COPYRIGHT AND USE OF THIS THESIS

This thesis must be used in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Reproduction of material protected by copyright may be an infringement of copyright and copyright owners may be entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright.

Section 51 (2) of the Copyright Act permits an authorized officer of a university library or archives to provide a copy (by communication or otherwise) of an unpublished thesis kept in the library or archives, to a person who satisfies the authorized officer that he or she requires the reproduction for the purposes of research or study.

The Copyright Act grants the creator of a work a number of moral rights, specifically the right of attribution, the right against false attribution and the right of integrity.

You may infringe the author’s moral rights if you:

- fail to acknowledge the author of this thesis if you quote sections from the work
- attribute this thesis to another author
- subject this thesis to derogatory treatment which may prejudice the author’s reputation

For further information contact the University’s Copyright Service.

sydney.edu.au/copyright
The Noose Among the Cherries: Landscape and the Representation of Resident Koreans in Japanese Film

By

Michael Ward

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

The University of Sydney

2015
Dedication Page

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my beloved father Billy F. Ward (November 30, 1945-August 16, 2014) who passed away only twelve days before I submitted this thesis for examination. I miss you and love you, Daddy. I hope to be only half the man you were.
Acknowledgements

A work of extreme hardheadedness, this thesis would not have been possible without the calm and dedicated guidance of my advisor Dr. Rebecca Suter. Dr. Suter helped turn my nebulous ideas into a cohesive thesis and for that I am forever grateful. I hope to one day become the scholar that you thought I could become. Much appreciation is also due to my associate advisor Dr. Lionel Babicz for his warmth and kindness during my time in Sydney. Dr. Jane Chi Hyun Park helped me through a living nightmare when I considered abandoning my graduate work completely.

Dr. Mark E. Caprio and Dr. Mats E. Karlsson acted as readers for this thesis. Their guidance helped this thesis reach its fullest potential.

Dr. Chikako Nihei, Dr. Sabina Zulovic, Dr. Yi Wang, Dr. Ping Tian, Dr. Hongwei Bao, Dr. Hongguang He, Dr. Meng Li, and Filip and Sayaka Swennen offered me friendship and the chance to join in many stimulating conversations. Thank you for that, dear friends. Special thanks is due to Dr. Zuvolic and my dear friend Lewis Tang who were both willing to deliver copies of this thesis in Sydney while I fidgeted nervously in Tokyo.

My dear mother Diane Ward has suffered long while her only child has gone off to live in distant lands. Thank you for your love and financial support. I would have never gotten this far without you.

My in-laws Takumi and Mari Sakurai have supported me with their love and financial support since the time I entered their family. This thesis would not have been possible without them.

My dear cat Ai-chan has helped me more than her confused little head will ever know. It was in a conversation with Ai-chan that I had a major breakthrough with my research and thus was able to create a stronger thesis. Thank you, Ai-chan.

Finally, my beloved wife Kuriko Sakurai helped me in more ways with her love and financial support than I would be able to list here. I love you, my heart. Thank you for being Kuriko, dear one. Your being you is a gift I cherish every day.
Table of Contents

Introduction: 5

Chapter 1: A Short History of Japan’s Resident Korean Population: 8

Chapter 2: Resident Koreans in Japanese Film: 98

Chapter 3: Landscape Theory: 167

Chapter 4: Death by Hanging: the Creation and Destruction of Ri Chin’ U: 244

Conclusion: 293

Works Cited: 297
Introduction: Resident Koreans on Film

My interest in the cinematic use and representation of Koreans and Resident Koreans in Japanese film began in 2004 when I watched Ōshima Nagisa’s 大島渚 (1932-2013) 1983 film Senjō no Merī Kurisumasu (戦場のメリークリスマス, Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence) for the first time. Besides the homoerotic tensions shared between David Bowie and Sakamoto Ryūichi, the scene that made the largest impression on me was one that depicted the brutalization of a Korean soldier serving in the Japanese army by a Japanese sergeant played by Beat Takeshi. After watching this film, I began to search for other Japanese films that contained Korean characters and came across Yukisada Isao’s 行定勲 (1968-) seminal film Go! (2001), which acted as my introduction to Japan’s Resident Korean community as well as films depicting Resident Koreans. With my general interest firmly in place, my academic interest in these films was ignited when I had the chance to view Ōshima’s film Kōshikei (絞死刑, 1968) in 2006 which introduced me both to a critique of institutionalized racism in Japan towards Resident Koreans and 1960s avant-garde Japanese film. As I worked on other projects, the subject of how Resident Koreans were represented in Japanese films remained in the back of my head and later developed through my readings of W.E.B. Du
Bois, Frantz Fanon, and Paul Gilroy. However, it was not until I came across Matsuda Masao’s 松田政男 (1933- ) and Adachi Masao’s 足立正生 (1939- ) theory Fûkeiron (風景論 Landscape Theory), detailed below, that I developed a more critical way of understanding how Japanese directors use Resident Korean characters in their films.

Consisting of four chapters, this thesis opens with a short introduction to pre-colonial and colonial Korean history and prewar and postwar Resident Korean history. Chapter two, after giving a brief description of Japanese victim consciousness and how it was spread throughout Japan through melodrama films, delves into the history of late 1950s and early 1960s films created by leftist humanist Japanese directors. These films depict diluted Resident Korean characters whose primary purpose is to reflect the positive qualities of the Japanese characters who appear in the films while more serious aspects of Resident Korean history remain absent. Concerned with the way in which the leftist humanist directors handled their Resident Korean characters, the third chapter of this thesis takes a close look at Matsuda and Adachi’s theory of landscape and uses it to show how marginalized individuals such as the non-Korean serial killer Nagayama Norio, the original subject for the theory of landscape, and the white-robed Resident Koreans in an early Ōshima Nagisa documentary film are controlled by Japanese political power that manifests itself in homogenous landscape
that was an ubiquitous presence throughout late 1960s and early 1970s Japan. The fourth and final chapter of this thesis concerns itself with the diagram of the microphysics of power which is embedded within Japan’s homogeneous landscape and is responsible for both the creation and death of individuals like the previously mentioned Nagayama Norio and the Resident Korean Ri Chin’ U and his filmic representative R in Ōshima’s *Death by Hanging*.

In writing this thesis I hope to accomplish two primary goals. One is to outline a general history of the representation of Resident Koreans in postwar Japanese films until 1970 and show how Japanese directors, both postwar humanist leftist directors and 1960s avant-garde directors used the images of Resident Koreans for their own purposes. Also, I hope that this thesis helps to show that the theory of landscape is more than an old Japanese film theory that has gained recent academic interest because it is quite useful as a critique in understanding how the Japanese state marginalizes individuals within its own borders while controlling the general populace.
Chapter 1: A Short History of Japan’s Resident Korean Population

1.1.1 Threatened by the West

In 1881, the politician and historian Takekoshi Yosaburō (1865-1950) wrote that in the Edo Period (1603-1868) the Japanese had no conception of the archipelago being a “nation” until the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry (1794-1858).1 The threat that Perry and his Kurofune (Black Ships) represented forced the Japanese to engage in a decades-long process of revamping their traditional, social, political, and economic structures and, according to Takekoshi, the combined threat of the West and the modernization/Westernization of Late Edo and Early Meiji Japan resulted in “the 300 or so domains becoming siblings and the many tens of thousands of people realizing that they were one people.”2

Responding to the threat from the West, the Meiji government engaged in a program of nation-building which closely resembled colonial expansion through the fact that local cultural institutions, such as local gods, dialects, costumes, cuisine, holidays,

---

were replaced by ones that the Meiji elite considered to be “civilized” and which they desired to see recognized at a “national” level.\(^3\) In order to spread these newly minted national cultural institutions through both interior lands and the peripheries of the archipelago, the Meiji government implemented compulsory education and universal male conscription as the primary vehicles to reach the Japanese masses.\(^4\) These measures were necessary in order to imbed a “Japanese identity” into the minds of Japan’s incredibly diverse population.\(^5\) The creation of a nationwide Japanese identity was beneficial to the Meiji elite because not only did it create a larger population that could be taxed and conscripted, but also helped to ensure that peripheral populations would not join with a foreign power and turn against Japan.\(^6\) Another primary goal of a homogenized Japanese identity was that it acted as a sign to the international community that the Meiji government was legitimate and that it had advanced to civilization.\(^7\)

Securing Japan’s peripheries was a major goal of the Japanese state because, according to Kume Kunitake 久米邦武 (1839-1931), in order for the Japanese to “be

\(^3\) Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies*, p.54.
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid., p.55.
\(^6\) Ibid., pp.55-56. Although the Meiji government included Okinawans and Ainu within this goal to homogenize Japanese identity, it should be noted that these ethnic minorities were still heavily discriminated against. “Pure” Japanese still considered Okinawans and Ainu foreign and when these groups attempted to identify with the Japanese, they received even more vicious rejections. Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies*, pp.67-70.
\(^7\) Ibid., p.56.
at peace with one another,” it was essential for Japan to be “a country which was threatened by no enemies on land or sea on any side.”

Thus the Meiji government continued its pursuit of modernization through looking to the West as a model and developed its own plan for imperial expansion. With the West acting as both catalyst and model, one can see that Japan’s quest for empire was not based solely on conquest or the inevitable law of monopolistic capitalism, but was conceived as a method for self-preservation. Indeed, with the goal of preventing Japan’s own colonization firmly in mind, the Meiji elite adopted the institutions of the West and thereby formed the belief that “in order to have a nation a country must also have an empire.”

Viewed either as a “singularly heroic defiance in the face of Euro-American intimidation” or a “tragic Faustian compromise,” the Meiji elite’s need for empire reflected its own desire to show that it could replicate the best practices of Euro-American imperialism and surpass them as well.

1.1.2 Japan’s Desire for Korea

8 Kume Kunitake as quoted in Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, p.52.
11 Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, pp.50-51; Uchida, Brokers of Empire, p.8
12 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.37.
Due to its proximity to the Japanese archipelago, the Japanese long had their eye on the Korean peninsula and often, at times more intrusive than others, implemented strategies to safeguard their interests within Korean affairs. This concern with Korea grew with the inception of the Meiji Period and the Japanese state became increasingly aggressive towards the peninsula. This aggression was the result of Japan’s concern that, if Japan were to be attacked by a foreign power such as Qing China or Tsarist Russia, the assault would originate from the Korean Peninsula.

In 1869, deeply concerned with such a possible invasion, the Meiji government sent an ambassador to Pusan. However, the message from the Japanese emperor that the ambassador carried was quickly rejected by the Yi Dynasty because it contained the words kōjō 皇上 (emperor) and hōchoku 奉勅 (receiving an imperial decree). These words were problematic for the staunchly Confucian Yi Dynasty because for it “kō (皇)” was to only be used by the Chinese emperor and “choku (勅)” was to be used solely for Chinese imperial edicts. For the Yi dynasty, the Japanese use of these Chinese characters openly displayed the arrogant attitude of the Japanese state toward Korea.

13 Ibid., p.25
16 Oh, Kankoku heigō e no michi, pp.36-37.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid., pp.41-42.
Primarily, according to Oh Seon-hwa, the Yi Dynasty was disgruntled by the fact that the Japanese were disrupting the *huá-yí* 華夷 continuum, a system established by the Chinese in which the cultural level of surrounding countries was determined by their level of Sinification, by using characters that placed the Japanese Emperor—or Japanese king according to the Yi Dynasty—at a higher rank than the Korean king despite the fact that the Korean king was officially a “liege subject” of the Chinese Emperor and the Japanese king was not.\(^\text{19}\) The Meiji government continued to send ambassadors to Pusan, but they were systematically rejected by the Yi dynasty because messages and formats were similarly problematic.\(^\text{20}\) Since the Japanese had broken the protocol of the *huá-yí* continuum, the highly conservative Yi dynasty labelled the Japanese “improvised Western barbarians” and placed them under the nineteenth century Korean policy of *wijeong cheoksaleisei sekija* 衛正斥邪 (upholding the right and expelling the wrong), refusing to hear out the Japanese ambassadors.\(^\text{21}\)

On its part the Meiji government refused to back down, and sent an expedition to seize the guesthouse where the Japanese ambassadors resided.\(^\text{22}\) After this violent display, the Yi Dynasty suspended trade and further negotiations with Japan, and the

\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Ibid., pp.36-37.

\(^{21}\) Ibid.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., pp.37-38.
Japanese responded with renewed aggression. It was at this point that the seikanron 征韓論 (advocacy of a punitive expedition to Korea) discourse began to rise anew in Japan. At this point, the Meiji government was not planning for the colonization of the Korean peninsula, but desired to dissolve the huá-yí continuum which acted as part of the reason why Korea refused to open to Japan and the rest of the world. This situation was particularly troublesome for the Japanese because, if Korea did not open up and modernize at a rapid pace, the peninsula could easily be colonized by a Western power and the security of Japan would be jeopardized. Thus, as long as the Yi Dynasty clung to the huá-yí continuum, the Meiji’s government’s decades of efforts for modernization would remain insufficient to protect Japan from possible invaders and this would hinder Japanese plans to create a new East Asian world order which could help protect East Asia from Western powers.

As the Meiji government’s sense of crisis continued to grow, it came to the conclusion that Korea was not going to abandon the huá-yí continuum and modernize to establish its own security and independence. However, although the Japanese well understood that Korea would not modernize through its own efforts and secure its own

23 Ibid.
25 Oh, Kankoku heigō e no michi, p.39; Oh, Seikatsussha no nihon, p.29.
26 Oh, Kankoku heigō e no michi, p.39
27 Oh, Seikatsussha no nihon, p.32.
independence, they did not engage with the Yi dynasty immediately because they had to strengthen their own national power.\textsuperscript{28} China, also, could not involve itself within Korean affairs at this time because of its own issues with Westerners that it was suffering through.\textsuperscript{29} The regent leader of Korea, the Daewongun 大院君 (1820-1898), took advantage of Japan’s situation, and attempted to pull Korea into deep seclusion, install a severe autocratic rule within the peninsula, and show loyalty only to China.\textsuperscript{30}

Eventually, The Daewongun was toppled by the Empress Myeongseong (1851-1895, hereafter referred to as Queen Min). The Empress was supported by a group of yangban 兩班, Korea’s traditional ruling class of Confucian scholars, who were heavily oppressed by the autocratic rule of the Daewongun.\textsuperscript{31} Having taken control, Queen Min reformed the Daewongun’s restoration policy and his severe policy of seclusion.\textsuperscript{32} Queen Min herself was not a progressive, but select yangban who had been oppressed by the Daewongun were. Following their lead, Queen Min attempted to enter diplomatic negotiations with the Meiji government. This move was also supported by the Chinese government who thought it best for Korea to avoid conflict with Japan.\textsuperscript{33}

The Koreans and the Japanese however were unable to meet each other

\textsuperscript{28} Oh, \textit{Kankoku heigō e no michi}, pp.43-44.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., pp.45-46.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., pp.46-47.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
halfway about how the reception would be formed.\textsuperscript{34} Issues such as the Koreans’ desire for the Japanese to wear traditional attire rather than Western clothing, and the Japanese desire to enter through the gate that normally was only to be used by the Chinese ambassador because they considered Japan to lay outside of the \textit{huá-yí} continuum, rankled both sides, and consensus could not be formed between the two parties.\textsuperscript{35} Thus, arrogance and lack of understanding and consideration on both sides prevented any type of negotiations. According to Oh Seon-hwa, if the Yi Dynasty had been willing to work with the Meiji government at this critical point, the Japanese might not have used gunboat diplomacy to open the country and subsequently force the Yi Dynasty to sign the Treaty of Kanghwa, an unequal treaty that heavily leaned in Japanese favor and that was based on similar treaties that Western countries had imposed on Japan after its own forced opening.\textsuperscript{36}

Queen Min and her progressive advisers continued to press reformist policies with the Japanese, but they were countered by conservative Confucians and \textit{wijeong cheoksa} supporters who had deep concerns about Korea becoming involved with foreign powers. For example, since they believed that trade with foreign powers would bring dependence on foreign countries, instead of empowering Korea through Japanese

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., p.47.
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid., p.49.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
intervention, they felt it was better for the peninsula to empower itself.\textsuperscript{37} With such dissent spawned by conservative Confucians, Queen Min and her bureaucrats were forced to attempt to pass progressive policies without popular support.\textsuperscript{38} Queen Min hired Japanese advisors to help reform regulations for the government and the military, but, unfortunately, she placed many of her own relatives into positions of power and they were thoroughly corrupt.\textsuperscript{39} Hated for their financial waste and embezzlement of taxes, Queen Min’ relatives were further demonized by the Korean masses for their continuous demands for even more money.\textsuperscript{40} The crisis created by these government officials manifested into a strong opposition campaign symbolized by the deposed Daewongun.\textsuperscript{41} Queen Min further entrenched herself into the bad graces of the Meiji government by seeking the favor of the Qing government.\textsuperscript{42} Therefore, although the Japanese had attempted to modernize Korea through both relatively peaceful and more forcible means, the peninsula remained mired in corruption, conservatism, and torn by factionalism.\textsuperscript{43}

Even if such factionalism and corruption had not been as rampant throughout

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p.58.  
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., pp.59-60.  
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., pp.59-60.  
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p.60.  
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
the peninsula, however, it is doubtful that the Meiji could have convinced the Yi Dynasty to follow it into modernization willingly. For one, even after China was defeated in the first Sino-Japanese War, the Yi Dynasty remained staunchly pro-Chinese. Secondly, the Koreans approached Russia to safeguard it from the Japanese. These actions displayed the sheer revulsion Koreans felt towards being ruled by a country that they viewed to be barbaric and that they despised historically.

1.1.3 The Annexation of Korea

With the Korean peninsula being both “strategically critical and tantalizingly convenient,” while being a wild and untamed threat, the Meiji state was quick to heed the advice of foreign powers about how to handle its Korean problem. As I wrote above, the Meiji state was well aware of the danger that Korea represented being only 120 miles away and, for nearly two decades after its inception, it attempted to have a cooperative relationship with the peninsula. However, after experiencing years of trouble and having the Prussian general Klemens Wilhelm Jacob Meckel (1842-1905) state that Korea was “a dagger thrust at the heart of Japan” in 1885, the urgency for

---

44 Oh, Seikatsusha no nihon, p.29.
45 Ibid.
homeland security reached its apex.\textsuperscript{47} Another reason why Meckel’s words of warning were quite important to the Meiji state was that they represented a Western power’s support for Japan’s more aggressive actions in securing, and later annexing, the Korean peninsula.\textsuperscript{48} Indeed, international law recognized that intervention was a proper action by a given power when the “inept government” of another country put the former in real danger.\textsuperscript{49} In part, the Western powers were primarily concerned with protecting their own Asian possessions, but they were also well aware of the corruption of the Yi Dynasty and thereby saw Japan’s increasingly aggressive moves on Korea as a natural current of an international situation.\textsuperscript{50}

Riding its own wave of aggression to expel and to prevent foreign powers from overtaking Korea, Japan engaged in the first Sino-Japanese war (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) in order to ward off Qing China and Tsarist Russia. Also, violence in peninsular affairs increased; the assassination of Queen Min in 1895 was arguably the pinnacle of Japanese brutality with Korean affairs. Two months after the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan and Korea signed the Eulsa Treaty of 1905, which cost Korea its diplomatic sovereignty and thereby made the peninsula a

\textsuperscript{47} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, pp.19-20; Uchida, \textit{Brokers of Empire} p.9.\\textsuperscript{48} Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.16\\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., p.88.\\textsuperscript{50} Oh, \textit{Seikatsusha no nihon}, p.31.
The protectorate of Japan. The Japanese reasoned that the protectorate was necessary due to the Meiji government’s interests in the political and military affairs of Korea that had a direct influence on Japan’s own safety. According to the “Declaration of the Japanese Government” issued on November 22, 1905, the Japanese government had attempted to guide Korea throughout the previous decades as an advisor, but this role had proved insufficient and Korea proved time after time to be a “most fruitful source of complications” especially in the realm of international concerns. Since to let Korea continue on its current course would bring even more “fresh difficulties” to Japan, the Meiji government decided to take measures to put an end to this “dangerous situation” in order to pacify East Asia.

The Meiji government, however, was not finished. In 1907, the Korean government was forced to give up control of all internal affairs and leave them in Japanese hands. In 1910, supposedly failing in their attempts to “sweep away evils rooted during the course of many years,” “to secure the well-being of the Korean Imperial family,” and “to ensure the safety and repose of Japanese foreign residents,” amongst other reasons, the Meiji government came to the decision that it was necessary to fully annex the Korean peninsula and to place it under the control of the Japanese

51 “Declaration of the Japanese Government” as quoted in Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.23.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid.
Imperial Government. After the Japanese annexed Korea, they changed the name of Korea back to Chosŏn (J: Chōsen) 朝鮮 after it had been renamed Daehan Jeguk 大韓帝國 (Great Korean Empire) by the penultimate Yi Dynasty ruler King Gojong 高宗, turned Emperor Gwangmu 光武帝 (1852-1919) in 1897. This was significant because it erased the attempts by Emperor Gojong to promote the modernization of Korea in the face of adversity. Forcing the country to use the name of a “thoroughly discredited past state,” Japan squashed Gojong’s ambitions for a Korean empire.

By annexing the Korean peninsula in 1910, the Japanese finally reached their goal of securing its borders and preserving its sovereignty while Western powers continued to rip through the rest of Asia. Korea also represented an important buffer against Tsarist Russia who, despite having been defeated in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, remained a significant threat for the Japanese. The annexation of the Korean peninsula also acted, in Jun Uchida’s words, as a “gate to the world” due its bordering China and Manchuria, two other countries that the Japanese eyed for expansion.

One major debate about late Chosŏn Korea is whether or not it would have

---

56 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.25.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., p.15.
59 Uchida, Brokers of Empire p.9.
60 Ibid.
been able to keep itself from being colonized even if Japan had not been a threat to its sovereignty. During its final decades, the Yi Dynasty, already burdened by near bankruptcy, a heavily factionalized government, and experiencing domestic unrest from disgruntled peasants and disenfranchised yangban, faced the threat of Western powers. While Japan and China engaged in rapid Westernization in response to these threats, Daewongun’s response was to restore a traditional Confucian monarchy and strengthen wijeong cheoksa, which, supposedly, would be effective in countering Western battleships.\(^{61}\) According to Oh Seon-hwa, the primary reason why the Yi Dynasty had been able to maintain itself for so long during its last decades was because the West was ensnared with other conflicts at the time and that the Yi Dynasty could be overtaken at any time.\(^{62}\)

The annexation/colonization of the Korean peninsula was seen by many as natural fate for the country. The diplomat and medical missionary Horace Allen (1858-1932) stated that Koreans were a people who “cannot govern themselves” and that “[t]hey must have an over-lord as they have had for all time.”\(^{63}\) If the Koreans were able to remove themselves from the control of an over-lord like China they generally made such a mess of their own affairs that it would “oblige someone else to take charge

---

\(^{61}\) Oh, Kankoku heigō e no michi, pp.36.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., p.35.

\(^{63}\) Horace Allen as quoted in Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, p.16
of them.”

The Japanese were well aware that Korea had a long history of relying on a foreign power and they used this knowledge as a rationalization for increased aggressiveness towards the peninsula. Reflecting on Korea’s tendency to rely on a foreign power, the Japanese prime minister Hara Takashi 原敬 (1856-1921) stated that an “inborn characteristic” of Koreans was that they had no “concept of independence,” and Japanese control of Koreans simply put them into their natural state of being controlled.

1.1.4 Colonized Korea and Japanese Status

As with its journey in becoming a colonial power, Japan mimicked European powers in its attempts to reflect Japanese imperial prestige and grandeur through the exoticism of its colonized peoples. With this scheme in mind, the Japanese held acculturation tours for a select few colonized subjects, which not only allowed the colonized to see the modernized grandness of Japan, but also gave the Japanese people and media a firsthand image of the primitivism of the colonized Other with which they could compare their own modernized selves. For example, The Japan Times,

---

64 Ibid.
65 Hara Takashi as quoted in Kum, Nihonjin no chōsen kan, p.211.
66 Ibid.
67 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.79.
68 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.79; Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, p.78.
commenting on an acculturation tour by Taiwanese natives in 1897, reaffirmed the images of the Taiwanese as a backward people in the minds of the Japanese by commenting on their clothing, their language, and their reactions to trains.69 As Mark E. Caprio notes, *The Japan Times* and others thoroughly ignored issues such as the potential for the two peoples to assimilate while maximizing their differences in order to aggrandize the Japanese.70 Steeped in their own sense of superiority, the Japanese used the polarized differences of the Taiwanese as a reason to colonize and subjugate them.71

Labelling the Korean population was more problematic because they were too bureaucratic, literate, and sophisticated to be dismissed as primitive.72 Korea was considered by the Japanese to be, at worst, a “semi-civilized” country, thus, the Japanese, despite their historical difficulties with the peninsular country, respected Korea because of its high status on the huá-yí continuum, its familiarity with the Confucian Way, and because it had benefited greatly from centuries of Korean knowledge.73 To make the matter even more problematic, Japan and Korea, with their individual political identities based on Confucian values, and their comparable levels of

70 Atkins, *Primitive Selves*, p.11; Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies*, pp.78-79. The aggrandizement of the Japanese was heightened by the fact that only Taiwanese natives were on these trips rather than those who had Chinese heritage.
73 Ibid.
economic and technological development, were incredibly similar to each other by the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, despite the fact that modern day Japanese rightists state that Japan transformed Korea “from a potentially degenerate kingdom to a well-ordered society” and shifted it “from a backward and poverty-stricken country to a productive and flourishing land,” Koreans argue that Japan was only able to colonize Korea because it had modernized a few decades earlier, and that Korea could have reached a similar level of modernization if not for Japan. With these issues in mind, the Japanese had to consider a different manner in which to differentiate the Koreans from themselves.

As E. Taylor Atkins states, the difference between the colonized and the colonizer is not based just on “geographical” or “cultural terms,” but on “temporal” ones as well. Koreans, despite their many cultural and historical similarities with the Japanese, were considered inferior by the Japanese because they were calcified in a “previous phase […] in the social evolutionary past” which the Japanese had surpassed years before. Thus, in order to enhance, once again, the grandeur of the Japanese state, the Japanese quickly gripped the supposed “temporal lag” of Koreans and spread

---

75 Ibid., pp.3, 5.
77 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.55.
78 Michael Kearney as quoted in Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.55.
derogatory images of Korea throughout the metropole.\textsuperscript{79} For example, the author Nitobe Inazō 新渡戸稲造 (1862-1933) found Korea to be a “sedate,” “dignified,” and “finely chiseled” land, but it was not one of modern times. Instead, the Korea viewed by Nitobe made him feel as if he was “living three thousand years back in the age of our Kami.”\textsuperscript{80} Nitobe also found that the “physiognomy and living of this people are so bland, unsophisticated and primitive” that instead of belonging to the twentieth or even the tenth century, they belonged to a prehistoric age.\textsuperscript{81} Besides making the Japanese Empire appear grander, the presence of a spiritless Korean caught within a temporal lag justified the Japanese enlightened government’s encroachment upon Korean sovereignty.\textsuperscript{82}

Japan’s view of Koreans as primitives is problematic, as Atkins notes, because it involves an older form of anthropological observation in which the “ethnographic other” was described and “critiqued by the cultural standards of the privileged observer.”\textsuperscript{83} The forms of critique and observation used by the ethnographers employed by the Japanese state categorized Koreans by comparing and contrasting them to other observed peoples and, due to the Japanese state’s desire to aggrandize its modernization

\textsuperscript{79} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.100.
\textsuperscript{80} Nitobe Inazō as quoted in Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.88.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.57; Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.89.
\textsuperscript{83} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.74.
versus Korea’s primitiveness.\textsuperscript{84} Thus, these ethnographers molded their images of Koreans in such a manner that they appeared to be “a primordial people inhabiting another temporal dimension.”\textsuperscript{85} With its desire to make Koreans “‘fit’ primitivist paradigms,” the Japanese state, despite its decades-long effort to assimilate the Korean people, preserved indications of Korean difference through this ethnographic work.\textsuperscript{86} Also, as we will see later in this chapter, these images negated whatever progress the Korean people made in their advancement toward modernization, thus, much of their exoticism and primitiveness was falsely created by the Japanese and was able to persevere because they “are maintained and exaggerated, and not disavowed or suppressed.”\textsuperscript{87} The images of Koreans being an exotic and primitive people would last until the 1930s, when wartime necessitated that new images of the Korean people be created.\textsuperscript{88}

\textbf{1.1.5 Korea’s Need for Japan (According to Japan)}

During the brief period that Korea was a protectorate of Japan, 1905-1910, and during the years of its annexation, 1910-1945, the Residency-General turned

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.91.  
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p.105.  
\textsuperscript{87} Nicholas Thomas as quoted in Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.106.  
\textsuperscript{88} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.79.
Governor-General released the *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen*. In the early volumes of this publication, the Japanese wrote scathing accounts on their viewpoints of the Korean people. In general, Koreans were viewed as a people who were prone to superstition, slothful, recalcitrant, and unsanitary. In an attempt to sum up the root cause of all that was wrong with the population, and how it was reflected in their clothing, cuisine, social habits, work habits, etc., the Japanese state utilized the “lazy native” trope that Caprio states experienced “extensive employment in the discourse of colonization at all levels of colonial activity.” One of the most highly disseminated pictures of the lazy Korean native was that of a slumbering Korean with his burden-laden mule waiting patiently for its master to awaken. Indeed, according to the historian and critic Yamaji Aizen (1865-1917), although the average Korean laborer’s stature and strength surpassed that of the average Japanese laborer, his deeply seeded laziness made him avoid work until his hunger made it absolutely vital. However, after consuming his fill, his desire to work would quickly ebb. To make the status of the lazy Korean native even worse, Yamaji stated that the average Korean

---

89 Originally titled *Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Korea.*
90 Atkins, *Primitive Selvés*, p.64.
93 Ibid.
laborer lacked the will to change his situation as well. The laziness of the Koreans was viewed as an “innate personality defect” that justified Japanese intervention into the peninsula and the subjugation of the Korean people. Also, as we will see later in this thesis, the lazy native trope implemented by the Japanese state, as with the Western nations it mimicked, justified the compulsion and coercion used to make the colonized into laborers for state projects.

Who was responsible for Korean listlessness and temporal lag that resulted from it? As with the lag in securing its own borders, the Japanese blamed the “inept government” of Korea for the stagnation of the country’s cultural development and the crippling torpor that its people were experiencing. Supposedly, the decay of the Korean nation began, as I will detail later, with the Japanese and the Koreans being split apart from each other by the Chinese. Due to this artificial separation, the culture and society of the Korean peninsula developed under the thumb of the Chinese and the scholar-gentry of Korea, the yangban, displayed little individual development and slavishly modelled themselves on their Chinese superiors. This form of servitude implemented by the Koreans, sadae or serving the great, resulted, in the eyes of

---

94 Ibid.
95 Syed Hussein Alatas as quoted in Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, p.41
96 Ibid.
98 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.56.
99 Ibid., p.76.
the Japanese, in Korean culture being nothing more than a “substandard derivative of Chinese culture.”\textsuperscript{100} The Korean gentry’s slavish worship of its Chinese models earned even further contempt from the Japanese because it represented the Koreans’ willingness to make a “humiliating, voluntary surrender of sovereignty” to China.\textsuperscript{101} The Japanese were further aggravated by the \textit{yangban} because of their inexplicably arrogant and self-satisfied nature, which was readily displayed during Japan’s attempts to open Korea and lead it to modernization.\textsuperscript{102} Due to Japan’s difficult history with the \textit{yangban} and the scholar-gentry’s slavish worship of the Chinese, which supposedly created the cultural variances and developmental gap between the Japanese and Koreans, the Japanese, as well as Korean nationalists, blamed the Korean nobility and the monarchy that ruled it for the stagnation of the Korean people.\textsuperscript{103}

According to Japanese officials in Korea, the \textit{yangban} were a group of individuals who were “accustomed to despise labour and indulge in idleness, whether they have property or not.”\textsuperscript{104} To make matters worse, as noted by the missionary Claude-Charles Dallet (1829-1878), the \textit{yangban} were a highly factionalized group of

\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., p.38.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., p.94.
\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Annual Report on Reforms and Progress in Chosen} as quoted in Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.64.
individuals who continuously vented their hatred upon each other. As Dallet noted, the *yangban*, who had, in the missionary’s words, rendered the last three centuries of Korean history into boring pap because it was made up of nothing more than “unproductive, bloody conflicts among the aristocracy,” did not have differences in policy or administrative principles, so they fought over their own dignity or the influence of their duty. Within this self-centered and bloody political society, common Koreans, who supposedly were the bearers of true Koreanness due to their lack of Sinification, were rendered completely voiceless and their opinions were simply not allowed within the political sphere. As Dallet wrote, the only times in which the *yangban* took notice of common Koreans was either to suppress them or to exploit them as much as possible. Living in such an environment in which the *yangban* enriched themselves through “long-standing official extortion and abuses,” it is not surprising that ordinary Koreans, due to the insecurity of their lives and property, were lackadaisical in the development of their occupations and improving their lives in general. Indeed, the general Ugaki Kazushige (1868-1956), who acted as the Governor-General of Korea twice, stated that the apathetic nature of the Koreans

---

105 Claude-Charles Dallet as quoted in Oh, *Kankoku heigō e no michi*, p.23.
106 Ibid.
ranked among the world’s worst and that their very existence held back the world’s development.\textsuperscript{110} According to the Japanese, the torpid nature of Koreans was engrained so deeply into their personhoods that it even affected their physical features. Despite the fact that their muscles for basic survival were supposedly superior to the Japanese, muscles that were used for “expressive movement” (hyōjō undo 表情運動) remained underdeveloped.\textsuperscript{111} Of course, if the physical characteristics of the Korean populace were affected by the general torpor that had come over the nation, its mental characteristics were affected as well. The journalist and educator Arakawa Gorō 荒川五郎 (1865-1944) stated that, although Koreans “look just like the Japanese” their minds “appear[ed] to be a bit vacant” with “their mouths open and their eyes dull, somewhat lacking.”\textsuperscript{112} With the stagnation of the Korean populace’s minds and desire to work and prosper, the Japanese believed that the yangban had “fluttered away its [Korea’s] glory.”\textsuperscript{113} Thus the Japanese took it upon themselves to intervene in Korean affairs and instill in the Korean populace a “will to work for the betterment of the collective whole.”\textsuperscript{114}

Steadfast in their belief that “leisure was a luxury not afforded people of a

\textsuperscript{110} Ugaki Kazushige as quoted in Kum, \textit{Nihonjin no chōsen kan}, p.279.
\textsuperscript{111} Kubo Takeshi as quoted in Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.90.
\textsuperscript{112} Arakawa Gorō as quoted in Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.91.
\textsuperscript{113} Seika Ayaka as quoted in Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.90.
\textsuperscript{114} Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, p.41.
civilized land,” the Japanese desire to pull Koreans out of the distant past and free them from their old ways was bolstered by the racial kinship that the two countries shared. Many Japanese thinkers, such as the politician and bureaucrat Shimada Saburō 島田三郎 (1852-1923) and the teacher and journalist Oyama Tōsuke 小山東助 (1879-1919), believed that saving the Korean people from their inept government was absolutely necessary and that it needed to be done through “good governance.” However, as I stated above, the Japanese believed that the Koreans were unable to maintain self-government and that they lacked the desire for independence. Thus, as Oyama stated, it was necessary for Japan to colonize Korea and install an enlightening administration so that the peninsula could receive the “good governance that it desperately needed.”

