated by Stephen Collington, Kevin Collins, and Gustav Heldt; they and the editors deserve our thanks for their manifest effort in producing a smooth and accurate translation, including excellent translations of numerous waka and haiku.

Despite the broad scope and readability of this book, it is not very well suited to stand alone as an introduction to Japanese poetry. Kawamoto’s focus on textual and intertextual analysis precludes much discussion of the development of Japanese verse from the standpoint of literary history. Indeed, the ideal reader for Kawamoto’s work will already have some familiarity with the canonical waka poetry collections, the Bashō school of haiku, and the movement to develop new verse forms in the modern period. Some additional background on these matters, and on lesser-known verse forms, such as konsai kayō, would have made this work more accessible to a broad audience.

Kawamoto’s text also provokes deeper questions about the social contexts of Japanese poetry, including the role of such practices as uta awase poetry competitions in shaping Japanese poetics, or the sociohistorical implications of the concept of “poetic madness” discussed in section two, which remain for future studies to explore. Nevertheless, within its self-defined parameters of textual and metrical analysis, The Poetics of Japanese Verse is both authoritative and enlightening. Its translators have performed a great service for students of Japanese and comparative literature, and the work will doubtless remain a touchstone for future studies of Japanese poetics.

W. O. G.
Every year the Japan Foundation confers the Japan Foundation Awards and the Japan Foundation Special Prizes on individuals and organizations in recognition of their academic, artistic, or cultural activities that have made outstanding contributions to international cultural exchange by deepening understanding between Japan and other nations.

The 2001 recipients were selected from among 167 nominees worldwide. The presentation ceremony for the awards, held in Tokyo on October 4, 2001, was attended by many distinguished guests. The recipients are introduced below.

**THE JAPAN FOUNDATION AWARDS**

**William Gerald Beasley, C.B.E.** One of Britain’s most eminent scholars of East Asian history, especially nineteenth-century Japanese history, Dr. Beasley has for more than fifty years devoted himself to comprehensive study of Japan’s culture and history and to the nurturing of young scholars to strengthen the foundation of Japanese studies in the United Kingdom. His *Modern History of Japan* (1963) has been published in translation in numerous countries around the world and has become the definitive text on the history of modern Japan.

For thirty-five years Dr. Beasley taught Japanese history to undergraduate and graduate students at the University of London. In the course of his career and with continuing distinction since his retirement, he has produced many monographs on nineteenth-century Japanese history. He has also made distinguished contributions to the understanding of the Meiji Restoration (1868) and the travels of Meiji-era (1868–1912) statesmen to Europe and America, especially through his books on these subjects.

**Ikuo Hirayama** Esteemed worldwide as a Japanese-style painter, Professor Hirayama has for many years supported international activities to promote peace through the preservation and restoration of cultural properties in Asia that are in danger of being damaged or destroyed, especially in China and on the Korean peninsula. He has contributed to international cultural cooperation by founding and operating the Red Cross Spirit for Cultural Heritage, an organization animated by the same humanitarian spirit that inspires the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Preservation and restoration of Buddhist cave paintings at Dunhuang, China; the twelfth-century Buddhist temple complex of Angkor Wat, in Cambodia; and ancient Koguryo-kingdom tomb frescos, on the Korean peninsula, are among the many projects that he has championed.

**Kosta Balabanov** One of the former Yugoslavia’s leading art historians and a renowned expert on Macedonian icons, Dr. Balabanov has worked with great dedication for more than thirty years to introduce Japanese culture to the people of his country and to promote mutual understanding between his country and Japan, using slides and documentary videos that he himself shot, as well as other materials he collected. Since 1995 he has served as editor of the quarterly newsletter *Akebono*, which covers a broad spectrum of Japanese topics and offers its readers a comprehensive introduction to Japanese culture.

**Naoyuki Miura** Since founding the nonprofit organization Music From Japan (MFJ) in 1975 Mr. Miura has devoted himself to promoting contemporary Japanese music in the United States. In twenty-five years of touring in the Americas, Central Asia, and Japan, MFJ has presented a total of more than three hundred works, including forty world premières, by about one hundred Japanese composers. Twenty-eight of the works were commissioned by MFJ.

**The Berliner Festspiele** Since its inception in 1951 the Berliner Festspiele, the administrative organization for the Berlin Festival and the Berlin International Film Festival, has regularly introduced the highest caliber of the world’s arts in all fields, especially music, drama, dance, literature, fine art, and cinema. Since 1965 the Festspiele has contributed to the introduction of the outstanding arts of Japan in Germany and to the promotion of mutual understanding between Germany and Japan with regular events focusing on Japan and with other Japan-related activities each year.