By establishing itself in Korea, the Japanese state hoped that through its good governance Koreans would be inspired to do things which they had failed at doing before, such as “complete a full day’s work” and strive for self-improvement. The Japanese also focused heavily on Korean women because they were the ones who

116 Shimada Saburō as quoted in Kum, Nihonjin no chōsen kan, pp.250-51.
117 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.65; Oyama Tōsuke as quoted in Kum, Nihonjin no chōsen kan, pp.250-51.
would instill such critical attributes desired by the Japanese state in their children through home education.\textsuperscript{119} Thus, through uprooting Korea’s inept government and attempting to install these desired attributes into the beings of the Korean public, the Japanese hoped to create a “new Korea” (\textit{shin Chōsen 新朝鮮}) that freed the Korean people from their “half-Chinese” (\textit{han-Shinajin 半支那人}) existence created by the Korean monarchy and \textit{yangban}.\textsuperscript{120}

As for Japan’s leadership role, the first Governor-General of Korea, Terauchi Masatake 寺内正毅 (1852-1919), stated that “there naturally exists a relationship in which one is the leader and guide and the other, the follower and pupil.” While Korea had fallen into a long period of stagnation due to the wedge driven between it and Japan by China, Japan had continued to progress to modernization and civilization thanks to the “wise and beneficent reigns of her successive Emperors,” thus, due to this historical situation, Japan was indeed the leader and Korea the follower.\textsuperscript{121} This was Japan’s destined role because of the rapid road to modernization it took during the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, as the liberal politician Ozaki Yukio 尾崎行雄 (1858-1954) stated, around the time of the Gaspin Coup 甲申政變 in 1884, although China and Korea had led Japanese civilization in the past, “now Japan is the leading

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p.194.
\textsuperscript{121} Terauchi Masatake as quoted in Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.27.
country and China and Korea follow far behind.”

By taking on the mission to rescue Korea from being caught within its archaic past and civilizing it, Japan effectively dismissed native Korean efforts to modernize. Indeed, Japan’s civilizing mission of Korea, in the words of Andre Schmid, stole the rhetoric of Korean intellectuals who were “rethinking…the [Korean] nation” and thereby “hijack[ed]” Korea’s own goals for modernization as reasoning for colonizing and subjugating the Korean people.

1.1.6: Same-Blooded Japanese and Koreans

As I have touched upon earlier in this chapter, Japan’s colonization of Korea was rather unique because it involved a nation colonizing another with a population of racially and culturally similar people. Indeed, up until the mid-nineteenth century, Japan and Korea were quite similar with their shared Confucian values and similar levels of economic and technological development. Thus, with the possible exceptions of British Ireland and French Algeria, no other imperial power could or did claim such a “racial bond” with the people it colonized as did the Japanese with

---

122 Ozaki Yukio as quoted in Kum, Nihonjin no chōsen kan, p.245.
125 Bruce Cumings as quoted in Caprio, Japanese Assimilation Policies, p.7.
Koreans. Also, Japan’s encroachment upon Korea differed from more traditional colonized lands due to the fact that the peninsula possessed some “two thousand years of distinctive cultural, historical, political, and ethnic identity,” however, as Mark Peattie notes, the colonization of Korea fit the pattern of Japanese imperialism due to the fact that Japan tended to colonize “well populated lands whose inhabitants were racially akin” to it. Indeed, Japan and Korea shared similarities in being influenced by the Chinese, Buddhist heritage, linguistic likenesses, the seemingly shared heritage of Korean shamanism (musok) and traditional Shintō, etc. Combining their knowledge of the shared heritage of Korea and Japan with their view that Korea was caught within its primitive past, some Japanese looked at Koreans as if they were mirrors that reflected back their own primitive selves. Thus, for the Japanese, the same-bloodedness of the Koreans “made gazing on the ‘other’ as much an act of introspection as [of] surveillance.”

Japan’s focus on Korea’s and its own shared heritage throughout the colonization of the Korean peninsula, 1910-1945, was markedly different than how it had viewed Korea during the Edo era. As Caprio writes, in pre-Meiji days, the Japanese

---

127 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.57.
129 Atkins, Primitive Selves, p.58.
130 Ibid., p.4.
131 Ibid., p.5.
viewed Korea as foreign power with which they engaged in a fairly equal diplomatic relationship.\(^{132}\) However, despite this equal diplomatic relationship, Japan and Korea were engaged in a game of one-upmanship in which one claimed cultural superiority over the other.\(^{133}\) For example, the Japanese believed they were superior because Korean tours of Japan supposedly acted as “tours of tributary” and Koreans maintained that they were superior because of their “refusal to allow Japanese visits to the Korean capital.”\(^{134}\) As during the colonial period, negative images of Korea were abundant. In an early account, Ugaki Kazushige wrote:

> ‘In Korea, hills are bald, fields are infertile, [and] tigers are walking around everywhere. A portion of the aristocrat scholars practice conspiracy, and most of the people wear white robes, hold long pipes in their mouths, indulge in napping in places like a pigsty, and they eat millet.’\(^{135}\)

Although these portrayals of Koreans remained firm throughout most of the colonial period, they changed from originally being used to solely paint Koreans as a filthy and archaic other to presenting them as kinsmen who desperately needed the civilizing mission of the Japanese. Thus, Japan’s interest in its shared cultural roots with Korea should be taken with a large grain of salt because this interest reflects the “flexibility and malleability of images to fit situation and purpose.”\(^{136}\)

---


\(^{133}\) Ibid.

\(^{134}\) Ibid.

\(^{135}\) Ugaki Kazushige as quoted in Kum, *Nihonjin no chōsen kan*, p.282.

1.1.7: Expansion and the Historical Japanese Self

As mentioned earlier, Japan, like other colonial powers, used ethnography and anthropology as tools to differentiate itself from those it colonized. However, unlike Western colonial powers, Japan also used anthropology as a tool to discover the roots of the Japanese in Korea. Indeed, through “anthropological diligence” the Japanese believed that they could rediscover or salvage a “primordial Japan” located within the Korean peninsula. Although the Japanese had been interested in locating their own origins throughout the colonial period, the need for security and the escalating conflict with China added intensity to Japan’s search for its origins in Korea and, as we shall see, the rest of Northeast Asia.

In attempting to establish a historical precedent for Japan’s colonization of Korea, the politician Nakano Seigō 中野正剛 (1886-1943) wrote that Japan’s deep relationship with Korea did not begin with the archipelago’s supervision of the peninsula, but went back to the supposed conquest of the three Korean Kingdoms 三韓征伐 (Sankan seibatsu) at the hands of the legendary Jingū-kōgō 神功皇后, Empress

---

138 Ibid., p.58.
139 Ibid.
Consort Jingū, (reign 201-269).\[140\] By establishing its historical presence in Korea, Japan, in the words of Prasenjit Duara, was attempting to establish an “anthropogenic claim” to Korea which gave logic to Japanese maneuverers in Korea because they were turned into “corrective actions to restore proper sovereignty” to Japan.\[141\] Indeed, to prove Japan’s “anthropogenic claim” to Korea, Japanese would engage in curatorial projects that would cement a “prior claim” to the peninsula through created evidence of a “prior Japanese political presence in antiquity.”\[142\] By establishing its prior claim to the country, Japan’s colonization became a matter of “sutur[ing]” the wound” created by China artificially wedging itself between Korea and Japan.\[143\] Thus, Japan’s colonization of Korea was not the act of forcing “historically groundless impositions of an alien identity on hapless Koreans,” but a “racially and historically valid crusade […] to reunify an estranged family.”\[144\]

With their prior claim to Korea established in history and anthropology, the Japanese reasoned that their colonizing Korea and their relationship with Koreans were “entirely different” and more “morally legitimate” than Western countries colonizing

\[140\] Nakano Seigō as quoted in Kum, *Nihonjin no chōsen kan*, p.258.
\[143\] Ibid., p.56.
\[144\] Ibid., p.96.
lands in Africa or Asia and white colonial relationships with darker skinned natives.\textsuperscript{145}

This morally legitimate colonization of Korea would later be extended to the assimilation of the Korean people because the similarities of the two people made assimilation “more appropriate” than a European power toward one of its colonies.\textsuperscript{146}

Since its colonization was supposedly more morally legitimate and its assimilation more appropriate due to its shared blood with Korea, Japan viewed its encroachment upon the peninsula as integration rather than colonization.\textsuperscript{147} The attempt to make the colonization of Korea seem more like “a smooth integration of backward cousins into the Japanese family-state,” was done, in part, to promote national cultural identity within the metropole as well.\textsuperscript{148}

Japan’s goal of finding anthropological evidence of its former sovereignty was not above the use of pure fabrication. For instance, the Japanese planted a stone monument in Koryŏng, the capital of the ancient Korean state of Kaya, to mark the existence of Mimana Nihon-fu 任那日本府, a Japanese colony created by the aforementioned Empress Consort Jingū in order subjugate Korean Kings under the rule of Japanese imperial authority.\textsuperscript{149} Although at one point the existence of Mimana

\textsuperscript{146} Caprio, \textit{Japanese Assimilation Policies}, pp.16-17.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., p.7.
\textsuperscript{148} Atkins, \textit{Primitive Selves}, p.53.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., p.114.
Nihon-fu was supported by Japanese, Korean, and Western historians. Koreans later came to see that Japan’s creation of Mimana Nihon-fu was a ploy to distort Korean history in order to claim that the Koreans were inferior to the Japanese and create a precedent for Japanese imperial presence.¹⁵⁰

Having validated their kinship with an historical presence in Korea through anthropology, the Japanese continued their anthropogenic claim deeper into Northeast Asia. For example, the scholar Akiba Takashi 秋葉隆 (1888-1954) stated that the Korean word mudang 巫堂 (female spirit medium) originated in Mongolia which strengthened the case for “regional shamanic heritage” and aided Japanese expansionist aspirations in Northeast Asia.¹⁵¹ With this work, Akiba thereby contributed to a field of study called Mansenshi 滿鮮史, a term created through the combined Chinese characters of Man 滿, the first character of Manshū 滿州 (Manchuria), sen 鮮, the second character from Chōsen 朝鮮 (Korea), and shi 史 (history) tagged at the end, which theoretically validated Japanese expansion into the Northeast Asian hinterlands due to the area’s shared heritage.¹⁵² Indeed, the Japanese continued to justify future expansions into Asia through the belief that primordial ties to an area was much

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.
¹⁵¹ Ibid., pp.63,77.
¹⁵² Ibid., p.77.
stronger than any modern empire’s claim.\textsuperscript{153}

Japan was unique among colonial powers in that, even in its official propaganda, it claimed a “long-standing kinship” with its colonized subjects. Such a claim was impossible for white Western colonial powers to make because of the scientific racism it used as reasoning to colonize its darker-skinned subjects.\textsuperscript{154} Of course, one of the major reasons why the Japanese claimed such a long-standing kinship with Koreans was that the two countries were legitimately tied to each other with their similar cultural backgrounds. However, more importantly, Korea’s geographical proximity made the Japanese embrace the cultural proximity of the Koreans in order to justify their more intrusive state rule to ensure state security.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid, pp.77-78.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., pp.56, 57.
Part 2: Koreans in Prewar and Wartime Japan

1.2.1: The First Koreans in Japan

In September 1875, the Japanese sent the gunboat Un'yō 雲揚 to the Korean island of Kanghwa and occupied it. Known as the Kōkatō jiken (江華島事件 Kanghwa Incident) in Japanese, this invasion subsequently led to the signing of the Nitchō-shūkōjōki (日朝修好条規 The Treaty of Kangwha) which allowed for individuals to travel between Korea and Japan and allowed for the transportation of goods between the peninsula and archipelago. At a glance, this treaty seems to have loosened the restrictions placed on Korea by the Yi dynasty, but it was an unequal treaty similar to those Western powers forced Japan to sign. With this treaty in place, the Japanese, among other things, were able to establish concessions within Korea where Japanese citizens gained extraterritoriality and were able to use Japanese currency in these locations156. Thus, many of the benefits offered by the Treaty of Kanghwa were only available to the Japanese which made it “one-sided.”157

Not too long after the signing of the Treaty of Kanghwa, Japanese nationals

began to flood into Korea. As Kim Chan-jung writes, Japanese, “who dreamt to get rich quick through having a share in rights and interests in Korea,” quickly moved to the peninsula in order to escape their situations back in Japan.\(^{158}\) However, Koreans were slower making their way to Japan. As the sociologist Fukuoka Yasunori writes, the total population of Koreans in Japan before the annexation of Korea in 1910 is commonly thought to have been around 790, mostly foreign exchange students.\(^{159}\) However, Fukuoka, drawing on the scholarship of Kim Yŏng-dal and Yamawaki Keizō, states that the number of Koreans in Japan was greater and that they engaged in a number of occupations including that of coal miners, railway construction workers, or peddlers of candies by the 1890s.\(^{160}\)

These laborers, as Kim Chan-jung states, filled the “industries which supported Japanese modernization.” During the early decades of Koreans working in Japan, these industrial jobs were often considered to be part of “punitive labor,” so many of the first Korean laborers in Japan were prisoners in their home country.\(^ {161}\) Koreans who came to Japan to work on the railways were experienced workers who had worked the rails in their home country. The first Korean railroad workers in Japan were hired to work in

\(^{158}\) Kim, *Zainichi korian hyaku-nen*, p.17.

\(^{159}\) Fukuoka, *Zainichi kankoku/chōsenjin*, p.22.

\(^{160}\) Ibid.

\(^{161}\) Kim, *Zainichi korian hyaku-nen*, p.17.
Kyushu on the Hisatsu Line 肥薩線 and their numbers continued to grow as Japan modernized and entered into the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05).\textsuperscript{162} Korean railroad labor played an important role in this war as it helped insure, both in Korea and Japan, that the rails were in good condition to supply the Japanese military in Manchuria.\textsuperscript{163}

Thus, because of Japan’s modernization efforts and war efforts, the Korean population in Japan by the end of the Russo-Japanese War was over one thousand.\textsuperscript{164} Besides these exchange students and laborers, the rest of the pre-annexation Korean population in Japan tended to be made up of government officials of Yi Dynasty Korea and political refugees.\textsuperscript{165} Overall, although many official records state that the number of Koreans residing in Japan was relatively low, this number seems to have been higher before the annexation than originally thought, and this is not even counting undocumented individuals who entered Japan’s borders unofficially.\textsuperscript{166}

\textbf{1.2.2: Forced Out of Korea}

Although the number of Koreans in Japan before the annexation of Korea in 1910 might have been greater than originally thought, it is true that Koreans went to

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid, p.18.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{164} Fukuoka, Zainichi kankoku/chōsenjin, p.22.
\textsuperscript{165} Kim, Zainichi korian hyaku-nen, p.17.
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid, p.23.
Japan in much greater numbers after the annexation was officially established. With their numbers growing each year after annexation, Koreans flooded continuously into Japan through “direct and indirect pressure” during the decades of the Japanese colonization of Korea, which extended from 1910 until 1945.¹⁶⁷

One of the primary reasons why Koreans left their home country was the state of economic destitution that the Japanese colonists left them in.¹⁶⁸ After the annexation of Korea, the Japanese immediately began to implement a number of harsh policies. In relation to Japan’s Resident Korean population, the tochi chōsa jigyō (土地調査事業, Land Survey Project, 1910-18) and the sanmai zōshoku keikaku (産米増殖計画, Plan for Increasing Rice Production, 1920-34), were the most important Japanese colonial policies that forced Koreans to go to Japan.¹⁶⁹ Under the Land Survey Project, most of the land that had once belonged to the Yi dynasty was confiscated by the Korean Resident-General and sold to the Oriental Development Company (東洋拓殖株式会社, Tōyō takushoku kabushiki kaisha) which resulted in a large number of Korean farmers losing their land.¹⁷⁰ In general, the purpose of the Land Survey Project was to

¹⁶⁷ Kim Tae-young, Aidentitii poriikkusu o koete: zainichi Chōsenjin no esunishiti. (Akashi Shoten, 1999), pp.16-17.
¹⁶⁹ Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, pp.22-23.
¹⁷⁰ Kim, Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen, p.27.
determine which farmers controlled what land for taxing purposes. However, since most of the ordinary farmers were unable to understand how to fill out the proper forms due to their illiteracy and because they declared ownership of land they worked on but did not actually own, they lost most of their land. When the Land Survey project came to an end in 1918, the Japanese, who did not make up three percent of colonial Korea’s population, and wealthy Korean landlords possessed 50% of Korea’s arable land. Much of this land, 64% of the rice paddies and 43% of the cultivated land, would become land worked by tenant farmers. Of course, these tenant farms were managed by the once independent farmers who had lost their land to the Land Survey Project. Securing these tenant farms was very costly because the farmers sometimes had to give up 70% of their total harvest. This situation led to the already destitute farmers becoming even poorer and eventually being forced out of Korea.

Already devastated by the results of the Land Survey Project, poor Korean farmers were struck again by the Plan for Increasing Rice Production. Beginning in 1920, the Plan for Increasing Rice Production was implemented as method to provide “cheap rice for laborers and poor people” of Japan in order to avoid a recurrence of the

171 Ibid.
172 Ibid.
174 Ibid.
175 Ibid, p.29.
Rice Riots (米騒動 *kome sōdō*) of 1918, which erupted due to the scarcity and high consumer price of rice.\textsuperscript{176} Thus, a better fed Japanese population was supported by the hard work and sacrifice of destitute Korean farmers who reaped no benefits from the enforced escalation of rice production.\textsuperscript{177}

Instead of helping the poor Korean farmer, the Plan for Increasing Rice Production led to “landholder-led commercialization and exportation of the rice product” which resulted in the “permeation of a twisted commodity economy” into Korean villages and “promoted class differentiation.”\textsuperscript{178} Japanese and Korean landholders benefited greatly from this plan because the Japanese Imperial government was willing to make major capital investments into Korean agriculture and land was leveled properly and advanced irrigation systems were installed. As a result, “Japanese [and Korean] landlords’ profit became secured.”\textsuperscript{179} However, as landlords became richer the number of destitute farmers increased as well. Average farmers were unable to compete with the rapidly modernizing farms, and rapidly increasing taxes, such as the water tax, and they were forced to give up their land.\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid, p.61.
\textsuperscript{177} Kim, *Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete*, p.64.
\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{179} Kim, *Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen*, p.61.
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid. This accelerated relinquishment of farmland can be seen in the fact that tenant farmers worked on 55.6\% of the cultivated land in 1930, up from 50\% in 1920, and that the percentage of tenant farmers rose from 39.8\% in 1920 to 46.5\% a decade later.
For Koreans who had lost their land or means to earn a living, going to Japan represented a method of survival. Koreans from the southern provinces of Gyeongsang, Jeolla and Jeju-do made their way to Japan while those who lived in the northern half of the peninsula headed to Manchuria/Manchukuo.\textsuperscript{181}

Even after losing their land and being forced to move to Japan, Koreans were unable to escape the Plan for Increasing Rice Production. For instance Jeong Gyeong-jo, who came to Japan because “(w)e could not eat no matter how much we worked (in Korea) at that time,” states that he came across a bag of Korean Jinsen rice when he went to a marketplace in Shimonoseki.\textsuperscript{182} This was a bad experience for Jeong because his poor countrymen back in the peninsula “could not eat it, especially in the summer.” Thus, Jeong came face-to-face with how he and his countrymen were considered to be second or even third class citizens within the Japanese empire.

Reflecting on his condition at this time, Jeong writes that he was “completely miserable” and that “the situation for our race [in Japan] was absolutely miserable.”\textsuperscript{183}

\subsection*{1.2.3: Korean Labor in Japan}

Coming to Japan and having to begin life in the country of their colonizers

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{181} Fukuoka, \textit{Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin}, p.23.
\textsuperscript{182} Jeong Gyeong-jo as quoted in Kim, \textit{Aidentii poritikkusu o koete}, p.64.
\textsuperscript{183} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
represented only the first problems that Koreans had to face. As Kim Tae-young states, Koreans immediately suffered “various discriminative treatments” upon their arrival in Japan, including “exclusion from opportunities in employment.”184 If Koreans were “lucky” enough to find employment in Japan, their jobs, normally at restaurants and construction sites, tended to be ones where they found themselves laboring under severe working conditions which the Japanese refused to tolerate.185 To make matters worse, these jobs were also unsecured and the Resident Koreans only received around one third of the wages that the Japanese received for the same work. Thus, the lives of early Resident Koreans in Japan “were in an utterly wretched state.”186

The availability of jobs for Korean workers would change as Japan prospered during the chaos of World War I.187 Indeed, in their search for “good and cheap labor,” Japanese companies, mainly in the spinning thread, coal, and construction industries, made strong efforts to recruit Koreans.188 Japan would experience an economic depression after the conclusion of World War I, but continued to need extra labor due to America’s prosperity and its demands for such things as silk.189 Indeed, Koreans became a much needed “resource” for Japanese industries because they created a secure

184 Kim, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, p.17.
185 Ibid, pp.17, 64.
186 Ibid, p.64.
188 Ibid, p.29.
source of labor. Japan’s national railways even offered discount fares to Koreans in order to insure that they were available to supply manpower to Japanese industries.\textsuperscript{190}

In order to gain the much needed “resource” of Korean labor, recruiters (both Korean and Japanese) used underhanded methods to cajole destitute individuals to leave their homes and move to the Japanese archipelago. However, these underhanded methods would often backfire because the fooled Korean laborers would rebel when they discovered that the working conditions in Japan were much worse than what they were told by the recruiters.\textsuperscript{191} Also, the harsh working conditions that the Koreans labored under were exacerbated by the fact that most of the Japanese workers held contempt and hostility towards them.\textsuperscript{192} However, Resident Koreans continued to come to Japan and their communities grew within the industrial centers of the country.\textsuperscript{193} This was not so much the result of the methods of the horrid recruiters who lied and tricked these individuals to come to the country of their oppressors, but an effect of the continuous poverty and unemployment issues that weighed on the backs of the peninsula’s poorest residents.\textsuperscript{194}

The flow of Korean laborers into Japan continued steadily for the first ten or so

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid, p.31.
\textsuperscript{191} Ibid, p.32.
\textsuperscript{192} Fukuoka, \textit{Zainichi Kankoku/Chôsenjin}, p.24.
\textsuperscript{193} Kim, \textit{Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen}, p.31.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid. p.33.
years after annexation; however, beginning in May of 1920, Japan was sunk into a deep economic depression which affected both the Koreans living in the peninsula who wanted to go to Japan and those who were already settled in Japan. Due to this depression, it became necessary for a number of industries to cut pay, dismiss workers, or to even close their entire factories. Of course, being a disdained minority whose jobs were already in a precarious position during the times of high prosperity, Resident Koreans felt the brunt of the depression. Thus Resident Koreans were the first to be let go with only a small amount of money, which was to be used as travel expenses as compensation.

Many Koreans, especially those who had family members back home, returned to Korea, however, there was an increasing number of Koreans in Japan who had no connections back in the peninsula, so they were fixed within Japan. Caught within Japan, these Resident Koreans had to fight tooth and nail in order to survive life with their colonizers. This situation led to many labor disputes between 1920 and 1922, but, because Resident Korean labor leaders were unorganized and there was a lack of solidarity with Japanese laborers, these disputes tended to peter out without any

195 Ibid, pp.41-42.  
196 Ibid.  
197 Ibid.  
198 Ibid.
significant goals being reached.\textsuperscript{199} Japanese companies created rivalries between the Japanese and the Korean laborers and oftentimes it was groups of Japanese laborers (that of course outnumbered the Resident Koreans) who suppressed the labor disputes.\textsuperscript{200}

Despite these early setbacks, Korean laborers eventually organized their disputes more evenly and some began to delve into Marxism and/or Leninism. This led to a number of Resident Koreans forming links with Japanese socialists.\textsuperscript{201} As a result, Resident Koreans were able to establish their own labor unions in 1922 in Tokyo and Osaka. After their establishment, Japanese and Koreans in the labor movement began to collaborate with one another.\textsuperscript{202}

After 1920, although Japan was hit by economic depression, the number of Korean workers coming to Japan continued to increase thanks in part to the enactment of a road reformation plan that was written in 1919.\textsuperscript{203} Also of note, during this time period administration policies within the Korean peninsula were undergoing a shift from a “military rule” to a “civilian rule” after the 3.1 Independence Movement in which Korean protestors demanded to be released from Japanese colonialism.

\textsuperscript{199} Ibid, p.42.
\textsuperscript{200} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{201} Ibid, p.43.
\textsuperscript{202} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid, pp.43-44.
Shocked by the protest, which it violently put down, the Japanese government attempted to “soften dissatisfaction, anger, and resistance of Korean people” by removing some restrictions that it had placed on them. One restriction removed was the necessity of Koreans needing a travel pass to enter Japan. As a result, the number of Koreans coming to Japan grew from 30,000 in 1921 to 97,000 in 1923.\textsuperscript{204} The elimination of the travel pass was supposedly Japan’s way of showing Koreans \textit{isshi dōjin} (一視同仁 Imperial benevolence) and eliminating “institutional discrimination” towards Koreans.\textsuperscript{205} Yet the true situation of Resident Koreans did not improve, but rather steadily grew worse.

For example, the July 29, 1922 issue of the \textit{Yomiuri Shinbun} reported that the working conditions and treatment of Resident Koreans working in Japan as construction workers were “utterly miserable.” This same issue also reported that a number of Resident Koreans were outright abused and slaughtered by the Japanese at the Number One Nakatsugawa Power Plant in Niigata.\textsuperscript{206} Instead of attempting to right the wrongs that had been committed in order to create a better relationship with colonized Koreans and Resident Koreans, the Governor-General of Korea and the Ministry of Home

\textsuperscript{204} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{206} Kim, \textit{Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen}, p.44.
Affairs attempted to deny the article and the ones that followed it. Resident Korean reporters, however, did travel to Niigata and verified that the atrocities had taken place. 

This incident in some ways helped create awareness of the issues that Resident Koreans faced among some groups of concerned Japanese. Indeed, due to Ra Gyon-sok’s 羅景錫 and Yi Sang-hyob’s 李相協 investigation of the incidents at the power plant and their speech given at the Korean YMCA Hall in Kanda in September 1922 where the prominent Japanese anarchists and Marxists, Urata Takeo 浦田武雄 (1893-1973), Takatsu Masamichi 高津正道 (1893-1974), Ōsugi Sakae 大杉栄 (1885-1923), and Sakai Toshihiko 堺利彦 (1871-1933) were present. The Japanese Communist Party, which was established the same year Ra Gyon-sok and Yi Sang-hyob did their reportage of the Nakatsugawa power plant, argued in favour of the “solidarity of Japan and Korean laborers” in its bulletin Zen’ei (前衛 Vanguard).

The slaughter of Korean workers in Niigata was a clarion call for leftist Japanese and Koreans to form a “common front” to oppose the imperialistic Japanese state. While the organizers succeeded in bringing together nearly 500 Koreans and

\[207\] Ibid.  
\[208\] Ibid, p.45.  
\[209\] Ibid, p.47.  
\[210\] Ibid.  
\[211\] Ibid.
500 Japanese, the event also drew more attention by Japanese forces who were not only concerned about the solidarity between Korean and Japanese laborers, but also wary of the rise of another independence movement in Korea.212

1.2.4: The Great Kanto Earthquake, The Massacre of Resident Koreans, and Resident Korean Collaborators

Japanese hostility and suspicion towards Resident Koreans came to a head after the Great Kanto Earthquake (関東大震災 Kantō daishinsai) occurred on September 1, 1923.213 With urban districts such as Yokohama and Tokyo reduced to rubble, many Japanese, who became increasingly agitated by strong and devastating aftershocks, became enraged as rumors spread that Resident Koreans were committing arson and poisoning wells.214 On the day after the earthquake, the rumors continued to spread and were supported and spread nationwide by the police through military facilities. Incensed by the supposed “arsons, poisonings, and pillages committed by Koreans in metropolitan areas,” Japanese “vigilante groups,” which were organized by town administrators, systematically rounded up and slaughtered Koreans.215 Also, since the Kanto region was put under martial law after the earthquake, the military played a

---

213 Ibid, p.50.
214 Ibid.
215 Ibid.
strong role in the rounding up and systematic slaughter of Koreans—as well as key Japanese communists and anarchists—who they recognized as threats.\(^{216}\)

The number of Resident Koreans murdered by Japanese citizens, police, and soldiers remains unknown because it has not been investigated by the Japanese government. According to the Japanese Department of Justice, the number of murdered Koreans amounted to 232 individuals, while the Governor-General of Korea states that the number was 832.\(^{217}\) Of course, these numbers are relatively suspect both because of their low totals and because of their sources. A more reliable source is Kim Sun-hak金承学, the president of a bulletin called Dokuritsu Shinbun独立新聞 (Independence News), a bulletin for Koreans who supported Korean independence, who, along with a number of Korean exchange students, surveyed the area secretly after the massacre took place. Kim estimates the number to be around 6,415 individuals.\(^{218}\)

When the chaos of the massacre and mass arrests finally ebbed, the Kanto region had become relatively depopulated of Resident Koreans.\(^{219}\) Furthermore, public security authorities issued on September 3\(^{rd}\), the same day of the massacre, issued an order that prohibited Koreans entrance into Japan. Individuals that arrived after this

\(^{216}\) Ibid.
\(^{217}\) Ibid, p.51.
\(^{218}\) Ibid.
\(^{219}\) Ibid.
order were refused entry and sent back to Pusan.\textsuperscript{220} This prohibition of entry into Japan was not done out of fear or malice, but to keep things from getting even more chaotic. Resident Koreans located in Shimonoseki were caught in a wave of fear because they were terrified of being massacred by the Japanese. Many fled home immediately.\textsuperscript{221}

After the massacre occurred, a pro-Japanese Resident Korean organization called \textit{Sōaikai} (相愛会) offered its services to help remove the bodies of dead Resident Koreans and watch those who had been imprisoned.\textsuperscript{222} This organization would also play a key role in the \textit{kōminka} (皇民化 imperialization) of Resident Koreans into loyal subjects of the Japanese empire, and acted as a watchdog over the minority’s activities.\textsuperscript{223} Originally established in 1920 by Park Choon-Geum 朴春琴 and Yi Ki-Dong 李起東 in Tokyo as an institution that was supposed to spread “harmony” between the people of Japan and Korea, \textit{Sōaikai} became a social work organization that established branches throughout Japan.

With its goals outlined in its constitution as the “annulment of racial discrimination,” “making harmony between Koreans and Japanese exhaustive,” and “seeking mental enlightenment and economic aid for Korean laborers,” \textit{Sōaikai}

\textsuperscript{220} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{221} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{222} Ibid, p.53.
\textsuperscript{223} Ibid.
supposedly aimed to build accommodations, find jobs, and give “vocational guidance” to struggling Resident Koreans. However, instead, the institution “observed and supervised Korean laborers” and “suppressed laborers who cried for better wages with violence.”

Indeed, it was this group that suppressed the activities of both the Korean labor and nationalists movements and, even more sickening to Resident Koreans and Koreans back in the homeland, actively aided Japanese public security authorities to suppress Korean movements. For their “pro-Japanese” spirit and their willingness to aid the Japanese authorities, including providing 300 men to clean up the corpses of dead Resident Koreans killed by the Japanese and imprisoning and guarding their own countrymen, they were made an official institution in 1928 by the oppressors of their own people.

After gaining official support from the Japanese government, Sōaikai followed the “government line” closely and, after Japanese war efforts increased, the Sōaikai would be “absorbed” into the Kyōwakai (協和会 Concord Association) which was a more powerful association which aimed to prepare Resident Koreans for the Japanese war effort. Kyōwakai would eventually establish a number of yūwa dankai (融和団

---

224 Ibid.
225 Ibid.
226 Ibid, pp.53-54.
227 Ibid, p.54.
harmony organizations) throughout Japan which were ostensibly created to aid Resident Koreans throughout the country. However, the Kyōwakai was instead used as a tool by the Japanese government, especially the Governor-General of Korea, to cover up the massacre of Resident Koreans within the Kanto region.

Also, and more importantly, the Japanese government and the Governor-General of Korea wanted to enlist the help of the Kyōwakai to “promote reconciliation between Japan and Korea” because they were concerned that the Koreans would rise in an anti-Japanese rebellion due to the massacres.228 The process of promoting reconciliation between the Japanese and the Koreans was initiated the Governor-General of Korea Saitō Makoto 斉藤実 (1858-1936) who travelled to Osaka and placed the order to establish the Ōsaka Naisen kyōkai (大阪内鮮協会 Osaka Japanese-Korean Association) which was established in 1924 and later created further branches in Kanagawa and Hyogo. These new Japanese-Korean organizations used the already established yūwa dankai in order to further their goals and they would have a lasting effect on the lives of Resident Koreans until the end of the war.229

1.2.5: Too Many Koreans Entering Japan

---

228 Ibid, p.55.
229 Ibid.
Despite the massacre and the general mistreatment that the Japanese showed toward Resident Koreans, Koreans continued to come to Japan due to the poverty in their homeland.\textsuperscript{230} As stated above, Japan went into a deep economic depression when World War I ended, and as a result many companies were forced to close and the Resident Korean population felt the brunt of the pay cuts and layoffs. Aware of the economic state of both Japan and Korea, the Japanese government reinforced measures to hinder the immigration of Korean labor into the country.\textsuperscript{231} In 1924, the Japanese government ended the “unrestricted passage policy” that had been implemented after the March 1\textsuperscript{st} Independence Movement and thereby allowed only Koreans who possessed a travel pass issued by the government to enter the country.\textsuperscript{232} Also, to reinforce the end of the unrestricted passage policy, the Governor-General of Korea made it increasingly difficult for Koreans to receive travel passes by upping the amount of money needed to pay for travel expenses.\textsuperscript{233} This plan was effective and more than 140,000 Koreans were refused voyage from Pusan to Japan over the next three years, 1924-26.\textsuperscript{234}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{230} Ibid, p.62.
\item \textsuperscript{231} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{232} Ibid, pp.62-63.
\item \textsuperscript{233} Ibid, p.64.
\item \textsuperscript{234} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Koreans into Japan. During the years that the Japanese strictly patrolled the legal entry of Koreans into Japan, the number of destitute Korean farmers was also increasing. This led to many Koreans coming to Japan through a “secret passage.”\textsuperscript{235} Because of these illegal entries into Japan, the Ministry of Home Affairs increased the amount of required travel money to sixty yen and a Korean had to possess an “employment certificate issued by the receiving company.”\textsuperscript{236} Although the Japanese government was trying to make entry into Japan more difficult for Koreans, the Governor-General of Korea did not actively discourage destitute farmers from making the trip to Japan because they represented an acute security issue if their numbers continued to grow.\textsuperscript{237} Thus, if a Korean possessed the necessary sixty yen for travel money and an employment certificate, he or she was allowed to leave with no questions asked. Of course, destitute Koreans and the Japanese companies worked around these new regulations as well. A common practice used was the hiring company giving a Korean the needed sixty yen which was promptly returned to the company after the immigrant worker’s arrival in Japan.\textsuperscript{238} As a result, the number of Koreans entering Japan continued with 67,417 more immigrants from Korea entering in 1928 than in 1927.\textsuperscript{239}

\textsuperscript{235} Ibid., p.65.
\textsuperscript{236} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{237} Ibid., p.66.
\textsuperscript{238} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{239} Ibid.
1.2.6: The Great Depression and The Japanese-Resident Korean Labor Movement

As stated above, Japan entered into an economic depression after World War I, but the country’s economy was able to remain relatively stable because of the prosperity America was experiencing during the early postwar years. However, when America was drawn into the Great Depression in 1929, Japan’s economy followed suit. Thus, the jobs of the Japanese and the Resident Koreans were rendered unstable due to the bankruptcy of companies, closure of factories, reduction of operations, and wage cuts. Those who were most deeply affected were individuals who worked in cottage industries and those who had no organizational or social protection. Resident Koreans, of course, possessed no safeguards for their jobs and were, again, hit the hardest.

As with the earlier depression, Resident Koreans had to endure unpaid wages and be dismissed on racial grounds because Japanese employers were attempting to preserve Japanese jobs. For example, 18% of the Resident Korean population in Osaka was unemployed in 1930. This percentage was three times greater than the percentage of unemployed Japanese in the same city.

---

240 Ibid.
241 Ibid.
242 Ibid.
Although many Koreans did return to the peninsula when they lost their jobs, many remained in Japan because they had nothing to return to. Korean labor groups, of course, opposed these discriminatory actions. However, unlike earlier Korean labor movements, those that supported Resident Koreans during the Great Depression era were “more systematic and combative because labor unions, which led the disputes, had been established and they also had solidified their ideological foundation.” Indeed, much of the solidarity of Korean laborers was established by the Zainichi Chōsenjin rōdō sōdōmei (在日朝鮮人労働総同盟 The Federation of Resident Korean Labor Unions in Japan) which was created in 1925 and by 1927 possessed more than 30,000 members. At first the organization was primarily concerned with issues such as unpaid wages, low wages, and unfair dismissals, but it soon had to deal with discrimination in the workplace as well. The federation became increasingly influenced by peninsular leftist and nationalist independence groups which resulted in a focus upon the “liberation” and “independence of Korea.” Due to these ethnic interests, the federation never sought to join with Japanese labor unions, however, it did seek solidarity with Japanese laborers.

---

244 Ibid, p.68.
245 Ibid.
246 Ibid.
247 Ibid.
248 Ibid, p.69.
In 1929 The Federation of Resident Korean Labor Unions in Japan was absorbed into the *Nihon rōdō kumiai zenkoku kyōgikai* 日本労働組合全国協議会 (the National Council of Trade Unions of Japan, abbreviated 全協 zenkyō) as directed by the Communist International. Many Korean laborers disliked the idea of being under the power of an international communist movement, so many of them dropped out of the Federation. Primarily, Resident Korean laborers, who were welcomed with open arms by the Council, were concerned with the fact that international communist-led group placed little interest in issues that were dear to them, such as Koreans’ rights to a certain standard of living or Korea’s independence. As a result of this distrust, membership in the Federation of Resident Korean Labor Unions in Japan, which had some 30,000 members in February of 1929, dropped to 2,700 after the Federation joined the National Council.

The Resident Korean who remained with the National Council were drawn deeply into some of the group’s illegal activities and became more and more involved with increasingly violent labor demonstrations which, instead of helping things, only made the labor disputes more intense. Indeed, from September of 1929 until

---

249 Ibid, p.70.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
252 Ibid.
September of 1930, Resident Korean laborers engaged in 486 labor disputes with brute force.\textsuperscript{253} As a result of this escalation in violent tactics, companies and public security authorities would hire labor racketeers, primarily made up of policemen and military police, to attack the Korean laborers.\textsuperscript{254} As the violence between Resident Koreans and the Japanese grew worse, prejudice against Korea and Koreans also grew. As a result, Japanese employers increasingly fired Resident Korean workers because of their tendency towards violence.\textsuperscript{255}

The Resident Koreans who remained loyal to the National Council also created a rift between them and their fellow countrymen residing in Japan who were more concerned with the independence of Koreans than with life and labor in Japan. This rift would remain until the end of the war and weaken the Resident Korean community as a whole.\textsuperscript{256}

The escalation of violence used by Korean laborers proved to the Japanese authorities that it was necessary for the yūwa organizations to increase their assimilation efforts because unassimilated Koreans would remain hostile towards Japan.\textsuperscript{257} By embracing violence, Resident Koreans lost whatever measure of resistance against

\textsuperscript{253} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{254} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{255} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{256} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{257} Ibid.
Japanese assimilation policies they once had because many of their leaders were arrested and kept in confinement due to the fear they caused the Japanese.\textsuperscript{258} Once these Resident Korean leaders were in Japanese custody, and thereby out of the public eye, the authorities did not hesitate the torture them to death.\textsuperscript{259}

1.2.7: Forced Labor

Although the Japanese government attempted to block the entry of Koreans into Japan because there was already a glut of both Japanese and Korean laborers, the circumstances quickly changed with the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 which drained the country of private citizens. Hardest hit were private companies which suffered from an acute shortage of young laborers. This shortage would prove to be the Achilles’ heel of the Japanese wartime economy.\textsuperscript{260} In order to fight the lack of able-bodied workers, the Japanese government implemented the \textit{Kokka sōdōin hō} (国家総動員法 National Mobilization Law) which allowed the government to draft citizens, including Koreans and Taiwanese, in order to fill vital industries for the war effort.\textsuperscript{261}

Coalmining, one of the most important industries for the war effort and one hardest hit

\textsuperscript{258} Ibid, p.72. Out of 1,698 activists arrested in November 1933, 926 of them were Korean.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid, p.73.
\textsuperscript{260} Ibid, p.114.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid, pp.114-15.
when workers were forced to become soldiers to support the war effort, directly contacted the Ministry of Commerce to gain Resident Korean workers and the Ministry supported their needs by actively searching for individuals to work in the mines.\(^{262}\)

However, the number of Resident Koreans who could work in such industries as coalmining and construction work was insufficient, so the companies asked the Japanese government if they could recruit workers directly from the peninsula.\(^{263}\) In order to fill the companies’ desire for Korean laborers, the Cabinet Planning Board created the 労務動員計画 (Labor Mobilization Plan), based on the National Mobilization Law, which was used to promote Korean immigration to Japan. In all, 85,000 spots were opened for Koreans to come work in Japan.\(^{264}\)

When Japanese companies, mainly those involved in coalmining, metal ore mining, and construction, offered to recruit Koreans to come work in Japan, they were flooded with applicants who had once been forbidden to go to the archipelago. However, after half a year or so, the number of applicants dried up completely.\(^{265}\) The reason why Koreans quit voluntarily coming to Japan at this time was because the “wretched working conditions” and “severe labor conditions” in Japan became common

\(^{262}\) Ibid.  
\(^{263}\) Ibid, p.115.  
\(^{264}\) Ibid.  
\(^{265}\) Ibid.
Because it became too difficult for Japanese wartime industries to receive sufficient numbers of Korean laborers through normal recruitment methods, the Cabinet Planning Board in 1942 created an “administratively enforceable” Plan for the Recruitment of Labor that was supposed to bring 130,000 Korean laborers to Japan.\textsuperscript{267} In February of the same year, the Cabinet Planning Board decided on the “measures on the use of Korean laborers” which incorporated the immigration of Koreans laborers and how they were to be handled by administrative and police authorities.\textsuperscript{268} Within these measures, the Governor-General of Korea established the *senjin naichi inyū assen yōkō* (鮮人内地移入斡旋要綱 guidelines for placement of Korean immigration to Japan), the so-called *kan assen* (官斡旋 public procurement for businesses) which officially began *kyōsei renkō* (強制連行 forced labor) in Japan and Korea.\textsuperscript{269}

Despite this increase in workers, Japanese industries were still strained to keep up with the production of needed goods as Japan was sucked deeper into the war. As a result of these struggles, the Japanese government invoked the National Service Draft Ordinance on Resident Koreans which forced them to work in industries that were...

\textsuperscript{266} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid, p.116.
\textsuperscript{268} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{269} Ibid, pp.116-17.
necessary to fuel Japanese war efforts.\textsuperscript{270} The government had already enlisted its own native citizens into the ordinance in 1939, but hesitated to bring Resident Koreans under it out of fear that they would riot.\textsuperscript{271} Predictably, Resident Koreans greeted their draft with heated protests. Many Resident Koreans simply did not show up when they were required to work. Out of 4,600 Resident Koreans drafted in Tokyo, 2,126 did not report and out of 1891 individuals drafted in Hyogo, 1030 did not appear.\textsuperscript{272} Originally this plan only applied to Resident Koreans, but, by April 1944, the Japanese government put peninsular Koreans under the ordinance as well. As could be expected, the Koreans protested being included in this ordinance. Many well-armed Koreans even hid in the mountains and would fight off those who tried to make them honor this ordinance.\textsuperscript{273} However, in the end the Japanese were able to overwhelm Korean resistance forces and between 1 million and 1.5 million Resident Koreans were forced to relocate to Japan to work with the wartime industries.\textsuperscript{274} Enforced Korean laborers oftentimes faced working conditions worse than Koreans and Resident Koreans who had voluntarily labored in the wartime industries. As Norma Field states, enforced Korean laborers worked in a type of “nazi economy wherein laborers were maintained at the

\textsuperscript{270} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{271} Ibid, pp.117-18.  
\textsuperscript{272} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{273} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{274} Ibid, p.118.
threshold of death because they were easily replaced.”

As Hong Yung Lee writes, the Japanese annexation of Korea, which ultimately lasted for thirty-six years, marks the shortest example of modern colonialism.

However, despite its brevity, Japan’s colonization of Korea would leave a lasting impact on diasporic Koreans in Japan that stretches for generations. On that note, I will now outline a brief history of Japan’s Resident Korean population over its first two decades.

---

Part 3: Resident Koreans in Postwar Japan

1.3.1: Why did Koreans Stay in Japan in the Early Postwar Period?

After Japan was defeated by the Allied Forces on August 15, 1945, thirty-six years of Japanese colonial rule in Korea came to an end. As a result of Japan’s defeat, over two million Koreans in Japan were “free” to return to their home country. Indeed, after the Korean people were freed “from the yoke of Japanese colonial rule,” the majority of them hurriedly returned to the Korean peninsula one after the other. Wanting little to do with the island nation that had devastated their lives and their home country, some 1,400,000 Koreans returned to the Korean peninsula from August 31, 1945 until February 1946. As the Resident Korean Kim Yeong-sik states, the Koreans who were the quickest to return to their homeland were those who had surviving parents or brothers and those who had “prospects for life there.”

Koreans who had been in Japan for a short time, primarily those who had been

---

278 Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, p.31.
280 Kim Yeong-sik as quoted in Kim, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, pp.71-72.
moved to Japan as enforced labor, returned to Korea in droves. Fukuoka notes that his interviews were not done through random sampling, he would have needed the original copies of the Resident Koreans’ alien registration forms for that, and that it would be foolish to state that there were no Resident Koreans or descendants of first generation Resident Koreans who came to Japan as enforced labor, but the “general tendency” is that Koreans who were brought to Japan as forced labor returned to Korea after the war, while individuals who sought employment in Japan “voluntarily” were more willing to remain in the country. Indeed, as Fukuoka states, it is not surprising that those who were forced to come to Japan left as soon as possible since it represented nothing more than a location of “oppression and isolation.”

Unfortunately, for many of the Koreans who desired to return to their homeland, the trip back to the Korean peninsula could be quite perilous. The Resident Korean Jeong Gyeong-jo, who was living in Shimonoseki at the time the war ended, states that

281 Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, p.31.
282 Ibid, p.32.
283 Ibid.
284 Ibid, p.33.
the Korean residents of his location, and elsewhere, were quite anxious to return to their homeland and were willing to jump upon any boat that was bound for there. However, being uneducated in nautical ways and misjudging how easily the waves of the Genkai Sea could capsize a boat, many Koreans and their entire families went to their watery graves as they dreamed of their homecoming.285

After most of the forced laborers and those who had family and good prospects back in Korea had returned there by February 1946, between 500,000 and 600,000 Koreans remained in Japan.286 As Fukuoka states, most of these Koreans likely desired to return to Korea and planned to do so in the near future, but there were a number of key elements that prevented them from doing so.287

One of the primary reasons why a number of Resident Koreans decided to remain in Japan was purely financial. As I noted earlier, the Koreans who came to Japan before the implementation of forced labor did so in order to survive. Although the working conditions and living conditions were horrid in many ways, at least the Koreans were able to eke out a living in Japan that they were unable to do in their homeland. When faced with the decision to return to Korea after the war, many Koreans decided to remain in Japan because the American Occupation Forces, which controlled

285 Kim, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, p.71.
286 Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chôsenjin, pp.31-32.
287 Ibid.
Japan from the end of the war until 1952, severely limited the amount of money and possessions that they were allowed to return with to their homeland. Thus, unless they were one of the individuals who either had family or prospects back in Korea, these individuals would lose the few gains they received in Japan and have to start from scratch again.\textsuperscript{288}

Besides having to give up their money and possessions before leaving Japan, Korean residents would be greeted only with wartime devastation if they chose to return to Korea. Many Koreans who remained in Japan after the war, including those who were planning and preparing, albeit slowly, to return to their homeland, received news from family members and those who had returned to Korea immediately after the war, that the country was in complete disorder and that it was better for them to remain in Japan.\textsuperscript{289} In fact, Korea was in such a state that a number of Resident Koreans who had made the trip back to their homeland snuck back to Japan to seek a steadier life.\textsuperscript{290} Furthermore, tens of thousands of Koreans who had not lived in Japan during the prewar or wartime periods made their way to Japan and hid in cities such as Osaka where there were large populations of Resident Koreans.\textsuperscript{291} If they had been caught,

\textsuperscript{288} Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.642; Fukuoka, \textit{Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin}, p.35.
\textsuperscript{289} Fukuoka, \textit{Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin}, p.35.
\textsuperscript{290} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{291} Ibid.
they would have been labeled as “smugglers” and deported back home. Many of these Koreans would reside illegally in Japan until their children were old enough to start school. At that time, they went to their regional legal affairs bureau and were able to gain a special stay permit that allowed them to become part of the Resident Korean community. Thus, due to the financial and physical difficulty of leaving Japan and due to the instability with the Korean peninsula, the flow of Koreans returning to Japan became a trickle and the true Resident Korean community in Japan began to form.

1.3.2: The Rise and Fall of Resident Korean Ethnic Schools

After being liberated from Japanese colonialism by the Allied forces, many Resident Koreans believed that they would finally be released from the “oppression of the race” which had dominated their lives for thirty-six years. Instead, Resident Koreans found themselves “trapped” within the enemy country in which they had to face Japanese—as well as American—laws and policies that “linger[ed] and hinder[ed] the[ir] ability to progress personally or socially” as liberated Korean nationals in Japan. For example, Jeong Gyeong-jo, who worked as an adviser in an ethnic

---

292 Ibid.
293 Ibid.
294 Ibid, p.70.
295 Ibid, p.79.
296 Noma Hiroshi as quoted in Anne McKnight, Nakagami, Japan: Buraku and the Writing of Ethnicity.
organization after the war, states that “the treatment of zainichi Koreans was still severe even after the war ended” and that the Japanese government’s desire to “usurp their basic rights was only getting stronger.” 297 Indeed, as I will show below, the Japanese were quick to attack Resident Korean ethnic schools and the organization Zai-Nihon Chōsenjin renmei (在日本朝鮮人連盟 The League of Koreans in Japan, abbreviated as Chōren 朝連), which was originally established to aid with the repatriation and unemployment of Resident Koreans.298

One method that the Japanese government and the American Occupation forces implemented to control the Resident Korean population was by stripping them of any national status. As Fukuoka writes, Resident Koreans were denied the rights of being either “foreigners” in Japan or “‘Japanese’ with Japanese nationality.”299 However, despite being denied the rights of both foreigners and Japanese, the Japanese government and the American Occupation forces were quick to identify Resident Koreans as either foreigners or Japanese when one label or the other proved to be the more effective method of controlling the minority group through law.300

One of the most reviled examples in which Resident Koreans were labeled as

---

297 Kim, Aidentitii porttikkusu o koete, pp.90, 79.
298 Ibid.
299 Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, p.35.
“Japanese” involved ethnic schools. As Kim Tae-young notes, immediately after Japan’s defeat, a number “Korean language training schools” mushroomed across the country in order to help children prepare for returning to Korea. However, because of the unease within the peninsula and the limits placed on money and belongings that Resident Koreans could take to their homeland, Resident Korean leaders thought it was best to improve ethnic schools, primarily through better organization and through the use of Resident Korean created textbooks, in order to not only prepare their children for life back in Korea but also for life in Japan.\textsuperscript{301} Also, these improved ethnic schools were established because Resident Koreans loathed the idea of their children being absorbed into Japanese society through the education system after they had been freed from colonial rule.\textsuperscript{302} Indeed, Koreans thought that it was natural for them to have their own schools that were separate from those that Japanese children attended.\textsuperscript{303}

Jeong Gyeong-jo, who worked at a Korean ethnic school in Fuse during the early postwar period, states that the mission of Resident Korean teachers, for the most part individuals who were not trained to be teachers, was the “‘recovery of ethnicity’” through the study of the Korean language, history, and culture that the Japanese

\textsuperscript{301} Kim, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, pp.72, 74.

\textsuperscript{302} Ibid, p.73.

\textsuperscript{303} Ibid.
government had attempted to eliminate.\textsuperscript{304} Thus, the Resident Korean teachers desired to infuse their students with Korean ethnicity so they would remember “that wherever we live, we must live as Koreans.”\textsuperscript{305} After having their Korean ethnicity suppressed for so long, it is not surprising that the education that the Resident Korean children received was highly nationalistic. As Jeong Gyeong-jo states, subjects such as history and geography were highly Korea-centric and reflected how Koreans were “the superior race with more than 4,000 years of history.”\textsuperscript{306} These studies also focused on how Korean society was respected in the ancient world and how Japanese society developed from Korea. Thus, in many ways, Korean ethnic education focused on how Koreans were supposedly superior to their colonizers.\textsuperscript{307}

By 1948 the number of Resident Korean schools in Japan had grown to 504 and they contained around 60,000 students. Most of these schools, of course, were established by Chōren whose leaders tended to be socialists and Korean nationalists, two groups made the Japanese government and the American Occupation forces uneasy.\textsuperscript{308} As Kim Tae-young writes, at first GHQ, General Headquarters, took a stance of “noninterfering” in its relationship with Resident Korean schools, but, as the Cold

\textsuperscript{304} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{305} Ibid, pp.73-74.
\textsuperscript{306} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{307} Ibid, p.74.
\textsuperscript{308} Ibid.
War became more severe, GHQ could no longer ignore the spread of these schools because they were linked to Chōren’s socialists who posed a supposed threat to the burgeoning democracy of Japan. Thus, GHQ’s stance towards ethnic schools changed from “noninterference” to “control” and finally to outright “oppression.” On January 24, 1948 the Japanese Ministry of education, through the enforcement of GHQ, sent a circular notice to the governors of each prefecture that states that “Korean children should be put to Japanese schools” and that the “establishment of private schools should be done in accordance with the School Education Law” while the “education given is in Japanese language with the textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education.” In June of the same year, an administrative order was given for the ethnic schools to be closed down in each prefecture. Resident Koreans opposed the closure of their schools and emphasized to the Japanese government and GHQ that the “goal and mission of ethnic education” was to make Korean children ready for life back on the Korean peninsula and they needed “education in Korean schools” where the “Korean language is used” in order to obtain such goals.

As Resident Korean ethnic schools were closed across the country, Resident

---

309 Ibid, p.75.
310 Ibid.
311 Ibid.
312 Ibid.
313 Ibid, pp.75-76.
Koreans rose up in protest. The core of their rage and dismay was displayed in the *Hanshin kyōiku jiken* (阪神教育事件 Hanshin Education Incident) that took place in April 1948. On April 13, an administrative order was given for nineteen out of seventy Resident Korean ethnic schools to be closed in Osaka. In protest, the parents of the students who attended these schools asked the Japanese government to withdraw the order. A few days later the principals of the ethnic schools gathered and they produced a list of eight demands that they wanted addressed to the Japanese government such as the “immediate withdrawal of the order of closure” and the “acceptance of the independence of ethnic education for Korean people.” In order to gain support for these demands, a signature gathering campaign was launched as well. With their list of demands written and a large number of Resident Korean signatures gathered, the Osaka branch of *Chōren* sent a request to Prime Minister Ashida Hitoshi 芦田均 (1887-1959) to “withdraw the order for the closure of the schools.”

On April 23rd, an assembly of around 30,000 individuals gathered in Ōtemae Park in Osaka to protest the closure of the schools. This protest allowed Resident Korean representatives to speak with the Vice Governor of Osaka, but the results of the

---

314 Kim, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, pp.75-76.
315 Ibid, p.76.
316 Ibid.
317 Ibid.
meeting were less than optimal.\textsuperscript{318} In order to break up the assembly of Resident Koreans, the Osaka prefectural police conducted a roundup where hundreds were injured and around 300 individuals were arrested.\textsuperscript{319} On April 26\textsuperscript{th}, Osaka policemen began spraying an assembled group of Resident Koreans with water cannons while \textit{Chōren} leaders were meeting with the governor of Osaka about the closure of the ethnic schools.\textsuperscript{320} Eventually, policemen armed with rifles would surround the building where the protestors were located and, after shots were fired, one Resident Korean teenaged boy was killed and eight other individuals were severely injured.\textsuperscript{321}

As these protests were raging in Osaka, a similar situation was brewing in Kobe when the administrative order for the schools to close was made by Hyogo prefecture on April 10\textsuperscript{th} and the closure of the ethnic schools occurred on April 11\textsuperscript{th}. The Resident Korean community asked the Japanese government to “respect the independence of ethnic education and the use of school buildings.”\textsuperscript{322} However, their requests were ignored and, in revenge, Resident Koreans surrounded the prefectural office in Kobe City, “enforced collective bargaining,” and “confirmed” that their schools would not be shut down. Yet, as a result of this “enforced collective bargaining,”

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{318} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{319} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{320} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{321} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{322} Ibid, 77.
\end{flushright}
GHQ established martial law and voided the new “agreement” between the Resident Koreans and the Kobe government while placing hundreds of Resident Koreans under arrest and later sentencing six of them, and one Japanese, to ten years of hard labor for their actions.323

Although some of the methods used by Chōren to preserve their ethnic schools were rather heavy handed and thereby had little chance to succeed, members of the group supported the “enforced collective bargaining” because they were fighting against the enemy that had, during the prewar and wartime periods, “deprived [them of] freedom of speech, publication, and association,” attempted to “eliminate [their] history and traditions, and “banned Korean education.” Therefore, the Japanese had attempted to destroy the supposed “Korean spirit” through their “assimilation policies.”324 It was a fight to preserve the culture of Korea for Korean Residents in Japan because “culture is something which expresses the existence of a race and a race without culture only has the road to ruin.”325

Ignoring the demands of the Resident Korean community, the Ministry of Education made it clear that if ethnic subjects such as the Korean language, history, and culture were to be taught to Resident Korean children they “shall be taught as optional

323 Ibid.
324 Ibid, pp.78-79.
325 Ibid.
subjects or in extracurricular lessons” and not as the primary education that the children received. In order to gain further control over Resident Koreans, and especially socialist and nationalist Chōren members, and other groups that it considered to represent a threat to the security of the country, the Japanese government established the Dantai tō seiki rei (団体等正規令 Organization Control Law) in April of 1949 which forcibly separated Chōren from Koreans in Japan Democratic Youth League. Chōren itself would eventually be shut down when the Japanese government, with full support from GHQ, declared that it was a “terrorist organization.” After its closure, even more Resident Korean schools were closed because they were directly run by the organization.

After the closure of Chōren and all of the public ethnic schools, Resident Koreans had three options for the further education of their children: independent schools ran by the Resident Koreans themselves, a branch of a Japanese public school, or Japanese public schools where ethnic classes were taught. By April 1952, the number of Resident Korean schools, including the branch and schools that offered

---

326 Ibid, p.79.
327 Ibid.
329 Kim, Aidentitiitii poritikkusu o koete, p.79.
330 Ibid p.81.
ethnic classes, dropped to 172. Although the three examples listed above were the primary ways for Resident Korean students to gain an ethnic education, students in the Tokyo metropolitan area had another option. As Kim Tae-young writes, on December 20, 1949 the Tokyo Board of Education officially established “Tokyo Metropolitan Korean Schools” which were an exceptional item because schools exclusively for foreigners were rarely “public schools.” However, these would prove to be short-lived due to their association with the pro-North Korea organization Minsen.

Although Chōren closed its doors in 1949, Japanese governmental concern about the actions taking place within Resident Korean schools would reignite with the beginning of the Korean War on June 25, 1950. The primary reason for this concern was that the Zainichi Chōsen tōitsu minshu sensen (在日朝鮮統一民主戰線 the United Democratic Front of Koreans in Japan, abbreviated as Minsen 民戰), which was established not long after the fall of Chōren and attracted many of the followers of the previous institution, supported North Korea, and was instructed by the Japanese Communist Party, was deeply involved with the education of Resident Korean children. Devoted to the “unification of their homeland,” which they believed would

---

331 Ibid.
332 Ibid.
333 Ibid.
334 Ibid, p.82.
be reached through “overthrowing the reactionary cabinet of Japan with mutual cooperation with Japanese people,” *Minsen*, like *Chōren* before it, aimed to secure the independence for Korean ethnic education in order to pursue such goals as “bringing up 100,000 Resident Korean children faithful to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.”

Fully aware of how the Japanese government eliminated previous incarnations of Korean ethnic education, *Minsen*, in their inaugural speech, stated that “They are trying to destroy the independent education of our race again. We must overcome every difficulty and oppression and defend our ethnic education to the end.”

The Japanese Government believed that *Minsen’s* activities with the Tokyo Metropolitan Korean Schools were those “of a revolutionary movement” and they supplied an “anti-Japanese communist education” to the students. Of course, Japanese officials believed that *Minsen’s* teachings and demonstrations were “opposed to the intentions of Japanese government” and thereby posed a real threat to the “public order of Japanese society.” As a result of the tensions between the Tokyo Metropolitan Korean Schools and the Japanese government, the activities of *Minsen*...
were put under heavy surveillance as a “public security measure” and the Japanese government sought the closure of these schools with the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952. Three years after the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Tokyo Board of Education declared that the public Korean schools would be closed on March 31, 1955. After this announcement, parents of Resident Korean students, Resident Korean teachers, and a number of Japanese teachers protested the closure of the schools.

One of the primary protestors of the closure of the schools was an illegal organization called 桑谷防衛全国委員会 (祖国防衛全国委員会 the National Committee of the Defense of the Motherland). In its bulletin Shin Chōsen (新朝鮮 New Korean), the organization states that 50% of Resident Koreans were unable to attend school after Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru’s 吉田茂 (1878-1967) cabinet “banned the voluntary, democratic ethnic education of Resident Koreans.”

The committee also complained that the Yoshida government took away their freedom to engage in organizing, speech, publication, assembly, and demonstration as well as blocking Resident Koreans from being able to “absorb new culture” because they could not contact Korea, China,

339 Ibid.
341 Ibid.
and the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{342} Thus, protesting the closure of ethnic schools was the way for Resident Koreans to fight against the “American and Japanese policies to erase ethnic peoples.”\textsuperscript{343}

1.2.3: Resident Koreans and Japanese “Homogeneity”

Despite the presence of 500,000-600,000 Resident Koreans, as well as other minorities, on national territory, the Japanese government and the Japanese populace tended to insist that Japan was made up of a people with one “homogeneous national identity” that consisted of and will continue to consist of common culture and lineage whose origin is solitary and pure.\textsuperscript{344} Thus, Japanese mess was “invariable and inflexible.”\textsuperscript{345} With a stronger understanding of how the Japanese conceptualized themselves as being homogeneous, one can better grasp why Resident Koreans, even those of later generations, who are acclimated to Japanese society due to their fluency in Japanese and familiarity with Japanese customs and culture, were/are still considered total outsiders in Japan. Besides wanting to preserve purity, the Japanese government wanted to preserve the idea of a homogeneous nation in order to let the black mark of

\textsuperscript{342} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{343} Ibid, pp.83-84.
\textsuperscript{344} Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.641; Kim, \textit{Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete}, p.9.
\textsuperscript{345} Kim, \textit{Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete}, p.9.
the colonial years fade away.

In order to accomplish this goal, the Japanese policy towards Resident Koreans who did not repatriate during the early years after the end of the war and those who did not return through North Korean-Japanese repatriation movement was “to make them die a natural death by forcing assimilation” upon them, which, in the end, “decolorized” their ethnic differences. Thus, Resident Koreans were expected “to become Japanese as much as possible” as they eliminated their “Koreanness.”

Accompanied by a desire to live a peaceful life within a country that was hostile to their existence, many Resident Koreans chose to assimilate totally to Japanese society or to become naturalized Japanese citizens. By almost submitting to (assimilation) or totally submitting to (naturalization) this “highest form of national belonging” available to a non-Japanese citizen, Resident Koreans were able to acquire Japanese identities. However, after doing so, it became necessary for a Resident Korean to “reject his or her racial and ethnic difference to align” solely with the Japanese. As a result, the Resident Koreans had to avoid associating with Korean

346 Kim, Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen, p.12; Kim, Aidentiti poritikkusu o koete, p.18.
347 Kim, Aidentiti poritikkusu o koete, p.9.
350 Park, Yellow Future, p.48.
ethnic organizations and acquaintances that were openly Korean.\textsuperscript{351} After giving up their Koreanness, the lives of Resident Koreans were still unsettled because they were burdened by the secret of their origins. Indeed, as Freda Scott Giles states, in reference to African Americans passing as whites, they become the “despised other lurking within” the mainstream society that they were forced to conform to.\textsuperscript{352} Thus, while passing as Japanese offers Resident Koreans some ease in daily life, it can also seriously damage their being because, as they “renounce a socially subordinate…identity to retain their tenuous place in the dominant culture,” it strengthens the dominant culture even more while weakening the culture and self-worth of minorities.\textsuperscript{353}

While closely guarding the secrets of their own origins, secrets that are hidden but “guide” their very lives, Resident Koreans are prone to self-reflection. However, instead of being the path to better self-understanding, such self-reflection often led Resident Koreans to “realize that they have no place in the all-inclusive structures that give them [the Japanese] meaning,” such as the beliefs in Japanese homogeneity.\textsuperscript{354} Also, Resident Koreans who decided to pass as Japanese were met with “fierce scorn

\textsuperscript{351} Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.644  
\textsuperscript{352} Freda Scott Giles as quoted in Park, Yellow Future, p.167-68.  
\textsuperscript{353} Park, Yellow Future, p.168.  
\textsuperscript{354} McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p. 30-31.
and dismissal” by their fellows who, at times, were “ethnically militant.” Particularly, Resident Koreans who decide to pass as Japanese are disdained by their fellows because they bear “the mark of the oppressor.”

Although the burden of concealing their identities was very difficult, revealing their ethnicity was potentially even more damaging. If a Resident Korean reveals his or her ethnicity, it can have “immediate consequences” because the ones who learn of this Koreanness might apply it to all aspects of the individual and use it to explain, albeit oftentimes falsely, certain traits of the confessors. Thus, revealing oneself as Korean, although it might be seen as empowering by many well-meaning individuals, can be damaging because it can give the “false impression that the confessor is the proprietor of his own voice.” If an individual is truly the “proprietor of his [or her] own voice, it means that he or she is “empowered in other spheres of life as well.” However, with Resident Koreans, especially during the early postwar years, this was not the case because the Japanese government, and a large section of the Japanese populace, saw the Resident Korean community as a “bothersome existence” that did not deserve even

355 Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.644
356 Freda Scott Giles as quoted in Park, Yellow Future, pp.167-68.
357 McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.65.
358 Ibid., p.69.
359 Ibid.
basic human rights.\(^{360}\) Thereby, in many ways, it was more effective to hide one’s Korean origins than to display them openly because doing so was “antagonistic” to one’s life in Japan.\(^{361}\)

Resident Koreans who have either naturalized or totally assimilated to life in Japan even kept their Korean origins secret from their own children in order to protect them. As a result, many Resident Korean children were devastated after eventually learning of their true origins, “because their comfortably assimilated lives are ruptured.”\(^ {362}\)

### 1.2.4: Resident Koreans Divided by Generations

For the most part, the Resident Koreans who decided to naturalize or assimilate totally were members of the second, or more likely, third generation and beyond.\(^ {363}\) The “impassioned Korean identity of the first generation” weakened as the years became decades and younger generations of Resident Koreans deeply engrained themselves in Japan by marrying Japanese and reaching some level of prosperity.\(^ {364}\) Thus, a divide was established between older Resident Koreans whose thoughts and emotions were

\(^{360}\) Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, p.44  
\(^{361}\) McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.69.  
\(^{362}\) Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.644  
\(^{363}\) Ibid.  
\(^{364}\) Ibid.
tied solely to the Korean peninsula and younger members of the minority group who
“share the same destiny with Japanese people in Japanese society.”

While a large portion of first generation Resident Koreans, whose political
leanings bent heavily towards North Korea, were more concerned with the
“reunification of the homeland” than with life and rights for minority groups in Japan,
younger generations, individuals that could be referred to as “true Resident Korean folk,”
knew that the island nation was not a “temporary stopping place,” but the one where
they were born and whose language and culture they were primarily familiar with. The
return to Korea, either North or South, was nothing more than a fantasy to them.

However, despite their knowledge that they would likely never return to North
or South Korea, many among these younger generations of Resident Koreans also had
no desire to fully naturalize because they would lose their ethnicity. This was a new
idea that broke many taboos because both older generation Resident Koreans and the
Japanese government found it abhorrent to link “permanent residence in Japan with
eternal fidelity to Korean folkhood.” This idea, which took some thirty-five years to
develop after the war, was excruciatingly slow in its manifestation due to, in relatively

365 Kim, Zainichi Korian hyaku-nen, p.11.
367 Ibid, pp.646-47.
368 Ibid.
equal parts, “the myth of a homogeneous Japanese folk, and the tragedy of a divided homeland still occupied by American troops.” Indeed, due to the brutalities committed by the Japanese and Americans within the Korean peninsula, the unending vitriolic racism of the Japanese, and having older relatives who had been brutalized by the Japanese and Americans and dreamed of reunifying the peninsula, it is not surprising that a desire to live in Japan as Resident Koreans took so long to develop.

However, these younger generations found it difficult to understand the sentiments that the first generation and their more militant fellows felt towards the “rhetoric of folk and homeland.” Indeed, for these younger generation Resident Koreans who were unable to embrace the “rhetoric of folk and homeland,” Korea and things Korean had the effect of making them understand how Japanese they really were. Thereby, although many became ashamed by how Japanese they were, it was an acceptance of their true selves as Resident Koreans and not Koreans.

1.2.5: The Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea

Although the Japanese government was quick to deny responsibility for the

---

369 Ibid, p.647.
372 Ibid.
suffering it caused the Korean people during the colonial period, it was very interested in starting relations with South Korea during the postwar years. As Norma Field writes, Japan, with help of the United States, was able to gain a strong economic position by the mid-1960s when the island country was ready to begin relations with the southern half of the Korean peninsula.  

Because of its powerful economic standing, the Japanese government was able to “shape” the Nikkan kihon jōyaku (日韓基本条約 The Treaty on Basic Relations) in a manner that would allow it to accomplish two desired goals: “representation of Japanese capital” within South Korea and an end to South Korean citizen demands for reparations for wartime losses.  

As a result of this treaty, the South Korean government, headed by President Park Chung-hee (朴正熙) who desired Japanese money to be pumped into South Korea, established a list of South Korean citizens who could not demand repatriations from the Japanese government. This list included “systematically current Resident Koreans, Koreans who died after 1945 from the effects of brutal prewar and wartime labor, Korean victims of the atomic bombs, and ‘comfort women,’ among others.”  

One of the major effects of The Treaty on Basic Relations was that it offered Resident Koreans who sided with South Korea the opportunity to apply for legal

---

373 Ibid, p.643.
374 Ibid.
375 Ibid.
permanent residence in Japan after January 1, 1966. The number of Resident Koreans who desired to be part of this *kyōtei eijū* (協定永住 permanent residence agreement) grew quite rapidly with the number reaching 100,000 in 1969, 342,000 in 1974, and 350,000 in 1985. As a result of this permanent residence agreement, which made Resident Koreans eligible for such things as passports, the Resident Korean community in Japan was permanently split into two political halves with those who were willing to accept the agreement being placed on the side of South Korea and those who did not sign being placed on the side of North Korea. This powerful separation led to a number of confrontations between those who supported the North and those who supported the South. As for the Japanese government, Fukuoka Yasunori states that there was little real concern for the welfare of Resident Koreans in Japan. The Japanese government was solely preoccupied with securing the alignment with the South Korean government, and the permanent residence agreement was established to cement the deal.

Many Resident Koreans, especially those who were placed on the side of North

---

376 Kim, *Aidentitii poritskkusu o koete*, p.84.
377 Ibid.
378 Ibid. Not all Resident Koreans who were placed on the North Korean side actually supported North Korea. Many of them simply supported “Korea” as a whole, but the Japanese government tended to only see Koreans as supporters of the North or South.
379 Ibid.
380 Fukuoka, *Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin*, p.44.
Korea, had a number of issues with the Japanese government attempting to solidify its relationship with the South Korean government. One of the primary reasons why North Korea-leaning Resident Koreans were displeased with the stance that the Japanese government was taking with South Korea was because it was evident that it was following the American policy toward Korea with its antagonistic attitude towards the North and ease of support with the oftentimes brutal leaders of the South.\(^{381}\) This attitude of the Japanese government would play an important role, especially during the 1960s and the 1970s, in influencing how “Resident Koreans extended their struggle against oppression in Japan to democratization efforts in Korea.”\(^{382}\)

Also, to many Resident Koreans and left-leaning Japanese, Japan’s economic presence in South Korea represented a type of neo-colonialism. As the noted Korean poet and playwright Kim Chi-ha 金芝河 (1941-) wrote about the dealings between the Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro 中曽根康弘 (1918-) and dictatorial South Korean president Chun Doo-hwan 全斗煥 (1931-), when “the political and economic dependence is already there all that remains is the cultural dominance in tune with military rule.”\(^{383}\) There was also fear that, with the aid of Japanese money, the South Korean government would continue to prioritize industry and transport

\(^{382}\) Ibid.
\(^{383}\) Kim Chi-ha as quoted in McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.183.
infrastructure over the wellbeing of its own citizens and workers.\textsuperscript{384}

As a despised minority within a hostile host country, the words of the Resident Koreans, especially those who sided with North Korea, were ignored by the Japanese populace and government and the South Korean government as well. Thus, it is not surprising that after the Japanese government paid President Park Chung-hee eight hundred million dollars in reparations and loans, “further claims on Japan related to its colonial rule” were essentially dropped while Resident Koreans and the citizens of South Korea continued to suffer due to the Japanese and South Korean governments that turned a blind eye to them.\textsuperscript{385}

Now, with this history established, let’s take a closer look at the representation of Koreans in Japanese film.

\textsuperscript{384} McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.183.
\textsuperscript{385} Ibid, p.175.
Chapter 2: Resident Koreans in Japanese Film

2.1: Introduction

According to the film historian Yomota Inuhiko 四万田犬彦, film scholars in Japan, unlike their counterparts in the United States of America, have cast a blind eye on the images of minorities within film. While the images of African Americans, Jews, Native Americans, and others have been written about for years and have enriched the reader’s knowledge of how minorities are constructed, depicted, and used in American film, Yomota believes that Japanese film scholars instead turned inward and examined what truly made Japanese film Japanese.\(^{386}\) Thus, for example, instead of analyzing the importance of the appearance of Korean laborers in Shimizu Hiroshi’s 清水宏 (1903-1966) prewar film Arigatō-san (有りがとうさん Mr. Thank You, 1936), they geared their research to such subjects as the “Japaneseness” of Ozu Yasujirō’s 小津安二郎 (1903-1963) films, a subject which was bolstered by the fact that Western critics were interested in how Japanese films differed from Western—primarily

\(^{386}\)Yomota Inuhiko, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō: Zainichi Kankokuujin no hyōshō” in Ajia no naka no Nihon eiga. (Tokyo; Iwanami Shoten, 2001), pp.52, 53.
Hollywood—films. A more blatant disregard for minorities in Japanese film can be seen in how these critics receive films from other Asian countries. Film critics sympathized with the “ethnic anguish” experienced by the characters, but were hesitant to mention the presence of Resident Koreans in yakuza—Japanese gangster—films. This absence of critical study concerning the presence of minorities, especially Resident Korean minorities, in Japanese film is odd to Yomota because studies of how Koreans and Resident Koreans are depicted in Japanese literature are quite prolific. In an attempt to redress this imbalance, this chapter I will trace a brief history of the representation of Koreans and Resident Koreans in Japanese film.

2.2: Victim Consciousness and US censorship

Although this chapter will primarily deal with the images of Resident Koreans in Japanese narrative and documentary film from 1955 to 1970, it is important to premise this with an outline of Japanese victim consciousness and how it was depicted in early postwar film, in order to understand the reasons behind the absence of Resident Koreans in early postwar films, and the reasons why their early incarnations in the late 1950s and early 1960s were nothing but idealized stereotypes.

\[^{387}\text{Ibid, p.53.} \]
\[^{388}\text{Ibid.} \]
As the film historian Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto states, victim consciousness was developed as “a psychic means of disavowing the history of the Japanese victimizing Asia” while at the same time making themselves the victims of their own militaristic government and the American atomic bombings. Because this mentality is so engrained within the peoples of the Japanese archipelago, it is impossible—although it has been attempted numerous times—to dislodge this mentality by simply stating that the Japanese were the victimizers and not the victims. Thus, instead of trying to understand victim consciousness as the “simplistic binarism of victimizers and victims,” Yoshimoto states that Japanese victim consciousness should be viewed as a “fantasy formation” of the Japanese which can only be dissolved by discovering and dissecting the “utmost ‘pathological’ kernel” within it that forms the victimized mentality of the Japanese.

Miryam Sas writes that the possible origin of Japanese victim consciousness might be found in the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August of 1945. One would expect that such an experience would make the Japanese resent the United States even more than they had throughout the war, but, as Sas writes, “Japan’s

---

390 Ibid.
vengeful gaze toward the United States was transformed into an adoring look.” The Japanese leadership saw the atomic bombings as a “drama of rescue” in which Emperor Hirohito could be saved by the United States from “corrupt militarists.” Such a viewpoint helped the Japanese leadership rationalize Japan’s inevitable defeat and made the Occupation by the United States easier to withstand. Furthermore, the Occupation leaders agreed with the Japanese leadership that Emperor Hirohito was a victim of circumstance and not a war criminal himself. This belief would eventually be embraced by the nation as a whole, and the Japanese were quick to forget the atrocities committed by the common Japanese soldiery in the colonies and inhuman treatment of minorities in the Japanese archipelago and a collective amnesia of the wartime and prewar periods overtook the Japanese populace. As a result, Japan became a victim which was pardoned of its past but forced into a subservient role under the rule of the United States.

The United States had other motivating factors in its willingness to blame the war and wartime atrocities solely on the militarists instead of the emperor: it hoped to
make Japan into a “peaceful nation” that staunchly supported its occupier in the Cold War against the looming communist threats of China and the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{396} Thus, even though Japan had supposedly been forgiven for its past deeds, the Occupiers were determined to make the island country fit the mold that they desired. This mold, of course, was based on the United States themselves.

Thus the Occupation authorities created the Civil Information and Education (CIE) which initiated a number of reforms in education, religion, and public information. Some of the basic goals on the CIE were to dissolve the militaristic mindset of the Japanese, endorse “liberal freedoms” such as freedom of expression, religion, and assembly, and to preserve Japan’s newfound peace.\textsuperscript{397} The CIE aimed to do this by “reeducating” and “reorienting” Japan into a pro-democratic and pro-American nation.\textsuperscript{398}

The American Occupation Forces turned to film as a method to help make Japan a pro-democratic and pro-American nation. Originally believed to be nothing more than a form of entertainment, Hollywood film became a “chosen instrument” of the Occupation forces to improve Japanese “collective behavior” and to help Japan gain

\textsuperscript{396} Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.36.
\textsuperscript{398} Ibid., p.34.
a prominent place in the global arena. Film was viewed as an effective means of spreading these ideals because of its ability to draw large audiences. Thus, the Occupation forces hoped that Hollywood film would fulfil the dual purposes of “entertainment and intellectual cultivation” (goraku to kyōyō 娛楽と教養) in order to offer both offer “release and fulfilment to a population crushed by the war.”

The Occupation forces initiated a “controlled reconstruction” of Japanese movie culture which was very similar to how Japan used film to spread its own ideologies in its colonies. Also, as I will show in more detail later, Hollywood film was an effective means of showing the abundance of consumer goods in America and spreading American capitalist ideologies. Thereby Hollywood film allowed the devastated Japanese populace to enter a filmic fantasy zone where they could indulge in the “vicarious experience of conspicuous consumption” which would not only show them the wealth and power of the U.S., but also help give the Japanese aspirations to rebuild their country as quickly as possible so that they too could enjoy such material comfort.

At the same time, concerned with the content of the films being produced in

---

399 Ibid., pp.x, xi, 17.
400 Ibid., pp.x, 33.
401 Ibid.
403 Ibid., p.27
Japan and imported from abroad, the Japanese government enacted the Regulation for Motion Picture Censorship (*Katsudō shashin firumu ken’etsu kisoku* 活動写真フィルム検閲規則) which gave the Home Ministry power to “pass, edit, or ban completed film products based on ‘common decency’ (*fūzoku* 風俗), which was applied against representations of cruelty, lust, adultery, nudity, profanity, and blasphemy.”

Censorship was further enforced by the Control Committee for the Motion Picture Code of Ethics, which evaluated films according to the categories of “Nation and Society,” “Law,” “Religion,” “Education,” “Custom,” “Sex,” and “Distasteful Subjects.”

One of the most intrusive censorship organizations was the U.S. Army managed Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD). A subdivision of McArthur’s Civil Intelligence Section, the CCD’s purpose was to enforce SCAP’s goals through “cultural regulation and control” with a particular focus on “censorship of civilian communications in Japan in both the private (telephone calls, personal letters, and telegrams) and public (newspapers, magazines, etc.) spheres of daily life.” The section that concerned itself with film was the Press, Pictorial, and Broadcast Division which was responsible for “censorship of all newsreels and movies made by the Japanese.”

---

404 Kitamura, *Screening Enlightenment*, p.16.
405 Ibid, p.49.
406 Ibid, p.36.
Routinely, this division was a stickler for the guidelines written in the Motion Picture Code and was quick to oust films that did not make the Code’s standards. Even if the films did meet these standards, the CCD would often ask for edits in order to strengthen SCAP’s agenda.408

Although these other divisions, both local and foreign, hindered the Japanese film industry, SCAP itself probably represented the greatest impediment to a true revival of Japanese film because they censored directors in their desire to “reeducate” and “reorient” the Japanese populace.409 Similar to its own division the CCD, which would be dissolved after only a few years, SCAP ran a fine-toothed comb through screenplays, scenarios, and film prints and made the Japanese filmmakers eliminate or alter sections that they found to be objectionable. As the film historian Hiroshi Kitamura states, SCAP’s actions made them a “regulator of [Japan’s] cultural output.”410 Similar to the CCD, SCAP used “pressure and suasion” to force the Japanese directors to change their filmmaking processes in order to nip in the bud questionable content and to include content desired by SCAP that reflected its own values.411 On the surface, these “suggestions” were supposed to aid Japan recover from the devastation of war and

408 Ibid, p.46.
410 Ibid, p.43.
411 Ibid.
instill in them an appreciation for American-styled democracy, but the primary result was that it revealed the “hegemonic structure of cultural and political power” that the United States possessed over Japan.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

The main topic that the censors wanted removed was war: 236 films which expounded upon “conformity to a feudal code,” the “creation of the Warrior Spirit,” and the “superiority of the ‘Yamato,’” all themes that could go against SCAP’s mission to reeducate and reorient the Japanese populace, were confiscated and incinerated near the Tama River.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}} Furthermore, they eliminated from other movies scenes in which “military songs, symbols, and men in uniform” were included.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p.53.}

Another issue that concerned SCAP’s censors was the depiction of both explicit and implied racism. Primarily, the censors were critical of foreign films in which white people interacted with peoples of color. If discrimination appeared in these films, the scenes in which it appeared were quickly excised before the film was released to the Japanese audience.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p.75.} For example, Sidney Salkow’s (1909-2000) prewar film \textit{Storm Over Bengal} (1938) featured an Indian insurrection against the British in which a military leader barely escapes a group of Indian rebels before their capture, and made

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}  
\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}  
\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p.53.}  
\footnote{\textit{Ibid}, p.75.}
whites seem to be both “imperialistic” and “racially intolerant.”416 This concern about
the negative depiction of white people and their relationship with darker skinned
“natives” can also be seen in the censors’ critique of Edward A. Kull’s (1885-1946)
*Tarzan and the Green Goddess* (1938). In this film white archaeologists are depicted as
nothing more than avaricious thieves who steal from natives who are “powerless,
faceless, and submissive” while being unable to defend themselves against white greed.
For this and other reasons, the censors found this film to depict “imperialism at its
worst.” Instead, the censors supported films such as John Cromwell’s (1887-1979) *Anna
and the King of Siam* (1946), because it depicted a striving for “‘scientific” thinking,’
‘modernization,’ ‘progress,’ and English-language education.”417

Although the United States limited the contents and types of films that

416 Ibid, p.76.
417 Ibid. Another topic that the censors were highly cautious of was communism, not only when it was
portrayed in a positive light, but even if it was hinted at in a totally neutral manner. For example, in
Charles Martin’s (1910-1983) *No Leave, No Love* (1946, a Texan is stated to have been from Russia.
There is no actual mention of communism, but because the character was created in a manner that did not
condemn communism, the censors felt it best to delete the scene.417 Relatively minor lines mentioning
communism were also deleted from Richard Haydn’s (1905-1985) *Miss Tatlock’s Millions* (1948) and
William A. Seiter’s (1890-1964) *The Affairs of Susan* (1945). On the other hand, censorship authorities
embraced films that spoke of the evils of communism or depicted characters that were trying to escape
from it. One such film was William A. Wellman’s (1896-1975)’s *The Iron Curtain* (1948). In this film, a
Soviet agent supplies secret information to the Canadian Embassy in Ottawa so that his wife and child
would have the opportunity to live in a democratic country. The film was originally rejected by the
censors, but was given an “okay” after the anti-communist nature of the work became readily evident. In
fact, the film became a tool used by SCAP to help “debunk communism.”
Japanese audiences could watch. Hollywood film would have a major effect on the Japanese and help shift their cultural, political, and social beliefs.\textsuperscript{418} As Kitamura states, after the Japanese were defeated, they developed a fascination with all things American and had a great desire to learn about the nation that decimated their country.\textsuperscript{419} At the same time, the Japanese “imagined and reinvented” the United States in the way that it best fit their needs. Therefore, even if the culture of United States seemed to be “superior” to Japanese culture, this heightened rank was built upon Japanese perception and not a perception instilled by the Occupation.\textsuperscript{420}

As in their appreciation for European film, a number of Japanese, especially critics and other intellectuals, looked to Hollywood film for inspiration on how to live a different life than they had during the prewar and the wartime periods.\textsuperscript{421} Indeed, because the ideologies that had governed prewar and wartime Japan had supposedly been wiped out by the Occupation, Japan had entered an “era of disintegration” which was a fruitful time for “theories of individual autonomy” (\textit{shutaiseiron} 主体性論).\textsuperscript{422} These theories were primarily concerned with how the Japanese could maintain

\textsuperscript{418} Ibid, p.xi.
\textsuperscript{419} Ibid, p.89.
\textsuperscript{420} Ibid, p.176.
\textsuperscript{421} Ibid, p.136.
“personal integrity in opposition to social forces” and institutions. Thus, Hollywood films, and Japanese films that contained similar issues, as I will show later in this chapter, functioned as guidelines to show the power of the individual and how an individual can still preserve morality by following his or her own decisions rather than being coerced by social forces.

Although Hollywood film was rapidly becoming popular in Japan, SCAP was disappointed that Japanese audiences did not seem to fully comprehend the films that they were watching. In order to bridge the gap between film and audience, SCAP, through the Central Motion Picture Exchange, invited rich and well-known Japanese to view films at special screenings in order to develop “advance publicity.” These individuals, instead of simply discussing the films with media outlets, were supposed to make the films’ “high level of culturalism” easier for the Japanese masses to understand. Thus these prominent Japanese became engaged in an “enlightenment campaign” that aimed to increase the consumption of Hollywood film by “systematizing the instruction of [filmic] appreciation.”

On the surface, this enlightenment campaign might seem to be nothing more

---

423 Ibid.
424 Ibid.
425 Kitamura, Screening Enlightenment, p.138.
426 Ibid.
427 Ibid.
than a scheme created by Hollywood to increase profits. At the same time, the American occupiers, similar to the Japanese during the prewar and wartime periods, were well aware of the importance of critics and how effective they were in spreading new ideologies. Thus, SCAP took it upon itself in “instructing” and “educating” these prominent Japanese in the best methods in how to spread the American values present in these films for the purpose of inspiring the Japanese populace to reconstruct a pro-democratic and pro-American Japan.\(^{428}\)

As stated above, one of the primary subjects that the Occupation forces wanted the Japanese public to learn about was democracy. Critics were also eager for their people to latch onto a democratic mindset because this would help fill the void of ideology created by wartime devastation and defeat and because democratic feelings would supposedly fill the Japanese with an “energy” that would help them “recover for tomorrow.”\(^{429}\)

One of the primary lessons that the Japanese critics hoped that Japanese film audiences would pay particular interest to was the subject of humanism (\textit{hyūmanizumu ヒューマンイズム}). Of course, humanism was a concept that the Japanese were familiar with before the Occupation, but, as Kitamura points out, the humanism that

\(^{428}\) Ibid.  
\(^{429}\) Ibid, p.138
appeared in prewar and wartime Japanese cinema, such as Tasaka Tomotaka’s 田坂具隆 (1902-1974) popular film Gonin sekkohei (五人斥候兵 The Five Scouts, 1938),
dealt with “human bonding and emotional affection in relation to Japan’s imperial polity.” With this “imperial polity” supposedly wiped out by the Occupation, humanism, as it was displayed in Hollywood films, came to mean a “mind-set to respect human beings.”

According to the critic Honda Akira 本多顕彰 (1898-1978), a “candid exposure of one’s inner emotional qualities” was of major significance to the humanism that appears in Hollywood films, but, of even more importance in the context of early postwar Japan, these films displayed “a universal drive for compassion.” Honda, as well as a number of his fellow critics, believed that this type of humanism was completely absent in Japan during the war years, but that Americans had possessed it since the time the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. Thus, Hollywood cinema was the perfect avenue for the Japanese to learn “personal kindness and compassion.”

2.3 Victim Consciousness and Melodrama: The War-retro Genre

---

430 Ibid. p.148.
431 Ibid.
432 Ibid.
433 Ibid.
Although the existence of American film and the ideals that Americans tried to instill into the Japanese were dominating early postwar film culture, Japanese film was still significant in the lives of the Japanese. Japanese turned to the film culture of their own country in order to try and come to terms with the collapse of the world that they had known and the absence of the ideologies that had once controlled their everyday lives.\footnote{Yoshimoto, “Logic of Sentiment,” p.4.} However, as Yoshimoto points out, Japanese film did not only concern itself with helping the Japanese understand how Japan’s prewar and wartime quest for modernity ended in complete disaster, but also with tackling the new modernity brought to Japan by the American Occupation forces.\footnote{Ibid., p.29.}

The most popular form of film during the first decade of the postwar period was the melodrama. Yoshimoto states that, in general, melodramas are considered to be “too formulaic, too exaggerated, and above all, too emotional” and their entertainment value derives from how they play on people’s emotions.\footnote{Ibid., p.12.} According to Peter Brody, melodrama is an “expressionist drama” in which the true emotions of the characters are not on the surface, but are embedded deeper in the characters. This normally means that the characters rarely express themselves in words alone, and rely instead on overblown “human body and facial expression[s]” in order to try and get their messages across to
others. Thus, in these melodramas “emotion and human feelings the only genuine discourse” and both the audience and the characters in the film must understand the unvoiced purity and innocence of the protagonist in order to experience the full impact of the films.

One of the most interesting aspects of melodrama is its use of the specter of the past within the present. In her study, Christine Gledhill states that while realism engaged itself with a continued search for “renewed truth and authentication” and thus always looked to the future, melodrama, on the other, was stuck in an “atavistic past” where one is always looking for something that has been “lost,” “inadmissible” or “repressed.” Instead of dealing with issues of the present, such as the “rise of market capitalism and the emergence of [an American-inspired] modernity,” melodrama focused on the antagonistic relationship shared between prewar and postwar cultures.

Overall, this clinging to the past is the melodrama’s way of rejecting change.

As I stated earlier in this chapter, the Japanese attempted to rationalize the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their subsequent defeat as a “drama of rescue” in which the Emperor—and the Japanese people as a whole—was saved by the

---

437 Ibid.
438 Ibid.
441 Ibid.
Allies from the militarists who had led the country to destruction. This belief led to the creation of Japanese “victim consciousness” which effectively created a national amnesia that let the Japanese “forget” the atrocities they during the war. Because of this desire to equate victimization with an unavoidable fate, melodramatic films could be seen as the perfect “cinematic actualization” of victim consciousness.\(^{442}\) Indeed, as Yoshimoto points out, for a decade after the war, melodramatic Japanese films were one of the primary avenues through which Japanese victim consciousness was able to spread throughout the nation and be able to install a collective amnesia that covered up Japan’s past traumas and atrocities.\(^{443}\)

For victim consciousness to come into existence, a “conversion narrative” must occur. The conversion narrative takes place when an individual casts aside all forms of responsibility and follows the belief that his or her actions are not decided by him or herself, but by the “determining forces of a situation.”\(^{444}\) In Japan, this can be seen in how the country, with the help of the American Occupation forces, made itself a victim of militarism and cast a blind eye to those it had victimized. Where film is involved, conversion narratives and their offshoot victim consciousness can best be seen in

\(^{442}\) Ibid, p.4.
\(^{443}\) Ibid, p.162
\(^{444}\) Ibid, p.62.
“war-retro genres.”

Although relatively simple in their presentation and content, films in the war-retro genre are more important in how they act as a meeting ground where the director and the audience can share a similar vision with the characters within a given film than their actual content. According to Yoshimoto, the director of melodramatic films does not want his or her viewers to simply feel sympathy for the characters, but to identify with them and thus acknowledge their experiences as the viewers’ own. Victim consciousness is therefore “a particular form of narcissism [that] transform[s] the difference of the other into the sameness of the self.” The directors of melodramas were supposedly able to make their viewers identify with their characters with relative ease because they, their audience, and the characters on the screen all shared the same feelings about the fate that had changed almost every aspect of their lives “in the expressive performance of a tender sorrow.”

In this respect, films like Imai Tadashi’s 今井正 (1912-1991) Mata au hi made (また逢う日まで Until the Day We Meet Again, 1950) and Matsubayashi Shūe’s 松林宗恵 (1920-2009) Ningen gyorai kaiten (人間魚雷回天 The Sacrifice of the

446 Yoshimoto, “Logic of Sentiment,” pp.163-64.
*Human Torpedoes*, 1955) which embraced man’s powerlessness when confronted by fate and the weight of history, were basically a slap in the face to thinkers who encouraged their fellow Japanese to embrace American and European film in order to establish the “autonomy of the individual.”

The purpose of the melodramatic retro-war films was the creation of an exchange in which the directors and their audiences could share an “emotional catharsis” and try to come to terms with Japan’s recent past. Indeed, by identifying with the films’ characters, the audience could overlap their own personal experiences with that of the characters and a “collective understanding of the trauma of the past” could be created and shared by the country as a whole.

Although the Japanese might have been able to gain some sense of contentment through this collective sense of victimization, their methods of dealing with the combined traumas of war, defeat, and the Occupation did not deal with the issues at hand but only allowed them to create a fantasy which, to quote Jean-Paul Sartre, “secures people within their own walls.”

An interesting aspect of early postwar Japanese cinema is that, although it can

---

448 Ibid.
be called a “cinema of war,” the enemy is virtually absent. Instead, the films primarily focus on how the war affects the ordinary citizens of Japan. Normally setting their films within the confines of a city or town that has been completely decimated by an air raid or another type of military violence, the directors of war-retro films implemented the absence of the enemy as a method to make the audience completely identify with the victims without seeing other perspectives. In this way, the audience members are able to develop an “intersubjective relationship” between themselves and the characters within the films and thus identify the characters’ experiences as their own.

Furthermore, the victimized Japanese characters and their enemies are always painted as absolutely good or absolutely evil, with no nuances. Similar to the way the Japanese see themselves in the fantasy zone of victim consciousness, “tragic heroes” within war-retro films were the victims of uncontrollable fates created by “environmental and political factors” that were much more powerful than them. Their actions were not of their own doing because there was no option of individual action.

---

452 Ibid, p.41.
453 Ibid.
455 Standish, Politics, Porn and Protest, pp.27, 30.
choice during this time period.\(^{456}\)

With the American and Japanese government, filmmakers, etc. creating memories and obfuscating the traumas of war and defeat, the Japanese populace was able to develop a “collective memory” of how they were victimized in the war by the militarists.\(^{457}\) Furthermore, Japanese filmmakers helped the Japanese better understand the traumas they experienced because it took the “unassimilated scrape of images, disjointed temporalities of overwhelming experiences” of trauma and put them into “teleological sequences of time” and “an all-knowing omniscient narration style,” which helped cement how the Japanese had no control against the fate the militarists led them to.\(^{458}\)

However, even though the collective memories of Japan’s populace are supposedly being depicted in these films, due to the director’s desire for the audience to identify with the protagonist, history is depicted through the “immediate memories” of those who had experienced the war. Thus, as Standish points out, “history, in the sense of ‘historiography’, is expunged from the narrative” and personal experience comes to be viewed as reality.\(^{459}\) Because history is viewed from personal experience, the

\(^{456}\) Ibid, p.27.
\(^{457}\) Standish, *Politics, Porn and Protest*, p.51
\(^{458}\) Ibid, p.53.
\(^{459}\) Ibid, pp.54-55.
suffering of others is looked upon with a narcissistic gaze and Japanese imperialism in Asia and the Pacific War are the cause of “domestic suffering” and, thus, they determine the “contemporary situation” of Japan.\textsuperscript{460}

Thus colonized individuals who had suffered at the hands of the Japanese both in the colonies and in Japan were expunged from Japanese collective memory.\textsuperscript{461} Although it in no fashion or form excuses the Japanese for their wartime atrocities, one, in some ways, can understand why the formerly colonized and Japanese minority groups were expunged from Japanese collective memory at that time: they were constant reminders of Japan’s failed imperialism and brought back painful memories.\textsuperscript{462}

\textbf{2.4: From Victim Consciousness to Consumer Culture}

Although films detailing victim consciousness were very popular during the first decade of the postwar period, their popularity began to fade roughly around 1955.\textsuperscript{463} One major reason was the spread of television, which began to take the place of cinema as the main form of entertainment, giving rise to a new form of “communal subjectivity.”\textsuperscript{464}

\textsuperscript{460} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{461} Ibid, pp.52, 54-55.
\textsuperscript{462} Yoshimoto. “Logic of Sentiment,” p.164.
\textsuperscript{463} Ibid, p.162.
\textsuperscript{464} Ibid.
As I stated earlier, a number of Japanese intellectuals looked to the devastation caused by the war with hope because it was an opportunity to recreate Japanese subjectivity after the old fascist ideologies were wiped out by defeat and the Occupation. Desiring to install a new “political subjectivity for a new social democracy,” the intellectuals’ hopes were soon dissolved when prewar political figures and bureaucratic personnel regained their positions of power and were determined for Japan to reach “economic supremacy” no matter what the cost. Thus, instead of a new Japan being reconstructed, one could say that prewar Japan was being put in a new mold.465

With the prewar leadership returned to power and with economic recovery becoming Japan’s primary goal, victim consciousness was soon supplanted by a “new economy of consumerism” which television helped fuel.466 Indeed, as Yoshimoto writes, television helped create a “new type of image” in Japan of an emerging urban middle class whose lifestyle, culture of consumerism, and importance of commodities as status symbols replaced the images of war and suffering.467

Drawing on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Yoshimoto states that this change from victim consciousness to consumer culture can be attributed in part to

---

466 Yoshimoto, “Logic of Sentiment,” p.162.
467 Ibid.
American-styled capitalism that was sweeping across the country during the early postwar years. Indeed, even before televisions began to spread within Japanese living rooms across the country, Hollywood films, as “myths of the twentieth century” “articul[ed] and propagat[ed] ideologies of American capitalism” on the silver screen, so the Japanese had already experienced vicariously American-styled consumption.\textsuperscript{468}

Thus, when the opportunity to participate in a similar culture of “conspicuous consumption” presented itself to the Japanese, many embraced it eagerly.\textsuperscript{469}

Although this American-styled consumer culture did help boost the Japanese economy, many left-leaning intellectuals were uneasy with it because the policies that the Japanese government was implementing were influenced by U.S. demands.\textsuperscript{470} Thus, they believed that Japan was slinking back to a prewar militaristic government and that the newfound democracy that had implemented in Japan was nothing more than “the flip side of wartime militarism.”\textsuperscript{471} Therefore the hope that many Japanese had felt with the dawn of a new democracy in Japan quickly turned into “despair and disgust” as they felt completely betrayed by their own government.\textsuperscript{472}

One of the most obvious cases that Japan was bending to the will of the United

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{468} Ibid, pp.24, 27.
\textsuperscript{469} Ibid, p.27.
\textsuperscript{470} Standish, \textit{Politics, Porn and Protest}, p.38.
\textsuperscript{471} Ienaga Saburō as quoted in Standish, \textit{Politics, Porn and Protest}, pp.38, 39.
\textsuperscript{472} Standish, \textit{Politics, Porn and Protest}, pp.36, 119.
\end{flushleft}
States was its opposition to worker and union activities. As Hiroshi Kitamura writes, McArthur and the Occupation forces seemed to be supportive of the rank-and-file workers at first because they ordered the massive conglomerates to be dismantled so that there would be more competition between medium and small-sized businesses and thereby empower the average worker. Although this movement brought communist and left wing movements to positions of power within the industry, McArthur supported them during the first two years of the occupation.473

However, because the conditions in the film industry remained rather chaotic during these two years, the Occupation forces decided that “stability” was more important than competition and the old monolithic conglomerates were revived at the expense of workers and unions.474 Thus, after having supported workers and unions, SCAP began a “reverse course” and a very large portion of left-leaning individuals was purged from the Japanese film industry in 1948 and 1949.475 Tensions between SCAP and the Japanese film industry reached its height at Tōhō studios when SCAP sent in troops and tanks from the First Cavalry Division of the occupation’s Eighth Army to put down a strike.476 Eventually, some 20,000 individuals in the film industry would lose

473 Kitamura, Screening Enlightenment, pp.32-33.
474 Ibid, pp.45-46.
475 Ibid., p.47.
476 Ibid.
their jobs in 1950 due to the red purges.\footnote{Ibid, p.39.}

Having thus established the historical, social, and political background of the film and television industry of Japan and its relationship with notions of national identity and consciousness, let me turn to the history of the representation of Resident Koreans in Japanese film.

\section*{2.5: Early Postwar Films Depicting Resident Koreans}

Besides the political and social methods used to obfuscate the presence of Resident Koreans in Japan, Japanese filmmakers were also quite hesitant to make films that were concerned with Korean or Resident Korean issues for practical reasons. One of the primary reasons why filmmakers were hesitant to make these films was because the figures of Koreans and Resident Koreans were quite “taboo” in Japan.\footnote{Ibid, p.67.} As the noted film scholar Satō Tadao \footnote{Ibid, p.67.} states, it was a risk to create films concerning Korean or Resident Korean issues, because if the Korean or Resident Korean characters in the film were not handled very carefully, the very real matter of discrimination could be raised by the offended party which could lead to trouble not only for the director but also for the company that produced the film. Thus, in order to avoid any such
repercussions, the issues involving Koreans and Resident Koreans were simply avoided.\textsuperscript{479} Also, besides being concerned with tackling controversial issues, film production companies were worried with how well films depicting Korean and Resident Korean issues would perform at theaters. As Yomota points out, film production companies during the early and mid 1950s viewed films not as works of artistic merit, but as items of mass consumption for entertainment purposes.\textsuperscript{480} Therefore, because production companies did not believe that films concerning Korean and Resident Korean issues would draw large audiences and thereby be profitable, they were further avoided.\textsuperscript{481}

However, by the mid-1950s, as Satō, Yomota, and Takayanagi Toshio point out, films concerning Resident Korean and Korean issues began to surface with the earliest films being Kobayashi Masaki’s 小林正樹 (1916-1996) Kabe atsuki heya (壁あつき部屋 The Room with Thick Walls, 1956) and Uchida Tomu’s 内田吐夢 (1898-1970) Dotanba (どたんば The Eleventh Hour, 1957).\textsuperscript{482} For the most part, the directors who took it upon themselves to create films concerning Korean and Resident

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.67.
\item Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.183.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Korean issues were humanist leftists who looked at Resident Koreans with feelings mixed with compassion, empathy and encouragement.\textsuperscript{483} By creating films that were contemporaneous with the lived life of the Resident Koreans, these directors supposedly hoped to build a solid foundation of trust with Resident Koreans that went beyond issues of race.\textsuperscript{484}

However, although films concerning Korean and Resident Korean issues were now being produced, directors still had to contend with Resident Koreans being a taboo subject and being concerned with making a profit. Thus, in order to deal with both of these issues, directors would in some ways “de-Koreanize” their films in order to make them more palatable for a Japanese audience.

One of the most famous films that from the 1950s that deals with Resident Korean issues is Imamura Shōhei’s 今村昌平 (1926-2006) filmic adaptation of Yasumoto Sueko’s 安本末子 (1943-) Nianchan: Jussai shōjo no Nikki (にあんちゃん：十歳の少女の日記 My Second Brother: Diary of a Ten Year Old Girl) which was released under the same name in 1959. Satō Tadao describes the film as being about a destitute Resident Korean family, which consists of two brothers and two sisters, bravely trying to survive in a poor Resident Korean coalmining town located in

\textsuperscript{483} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.55.
Kita-kyūshū after the dual tragedies of their father passing away and the older brother losing his job. As Satō writes, an awareness of the family’s background is essential to truly understand the film because it explains several nuances of the work such as the reason why it was so easy for the older brother to be fired from the mine when the industry became depressed and why the family’s neighbors were so willing to offer aid.

However, while the film does give hints that the people depicted are Korean, i.e. an old woman who is kind to the family wears traditional Korean clothing *ch’ima chogori* and the older brother’s friend speaks with an accent, Satō notes the fact that the characters are Korean is never fully disclosed to the audience. Therefore, Japanese viewers who have some knowledge of Koreans or Resident Koreans should be able to recognize that the characters are Korean, but those who have no such knowledge might remain unaware of it. Interestingly, this information is not just missing in the film, but in the original diary written by Yasumoto as well. Indeed, Yasumoto herself has stated that one of the main reasons why her diary became a bestseller in the 1950s was

---

486 Ibid, p.183. As Satō explains, because the older brother was Korean he could only find work as a temporary laborer at the mine. Thus, when the industry became depressed, he was one of the first let go by the mine. The neighbors were so quick to aid the family because they were their fellow countrymen.
487 Ibid.
because of its “lack of ethnic consciousness.”

Despite its de-Koreanized nature, Satō believes that some aspects of the diary were still too Korean for Japanese audiences. One major issue in which the film differs from the diary is the nature of the older brother. In the film, the older brother is a “strong, cheerful, and active young man” who never loses courage and hope despite his family’s poverty. Remaining cheerful despite living in abject poverty is a common theme found in films concerning Resident Koreans produced during the 1950s and 1960s, and the older brother in My Second Brother might be considered the progenitor of this theme. Yet, the filmic older brother is markedly different from the older brother in the diary, described as a “considerate and intelligent person” whose primary goal is to see that his younger siblings become well educated. Satō believes that the older brother’s deep concern to see that his younger siblings are well educated is a strong sign of his Confucian nature that also marks his Koreanness. As Satō writes, “Korea is a country of Confucianism” where “elders hold a strong responsibility for the instruction of younger people;” thus the brother’s seriousness in regards to his younger siblings’ education truly makes him Korean.

---

488 Ibid.  
490 Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.183  
491 Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.184; Yang, “Sengo Nihon eiga ni okeru
At the time the film was released, Japanese believed that Resident Koreans lived similarly to the poorest of the poor in Japanese society. Thus, because Japanese audiences could not equate Confucian morals with the poorest of the poor Japanese, they also believed that Koreans were void of these traits. If a film attempted to display Korean characters steeped in Confucian values, the characters would be “too wonderfully praiseworthy for Japanese sensibilities.” Satō also writes that the image of a character honed by Confucian values might have also appeared to be distasteful to Imamura because the director preferred to depict the “image of a human living as wildly as he desires.” However, although the filmic depiction of Resident Koreans might have been more palatable to Japanese audiences, Satō believes that Imamura did a disservice to Resident Koreans because he failed to depict them faithfully. Thus, Imamura’s sympathy displayed in this film is flawed because it reflects his sympathy for poor people as a whole, not his sympathy for Resident Koreans.

Although quite observant in his analysis of Yasumoto’s diary, there are some other aspects of Resident Korean life in the work that Satō does not mention. According to Sung Mija 成美子, herself a second generation Resident Korean, the diary resonated

---

“Zainichi”zō wo meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.79.
493 Ibid.
494 Ibid.
with her own life in three primary ways: poverty, abusive language hurled toward Koreans by racist Japanese, and how “Korea” remains in the lives of the family despite their having been Japanized. For example, Korean-styled religious services, fortune telling, and celebration of the Lunar New Year are all portrayed.495 Besides these cultural observations, Sung also observes that the diary is very “Korean” despite being written in Japanese because of the prevalence of honorifics used by the ten-year-old Yasumoto in her writing even when speaking of her father and elder brothers.496 Thus, Imamura also eliminated these aspects of Korean culture in his adaptation of the work.

It is also worthy of note that Japanese directors hid the Korean backgrounds of characters in yakuza (Japanese gangster) films consistently throughout the 1950s, the 1960s, and even the 1970s. As the scholar of Resident Korean studies Takayanagi Toshio writes, yakuza films such as Katō Tai’s 加藤泰 (1916-1985) Otoko no kao o rikekisho (男の顔を履歴書 By a Man’s Face You Shall Know Him, 1966) and Izutsu Kazuyuki’s 井筒和幸 (1952- ) Gaki teikoku (ガキ帝国 Empire of Brats/Kids, 1981) are valuable films in the study of Resident Koreans in Japanese cinema because they presented “tougher and more realistic images of Koreans” than earlier films such as My

495 Sung Mija in Yang, “Sengo Nihon eiga ni okeru “Zainichi”zō wo meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.79.
496 Ibid.
Second Brother. \(^{497}\) However, Takayanagi shows that *yakuza* films were also used as conservative tool to show the Japanese population’s mistrust of Resident Koreans and other third nation peoples (三国人 *sangokujin*), such as Resident Taiwanese and Chinese. In these incredibly one-sided films, Resident Koreans and others were shown to take advantage of the chaos and lawlessness of postwar Japan, but were wiped out by the *yakuza*. Thus, while left leaning directors such as Imamura and Urayama Kirio 浦山桐郎 (1930-1985) attempted to show a more humanistic side to Resident Koreans, more mainstream conservative film presented Japan’s largest minority group as a possible threat to the well being of Japanese citizens. \(^{498}\)

### 2.6: Yakuza and Resident Koreans

With this background in mind, I will now turn my attention to a seminal *yakuza* film that, according to Yomota, was particularly well received by Resident Korean film viewers: Yamashita Kōsaku’s 山下耕作 (1930-1998) *Nihon bōryoku rettō: Keihanshin koroshi no gundan* （日本暴力列島：京阪神殺し軍団 *Gangland Japan*, 1975). \(^{499}\)

Although it is a fictional film, the gangsters in *Gangland Japan* are modeled after the Yanagawa-gumi 柳川組, a real *yakuza* gang based in Osaka and originally led by the

---

\(^{497}\) Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi korian zō,” p.237.

\(^{498}\) Ibid.

\(^{499}\) Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.68.
Resident Korean “Don” Yanagawa Jirō 柳川次郎 (Korean name Yang Uyon Sok 梁元錫) (1923-1991) who acted as the model for the film’s protagonist played by the popular actor Kobayashi Akira 小林旭 (1938-). Set in the year 1952 and located in Tsuruhashi 鶴橋, the locale of a major Resident Korean community in Osaka, the film opens with a petty turf war between two gangs which results in Kobayashi’s character inflicting a serious wound on a rival gang member.

In the context of Resident Korean film studies, the thing that is most valuable about this film is how the Koreanness of the characters is concealed yet fully displayed at the same time. As I mentioned above, both Satō and Yomota write that films directly concerning Resident Korean affairs or films with Resident Korean characters were rare because Resident Korean issues were taboo and because this subject matter, within films that were intended just for entertainment, would probably attract a very small audience. Also, Yomota writes that Japanese film audiences, similar to the early postwar film critics that I mentioned above, simply did not want to see Resident Korean characters in film because their presence would disrupt the belief that Japan was a homogeneous country. Therefore, similar to the way the Japanese government desired both to ignore and reduce the presence of Resident Koreans in Japan, the Japanese

---

500 Ibid., p.55.
populace supposedly wanted to ignore this presence as well.\textsuperscript{502} Thus no words which refer to “\textit{Kankoku}” (韓国 South Korea) or “\textit{Chōsen}” (朝鮮 North Korea) appear in films such as \textit{Gangland Japan}.\textsuperscript{503}

Thus, the question remains: how does a major film studio like Tōei, the major producer of \textit{yakuza} films, create movies that center around characters who belong to a despised minority? According to Yomota, Tōei adopted a “dual structure” in handling Resident Korean characters which means that while overt references to the Korean backgrounds of the characters are never given, there are “symbols” sent to certain audience members, i.e. those who are familiar with Korean and Resident Korean society, who would be able to recognize the Korean backgrounds of the characters while those who were unfamiliar might simply detect a general foreignness hovering about them.\textsuperscript{504}

While Imamura at Nikkatsu “de-Koreanized” Yasumoto’s diary in order to make it more palatable to Japanese audiences, in \textit{Gangland Japan}, the references to Korean culture are much stronger and, if Yomota’s presumption is correct, discovering these bits of Koreanness can help the viewer to better understand the deeper meanings of the film.\textsuperscript{505}

\textsuperscript{502} Yomota, “\textit{Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō},” p.67..
\textsuperscript{503} Ibid., p.55.
\textsuperscript{504} Ibid., pp.67, 73.
\textsuperscript{505} Ibid., p.67
Although there are of course Japanese living in the location as well, Tsuruhashi is widely known to be the home of an enormous Resident Korean community.\textsuperscript{506} As the sociologist Fukuoka Yasunori writes, Osaka contained the largest Korean population in prewar and wartime Japan and, at the end of the war, the largest portion of the Resident Korean community remained there and were soon joined by thousands of other Koreans who sought refuge from their ravaged homeland.\textsuperscript{507} The characters from Tsuruhashi are \textit{yakuza}, which makes their Koreanness more and more evident due to the fact that, because they were kept both from finding gainful employment and economic help from the Japanese government, Resident Koreans often were reduced to having to pursue unlawful activities in order to survive.\textsuperscript{508}

The clues mentioned above are some of the more obvious nods to the Resident Korean origins of the characters, however, there are several subtler hints of their Koreanness as well. As mentioned above, the film opens with a skirmish between two rival gangs, in which Kobayashi Akira’s character Hanaki Isao seriously wounds a rival gang member, Kanemitsu Kōji. When the wounded man needs a blood transfusion and


\textsuperscript{507} Fukuoka, \textit{Zainichi Kankoku/Chosenjin}, p.35.

\textsuperscript{508} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p. 66.
it is discovered that Hanaki’s is a match, the protagonist offers his, but Kanemitsu states, “Pig’s blood is much better than yours!” According to Yomota, this scene is significant because Kanemitsu’s use of the term “pig’s blood” hints at his Korean origin.

As Yomota writes, “choppari” チョッパリ, pig’s foot, was an insult used by Koreans against Japanese, so Kanemitsu does not want his Korean blood sullied by that of a Japanese. Yet, Hanaki reveals his own Korean origins when he states, “Don’t worry. You and I have same blood.”

There are other instances in this film that act as symbols of some of the characters’ Korean origins such as when Hanaki discovers and drinks from “a beer bottle containing white liquid” which, according to Yomota, is most likely makgeolli, a Korean rice wine and when a gang member complains that his rivals “eat different food” which the film historian Monma Takashi 門間高志 takes to mean the abundance of garlic and hot pepper in Korean cuisine which Japanese avoided almost completely a few decades ago.

While paying so much attention to the “hidden” Korean aspects within "Gangland Japan" might appear excessive, they are significant to display how Resident

---

509 Ibid, p.67. おんどれの血を貰うくらいならブタの血の方がマシじゃ！
510 Ibid. The term originates from how Japanese tabi socks made their feet look like split-toed pig’s feet.
511 Monma, “Nihon eiga no naka no Zainichi zō,” p.222. “安心せい。ワシとワレは同じ血や。”
Koreans appeared in some Japanese films that utilized a “dual structure.” Thus, for Japanese who knew little about the presence of Resident Koreans in Japan, *Gangland Japan* would be nothing more than yet another *yakuza* film.\(^{513}\) However, for Resident Korean viewers who were able to pick upon the hidden symbols and recognize the Koreanness of the characters depicted in the film, the film is irreplaceable and made all the more special because of its hidden meanings.\(^{514}\)

### 2.7: Creating Stereotypes: Moral Koreans and Moral Japanese

When filmmakers of the majority deal with issues pertaining to minority populations, the issue of stereotypes cannot be avoided. Therefore, as with the skewed images of African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, etc. in American film, the images of minorities in Japanese films are quite distorted by native filmmakers.

As I have stated above, in order to create films that contain Korean or Resident Korean characters, Japanese filmmakers have to concern themselves with the taboo of simply presenting Resident Korean characters, how well the films will profit, and how a “homogeneous” Japanese audience would react to the presence of Resident Korean

\(^{513}\) Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p. 67.
\(^{514}\) Ibid, p. 68.
characters. Japanese filmmakers also had to be concerned with how the characters reacted to certain issues such as discrimination. If they attempted to show films that depicted “happy” Resident Korean characters, such as those in My Second Brother, in conjunction with discrimination, the film would seem to be taking the very serious issue of discrimination too lightly and the film would seem “unnatural.”

Caught in this ordeal, one might think that Japanese directors would take advantage of this situation and try to create serious Resident Korean films that deal with the real lives of Resident Koreans. However, as Yomota writes, film directors locked the images of Resident Koreans in rigid stereotypes where they were presented as always being “upright and clean, morally noble, and broad-minded,” albeit being weak in power. This type of false image making is a problem.

At a conference organized by Yomota, the third generation Resident Korean actress Kim Ku-mi-ja 金久美子 (1958-2004) referenced a scene in Ōshima Nagisa’s Nihon shunka-kō (日本春歌考 Sing a Song of Sex, 1967) and critiqued how the images of Resident Koreans were handled by Japanese directors. In this scene, a high school girl of possible Resident Korean origins sings a song that was once sung by Korean comfort women (慰安婦 ianfu). After the completion of the song, the girl is applauded

---

516 Ibid.
and made to wear a sparkling dress that did not fit her. Kim believes that this scene reflects how humanist leftist film directors avoided dealing with the real issues faced by Resident Koreans in Japan by creating their own ideal Resident Korean characters who were paragons of morality. With this issue in mind, let’s delve deeper into these constructed images of Resident Koreans.\textsuperscript{517}

Yomota likens the Japanese directors’ willingness to create these idealized images of Resident Korean characters to the Freudian concept of “screen memories” in which the consciousness screens important memories and buries them deeply in the unconscious while unimportant memories come to surface and are focused on in minute detail.\textsuperscript{518} Therefore, because Japanese directors have to be concerned about taboo issues concerning Resident Koreans, about the profitability of their films, about the supposed homogeneous nature of their audience, and about how to portray Resident Koreans, important issues such as discrimination and traumatic events from the prewar and wartime periods are deeply buried and lesser issues and attributes surface. Thus, it is due to industry restraints that directors “forget” important issues and focus on not so important issues. With this system of “screened memories” in mind, the viewer of today is more able to understand the “strange tendencies” of how Koreans were represented in

\textsuperscript{517} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.56. Kim, who acted in both Japanese and South Korea before her death is known by the name Kanemura Kumiko 金村久美子 in Japan.

\textsuperscript{518} Ibid, p.73.
late 1950s and early 1960s Japanese film.\textsuperscript{519}

The “strange tendency” to show that Resident Koreans possessed a “moralistic spiritual supremacy” appeared in the first postwar films that depicted Resident Korean characters such as Uchida Tomu’s \textit{Dotanba} and Kobayashi Masaki’s \textit{The Room with Thick Walls}. \textit{Dotanba} is set within a mining town where, one day, a cave-in occurs. Miners outside the mine attempt to derive a plan to rescue the trapped men, but they are unsuccessful. Among their ranks is a group of Resident Koreans who also wanted to help the trapped men, but one of the Japanese miners takes issue with their presence and states, “They came here because they can drink for free.”\textsuperscript{520} This comment angers the group and they abandon the idea of helping the trapped miners and leave. Eventually, the rescue operation requires more manpower and the Resident Koreans are asked to come back. They refuse to do so at first, but their leader states “I am really angry at the Japanese who says that we help them because we can get free drink. But if we are locked up in the mine, we will wait hoping other miners come and help us.” The group of Resident Koreans then goes to the mine to help with the rescue and the trapped miners are saved.\textsuperscript{521} Thus, the Resident Koreans were able to get over the harsh remarks uttered by the Japanese, were able to put themselves in the shoes of their

\textsuperscript{519} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{520} Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.184.
\textsuperscript{521} Ibid.
former (current?) enemies, and saved those who might have killed them mercilessly just a few years before. Therefore, although if they were living in a situation even worse than poor Japanese miners in a small mining town, the group allowed their “spiritual supremacy” rise to the surface and they were able to beat Japanese discrimination by helping the very Japanese who had discriminated against them.

Besides being able to maintain their moral uprightness in the face of discrimination, filmic Resident Koreans were also able bastions of calmness at moments when their Japanese counterparts were totally ensnared by militaristic ideologies. Thus, the Koreans in Kobayashi’s *The Room with Thick Walls*, who have been imprisoned in Sugamo prison as class B and class C war criminals, can criticize Japanese militarism and can make sense historically of how they came to be imprisoned in Japan. In this context, the words of Koreans or Resident Koreans were considered to be wise and correct despite their oftentimes powerless, albeit morally superior, position. This can be seen in Suzuki Seijun’s 鈴木清順 (1923-) film *Shunpuden* (春婦伝 *Story of a Prostitute*) in which the white-clad Korean prostitute criticizes the foolish death of a Japanese comfort woman because one has to “live on at all costs.” Thus, many postwar directors, including such major names as Imamura, Kobayashi, Suzuki, and

---

522 Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.69.
523 Ibid, p.70
Urayama, presented Koreans and Resident as morally strong, albeit weak in power, individuals who are in many ways superior to the Japanese. However, the question that must be asked is why Koreans and Resident Koreans are presented this way? In what way are these morally superior Korean and Resident Korean characters important for Japanese audiences?

Although it is true that these early postwar films that depict Resident Koreans can in some ways be seen as creative works that try to move beyond nationality and show compassion, empathy, and encouragement for the downtrodden minority group, the main focus of these of these films is actually the Japanese characters who appear alongside the Resident Koreans. Indeed, as Yomota points out, the presence of ideal morally sound Resident Koreans in these films is to support the presence of likewise ideal moralistic Japanese. These idealized images of Resident Koreans and their Japanese counterparts go beyond these films to show how Korea and Japan’s relationship’s was based on moralistic terms as well.\textsuperscript{524} The presence of these moralistic Japanese is problematic because, as I will show later in this section of the thesis, they are used to cover up issues that truly need to be addressed.

As Yomota writes, films concerning Resident Koreans normally present the

\textsuperscript{524} Ibid, p.73.
viewer with two types of Japanese characters: those who are prejudiced and view Koreans as inferior and those who are “conscientious and humanistic” and “protect Koreans as their brothers.”

Probably the best known film for Japanese audiences that presents the viewer with prejudiced Japanese along with their morally superior counterparts is Urayama Kirio’s *Kyūpora no aru machi* (キューポラのある街 *Foundry Town*, 1962) which was based on a novel by Hayafune Chiyo 早船ちよ (1914-2005) and scripted by Urayama and Imamura Shōhei.

Set in the city of Kawaguchi in Saitama prefecture, *Foundry Town*’s plot is centered on the struggles of laborers in the postwar period, whose jobs are put in danger by the rapid mechanization that is sweeping through the country. Despite these circumstances, which have both soured the being of her proud laborer father and forced her to quit high school so that she could seek employment, Jun and her brother Takayuki remain cheerful despite such desperate times. Also, Jun and Takayuki do not allow nationality to get in the way of their friendships. Jun is friends with Kaneyama Yoshie, a young Resident Korean woman who works at a *pachinko* parlor, and Takayuki is a

---

526 Indeed, Takayanagi Toshio states that this film would also be the first film that Japanese over a certain age would remember when they think of films that have Resident Korean characters. Takayanagi also lists this film as one of the masterworks of Japanese cinema. Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.234.
friend and classmate of Sankichi who is Yoshie’s younger brother.

Jun, a young girl on the brink of womanhood, is often at odds with her old-fashioned father. When Jun’s mother and father learn that the girl is friends with the Resident Korean Yoshie, they both grow concerned and angry. Jun’s mother tells Jun that Yoshie is “dangerous” while her father, who is drunk, yells, “You idiot! Do you hang out with that Korean?” However, instead of allowing her parents to destroy her relationship with Yoshie, Jun retorts, “Yes, I’m her friend. What’s wrong with that?”

Takayuki’s moralistic outrage is more complex. Knowing that his friend Sankichi will soon “repatriate” to North Korea, Takayuki, who is directing a skit for his school’s performance day, allows the Korean boy to play a lead role after he asks to do so. Wanting to act in the skit—Jules Renard’s *Poil de carotte*—because the girl he likes, Kaori, is doing so as well, everything is going well for Sankichi until he utters the line, “I am Carrot. Because my hair is red, the madam named me so.” In response to this, a young heckler shouts, “San-chan, a Korean carrot!” This heckling devastates Sankichi so much that he forgets his next line and begins to cry. Takayuki himself had made discriminatory remarks to Sankichi in the past by stating such things as “guys like

---

529 Ibid.
531 Ibid, p.218.
you should quickly go back to Korea,” but these taunts were seen as nothing more than
general rudeness among two young male friends. However, seeing his friend devastated,
Takayuki runs after the heckler and makes him cry.\footnote{Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chôsenjin,” p.186.} Thus, Takayuki affirms his own
powerful moral code by defeating the bad Japanese boy. Thus, in these conflicts, in
which the downtrodden Resident Koreans do not fight for themselves, one can easily
see the presence of both good and bad Japanese and how the good Japanese can
supposedly eliminate discrimination through their morality. I will return to this issue
later in this section of the chapter.

Another film that features moralistic Japanese who are able to eliminate
discrimination rapidly is Morizono Tadashi’s 森園忠 educational film Omoni to shônen
(オモニと少年 Omoni and the Boy, 1958). Created with the theatrical trope Gekidan
mingei 劇団民藝, Omoni and the Boy centers on the figure of a Resident Korean
woman who adopts a young Japanese boy after he loses his parents at the Jôban
coalfield in the city of Iwaki.\footnote{Yomota Inuhiko, “Kyôka kara shisen: Zainichi eiga shosô.” Sekai. 747 (January, 2006): 255.} After the boy’s teachers and neighbors are unable to
locate additional members of the boy’s family, the Resident Korean adopts the boy. The
woman is told not to adopt the boy by her Resident Korean neighbors because of his
Japanese origins and because there are many orphaned Resident Korean children, but
the woman wants to do so because the boy reminds her of her own deceased son.\textsuperscript{534}

The woman and boy live happily despite their poverty; however, the boy is soon teased at school by the other Japanese children who say such nasty things as “You smell of garlic” and “You will become Korean although you are Japanese.”\textsuperscript{535} Instead of asking the boy to endure the discriminatory words, the Resident Korean woman visits the parents of the bullies and, because of her purity and sincerity, the Japanese parents quickly discover their own morality and change their views toward Resident Koreans and make their children change theirs as well. Thus, the Resident Korean woman’s morality was able to draw out the moral goodness of her Japanese neighbors who quickly were able to snuff out their children’s burgeoning racism. Eventually the boy’s uncle is located and the man intends to take the boy back to Tokyo with him, but the boy decides to remain with the Korean woman. Therefore, as with most of the films that concerned Resident Koreans at this time, the superior morality of the Resident Korean mother was able to gain strength through likeminded Japanese and together they were able to defeat discrimination. This means that, although Resident Koreans might always be considered morally superior to a certain portion of the Japanese population, they

\textsuperscript{534} Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chôsenjin,” p.185.
\textsuperscript{535} Ibid.
must have the aid of the Japanese to truly change attitudes toward discrimination.\(^\text{536}\)

As Monma Takashi states, midway through the first decade of the postwar era, Japanese directors, who, at that time, were free from the restraints imposed on them by the American Occupation forces, began to create films as an “act of atonement” for the atrocities committed against Koreans and Resident Koreans. However, even if they did not completely eradicate it, as can be seen in *Foundry Town* and *My Second Brother*, Japanese directors greatly attenuated the very real issue of discrimination that Resident Koreans faced by showing that it was a relatively easy force to defeat through the combined forces of moralistic Resident Koreans and Japanese.\(^\text{537}\) Yomota, likening these films to Stephen Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List* (1993), states that these leftist humanist films focus on the “humanitarian salvation” of the Japanese from their past misdeeds. Thus, the morally superior Resident Korean characters serve one major purpose: they act as the catalyst for good Japanese to show their moral superiority that cleanses or completely obfuscates Japan’s bitter history with Korea.

### 2.8: Persisting Stereotypes: Resident Koreans and Poverty

\(^{536}\) Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.185; Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi korian zō,” p.234. Although I was harsh on these films in my critique, they are both quite important because they were a couple of the first films to address Japanese discrimination toward Resident Koreans, albeit in a manner that aggrandizes good Japanese.

Poverty, more often than not, shapes the plots of these humanist leftist directors’ films. Indeed, as Yomota points out, it was the poverty that Resident Koreans had to struggle through that encouraged the directors to create films that were filled “with compassion, empathy or encouragement toward their peninsular neighbors.” Of course, the two major films that I have covered in detail in this chapter, Imamura’s *My Second Brother* and Urayama’s *Foundry Town* are the best-known films that not only deal with the issue of Resident Korean poverty during the early postwar years, but also show how Resident Koreans dealt with this poverty by “living purely, rightly and positively.” Let’s take a closer look at how poverty is displayed in *My Second Brother*.

As stated above, *My Second Brother* is set in the city of Kitakyūshū where the mining industry is caught in a major economic slump due the closure of the Korean War. The Yasumoto family, which has suffered the loss of its patriarch, receives another major blow when the elder brother is fired due to the economic strain put on his mine. Thus, the family, which was already poor, is reduced to “rock bottom subsistence

---

539 Monma, “Nihon eiga no naka no Zainichi zō,” p.217; Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.235. As Monma states, this would set the film between 1954 and 1957 which was a period of economic depression before the “boom” years of the final years of the 1950s.
540 Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō, p.58.
level living.”

However, despite their poverty, the four siblings are “wonderfully cheerful, sunny, and easy going” as they live “bravely” through their day to day lives in which they endure hunger and separation from each other. Indeed, even the film’s theatrical poster states “Four siblings who lived cheerfully and strongly as they were trodden and kicked!”

Moved by both their endurance and their ability to stay positive no matter what hardships life throws at them, Satō, in his initial viewing of the film, believes that the four siblings offered a valuable model for Japanese audiences who, despite vast improvements, were still recovering from the deprivation and destruction of the wartime period. However, this depiction of Resident Koreans as cheerful despite their poverty, similar to depicting their moral superiority despite discrimination, is damaging because it not only trivializes their suffering in Japan but also obscures the root causes of their poverty and why they more deeply ensnared by their poverty than their Japanese counterparts.

Earlier in this chapter, I mentioned that one of the “hidden” clues that the

---

541 Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.182.
Yasumoto family was Korean was how easily the mine fired the elder brother.\textsuperscript{545} This obfuscation of the reason why the character was fired, although it might make the film more palatable for a Japanese audience, does a great disservice to Resident Koreans because it removes a key reason of why they remained entrenched in poverty while the Japanese around them were able to prosper: their own Koreanness kept them poor.\textsuperscript{546}

As I wrote earlier in this chapter, Satō Tadao believes the Confucian ethics that are supposedly present in Yasumoto Sueko’s diary were removed from the filmic version of the work in order to make it more appealing for Japanese audiences. Satō believes that Japanese filmgoers would find it very difficult to believe that Resident Koreans could live under a strict moral code when this morality was completely absent within the beings of the poorest of the poor Japanese.\textsuperscript{547} Although Satō wrote this section of the essay in order to criticize Imamura for “Japanizing” the Yasumoto family by removing a key element of their Koreanness, it also reveals the rise of classism in late 1950s and early 1960s Japan in which destitute Japanese and Resident Koreans were scorned heavily by Japan’s middle class.

Another issue that Satō focuses on is the strong system of mutual support that is present within the Resident Korean presented in \textit{My Second Brother}. Although poor

\textsuperscript{545} Monma, “Nihon eiga no naka no Zainichi zō,” p.217
\textsuperscript{546} Sung Mija in Yang, “Sengo Nihon eiga ni okeru “Zainichi”zō wo meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.80.
\textsuperscript{547} Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta kankoku/chōsenjin,” p.184.
and the victim of Japanese discrimination, the Resident Korean mining community in

*My Second Brother* is still full of pride and attempt to cheer up the parentless Yasumoto family through their mutual support. Satō believes that both poverty and national affinity played a mutual role in creating a strong community of Resident Koreans who were quick to reach out to each other in times of need. It is this strength found through poverty and national affinity that Satō believes is the primary lesson that can be learned watching this film. However, although mutual aid is commendable, Satō does not mention the true origins of this mutual aid: because Resident Koreans were barred from receiving social security and welfare, the only method that they could employ to survive was mutual aid.

Although I was highly critical of this film, I do respect Imamura’s supposed goal, as theorized by Satō, of trying to create a film that presented solidarity through poverty. However, this theme began to disappear from films by the early 1960s due to the high economic growth. Thus, it became difficult to form a foundation between Japanese who were growing richer and their downtrodden countrymen and women and Resident Koreans and Taiwanese. Instead, as I mentioned above, the richer Japanese

---

548 Monma, “Nihon eiga no naka no Zainichi zō,” p.217; Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō, p.70.
began to hold a deeper disdain for the poor, both Korean and Japanese.

Yang In-sil states that the humanist leftist directors, although they create positive portrayals of Resident Koreans, such as their being paragons of morality, cheerful despite their poverty, and possessing strong communal bonds with their countrymen, depict only images that are already present in their minds. As Jane Chi Hyun Park writes, false images, even positive ones, are damaging because they are a “fiction that becomes real” through its acceptance and reiteration by members of both dominant and marginal groups. Thus, because films, then and now, are a major method by which Japanese audiences come in contact with Resident Koreans, their impact is substantial. If these idealistic images of Resident Koreans appeared in only a handful of films, they might not pose such a problem, but, due to their prevalence, they can crystallize their images of Resident Koreans in the minds of Japanese viewers. According to Homi Bhabha, a stereotype is “a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place,’ already known and something that must be anxiously repeated.” Therefore, one could say that the stereotypes of Resident Koreans present in these late 1950s and early 1960s films were “anxiously repeated” and became so well “known” that their images were “affixed and arrested” and these

554 Homi Bhabha in Park, Yellow Future, pp.15-16.
images became the scope through which Japanese audiences saw Resident Koreans. Resident Koreans thereby lost their individual beings while their traits portrayed in popular film became the “common sense” of the Japanese.\(^{555}\) However, the “common sense” presented in these films is skewed by the Japanese directors and issues that truly create the beings of—primarily first and second generation—Resident Koreans, such as “South-North division,” “division of race,” and “the sorrow of history,” are completely absent from their films.\(^{556}\) Thereby, instead of focusing on issues that could have helped explain the positions of Resident Koreans and helped Japanese truly understand the complex nature of being Resident Korean in Japan, these directors, and film critics as well, focused on the “differences and distinctions” of Resident Koreans that made them distinct from the Japanese, such as “Confucianism, ethnicity, and traditional culture.”\(^{557}\)

Therefore, as Yomota writes, these Resident Korean characters should be looked upon as “intellectual works” created under the Japanese directors’ “idealized notion called ‘Korean’ and far apart from real [Koreans] themselves.”\(^{558}\) Now, let’s take a look at some of these “intellectual works” and how they locked Resident Koreans into Japanese condoned stereotypes.

\(^{555}\) Ibid, p.16.  
\(^{556}\) Yang, “Sengo Nihon eiga ni okeru “Zainichi”zō o meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.93  
\(^{557}\) Ibid, p.91.  
\(^{558}\) Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō, p.70.
Satō pays a great deal of attention to the bearing of the elder Yasumoto brother whose personality is shifted from a quiet young man deeply concerned with the education of his younger siblings in the diary to a bright and cheerful young man who does not let his poverty destroy him in the film. Satō believes that this shift was done in order to make the character more acceptable to Japanese audiences who would have a hard time believing that such a dirt poor Resident Korean could possess such a high level of Confucian morality. This disbelief is premised on the assumption that very poor Japanese could not possess such morality. Besides revealing Japanese classism, Satō’s critique of the brother’s shift from serious, Confucianist Resident Korean to carefree Resident Korean also reveals the film historian’s desire to find something purely “Korean” within the Resident Korean featured in the diary and the film. This desire to locate something “purely Korean” acts as a method to not only better understand the “daily customs” of Resident Koreans displayed in the films but as a method to show how Resident Koreans differ from the Japanese. Indeed, as Yang points out, Nakata Tōichi’s 中田統一 Osaka sutōrī (大阪ストーリー Osaka Story, 1995) also received a similar treatment due to the ways Confucian patriarchy, a major

561 Ibid, p.91
issue in the Resident Korean community, was handled in the film.\textsuperscript{562} The primary issue here is not the fact that these issues are critiqued, but that they are handled in such a way that only marks Resident Koreans as the other instead of showing how some issues are imbedded in Japanese, Korean, and Resident Korean societies.

Another issue that Satô’s focus on Confucianism in \textit{My Second Brother} reveals is that Japanese critics might be searching for signs of “Korea” when they do not really exist. As I wrote earlier, Yasumoto Sueko believed that the success of her diary could be linked to its “lack of ethnic consciousness.”\textsuperscript{563} However, this lack did not keep critics from searching for something “Korean” about the work. Indeed, it gave critics “much room for interpretation,” so Satô, Sung, and the like attempted to fill the void of this “lack of ethnic consciousness” with Confucianism, i.e. the substance that made the Japanized characters truly Resident Korean.\textsuperscript{564}

\textbf{2.9: The Repatriation Movement to North Korea in Japanese Film}

If Confucianism was a rather tenuous connection to make between Resident Koreans and the Korean peninsula, Japanese critics and directors found a stronger issue that tied Resident Koreans to their ethnic “homeland” with the repatriation movement

\textsuperscript{562} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{563} Ibid, p.80.
\textsuperscript{564} Ibid, pp.89, 91.
which would see some 90,000 Resident Koreans—many with Japanese spouses in tow—leave Japan to go to North Korea from 1959 until 1984.\textsuperscript{565} Indeed, as Takayanagi writes, after the Japanese and North Korean Red Cross organizations established the repatriation route between the two countries elements of “anticipating return” and the “recognition of North Korea” were added to a number of leftist humanist directors’ films with Urayama Kirio’s \textit{Foundry Town} being probably the most renowned.\textsuperscript{566} In fact, the film is centered on Jun and Takayuki’s friends Yoshie and Sankichi’s pending “repatriation” to North Korea.\textsuperscript{567} At the end of the film, Jun and Takayuki see Yoshie and Sankichi off at Kawaguchi station which is adorned with North Korean flags while a chorus of “The Song of General Kim Il-sung” can be heard in the background. The scene is sad, but it is also full of hope as Takayuki gives Sankichi a bag of marbles and Yoshie gives Jun her old bicycle as keepsakes.\textsuperscript{568}

Another film with a similar theme is the actress Mochizuki Yūko’s 望月優子 (1917-1977) \textit{Umi o wataru yūjō} (海を渡る友情 \textit{Friendship Across the Sea}, 1960). In this film, the decision to repatriate to North Korea acts as a type of panacea for the rocky marriage between a Resident Korean man and a Japanese woman. It is as if

\textsuperscript{566} Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” pp.235-36.
\textsuperscript{567} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to majoritei no hyōshō,” p.59
\textsuperscript{568} Monma, “Nihon eiga no naka no Zainichi zō,” p.218.
entrusting their future to North Korea and Kim Il-sung smoothes over the tension they experienced in Japan.\textsuperscript{569}

As can be seen in these very brief descriptions of these two films, the Japanese directors handled the repatriation movement rather lightly and the scenes were full of good cheer. Takayanagi believes that these depictions of the repatriation movement are highly problematic, despite the “progressive” and “conscientious” intentions of the directors, because they lack a “historical viewpoint” that would connect the presence of Resident Koreans in Japan to prewar institutions.\textsuperscript{570} I would also add that these films noticeably lack historical understanding in why Resident Koreans felt the need to “return” to North Korea when the majority of the population was from the southern half of the peninsula and how many Resident Koreans were “forced” out by the Japanese state due to how they were treated as an unwanted population in Japan.

As I stated above, Urayama’s \textit{Foundry Town} was considered to be a masterpiece not only in the limited realm of films that deal with Resident Korean issues but also in the realm of postwar Japanese film as a whole.\textsuperscript{571} However, it is also one of the films most disliked by older generation Resident Koreans. A Resident Korean acquaintance of the film historian Yomota Inuhiko, who had actually repatriated to

\textsuperscript{569} Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.236.
\textsuperscript{570} Ibid, p.239.
\textsuperscript{571} Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.186.
North Korea before making his way back to Japan, states that *Foundry Town* was the most distasteful film concerning Resident Koreans ever made, and the scene of Yoshie and Sankichi the most difficult to bear because of its fawning nature towards North Korea. For South Korean viewers of the film, the film is ludicrous because of its adoration of North Korea. Thus, instead of filling them with respect for the Japanese directors who tried to cement Japanese/Resident Korean friendships through their films, they could only see the North Korea affiliated organization Sōren, which was “evil” and “scary” to South Koreans, and how it ruined the lives of its own people by repatriating them to the hated North. Satō Tadao was also greatly moved by the film for many years because it displayed how a young Japanese boy reached out to a Korean boy, but his rosy glasses were shattered when he chatted with South Korean producer about the film. The producer was infuriated by the fact that the Japanese seemed to be impressed with the repatriation movement and that they thought it was good for the Resident Koreans to return to North Korea. This attitude showed that the Japanese were blind to history and that they were unaware that the Resident Koreans were going to North Korea because they, the Japanese, made their lives absolutely miserable in Japan.

This glorification of an ahistorical repatriation movement underscores how
Japanese directors of this period seemed to be more concerned with their own ideologies than the well being of Resident Koreans. For example, Mochizuki Yūko’s *Friendship Across the Sea* and Urayama Kirio’s *Foundry Town* both seem to praise North Korea as a place where Resident Koreans can escape poverty and even domestic disputes, but their not so subtle underlying purposes seem to be to elevate the status of North Korea in the eyes of Japanese viewers. A more ham-handed approach can be seen in Yamada Tengo’s 山田典吾 (1916-1998) *Nihonkai no uta (日本海の歌 Song of the Sea of Japan)* which uses the formation and the implementation of the repatriation movement to North Korea as a base to show the struggle between the North Korean and Japanese masses against the Japanese and American ruling classes.575 Yamada also “glorifies” the construction of North Korean socialism as well as Kim Il-sung’s anti-Japanese partisan battles within this film.576 Historical works were also not spared in their support of the directors’ political ideologies which can be seen in the veteran director Toyoda Shirō’s 豊田四郎 (1906-1977) 1969 filmic adaptation of Akutagawa Ryūnosuke’s 芥川龍之介 (1892-1927) story *Jigokuhen (地獄変 “Hell Screen,” 1918).* The filmic version of this work features a group of Korean artisans led by Yoshihide, who had fled to Japan when the Korean kingdom of Koryo 高麗 (918-1392) was in  

575 Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.236.  
576 Ibid.
dire straits. However, much to the group’s consternation, the Japanese emperor does not allow them to return home when things settle down back home.\textsuperscript{577} This aspect was not present in the original work by Akutagawa and, although the film is set in Korea’s Koryŏ period, which was synonymous with Japan’s Heian period (794-1185), North Korea, the locale for the Koryŏ kingdom, is still viewed as an “earthly paradise.”\textsuperscript{578}

Because of this leftist Japanese view of North Korea as an “earthly paradise,” this film, according to Yomota, seems to be very “selfish” and “lacking recognition” of the true situation in North Korea and the lives of those who repatriated there.\textsuperscript{579}

Although these films might be considered off-putting because of their directors’ fawning look at North Korea, their ideologies were not the directors’ alone. In fact, many of their beliefs reflect those of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (在日本朝鮮人総連合会 Zai nihon chōsenjin sōren gōkai), abbreviated in Japanese as Sōren and Korean as Chongryon.\textsuperscript{580} Sōren, which formed in 1955 and distanced itself from Japanese affairs, originally created newsreels that were produced by Sōren jihō (総連時報 Sōren News) and concerned with patriotic observances, the national convention of Sōren, and celebratory events of the founding of the nation in

\textsuperscript{577} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō, p.66
\textsuperscript{578} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{579} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{580} Yomota, “Kyōka kara shisen,” p.250.
Pyongyang. Yomota states that, outside of the “glorification of the republic and the “personality cult of the leader,” these films are quite hollow.\textsuperscript{581} Although rather empty at first, \textit{Sōren News} eventually became more active. Of course, one issue that it took particular interest in was the first repatriation movement. Newsreels of this movement show the jubilant faces of Resident Koreans as they board a train at Shinagawa Station which will take them to Niigata where they will depart on a Soviet ship to Chongjin. Much of the “action” in this newsreel revolves around South Korea supporting Resident Koreans who sit on the rails in protest of the repatriation movement. As the narrator states, “Syngman Rhee and his henchmen tried to cause a disruption, but it failed.”\textsuperscript{582} Indeed, their protest did fail and thousands of smiling Resident Koreans were shipped off to a land that wasn’t even their true home.

However, although \textit{Sōren News} was in many ways found to be lacking, more substance was given to Resident Koreans by \textit{Japanese News} (日本のニュース \textit{Nihon no Nyūsu}) which was produced by Nippon Eiga Shinsha Co. Ltd. (日本映画新社 \textit{Nihon eiga shinsha}). This group created newsreels that depicted such things as displaced Resident Koreans who were forced to live in tents before their reparation to

\textsuperscript{581} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{582} Ibid.
North Korea. More importantly, the newsreels also showed what happened after the Resident Koreans arrived in North Korea. As Yomota states, the viewer is able to witness the applause of North Koreans when the repatriation ships arrive in Chongjin, a totally mechanized farm, the modern wonders of Pyongyang, and a high-rise apartment building that had been especially built for the repatriates. Such wonderful scenes make the narrator state, “Their days of hope start from this place for a peaceful life.”

The positivism found in these newsreels encouraged many other Resident Koreans to follow suit and return to North Korea. However, because of the information that we now know of North Korea, these films in hindsight show the great damage caused to Resident Koreans by Sōren and other organizations and peoples who blindly supported the repatriation movement to North Korea.

This view of North Korea as an “earthly paradise” remained a strong theme in films involving Resident Koreans through the late 1950s until the mid 1960s. However, in a similar way that films that focused on poverty as solidarity between the Japanese and Koreans died out, films that took up this issue, as well as the repatriation movement in general, faded away with Japan’s rapid economic growth period. Therefore, North Korea was no longer needed as an “earthly paradise” when Japan was becoming more
and more comfortable for the Japanese.\textsuperscript{586}

\section*{2.10: Alternative Views}

Although most films created during the late 1950s and early 1960s that centered on or contained Resident Korean characters displayed their “purity, beauty, and honesty” or fawned over the “earthly paradise” of North Korea, there were exceptions to this rule. \textit{Are ga minato no tomoshibi da} (あれが港の灯だ \textit{There are the Harbor Lights}, 1961) is a major example within the realm of mainstream narrative cinema.\textsuperscript{587}

Penned by Mizuki Yōko 水木洋子 (1912-2002) and directed by the social-realist filmmaker Imai Tadashi 今井正 (1912-1991), the movie is rare because it centers not only on the general sense of distrust shared between Japan and the recently created nation of South Korea, but also a real historical issue: the Syngman Rhee Line (Rì Shōban Rain 李承晩ライン) which was established by the first president of South Korea on January 18, 1952.\textsuperscript{588} This line, which extended beyond territorial lines established by international law, caused a serious issue when South Korean fishermen began shooting rifles at Japanese fishing boats when they traveled across the line established by Rhee. South Korean patrol boats also hijacked the Japanese fishing boats

\textsuperscript{586} Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.237.
\textsuperscript{587} Ibid, p.236.
\textsuperscript{588} Satō, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chōsenjin,” p.188.
and the Japanese fishermen were even imprisoned for crossing over the line.589

However, fishermen from Kyushu were undeterred and continued to cross over to fish the rich waters. The Japanese government, which supported their plight, assisted them by sending out the Japanese Coast Guard to protect the Japanese fishing vessels.

However, unlike the South Korean patrol boats, the Japanese went unarmed and could only intervene between the fishing boats of the two countries.590

This situation, of course, aggravated the already tense situation between South Korea and Japan and antipathy towards Koreans grew in Japan. However, it was difficult for the Japanese to openly accuse South Korea of its actions because of Japan’s violent past in the peninsula. This caution can even be seen in this film when the patrol boats firing on the Japanese vessels are referred to as “mysterious boats” instead of “South Korean patrol boats.” Thus, the Japanese fishermen were forced to stew in their own vitriol while waiting for an outlet which, for this film at least, is embodied in the figure of the Resident Korean Pak Shunmei 朴春明 who passes as Japanese under the name Kimura Hideo 木村秀雄.591

Because he is a Resident Korean, Pak feels torn between his country by blood and his country by soil. His situation is exacerbated, as we shall see, by the fact that he

589 Ibid.
590 Ibid.
591 Ibid.
is treated as an “other” by both South Korea and Japan. Although the feeling of being split between Japan and Korea would become a common theme touched upon by both Japanese and Resident Korean directors in the coming decades, this film is considered to be a “heraldic” work because it was the first to touch upon such an issue.592

Pak’s battle between his Japanese and Korean halves comes to the fore when a fisherman named Nishioka is killed by the gunfire from one of the South Korean Patrol boats after the Japanese fishermen cross the Syngman Rhee Line. Angered by the shooting, the wife of the manager viciously criticizes the South Korean fishermen. Pak, unable to keep listening to the abuse, speaks out. Angered further, the wife, Chizuko, states that she dislikes how the Koreans keep falling back on the thirty-five years of colonialism to justify drawing the Syngman Rhee Line. The Japanese have now been wronged by the shootings, so they will be unable to forget that injustice as well. Pak is unable to accept such a simple deduction because he feels that the Japanese should apologize for the colonial rule and that the South Korean fishermen should be forgiven because they are only trying to survive. The wife, incensed, asks Pak if they should think it moral that they kidnapped and imprisoned Japanese fishermen and kept the men in prison over term. She then asks Pak the ultimate question: “If you are killed like

Nishioka-san, will you still say that it’s moral?” Pak is unable to answer this and thus his conflicting Japanese and Korean selves continue to be at odds with one another.\textsuperscript{593}

As I stated above, although Pak’s close Japanese friends know of his Korean heritage, he passes under the name Kimura Hideo in order to avoid discrimination and from drawing undue attention to himself. However, one day the chief fisherman informs Pak’s shipmates of his heritage before shipping out. Although the chief fisherman adds “Please get along with each other!” and the crew members seem undeterred having a Korean amongst them, the chief fisherman’s actions are inexcusable because they took away his ability to pass as Japanese which is oftentimes essential for Resident Koreans to live peacefully in Japan. Things worsen for Pak when a South Korean patrol boat spots him and the other fishermen. The Japanese fishermen believe that Pak informed the South Koreans of their presence. In the end, Pak’s boat is the only one caught by the South Koreans who quickly label him “pan choppari” or half-Japanese. Because of his, and only his, capture, the Japanese fisherman think that Pak is a traitor and one of them states, “He betrayed us and now he is welcome as a hero in Korea.”\textsuperscript{594}

Unlike other films which display discrimination towards Resident Koreans such as \textit{Foundry Town} and \textit{Omoni and the Boy}, \textit{There are the Harbor Lights} does not

\textsuperscript{593} Satô, “Nihon eiga ni kakareta Kankoku/Chôsenjin,” pp.188-89.
\textsuperscript{594} Ibid., p.189.
allow the situation to be tidied up so a happy ending can occur. Instead, Pak is still firmly stuck between the Korea and Japan and he is abandoned and misunderstood by both. Thus, Japanese audiences might be able to better understand the difficult position of Koreans in Japan because this film does not allow discrimination to be neatly tucked away.595

Another important example is the scene in which Pak and the manager’s wife argue whether the Japanese or the South Koreans should be the first to apologize. Although Pak is sympathetic to the Japanese and the murder of Nishioka causes him a great deal of personal turmoil, he is unable to simply write off the South Koreans as evil because he sees the Japanese as the original source of trouble between the two countries. So, with the history of Japanese colonialism in mind, Pak states, “In a fight, the one who punched first should apologize…”596 Thus, this is one of the first films to show the South Korean side of an issue. As Pak states, the South Korean fishermen are fighting off the Japanese in order to survive and that the Japanese should not be satisfied if they are able just to run off the fishermen from the peninsula because they will suffer further because of Japanese actions.597

Although this scene is revolutionary in the world of Japanese film, it is not

---

595 Takayanagi, “Nihon eiga no naka Zainichi Korian zō,” p.236.
597 Ibid.
without its problems. Significantly, although Pak does mention that the root causes of the problems suffered by Koreans can be found in Japanese colonialism, they are not extrapolated on further and it seems that their main purpose is to show that Japan also suffers from a number of problems, which are in fact more severe than those suffered by the South Koreans. Furthermore, the film is not as concerned with Resident Koreans as it is with the Korean peninsula, both North and South, a general tendency in film of this period as well as of later years. Mizuki’s and Imai’s film, although not particularly well received by Japanese audiences, was given approval by film critics who thought that the film presented a “fair position on such a difficult theme that can easily end up just inflaming antipathy toward Korea.”

Now, having a chapter concerning the history of how Resident Koreans were represented in early postwar film to act as a companion to the previous history of Resident Korean chapter, I will now take this thesis in a different direction to describe in detail Matsuda Masao’s and Adachi Masao’s conceptualization of the theory of landscape. This theory, as I will show in chapter four, is a useful tool in understanding the place of Resident Koreans in an increasingly homogeneous Japan and will aid my analysis of Ōshima Nagisa’s films concerning this minority as well.

---

598 Ibid
Chapter 3: Landscape Theory

3.1: The Discovery of Homogeneous Landscapes

In order to examine the representation of Resident Korean identity in Japanese film, I will look at the narrative and visual strategies deployed in Oshima Nagisa’s *Death by Hanging* through the lens of a theory of film developed in the 1960s by *avant-garde* Japanese film directors and critics, namely *fûkeiron* (風景論) or Landscape Theory. The theory was first developed in connection to a documentary on the life of serial killer Nagayama Norio 永山則夫 (1949-1997) that drew connection between his crimes and his childhood and adolescence in suburban Hokkaido and urban Tokyo. Starting out as a hermeneutic tool to address the specific experience of Nagayama, Landscape Theory developed an interpretive framework to examine the effect of the changing modern Japanese social landscape on individual identity that has significant bearing on Oshima’s fictional treatment of Resident Korean identity, as we will see.601

In order to probe into the development of Landscape Theory, I will first briefly describe its evolution in relation to the case of Nagayama, and then proceed to explicate its applicability to my main case study, Oshima’s documentary films.

---

The seventh child and the fourth son of the desperately poor family, Nagayama Norio’s itinerant life began at the age of two when his family moved to Abashiri City. Shortly after arriving, Nagayama’s oldest sister was sexually assaulted and had to be put in a hospital, while his eldest brother impregnated a classmate at his part time high school, left his family, and became a petty criminal. After three years, the family moved to the city of Itayanagi in Aomori prefecture, where they fell into abject poverty when the father abandoned them as well. After graduating from middle school, Nagayama went to Tokyo to find employment at a fruit parlor that also supplied him with room and board. On October 6, 1968 the nineteen-year-old man snuck into the naval base at Yokosuka and stole a “West German manufactured .22 caliber Rohm RG-10, nicknamed the ‘Rosco’” along with fifty rounds of live ammunition and proceeded to kill four individuals. The first shooting occurred at the Tokyo Prince Hotel on October 11th, the second occurred on October 14th at the Yasaka Shrine in Kyoto, the third occurred in a suburb of Hakodate on October 26th, and the final shooting took place on November 5th in Nagoya. Nagayama’s victims consisted of two taxi drivers and two security guards. For these murders, Nagayama was sentenced to death and his

602 Ibid.
604 Ibid.
execution was carried out in 1997.\textsuperscript{605}

Slightly before and during the time that he lived as a vagrant drifting from city to city and from job to job, Nagayama committed a number of petty crimes such as stealing items from a clothing store, a butcher shop, and even from the U.S. military base in Yokosuka.\textsuperscript{606} However, despite these crimes, there was no hint that Nagayama was capable of committing such violent acts as murder. The filmmaker Adachi Masao states that the disaffected youth of 1960s Japan normally rebelled against society by joining student movements, becoming yakuza, or delving into narcotics. Nagayama, however, never joined a student organization or union and never got involved with underworld crime.\textsuperscript{607}

This led to much media speculation on the reasons for his crime.\textsuperscript{608} One prominent individual who tried to cast light on the situation was the Avant-Garde playwright, filmmaker, and poet Terayama Shūji 寺山修司 (1937-1985) who, while referring to the nineteen-year-old man as a “metropolitan gypsy wandering the Tokyo desert,” stated that Nagayama was likely driven to his murderous ways because of the

\textsuperscript{605} Adachi, A.K.A Serial Killer; Furuhata, “Refiguring Actuality,” p.207.
\textsuperscript{606} Adachi, A.K.A Serial Killer.
effects of the “desolate sky of the north.” Tahara Sōichirō 田原総一朗 (1934- ) was quick to disagree with Terayama because, during his time visiting Itayanagi where Nagayama’s mother still lived, “the sky…was surprisingly bright and Mt. Iwaki was sparkling with silver under the smog-less deep blue sky.” Matsuda Masao states that Tahara here would likely be called an “irresponsible tourist” by Terayama, who was from Aomori and who shared a similar background with Nagayama, for such a statement, because the journalist had traveled to Itayanagi during the late spring instead of midwinter. As interesting as this argument may be, is the “dark climate of the north” an adequate answer to why Nagayama killed four individuals? For Matsuda Masao, Adachi Masao, and their comrades it was not, so in 1969 they began planning their own investigation into why Nagayama Norio became a serial killer.

The seed of the idea that would eventually become the “landscape” film Ryakushō: renzoku shasatsu ma (略称・連続射殺魔, A.K.A. Serial Killer, 1969) began to develop when Adachi, Matsuda, and the others were in preparation for the revival of the journal Eiga hihyō (映画批評 Film Critique). Although this magazine was a milestone in and of itself because it was a theory-heavy journal released at a time when

609 Ibid.
610 Ibid.
612 Ibid.
most filmgoers were primarily interested in popular cinema, Adachi and his comrades did not feel that the magazine was enough to create a true “movement” in Japan. Thus, they decided to produce an experimental film. It was at the time that Adachi and Matsuda were organizing the publication of *Eiga hihyō* that Nagayama Norio shot his victims, was arrested, and awaiting his trial to begin. Like the general public and intellectuals such as Terayama and Tahara, Adachi, Matsuda, and company were interested in Nagayama’s case, but did not understand why the young man committed such a violent crime. Thus they decided to make a film concerning the reasons why Nagayama killed four people.

The group travelled to Yobito, the city where Nagayama was born, and Abashiri City where Nagayama had spent part of his early childhood and desired to return to after his family moved to Itayanagi. The group then continued following Nagayama’s path and travelled to Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kobe. What they observed on the trip convinced them that although Nagayama had grown up extremely poor and hungry, these were not the reasons why the young man shot four individuals, and thus they saw a more compelling trigger in the landscape that had surrounded

---

613 Adachi and Hirasawa, *Eiga kakumei*, p.287.
615 Adachi and Hirasawa, *Eiga kakumei*, pp.287-88
Matsuda Masao, reflecting on the group’s trips to Yobito, Abashiri City, and Itayanagi, came to recognize that he had déjà vu like feeling when he visited Itayanagi because the landscape was identical to that of Abashiri City.

What’s more, the landscapes of both Itayanagi and Abashiri City were exact reflections of Tokyo and their “uniqueness of local areas was considerably worn out.”

Similarly, although he did not understand exactly why at first, Adachi states that he had a feeling of “suffocation” when he and the group traveled from city to city as they followed the steps of Nagayama. However, instead of encountering a concrete force that was causing this feeling of “suffocation,” Adachi only encountered landscape that was “just as beautiful as a postcard.”

Keenly aware that the cities and small towns of Japan were “turning into small urban zones modeled on Tokyo,” the group thought that Nagayama’s violent outburst was the result of a nearly unbearable feeling of “suffocation” caused by the homogeneity of the Japanese landscape.

The group came to believe that the reason why Nagayama had not engaged in unions or student movements or become a yakuza was that he had acutely “experienced the feeling of

---

617 Baudelaire, *The Anabasis*.
suffocation in these towns” and shot at it out of desperation.621

3.2: The Decay of the First Village

Satisfied that they had found the supposed cause of Nagayama’s murderous ways, the group of filmmakers decided to depict how the young man was made into a serial killer by the suffocating presence of Japan’s homogeneous landscape and how the same creators of this landscape condemned him for his actions.622 Thus, the filmmakers attempted to make the perspective of the film match how Nagayama himself “face[d] the landscape” and thereby show the viewers how the Japanese landscape was becoming homogeneous.623 Nagayama’s status as a “member of the masses who grew up in the lower-class strata of society” was crucial to the filmmakers because they believed that he possessed “visionary eyes” that could aid the Japanese in seeing “another Japanese archipelago” that they normally would be unaware of.624 With their interest in Nagayama’s landscape firmly established, the group of filmmakers decided that it was unnecessary to create a concrete story for the film. Thereby, they focused solely on how state power was represented in urban landscapes and carefully trimmed away all excess

621 Adachi and Hirasawa, Eiga kakumei, pp.290-91.
In all, the group would travel to and film the common urban landscapes of thirty-three cities and create what Matsuda would refer to as a jikkei eiga 実景映画 or an “actual landscape film.”

The filmmaking group discovered that the landscape of Japan was becoming uniform relatively early in their search to discover the reason why Nagayama Norio committed his crimes. While in Abashiri City, the first city Nagayama’s family moved to after his birth, the filmmakers witnessed a festival which contained a “daimyo march” which consisted of a number of locals dressed like court nobles. Besides the court nobles, the filmmaking group also witnessed other common festival sights that most Japanese would be quite familiar with from films, photos, and their daily lives such as “Shintō priests purifying at street corners, portable shrines, floats, flutes, and drums.”

Despite its being a common scene that one could witness throughout the Japanese archipelago, the group of filmmakers could not help but laugh with amusement when they encountered the festival. Although there was nothing particularly funny about the scene itself, Matsuda, Adachi, and company found the festival with its “daimyo march” to be ludicrous because Abashiri, a city that faces the Sea of Okhotsk,

---

625 Baudelaire, *The Anabasis*.
627 Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” pp.7-8. According to Matsuda, the only thing missing from the festival was enthusiasm.
is one of the historical homes of the Ainu, Japan’s indigenous people. As Matsuda writes, although Abashiri had been economically ruled by the Matsumae Han 松前藩 and governed by the bakufu during the last years of the Tokugawa Era for military needs, mainland Japanese did not begin to come to the area until the year 1880 when the village office was established. This means that there was no historical precedence for the festival to take place in Abashiri.

The turning of Abashiri into a small model of Tokyo and its inhabitants acting out the traditions of the capital presents striking similarities with the “internal colonization” that took place in Hokkaido and Okinawa during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to try to homogenize the populace of Japan. As is well known, one of the longest lasting results of this colonization was the creation of “empty culture” at home. As can be seen in this brief account of Abashiri, the culture of Tokyo replaced many aspects of Abashiri’s native culture. However, instead of becoming completely internalized and adopted as the natives’ own culture, the culture of Tokyo became empty after the original colonists and their early descendants died off. This vapid culture created by outside forces left the inhabitants of Abashiri feeling empty and thus they turned to Tokyo as the source of true culture and as their real home. Yet, as we

---

629 Ibid.
will soon see, Tokyo offered no solace for those outside looking in.

While the above account depicts how an outside society physically replaces another society’s culture with its own, a culture can also die from internal decay. In his essay “Fukashi no mura no iriguchi de” (不可視のムラの入口で At the Entrance to the Invisible Village, 1971), Matsuda describes how a traditional family dissolves from within due to a little prodding from an outside force: television.

Like many of his fellows within the Japanese avant-garde film movement, Matsuda Masao states that he tended to avoid television documentaries because of their vapid, maudlin subjects that oftentimes focused on how “traditional” Japan was rapidly becoming modern and thereby losing its native spirit. Thus, when a documentary concerning a family living deep in Iwate prefecture came on the television, Matsuda thought that the documentary film was going to be nothing more than overly sentimental schlock.630 However, Matsuda’s interest was sparked by this particular documentary because it dealt with the family of one of the few individuals who still earned his living as a charcoal burner.631 Matsuda was initially interested in the documentary because it was a reminder that Japan had been undergoing an “energy revolution” for the previous two decades and that coal and charcoal were rapidly being

---

631 Ibid.
replaced by electricity and petroleum which led to very poor conditions for laid off workers, however, there was more to this particular program than what the film critic originally thought.\textsuperscript{632} Originally he thought that the film would contain the familiar trappings of themes that aimed to make the viewers admire the “effort of those people acting as the base of Japan” and make them feel a sense of loss because traditional lifestyles and trades were being destroyed by Japan’s ongoing modernization.\textsuperscript{633}

However, instead of being an “elegy to natural order of no return,” the documentary depicted how such traditional industries dissolved from within and thereby captured “subtle reversed relations between cause and result” compared to what is normally depicted in mainstream documentary film.\textsuperscript{634}

As stated above, the documentary revolves around the lives of a charcoal burner’s family. Many of the children had already left home to work and settle in more urban areas, but the eldest brother and one daughter, the protagonist of the film, remained at home and were destined to take over the failing family business. Because the family home has no electricity due to its location deep in the wilderness, the eldest brother, whose hobby is to take apart and reassemble machines, decides to buy an old

\textsuperscript{632} Ibid, p.111.
\textsuperscript{633} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{634} Ibid.
motorcycle in order to use its parts to make an electric dynamo for his family’s use. However, despite his efforts, the machine is only able to create enough electricity to light a small bulb. The father, who continues to busy himself by making increasingly unsellable charcoal, is unable to just do nothing so he buys an electric dynamo and adds to the family’s ever increasing debts.

After having the dynamo set up inside the family home, the first electrical appliance the family purchased is a television. The television does not affect the older members of the family; the father continues to make charcoal and the eldest brother continues to try to make his own electric dynamo, but the younger children quickly lose interest in the games that they created on their own. More significantly, the daughter, who was supposed to stay and keep the failing charcoal business alive, left home to work at a dressmaking shop in Morioka, the capital of Iwate prefecture. The film strongly hints that it was the presence of the television that made the daughter leave home because it presented to her a stronger sense of “reality” than the life she lived. In the next section, I will show how the homogenization of the Japanese archipelago, although it presents itself as appealing, is hostile to those who do not fit a particular

635 Ibid, pp.111-12.
636 Ibid, p.112.
637 Ibid.
638 Ibid.
mold, such as Nagayama and the coal burner’s daughter.

At a glance, one might think that Matsuda’s essays concerning the festival in Abashiri and the demise of a traditional family in Iwate prefecture are too different in both historical background and contemporary context to have any true significance with each other. However, Matsuda writes that both of these scenes, as well as others that the filmmaking group encountered as they travelled throughout thirty-three cities, had one “common factor which could be called nothing but [uniform] landscape.” Indeed, according to Matsuda, if one paid close attention to Abashiri with its empty festivals and the scenes of Tokyo being broadcasted into a home in Iwate, one could understand that all of Japan had become “standardized as a chain of big cities” and that once one became aware of this situation, one could not help but see “Tokyo” in even the most rural of areas. Thus, the apple farms of the Tsugaru Plain no longer reminded Matsuda, Adachi, and company of “a green forest, but as something just reminding us of our gray capital with its white leaves dusted by agricultural chemicals” and Terayama’s “desolate sky” of the north was reduced to the “smog” of the capital. Therefore, because of the uniformity of landscape that Matsuda encountered, he writes that neither

---

640 Ibid., p.93.
in Abashiri nor in Itayanagi could he and his fellows find any trace of Nagayama Norio’s true “hometown;” instead, they only discovered miniature versions of Tokyo. This experience chilled Matsuda to the core, because it gave him concrete evidence of the homogenizing force of state power.

In order to explain this phenomenon Matsuda refers to the work of political scientist Kamishima Jirō 上島次郎 (1918-1998). Kamishima states that the “natural village” or “first village” was firmly placed on the five pillars of the Japanese “order consciousness” that consisted of “a view of religious life, economic life, social life, political life and outcasts.” These five pillars of “order consciousness” would become engrained within the lives of the villagers of the “first village” from birth, so it was natural that individuals would use these same pillars, as can be seen in Abashiri, when they established the “second village.”

Kamishima also states that the second village’s “sense of solidarity” with the

---

642 Ibid.
644 Ibid.
645 Kamishima Jirō as quoted in Matsuda, “Fukashi no mura no iriguchi de,” p.113.
646 Ibid.
first village is based on “past memory” and because the lifestyles of those in the second village have to be recreated instead of being lived naturally, they become “remarkably ideated.”

Thus, the unity of the second villagers is “integrated under a kind of romanticism” in which the “detached from reality [first village] is beautified, recalls strong attachment, and is vividly regenerated on the people’s sympathy because of its distantiation.”

By the late 1960s, Japanese attitudes toward the first village were changing. As Matsuda states, Tokyo has long acted as the preferred destination for migrant workers, but their travels to the capital were always in “centripetal tension to the homeland.”

By the end of the 1960s, the collective gaze of Japan’s population was drawn away from the “first village” and turned towards Tokyo or cities modeled after Tokyo. In part, the change of the collective gaze’s orientation can be blamed on provincial intellectuals who believed that Tokyo was “fertile” while their own provincial areas were “desolate.” However, as mentioned above in connection with the coal burner’s family in Iwate, television not only helped turn the collective populace’s gaze toward Tokyo but greatly accelerated the rate in which it was done so as well.

---

647 Ibid.
648 Ibid.
650 Ibid.
651 Ibid
Concerning the coal burner’s family in Iwate, Matsuda states that the television acted as a “window” that “connected to the outside world to this household isolated in the mountains” and, because big cities were the focus of the programs instead of villages, the daughter was drawn away from her life deep in the mountains to something that she thought was more authentic. 652 Tokyo was more important to the daughter than her life in the mountains because of the “fresh originality” that she thought she would encounter there. 653 As a result, the second village/big city came to be seen as authentic while the first village came to be seen as a copy. In simple terms, this means that the first village was undermined by the big city and it was quickly becoming a miniaturized copy of the big city. As a result, Japan’s landscape increasingly became homogenized until there was little difference between Tokyo and the provinces. 654

Nagayama Norio’s family was too poor to own a television. However, Matsuda speculates that the continuing modernization process during the 1950s and 1960s affected the poor boy as well. Rather poetically Matsuda writes that “Nagayama Norio and his brothers spent their childhood being ignored like stones by the trains passing by them.” These trains hinted that there was another “hometown” for Nagayama, and they

652 Ibid, p.112.
653 Ibid.
helped inspire his life of vagrancy.\textsuperscript{655}

3. 3: High Economic Growth and the Homogenous Landscape

Although it is still a relevant theory today, \textit{fūkeiron} is a concept that is firmly tied to the economic and political fabric of late 1960s and early 1970s Japan. As Adachi Masao states in an interview with the historian Harry Harootunian, Japan was entering a time in which politicians were “casting off the postwar” and “policies for high economic growth were reaching a peak.”\textsuperscript{656} That landscape would be connected to economic growth is nothing unusual. Yuriko Furuhata, drawing on the work of Denis Cosgrove, states that landscape is “inseparable from the economic and social expansions of the urban property owners” and thus landscape becomes “a way of seeing the external world” and a method for the “practical appropriation of space.”\textsuperscript{657} In the context of late 1960s Japan, the uniformity of both rural and urban landscape was the physical evidence of the “concentric migrations of labour and correlative circulation of standardized commodities” throughout the Japanese archipelago that was created by the conservative Japanese government.\textsuperscript{658} As a result of this increasingly homogeneous

\textsuperscript{655} Ibid, p.117.
\textsuperscript{656} Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle;” p.73.
\textsuperscript{657} Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality;” p.353.
\textsuperscript{658} Ibid, pp.353, 355.
landscape, individuals like Nagayama, i.e. “unskilled manual labourers,” were created and destined to roam a Japan that had become one “massive city.”

Although I have not cast Tokyo with its ever-spreading homogeneous landscape in a positive light, it must be remembered that Tokyo drew individuals who believed that the capital offered “something original” and something energetic that they could not find in their hometowns. As Matsuda writes, the journey to the capital represented a trek to the “original world” that they had come to know through Japanese media outlets. Thus, these individuals, whose numbers were primarily made up of lumpenproletariat, moved in an opposite direction “of the folklorists who leave for today’s remote areas and solitary islands pursuing our past archetypes.”

However, once they arrived in Tokyo, they only found the same landscape that existed within their hometowns. Also, to their disappointment, the “original enthusiasm” that they had hoped to find in the capital’s expressions of culture was nowhere to be found. During a return trip to Tokyo after spending time in Hokkaido and northeastern Honshu, the filmmaking group witnessed a festival in Shinjuku and the parade was the same as one on television. Indeed, Matsuda states that the festival was nothing more

---

661 Ibid.
than the “shade of the media which it had created itself.”\textsuperscript{663} The scene, which was just as depressing as the daimyo march that the filmmaking group had witnessed in Abashiri was a “funeral procession of scenery” that bespoke of the death of originality and the omnipresence of homogeneity.\textsuperscript{664}

Of course, Nagayama and his fellows wanted to discover something more than just homogeneous landscape. According to Matsuda, these individuals were searching for a “third village” between the first village, the one that used to be original but has become a reflection of the second village, and the second village, which is a copy of the first village and has become culturally sterile.\textsuperscript{665} Supposedly existing “at the end of the centripetal flow to the second village from the first village, the third village is in fact an “invisible village” because it exists as a “daydream” without true substance.\textsuperscript{666} Condemned to become “eternal rebels,” these lumpenproletariat were completely locked in a never-ending struggle to find the third village; no matter where they traveled to in Japan, they were confronted by the same landscape.\textsuperscript{667} However, they continued their search for “reality;” returning to the “first village” was not possible because they knew

\textsuperscript{663} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{664} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{665} Ibid, p.115.
\textsuperscript{666} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{667} Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.15.
that it is nothing more than a “fictional” copy of Tokyo.\textsuperscript{668} Thus, in some ways, the vagrant lifestyle lived by Nagayama was a “choice” not to give in to Japan’s increasingly homogeneous landscape and to continue a quest to find something real within the Japanese archipelago.\textsuperscript{669}

Although it is difficult to think of Nagayama Norio as a victim since he took the lives of four individuals, Matsuda and Adachi write convincingly that Nagayama, and those who shared his class, were indeed victims of those behind Japan’s ever-expanding homogeneous landscape. Individuals like Nagayama were created by the “homogenization of scenery” and they “are the truth” of how the Japanese state oppressed the poorest of its citizens.\textsuperscript{670} This homogeneous landscape, which “involved the overflowing will of the government and the power of the time,” did not just harm individuals in lowly positions like Nagayama Norio; it “incorporated all the people who lived in these transformed places.” The filmmakers’ argument that by “shooting at the landscape” Nagayama had tried to generate a “collision of natural things and artificial things” to separate the real from the copy thus has greater applicability to the case of similarly disenfranchised individuals, including Resident Koreans, as we will see.\textsuperscript{671}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{668} Matsuda, “Naraku e no tabi no tojō de,” p.88.
\textsuperscript{669} Matsuda, “Fukashi no mura no iriguchi de,” p.116.
\textsuperscript{670} Frantz Fanon as quoted in Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.21.
\textsuperscript{671} Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.21
For his actions, Nagayama came under the heated scrutiny of some of Japan’s most prominent intelligentsia, including the aforementioned Terayama Shūji who criticized the young man’s lack of “power of thought,” “power of imagination,” and “power of theatrical imagination.” Matsuda felt that Terayama and those who shared similar thoughts were being overly pedantic and seemed to ignore the fact that the young man was one of the nameless masses in the lowest echelon of society, whose only choice to strike back at an increasingly homogeneous Japanese society was through “geographical vagrancy” and “power of action.” Matsuda, Adachi, and the other members of the filmmaking collective, after experiencing the “feeling of suffocation” caused by the “beauty that was only like that of a postcard,” decided to film “the arbitrary power that appeared in the landscape,” that had “alienated and threatened” Nagayama’s being to the point that he shot the very landscape itself.

One problem that emerged in the filming process was the choice of camera techniques. Like many of the other avant-garde film directors from this time period, Adachi gave his cameramen relatively free reign with how they wanted to make the movie. However, he did ask them “neither to film beautiful things beautifully nor to try to film dirty things intentionally,” since he wanted to simply capture the homogeneous

---

674 Adachi and Hirasawa, Eiga kakumei, pp.289-90; Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle,” p.73
landscape of the Japanese archipelago which was like a "beautiful postcard." Simply filming the Japanese landscape proved to be difficult for the two cameramen because they were too skilled at their professional craft. For example, Yamazaki created a vivid scene of the spot at Yasaka shrine in Kyoto where Nagayama had shot and killed a policeman who was working the night patrol. Thinking that the camerawork was too good, Adachi asked Yamazaki and his assistant “to take everything apart and make it jerky because it was too smooth and beautiful.”

The collective hoped that they could create a film that would show how the feeling of suffocation caused by this identical landscape could lead Nagayama Norio, a poor man with no history of violent crime, to steal a gun and kill four people. By establishing the “common denominator” of Japan’s homogenized landscape that had spread “from center to periphery and country to capital,” the collective’s film asked its audience to “approach every urban corner, literally as if it were a crime scene, or at least a place of lurking danger.”

3.4: Discovering State Power Within Homogeneous Landscape

675 Ibid, p.293.
676 Ibid.
678 Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.258
As a film that contained nothing more than ordinary scenery, Matsuda states that the purpose behind filming *A.K.A. Serial Killer* could be considered the opposite of why the French photographer Eugène Atget (1857-1927) had taken photos of the “empty streets of Paris.”\(^680\) As Walter Benjamin writes, Atget photographed “scenery just like a crime scene” due to the fact that “there was not a human form in the crime scene.” By taking these photos, Atget helped create “evidence of the historical process.”\(^681\) However, unlike Atget, Adachi, Matsuda, and the rest of the collective filmed the “crime scene as scenery.” Matsuda’s beliefs behind this statement are difficult to extricate because his writing is overly complex, but, in simple terms, he seems to be stating that the group filmed everything as simple landscape because the fabric of the whole was a much more powerful force than simply the area where a particular action had occurred. Certain spots, because of their history, should not be considered the only spaces that contain “lurking danger,” but everywhere on a given landscape, both rural and urban, should be approached with great caution.\(^682\)

As I stated earlier, *fūkeiron*, or the theory of landscape, is deeply linked to the changes in the politics and society during the transition period from late 1960s to early

---

\(^680\) Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.16.
\(^681\) Walter Benjamin as quoted in Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.16.
1970s Japan. Indeed, Matsuda states that it would not have been possible for the theory of landscape to develop during the 1960s alone.\textsuperscript{683} Yuriko Furuhata, in her attempt to answer why the theory of landscape was able to develop in Japan during the transition from the 1960s to the 1970s, writes that this period of Japanese history was different than the 1950s and early 1960s because traditional “macropolitical representations of large-scale demonstrations” such as “the masses confronting the state apparatus embodied in the form of riot police” were no longer a proper way to present the political turmoil of the time.\textsuperscript{684} Furuhata writes that the decline of this image was threefold: the centrality of the classic mode of resistance, the masses versus the state was rapidly declining; leftist activists, intelligentsia, and artists were becoming disillusioned with the revolutionary subject; and Japan’s economy was undergoing a dramatic shift from industry to post industry.\textsuperscript{685} In general, these changes simply represent the shift from the highly politicized 1960s to the highly capitalist/consumerist 1970s during which resistance and subversive groups were defanged by the almighty yen.\textsuperscript{686}

However, despite the rise of these three issues, the methods in which documentary films were created in Japan were slow to change. For the most part, leftist

\textsuperscript{683} Matsuda, “Yūtopia no hango,” p.134.
\textsuperscript{685} Ibid, pp.202-03.
\textsuperscript{686} Ibid, p.225.
documentary filmmaking in Japan during the late 1960s and the early 1970s reflected many of the ideals visualized in the Argentinian directors Fernando Solanas’ (1936- ) and Octavio Getino’s (1935-2012) film *La hora de los hornos* (The Hour of the Furnaces, 1968). “With a rapid montage of fashion models, Batman, cowboys and bleeding Vietnamese children” accompanied by a soundtrack consisting of the rapid blasts of a machine gun, Furuhata states that this long documentary film perfectly encapsulated “the political avant-garde notion of ‘film as a weapon.’” Embracing Solanas’ and Getino’s beliefs that “the camera is the inexhaustible expropriator of image-weapons” and that “the projector” was “a gun that can shoot 24 frames per second,” Japanese, as well as other countries’, leftist filmmakers who believed it was of the utmost necessity to immediately cover “events from a left perspective” created a great number of action-oriented documentary films.

During this time period, Japanese documentary filmmakers primarily focused on creating images that focused on “eventfulness and human action” such as “police brutality, picketing workers, [and] marching students.” Also, it is important to note that the filmmakers were often part of the action itself. For example, the renowned

---

687 Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.345.
documentary director Ogawa Shinsuke 小川紳介 (1935-1992), when he was filming a student struggle at Meiji University, “felt a strong urge to do something about the reality presented there from my own [professional] position” and put his camera aside to jump into the foray in order to protect masked students from being unmasked and brutalized by riot policemen. Ogawa, supposedly, was fighting a feeling of indifference towards politics before this event took place. However, because he was willing to receive bodily harm in order to protect the student protestors, Matsuda Masao writes that the action-filled documentary “turned into a masterpiece in front of our eyes.”

Of course, Ogawa, as well as other directors such as his longtime filmmaking partner Tsuchimoto Noriaki 土本典昭 (1928-2008), had other reasons to get directly involved in the student struggle than simply creating masterpieces of documentary filmmaking. As Abé Markus Nornes notes, Ogawa’s and Tsuchimoto’s direct actions were implemented in order to spit in the face of “the rhetoric of objective reportage used by the television news documentary to veil its alliance with the government and big business.” Thus, as a byproduct, the actions presented in these films energized the student movement and these directors quickly became “cultural

---

690 Ogawa Shinsuke as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.348.
heroes of the left.”

However, despite the leftist filmmakers’ efforts to help fuel change in Japan, the Japanese populace came to feel as if it was “bound in all-powerful systems that can seldom be affected from within.” The collective wanted to steer their audience’s focus away from the “human figure” and turn it towards mundane landscapes because that was where they felt power manifests itself. Adachi agrees that the power of the Japanese state can be seen in human figures such as members of the military or the police, but they were only a small “piece of the system” whereas landscape represented the omnipresence of state power. Adler, drawing on the work of the photographer and critic Yamagishi Shōji 山岸章二 (1930-1979) states that everything in Japan is controlled by a “system” or a “mechanism.”

In order to explain how the source of power had changed from the human figure to the system of mechanism, the literary critic Katō Shūichi 加藤周一 (1919-2008), states that while “Napoleon, seated on his horse viewing the burning of Moscow, made a very picturesque figure,” the former American Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, “guiding the Vietnam war from an office in the Pentagon” was not

---

693 Ibid.
695 Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle,” p.86.
696 Ibid.
697 Yamagishi Shōji as quoted in Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.233
of the same cloth. This is because “the focus of the Vietnam War did not lie in the character of the man, McNamara; it lay in the non-human mechanism that he represented.” This “mechanism” was what kept the war going, but, because it did not possess a physical form like Napoleon, it could not “be depicted in painting, nor can it be shown in photographs.”

Although Adachi, Matsuda, and the rest of the collective would agree that power was no longer represented within the human figure, they might have disagreed with Katō that power during the late 1960s and early 1970s was not photographable. While he was viewing a collection of photos taken by the photographer Kurihara Tatsuo 栗原達男 (1937-), Matsuda was primarily attracted to a “plain picture with a common structure” that contained the image of an “empty space” that separates “a huge manhole cover… and the lines of warriors (student protestors) passing far away” Matsuda, after paying particularly close attention to “the weird scenery where all the warriors are gone and only the manhole cover… exists,” felt an “unexpected inclination to scenery” within himself that he had not noticed before.

Matsuda was intrigued by the scenery in the photo because, although the

---

698 Katō Shūichi as quoted in Yamagishi Shōji as quoted in Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.233
699 Ibid.
701 Ibid.
student protestors were almost out of the frame and although there was no sign of
opposition from a human figure, he felt that state power still radiated in it. 702 Again,
this desire to carefully contemplate was drawn from a rather new “mode of thinking
about resistance” in which “the revolutionary acts of human agents” were losing support
in favor of individuals “investigating the immanent relations of power that are found
within a historically specific social formation.” 703 Matsuda believed that leftists must
“stare at ordinary, casual, touching, ubiquitous, and filthy ‘landscapes existing
everywhere’” like the lumpenproletariat were supposedly doing because “[l]andscape is
the casual window which underlies to the abyss of the end of a century.” 704 In other
words, not only did the homogeneous landscape show individuals how Japan was being
completely dominated by the state, but it also showed how leftists needed to alter their
tactics in order to effectively confront the Japanese State and keep the idea of “eternal
revolution” alive. 705

The historian Harry Harootunian, after viewing A.K.A Serial Killer, states in
his interview with Adachi that landscape “determines who we are.” 706 Thereby,

Matsuda believed that the average Japanese citizen needed to create a new map of the

---

705 Ibid.
706 Ibid, p.86.
archipelago to truly understand how the state’s power runs through it. Reflecting on how cartographers create different images of the world depending on what country and continent they are from, Matsuda asks his readers to place two maps beside each other on a wall and compare them to each other.\textsuperscript{707} When he did so himself, Matsuda experienced a wave of nausea because certain countries and continents were placed in different locations from what he was accustomed to. However, despite his feeling of sickness, the placement of Africa and South America on one map, which resembled “Siamese twins being forcefully separated” made Matsuda feel like he was witnessing “the birth of ‘the third world.”’\textsuperscript{708} This “third world” of Matsuda’s does not pertain to economic status or development, but is “another world as the existence” that depends on how the individuals who create a map position themselves and others. They “crystallized” their positions as the “people who made the map,” i.e. those in power, and “crystallized” those “who were made by the map,” i.e. those who are controlled.\textsuperscript{709} Because this crystallization was controlled only by those who wielded some measure of power, Matsuda writes that he “could not help but think that we can find another Japan for us, which is expressible as a concrete and materialistic map” created by those who

\textsuperscript{708} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{709} Ibid, p.92.
held no power, like the lumpenproletariat Nagayama Norio.\textsuperscript{710}

3.5. Discovering Actuality

Although the directors of these were attempting to simply inspire their audiences to spring to action and fight the increasingly conservative Japanese government, Matsuda, Adachi and the other members of the filmmaking collective were concerned with the way action-filled sequences were presented to Japanese audiences. Primarily, the collective wanted the audience to be aware that documentary films, like narrative films, create “meaning through internal sequenciation.”\textsuperscript{711} This simply means that documentary films are shot and edited in a manner that the director thinks will get his or her point across in the most effective manner.\textsuperscript{712} \textit{A.K.A Serial Killer}, besides being a film that attempted to show the Japanese audience the power that existed under the seemingly harmless camouflage of homogeneous landscapes, was also a critique of mediated images from both the right and left.

Although the filming of landscapes instead of “revolutionary events” might seem like a waste of film, the collective’s decision to do so can be read as a critique of the “mediatized ‘actuality’” that was being shown in theaters and on television. Indeed,

\textsuperscript{710} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{711} Philip Rosen as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.357.
\textsuperscript{712} Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.357.
as Furuhata points out, two of the most effective methods in which to protest “mediatized ‘actuality’” was to either film the same material “with difference” or to completely avoid filming “spectacular events themselves.” Therefore, in A.K.A Serial Killer and the handful of other films that were influenced by the theory of landscape, “no indictment of cultural imperialism and neocolonial capitalism is explicitly articulated” and no “epoch-making events” are included. This means that the ubiquitous images of protesting students and workers that were so common in both leftist documentary films and on the news were completely absent from the collective’s work. Concerning the collective’s refusal to film “epoch-making events,” Furuhata states that Matsuda, Adachi, and their fellows desired to disrupt “the revolutionary temporality that structures political documentary films of the 1960s.” Normally, leftist directors would focus their cameras on “dramatic moments of rupture and change” because these events both seemed to inspire their viewers and because they were viewed as hopeful shifts in power. However, by shifting the focus of their film to the prosaic landscape of the Japanese archipelago, the collective effectively challenged the importance of such events in the Japan of the late 1960s and, especially, the early 1970s

714 Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.349.
716 Ibid, p.349.
when old forms of political resistance—the physical masses versus the physical state as represented by the riot police—as well as a firm belief in the revolutionary subject were declining. The collective’s rejection of “dramatic moments of rupture and change” can clearly be “seen” in *A.K.A Serial Killer* in the fact that the group avoided dramatizing Nagayama Norio’s crime, in contrast with the dominant trend in leftist documentary films that put great emphasis on such things as dates and locations.

Another method that the collective used to challenge ordinary leftist documentary films and the documentaries produced by news companies was to implement an early and outdated type of filmmaking: the actuality film. Drawing on the work of Tom Gunning, Furuhata notes that the actuality films lacked the “dramatic articulation of a story” because they “contain neither elaborate narratives nor dramatic events.” According to Furuhata, the collective’s implementation of this older form of filmmaking, which was without narrative, was done in order to keep the audience members from being drawn completely into the film. Drawing on Noël Burch, Furuhata writes that the transition from the “‘primitive mode of representation’ of early cinema to the ‘institutional mode of representation’ of mainstream narrative cinema”

---

719 Furuhata, “Refiguring Actuality,” p.221.
occurred when the audience members, who were firmly positioned outside of the film during the early days of cinema, became more and more a part of a film as filming techniques and theories advanced.\textsuperscript{722} Indeed, the audience members became “the point of reference” for films and thereby became too involved with filmic works to truly be critical of their contents.\textsuperscript{723} Thus, the landscape film \textit{A.K.A Serial Killer} possesses a power to make individuals pay attention to its banal content because it does not contain narrative or formal devices such as “the axial match, the eyeline match, the shot/reverse shot, and narrative closure” which would normally draw an individual deep into a film’s world.\textsuperscript{724}

With the goal of keeping the audience from fully being pulled into a film’s world, the filmmaking collective was able to create a work that separated landscape completely from narrative and brought it to the fore so that the audience’s attention was completely drawn to it. This, as I have already stated, was different from most narrative films in which “exterior space [landscape] frames the action and is subordinate to it.”\textsuperscript{725} Although the audience might not develop an “obsessive propensity towards landscape” like Matsuda, Adachi, and the other members of the filmmaking collective had during

\textsuperscript{722} Furuhata, “Refiguring Actuality,” p.207.
\textsuperscript{723} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{724} Ibid, pp.207, 224.
\textsuperscript{725} Martin Lefebvre as quoted in Standish, \textit{Politics, Porn and Protest}, p.109.
their travels following the path of Nagayama Norio, hopefully, by watching a strange “landscape film” like *A.K.A Serial Killer*, they would develop an interest in the landscape itself and actually think of the reason why the landscape was being presented in such a way instead of having the answer spoon-fed to them.  

One of the main purposes for the collective’s conceptualization of the theory of landscape was to make city dwellers, and those whose rural homes had been urbanized, become aware of how Japan’s homogenized landscape represented the oppressiveness of the Japanese state. However, along with showing the oppression of homogenized landscapes, Matsuda, Adachi, and company also wanted to show how “protective” the Japanese state was of its population. Thus, as Adler writes, the Japanese state used equal parts oppression and protection to rear and create “obedient citizens” that would continue to homogenize the Japanese landscape. Because their society was based on a protective oppression, the Japanese in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the novelist and translator Shibusawa Tatsuhiko 蓼澤龍彦 (1928-1987) stipulates, “live[d] right in the midst of phantom of an ominous and tricky pseudo-utopia created by techno-society and regulated society.”

---

728 Ibid.
According to Shibusawa, the Japanese state created these “pseudo-utopias” to make the Japanese people forget the “agonies and contradictions of history” and, eventually, the “adhesive capacity of the world melting out of shape like Dali’s paintings becomes too strong and young people are immobilized like insects captured by the sundew.” 730 Thereby, the Japanese state effectively imprisoned its populace in a state of historical amnesia and the people were destined to remain in what Régis Debray refers to as a “purgatory that is comfortable to live in.” 731 Debray continues by stating that even a person who is against the oppressive state, if he or she “lives in a city unconsciously becomes bourgeois compared to guerrilla warriors” because the former “cannot understand what physical travails required to eat, sleep, and move” are involved. 732 Thus, the city dweller “lives [only] as a consumer” whose life becomes “underdeveloped and bourgeois” as he or she continues to support the power that homogenizes Japan. 733

However, despite the power the Japanese state uses to control its citizens and despite the comfort of the pseudo-utopia that is offered as well, many knew that Tokyo and its homogenizing power was the “source of our suffocation.” Yet, because of the

730 Ibid.
732 Ibid. Matsuda’s emphasis.
733 Ibid.
simple difficulty in living, homogeneous landscape “keeps spreading everyday while people walk through the city in order to survive.” Matsuda, through Debray, urges the Japanese to cease living their lives under the cumbersome power of homogenized landscapes and rise up against it, because the urban landscape, despite its power to dominate, is the “life-space of the Masses” where oppression must be fought.

As Matsuda eloquently puts it, The Japanese no longer had “‘mountains’ (first villages) to return to anymore” because they were “living in a transition period where the whole Japanese islands were transfiguring into a massive city.” However, instead of giving into the power that pulverized their “mountains” into dust, the Japanese people, through the example of the lumpenproletariat like Nagayama Norio, had to build their own “mountain” within the “purgatory that is comfortable to live in” in order to fight it, occupy it, and dismantle it. Matsuda believes that it would be proper for Tokyo and the rest of urban and rural Japan to meet this fate because of its past evils and that the revolutionaries should recreate Japan into a “purgatory in its true meaning as a purifier of soul.”

734 Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.351.
737 Ibid.
3.6. Landscape in *The Man Who Left His Will on Film*

Although the theory of landscape is an effective medium for the critique of film, landscape films that were created in the same vein as *A.K.A. Serial Killer* would remain a rare item. However, the theory would gain a powerful supporter when the prominent independent film director Ōshima Nagisa created his film *Tōkyō sensō sengo hiwa: eiga de isho o nokoshite shinda otoko no monogatari* (東京战争戦後秘話映画で遺書を残して死んだ男の物語 The Secret Story of the Post-Tokyo War: The Man Who Left His Will on Film, 1970). With a screenplay written by Hara Masataka 原正孝 (1950-) and Sasaki Mamoru, two major supporters of the theory of landscape, *Will on Film* differs from *A.K.A Serial Killer* in the fact that it possesses a narrative and a plot, albeit a sometimes infuriatingly confusing one. Centering around the thinly mustached protagonist Motoki 元木, *Will on Film* depicts the young man’s quest to find both the creator of a mysterious filmic will and the locations where the film was shot.

The topics of landscape and the filming of landscape greet the viewer from the very first scene of the film. This scene, at first, depicts the eye-level perspective of the creator of the filmic will as he films a stretch of highway. He is soon accosted by an

---

738 Other landscape films include Hara Masato (Masataka)’s 原将人 (1950-) *Hatsukuni shirasumera mikoto* (初国知所之天皇 The First Emperor, 1973) and Takamine Gō’s 高嶺剛 (1948-) *Okinawan doriimu shō* (オキナワン・ドリーム・ショー Okinawan Dream Show, 1974). Furuhata, “Refiguring Actuality,” p.200.

739 Hereafter I will refer to the movie as *Will on Film*. 
angry Motoki, whose rage is seemingly set aflame by the fact that the filmmaker is filming only landscape where there are no human figures. This situation angers Motoki because the leftist filmmaking group he belongs to has “something more important to film” than mundane landscape which could be filmed at any time. Thus, in this early scene, one can already see the confusion caused by filming something as simple as landscape, when one’s filmic ideals are formed by the necessity of filming action-oriented sequences.

After being confronted by the protagonist, the filmmaker breaks into a run. Motoki pursues him, but, because of the filmmaker’s quickness and because of heavy traffic, loses him and does not spot him again until the man leaps to his death from the roof of a building. After a policeman picks up the camera, which will seemingly be used as evidence, Motoki runs and snatches it away. Motoki then flees from the scene, but is pursued by the police into a dark tunnel where, although it is not depicted in the actual film, Motoki is supposedly assaulted by the police and beaten unconscious.

When Motoki revives, he finds himself within the confines of his leftist filmmaking group’s headquarters. The group, which had been waiting for him to wake up, inquires about what happened to him after he had become separated from them, the fate of the Bolex camera he had possessed, and what was on the Bolex’s film. Motoki,
as well, is concerned about the camera, which was supposedly lost when one of the
group’s members, Endo, sprained his ankle, and wants to start a campaign in order to
get the camera back, makes the mistake of stating that “We’ve got to get my camera.”
This simple statement sets off a vitriolic member named Yazawa who turns Motoki’s
desire to get back the camera and film into a critique of the young man’s political
soundness.

After stating “You’ve still got the idea of personal property” to Motoki, Yazawa
continues sinking his barbs into Motoki by questioning his true purpose for running
after the camera: “Did Motoki go after the cops because he wanted to resist oppression
or was he trying to protect his property?” At this point, other members of the group
jump into the discussion supporting either Yazawa or Motoki. The argument at this point
devolves into nothing more than name-calling with Yazawa making such statements as
“materialistic bourgeois consciousness” and “ownership is betrayal of the proletariat.”

Endo, who sympathizes with Motoki, challenges Yazawa and demands to know
what he would have done if he had found himself in Motoki’s position. Yazawa,
however, is quick to deflect the question and the name calling continues with Yazawa
accusing Endo of being a “mindless activist” while Endo calls Yazawa a “dogmatist.”

This scene is similar to one that can be found in Ōshima’s earlier film Nihon no yoru to
*kiri* (日本の夜と霧 Night and Fog in Japan, 1960) in which the dogmatic Nakayama spews rhetoric while the unity of his comrades is in shambles. In Motoki’s case, the group seems to forget that he wanted to organize a protest in order to retrieve the camera and decide to ponder on the best “strategy” to get back the film instead. Thus, infighting over rhetoric and planning quickly take the place of direct action and little is actually accomplished by the group.

After deciding that they need to work out a strategy to get the film and camera back, most of the group’s members depart while leaving a member named Yasuko behind to look after the injured Motoki. Soon after the group departs, Motoki again becomes restless and leaves the compound in order to retrieve the camera and its film. Accompanied by Yasuko, Motoki inquires about what activities occurred on the day that he lost the camera.

Yasuko reports that the camera and film were lost on April 28, the anniversary of when mainland Japan regained its sovereignty from the United States while Okinawa remained in America’s military grasp. On that day, the film collective met in front of Sendagaya station in order to film the protest that was taking place there. At this point in the film, the line between fiction and reality becomes blurred because the scenes depicted on the screen are from actual documentary footage. For the viewer who is
unfamiliar with the theory of landscape, the documentary segments depicted here are relatively stereotypical images of protests in 1960s Japan, but, for the viewer who is familiar with the theory, one can see much of what Matsuda’s and Adachi’s filmmaking collective critiqued about action-oriented documentary films. Indeed, as I stated earlier in this chapter, Japanese documentary makers who believed it was of the utmost necessity to immediately cover “events from a left perspective,” and created a great number of action-oriented documentary films that reflected Solanas’ and Getino’s ideal that the “camera is the inexhaustible expropriator of image-weapons.”740 Thus, these directors tended to focus on “dramatic moments of rupture and change” such as “police brutality, picketing workers, [and] marching students.”741

Yasuko’s narration of the events that took place on April 28th fits almost perfectly into these “dramatic moments of rupture and change”: “the shields of the riot police were lined up;” “the loud commands coming from the armored car echoed across the broad avenue;” “Then the riot police attacked without warning. They were out to get us no matter what. We used all the film we brought taking that scene.” To make this event even more dramatic, Yasuko goes on to say that a plainclothesman police officer accosted the group that led to Endo spraining his ankle and Motoki losing the Bolex

camera and its film.

However, despite the fact that the scene is filled with action sequences, this segment of the film also reveals some of the realities of protests that normally go unrevealed within a documentary film. For example, Yasuko, after stating that “the shields of the riot police were lined up” goes on to state that the beginnings of the protest failed to meet the collective’s expectations because many of the protestors “cooperated so nicely [with the police that] it drove us crazy” and that some of the police, because of their large number and because the crowd was behaving itself, had enough time “to play with the children” at a local park. These scenes would have normally been excised from a conventional leftist documentary film because they did not show “dramatic moments of rupture and change” involving “eventfulness and human action.” Instead, as the promulgators of the theory of landscape wanted to show, these scenes demonstrate how documentary films, like narrative films, are constructs and that the directors of documentary films are attempting to imbue the viewers with their beliefs. Thus, the use of mundane, boring scenes show that Solanas’ and Getino’s conceptualization of “film as a weapon” only shows images that the directors want to show and does not give the viewer a full understanding of any given

742 Ibid, p.348.
As Yasuko continues her account, the young man becomes agitated because her story does not match the events that Motoki experienced himself. Still convinced that Endo had died earlier, Motoki demands Yasuko to tell him what she was doing when he and Endo lost the camera. Yasuko explains that she was busy taking scenes of the Okinawa Day demonstrations. This answer enrages Motoki who, possibly acting as the mouthpiece for the film’s creators and the supporters of the theory of landscape, states “How long are you going to keep up this nonsense? Making film into a weapon.” Rather surprisingly, Yasuko agrees with Motoki that the collective truly “can’t participate in the struggle by making films” and that making films is only a “rationalization,” and avoids truly facing the obstacles that must be overcome for true revolution to occur. However, Motoki thinks that her words come too late because she had continued to film the scenes.

Besides offering a critique of action-oriented films, Ōshima later in the film also reflects on the power of imagination, an idea that played a major role in the theories of avant-garde intellectuals of the late 1960s. While editing some film footage, Motoki engages in a conversation with Yazawa and a female member of the collective named Akiko about the power of film. Yazawa states that “all mankind is being oppressed” and
that the only way for mankind “to break through that oppression is imagination.” It is for this reason that Motoki and the rest of the collective create films.

At this point, Motoki states that “the recovery struggle is more than just getting the film back:” it is a method in which he, and the rest of the collective, can fight back against the “oppression of creativity,” or resisting the authorities’ attempts to suppress creative media. Indeed, as can derived from Motoki and Yazawa’s rather artificial conversation and, as I mentioned above, Terayama Shūji’s frowning upon Nagayama Norio’s lack of “power of thought,” “power of imagination,” and “power of theatrical imagination,” artistic forms of resistance were, in many ways, preferred over direct action. However, as with the case of Nagayama, such methods were simply not available for the members of the lowest classes because they were too busy with mere survival. Thus, those who were concerned primarily with resisting the oppression of imagination were so wrapped in their own worlds that they became rather oblivious to the suffering of those at the bottom of society.

Documentary film also represents a way for Motoki to fully engage with history. Before joining the filmmaking collective, Motoki’s experience with protests was that of an ordinary protestor, an experience, possibly because it did not measure up to

the protests that he thought he was going to be part of, that had left him feeling empty since he thought the protests were doing nothing more than “moving side by side with history.” However, roughly around the same time Motoki saw a documentary made by an independent group concerning the protests that “illustrated history” and thus made the protests “seem familiar, personal.” Motoki’s statement is important here because it shows the impact the mediated image has on the viewer. Instead of coming to understand that protests include a lot of down time and disappointment, Motoki clings to an artificial representation of protesting that the media feeds viewers. For the promulgators of the theory of landscape, this is problematic because, while the heads of viewers are filled with the mediated images of protest, real power still lurks in the very landscape of Japan.

Motoki’s belief that his “street demonstrations were bankrupt” is supported by Yazawa who states that Motoki “joined our group in order to use film as a means to launch a new struggle.” Motoki confirms Yazawa’s statement and adds that “film creates a new relationship between reality and the creative self” in which they mutually criticize each other. These beliefs are sound, but, as I will show in the next section, the films created by Motoki and his collective have a number of problems which can be revealed through the theory of landscape.
To this point, I have primarily focused on how the authors of the theory of landscape would have likely critiqued the filmmaking methods of Motoki’s collective; now, I will turn my attention to the filmic will that is screened within Will on Film. In some ways, as Matsuda Masao argues, the entirety of Will on Film could be called a “landscape film,” but the filmic will acts as a “landscape film” in the purest sense of the term.744

In an odd scene that takes place after Motoki rapes Yasuko, the collective watches the filmic will of the deceased member that was supposedly returned after the filmmaker’s death was ruled a suicide. The film itself is very short, but, because it consists of nothing but still shots of a residential area, a busy street with shops and pedestrians, a stretch of road, a tobacco shop with a public phone, a postbox, and power lines, the film seems to drag on for an exceptional amount of time. Due to this mundane landscape, one of the collective’s members states that the filmic will “is an awfully slow testament” that the filmmaker left behind. While the group watches the film, they attempt to find some meaning behind the scenes. For example, as the collective watches the scene that contains a still shot of the busy shop-lined street with pedestrians milling about, one of the members notices a sake shop and simply states “Maybe he bought his

liquor there,” however, one of the other members is quick to note that the filmmaker “really wasn’t much of a drinker.”

This befuddled search for understanding continues with the speculation that the director was “after the shopgirl.” This empty speculation continues throughout most of the short landscape film with no higher understanding being reached by the collective. However, a hint about the true purpose of the film is made when one member asks another: “Isn’t that the bookshop you use a lot?” to which the other answers, “Maybe, I can’t really tell.” This is a simple statement, but it hints at what the creators of Will on Film wanted the filmic will to be: nothing more than semi-static scenes of “ordinary landscape.”745

I went into great detail here to show that, although the contents of landscape films can be boring almost to an infuriating level, their contents do make the audience think about the films that they were watching. If the creators of A.K.A Serial Killer had created a film that had built upon the theory of landscape instead of being a film that was the theory of landscape, some of the directors’ original intentions might have been lost because the audience would have been too involved with the film to notice the landscape which would have likely faded into the background.

745 Ibid. p.129.
After the film reaches its conclusion, Motoki and Yasuko are the only members of the film collective who have interest in the filmic will and the landscapes that are depicted in it. The two screen the film again and Motoki demands for Yasuko to tell him where the film was taken; it is nearly impossible for him to locate it because “it’s a place like a million others.” Motoki wants to know what possessed the director to create such a “filthy film” that included nothing more than images of things like “a street of broken down signs,” “bent and twisted guardrails,” and “a mailbox, weathered and peeling.” He contends that “it’s just junk and more junk” and was filmed only because of the director’s limited ability. However, Yasuko, countering Motoki’s escalating anger, simply states “No, there must be something better there. You just can’t see it.”

As with Adachi and Matsuda’s A.K.A Serial Killer, the filmic will is steeped in the “anti-theatrical” and the “anti-spectacular,” and thereby eschews the “dramatization of narrative events and emotion,” which are the common elements found in action-oriented documentary films.\(^{746}\) Instead, again in a similar fashion to Adachi and Matsuda’s film, the mundane landscapes filmed by the deceased filmmaker are similar to the images of actuality films which “contain neither elaborate narratives nor dramatic events.”\(^{747}\) The purpose of these mundane images was to keep the audience members

\(^{746}\) Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan*, p.131.

from being drawn completely into the film so that they would be forced to pay attention to the images on the screen rather than simply being wrapped up in “the revolutionary temporality that structures political documentary films of the 1960s.”

Although mundane, the scenes within the filmic will are somewhat picturesque and reflect the “beauty that was only like that of a postcard” that Adachi and Matsuda encountered when they followed Nagayama Norio’s circuitous path. At the same time, through their ordinariness and hushed nature, these scenes can also make the viewer uneasy, especially if he or she is like Motoaki and is aware that something is hidden beneath the façade of mundane landscape. Indeed, some of the members of the film collective become concerned while they view the filmic will. One member states that the filmic will contain “landscapes which can make you cry” while Akiko, in a more direct way states that the work “is beginning to scare me.” Like Adachi and Matsuda, the members of the collective can detect the “feeling of suffocation” caused by the “beauty that was only like that of a postcard.”

The reason why the landscape radiated a “feeling of suffocation” was because it represented the “arbitrary power of the state.” The filmmaking collective in Will of

748 Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.358.
749 Adachi and Hirasawa, Eiga kakumei, pp.289-90
751 Adachi and Hirasawa, Eiga kakumei, pp.289-90; Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle,” p.73
Film, like most left-leaning Japanese directors of the time, focused on action-oriented scenes and epoch-making human activity; Adachi and Matsuda, as well as the deceased filmmaker, were different because they were not interested in including scenes of action outside of the daily lives of individuals who happened to come within reach of the camera’s eye.  

The absence of action-oriented scenes in the filmic will recreated the “reverse Atget” plan that Adachi and Matsuda implemented in A.K.A Serial Killer in which they filmed “crime scene[s] as scenery.” As I mentioned above, filming “crime scene[s] as scenery” means that Adachi and Matsuda refused to simply film locations where “action” had occurred, such as the spots where Nagayama Norio murdered his four victims. Instead, they followed his path and carefully filmed the mundane landscapes that the young man had witnessed during his wandering throughout the Japanese archipelago. Thus, Adachi and Matsuda were more interested in depicting the arbitrary power of the state that could be found in mundane landscapes rather than focusing on spots where “action” occurred because they only made up a small fraction of the complete picture. The deceased director of the filmic will also focuses on mundane pieces of landscape, such a street lined with shops, a highway, a red postbox, and electrical wires to show that, while the riot police that the film

---

754 Ibid.
collective filmed are indeed a representation of state power, they are only one aspect of it. Capitalism as represented by the shops, transportation as represented by the highway, communication as represented by the postbox, and power as represented by the electrical lines are a quieter but more prevalent and powerful form of state authority.755

Similar to Adachi and Matsuda, the deceased filmmaker also shows how the homogenization of Japan has reached residential areas. In Will on Film, there are two scenes in which the viewer receives a long view of the “snug scenery of an ordinary residential area”756. The first occurs in the filmic will and the second occurs when Motoki visits his family home. The creators of the film are strongly hinting that these views from the window take place from the same spot. However, after viewing the film several times, one realizes that scenes are actually different from each other, yet another sign of how the homogeneity of the Japanese archipelago has spread into Japanese rural and urban residential areas. For Matsuda, who wrote in an earlier article that “Nagayama Norio also saw the scenery which is everywhere, like the ones seen from my and your windows,” noted that scenery that can be seen from the windows in the “films” is similar to the one that could be viewed from Nagayama’s window.757 Thus, through these “films” Matsuda believes that the Japanese audience can witness the

757 Ibid, p.133.
homogenization of Japan.\footnote{Ibid.}

As I stated earlier, the collective member Akiko became scared as she watched the deceased director’s film. I interpret her fright as a sign that she sensed there was something more to the landscapes than what was on the screen. These sentiments were shared by Matsuda, who was made to feel uneasy by some of the simplest presentations of landscape in the film. These scenes of landscape appeared when Motoki “simply started to shoot sceneries all around himself without looking through the finder.”\footnote{Ibid.} Although these landscapes were filmed rather haphazardly, they “were [the] scary ones which swallowed up the dead bodies of youth both in illusion and reality” while they continued to spread their homogeneity throughout Japan.\footnote{Ibid., p.129.}

As with \textit{A.K.A Serial Killer}, the supposed purpose of the director of the filmic will was to look beyond “macropolitical representations” of power and to find the “adhesives” that kept the juggernaut of the Japanese state running.\footnote{Furuhata, “Refiguring Actuality,” pp.195-96.} Similar to Motoki when he physically engaged with demonstrations, many Japanese “bound in all-powerful systems that can seldom be affected from within,” felt as if Japanese society was impossible to change.\footnote{Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.232.} For Adachi and Matsuda and the deceased
filmmaker, the reason why these demonstrators felt like they were unable to defeat these “all-powerful systems” was due to the fact that they were attacking them at the wrong spots: attacking riot police instead of critiquing the “ordinary, casual, touching, ubiquitous, and filthy ‘landscapes existing everywhere’” that held the true power of the state.\(^763\) This call to change focus from the “human figure” of state power to ordinary landscape was a method that the directors used to try to further the “eternal revolution” which they thought was in danger of petering out.\(^764\)

Interestingly, although these landscapes were ordinary and supposedly present throughout the Japanese archipelago, the assistant directors of *Will on Film* actually had difficulty finding such landscape when they went location hunting.\(^765\) Matsuda originally found the assistant directors’ situation to be humorous, but it hinted at something more sinister. In this respect, the assistant directors’ difficulty in finding ordinary landscapes resembles the same difficulty the photographer Nakahira Takuma experienced when he attempted to “physically intrude in[to] the landscape.”\(^766\) Nakahira had been able to see the landscape when he was “just watching [it] from afar,” but it disappeared when he was inside of it.\(^767\) After Motoki watches the filmic will the

^{764}\) Ibid., p.148.  
^{765}\) Ibid., pp.130-31.  
^{766}\) Nakahira Takuma as quoted in Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.260-61.  
^{767}\) Ibid.
first time, he becomes obsessed with locating landscapes that appeared in the film.

However, due to the fact that the landscapes are so ordinary, he has a very difficult time locating them and, at first, is only able to find landscapes that are similar to the ones that were displayed in the filmic will.

When Motoki and Yasuko search for the landscapes again after viewing the filmic will for a second time, the landscapes themselves seem to form an avatar in the shape of man. Although Motoki runs after the man at full speed, he is unable to get a clear view of the “man.” Thus, the man is similar to the landscape encountered by Nakahira because it is visible at a distance but invisible close up. As he grows frustrated in his pursuit of the “man,” something, unlike the feeling of “suffocation” that Adachi and Matsuda experienced, actually strikes back and harms Yasuko several times. When Motoki asks Yasuko who attacked her, she points and Motoki only sees the same “man” running away. Although an individual can only see the landscape at a distance, the landscape itself can harm individuals who oppose it.

Mundane landscape is not openly malicious and it can offer its denizens a number of comforts. However, as Matsuda writes, this mundane landscape, “which ought to exist everywhere but nowhere, but then exist everywhere,” questions the
subjectivity of the individuals within it.\textsuperscript{768} If it goes unopposed, the “reality of landscape” simply “swallows up” the “subjectivity of each individual” and thereby the human population becomes the “effects” of landscape.\textsuperscript{769} According to Matsuda, the best defense against this landscape is “whether we can be aware of our being-in-itself stared at by the thing (あいつ, the “man” in the landscape) existing in landscape.”\textsuperscript{770} Thus, A.K.A Serial Killer and The Man Who Left His Will on Film are warning signals for individuals to become “sensitive enough to notice that you are seen by the landscape spread out over the window.”\textsuperscript{771}

The filmic will within Will on Film and A.K.A Serial Killer are examples of how some leftist documentary filmmakers were moving from footage “anchored in the revolutionary acts of the human agents – to a de-centralized analytic mode of investigating the immanent relations of power that are found within a historically specific social formation.”\textsuperscript{772} When one considers the early documentary films by Ōshima that concerned the lives of Resident Koreans in Japan and destitute Koreans in South Korea, one can see a huge shift from the physical struggles of these individuals and their bodily wounds caused by war and the Japanese and South Korean

\textsuperscript{768} Matsuda, “Yūtopia no hango,” pp.131-32.
\textsuperscript{769} Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle,” p.73, 86.
\textsuperscript{770} Matsuda, “Yūtopia no hango,” p.137.
\textsuperscript{771} Ibid.
governments to the “‘diagram’ of the microphysics of power’” within the “shaking, melting and warped capital” of Tokyo.\textsuperscript{773} For Matsuda, this shift represented Ōshima’s “transposition from jōkyōron (情case論, theory of situation) to fūkeiron (風景論, theory of scenery) which also mirrored the same shift from 1960s to 1970s Japan.”\textsuperscript{774} Let’s now take a close look at Ōshima’s documentary films through the lens of fūkeiron.

\textbf{3.7 Resident Koreans and Koreans through the Documentary Lens}

Before delving into a deeper analysis of Death by Hanging, I will now present a fūkeiron influenced analysis of two documentaries that Ōshima Nagisa directed from 1963 until 1965 that concern Resident Koreans and peninsular Koreans, namely Wasurerareta kōgun (忘れられた皇軍 The Forgotten Soldiers, 1963) and Yunbogi no niki (ユンボギの日記 Yunbogi’s Diary, 1965).

Ōshima’s The Forgotten Soldiers debuted on Nippon Television’s program Nonfikushon gekiba (ノンフィクション劇場 Nonfiction Theater) on August 16, 1963. Despite clocking in at less than thirty minutes and being broadcasted in a 10:54 timeslot, the documentary created a clamor within its audience who sent in their opinions of the

film to Japan’s major newspapers. Indeed, Satō Tadao, who ranks the film as one of Ōshima’s great works, recognized that *The Forgotten Soldiers* rose above the multitude of left-leaning 1960s documentary films not only because of its skillful camerawork and editing, but because of the director’s willingness to film scenes that other directors would have likely avoided and through his ability to share the anger of the wounded veterans.

*The Forgotten Soldiers* is a landmark work within the history of Resident Korean films because it was the first to break the stereotypes of Resident Koreans being optimistic and possessing high morals despite their poverty, and to replace them with real men who had been abandoned by both Japan and Korea. In this manner, Ōshima intended this film to act as a wake-up call to the Japanese who had willfully ignored the presence of wounded Resident Korean Veterans as a method to ignore Japan’s colonial and wartime legacy.

As Satō writes, during the first few years that followed the end of World War II, the streets of Japan’s big cities were filled by disabled war veterans garbed in army caps and white kimonos that had been issued to them by military hospitals. Normally in

---

779 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.123.
pairs, one member of the duo would play an old military song on an accordion while the other member, who was normally missing a limb or two, would accept handouts from passersby. The Japanese populace felt sympathy for the injured veterans at first, but, as most of the veterans gained employment and reentered Japanese society, the sympathy turned to hatred for the remaining veterans because a rumor spread that the men were faking their disabilities. By believing this rumor, conscientious Japanese were able to dissolve their feelings of guilt when they saw the wounded veterans and thereby turn a blind eye to their suffering. However, it is important to remember that the Japanese government, with such things as the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952, had attempted to phase out Koreans/Resident Koreans from Japan and Japanese history because they did not fit in with the victimization mentality that had gripped the country. Thus, the ignorance of the Japanese populace concerning the national origins of the wounded soldiers can be seen as a result of victimization mentality.

With this in mind, one can understand why the initial viewers of the documentary were shocked when they learned that the remaining white-clad veterans were Resident Koreans. One viewer, whose opinion was published in the August 21, 1968 edition of the "Ibid, pp.123-24. 781 Ibid. 782 Ibid."
1963 edition of the *Yomiuri Shinbun* states that “(e)very time we saw their awful appearance, we used to wonder why they had to do such things when they had already received compensations.” However, his attitude towards the wounded veterans changed when he understood that the men had been refused help by both the Japanese and the South Korean governments. Similarly, the TV listings of the *Asahi Shinbun*, at first, echoed the disgust of the Japanese public with the Resident Korean veterans with the statement, “What a sorry state they are still in after eighteen years have passed.” However, the tone of the piece changes when it is revealed that “we never knew that there were such people (Resident Koreans) among them!” It is somewhat refreshing to see that the Japanese populace was disturbed by how its government and the South Korean government treated their countrymen, but, again, it shows the true power that a government wields in erasing the known presence of unwanted minorities.

Although the number of Resident Koreans in Japanese film went from nonexistent to occasionally present nearly a decade after the culmination of the war, their appearances in film began to fade by the end of the 1950s or early 1960s. This was due to combined reasons. On one hand, leftist-humanist directors struggled to find

---

784 Ibid.
785 Ibid.
786 Ibid.
methods to use poverty to connect the Japanese with peninsular Koreans as Japan entered into the high economic growth period; on the other, the lure of North Korea as an “earthly paradise” receded.  

While these changes would eventually lead to the disappearance of Resident Korean images within Japanese film, initially the Resident Koreans who appeared within the leftist-humanist directors’ films were highly idealized as paragons of virtue and purity. Thus, Ōshima’s desire to film the wounded veterans represented an opportunity to bring true images of Resident Koreans to Japanese television screens.

As I showed in chapter one, thousands of peninsular Koreans were forced into the Japanese military through the implementation of “forced conscription” during the twilight years of Japan’s colonial period. Of course, while serving as soldiers or laborers for the Japanese, many Koreans were killed or maimed during attacks. These men, although most of them were forced to do so, were stigmatized by both the North and South Korean governments because they had actively “supported” the Japanese. Thus, after the war came to a close, many remained in Japan because returning home was both shameful and possibly perilous.

Although far from enviable, the Resident Korean veterans were able to survive

---

788 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.124.
because their “Japanese” nationality, which remained intact at the end of the war, allowed them to receive governmental pensions for the war disabled. However, this small amount of security was snatched away from them with the implementation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1952. Although the enactment of the San Francisco Peace Treaty ended the U.S. occupation and gave the Japanese people the right to self-government, it was a black mark for Resident Koreans because it stripped them of their status as “Japanese nationals with Japanese nationality” and turned them into “foreigners” without giving them the opportunity to choose their own nationality. Resident Koreans were thus rendered “dual exiles” and “completely stateless” in Japan because they had been labeled as a people who had “renounced Japanese nationality,” and because Japan did not recognize North Korea or South Korea as a sovereign nation. At the same time Resident Korean veterans had their benefits stripped from them because they were no longer Japanese citizens. Having their means of survival snatched away from them, the wounded veterans turned to begging as a means of survival.

789 Ibid.
790 Fukuoka, Zainichi Kankoku/Chōsenjin, p.37; Kim Tae-young, Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete, p.80; Ryang, Writing Selves in Diaspora, p.xix.
791 Ryang, Writing Selves in Diaspora, pp.xix, 67. South Korea would finally be recognized by Japan in 1965 and North Korea would be recognized in 1981.
The Japanese government turned a blind eye to them because, after officially freeing them from colonialism, it was released “from any responsibility for postcolonial settlement for the peoples of the former colonies that stayed on in Japan.” Thus, as Sonia Ryang states, Resident Koreans lost their human rights along with their national rights. Resident Koreans, at least those who sided with South Korea, would not gain basic human rights until the signing of the Treaty on Basic Relations, which marked Japan’s official recognition of South Korea.

As individuals who were not “human[s] in terms of rights and entitlements,” Resident Koreans, of course, “did not have a direct access to political life equal to that of national citizens.” This situation left them in a state of silence because, no matter how vindicated their opinions and criticisms of their status in Japan were, “their voices do not reach the political realm as legitimate voices” because they were invisible within Japan. Thereby, the concerns of the Resident Korean soldiers would likely never rise above “private concerns” because it was ordinarily the concerns of Japanese nationals that were able to break through the private and become “public debate.” Because of this situation, the Resident Korean soldiers, and Resident Koreans in general, felt they

---

794 Ryang, Writing Selves in Diaspora, p.xxi.
796 Ibid, p.xxii.
797 Ibid, p.111.
798 Ibid.
799 Ibid.
were not involved with national tasks that aimed to improve the “common social good” and therefore only had each other to rely on.  

*The Forgotten Soldiers* opens simply with Ōshima and his staff filming the Resident Korean veterans going to a Japanese governmental office in order to demand that they receive pensions similar to those that wounded Japanese veterans received. The Japanese officials, of course, rejected the requests of the veterans. Afterward, the soldiers met with a representative of the South Korean government and again demanded that they receive some manner of aid for the wartime injuries. Unsurprisingly, the veterans were rejected again, and the representative stated that it was an issue that the Japanese government should deal with because the men had served in the Japanese military. After having been rejected by the Japanese government, the men took to the streets and gave speeches about their difficult situation. However, because of the bad feelings that had developed towards the men due to the rumors that they were faking their injuries, the Japanese populace remained indifferent to their suffering. After their efforts to gain recognition from both the Japanese and the South Korean governments ended in failure, the group of veterans engaged in a drinking party

---

800 Ibid.
801 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.124
802 Ibid.
at a bar on the second floor of a noodle shop.\textsuperscript{804} The festivities begin merrily enough with the veterans singing Japanese army songs, but, for unknown reasons, the group bursts out into a fight.\textsuperscript{805} Although contemporary Japanese films concerning the Resident Korean community, such as Yukisada Isao’s \textit{Go} and Sai Yōichi’s 崔洋一 \textit{Chi to hone} (血と骨 Blood and Bones, 2004) are full of bodily violence, the violence depicted within \textit{The Forgotten Soldiers} was new to Japanese audiences because it was performed by a minority group whose filmic images tended to stereotype them as being paragons of purity and virtue.\textsuperscript{806}

Although a fight amongst disabled veterans would always be difficult to watch, this scene becomes even more unbearable when Ōshima focuses his camera on the blinded veteran Seo Nak Won 徐洛源 who, after becoming agitated with the fighting amongst his comrades, removes his dark glasses to show tears flowing from his eyeless sockets.\textsuperscript{807} Satō writes that this scene is what makes Ōshima’s film different than other left-leaning documentaries being released during the 1960s because it eclipsed the standard material that most directors were willing to film. As he notes, the early scenes of the documentary in which the wounded veterans sought aid from the Japanese and

\begin{footnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{804} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{805} Ibid.
\item\textsuperscript{806} Yomota, Ōshima Nagisa to Nihon, p.169.
\item\textsuperscript{807} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.124.
\end{footnotes}
South Korean governments and protested in the streets were no different than what any director interested in the Resident Korean veterans would have filmed. However, Satō believes that other directors would have ceased filming at the fight scene because of its unpleasant and almost exploitive material. Ōshima seems to have been of a different mind because this fight scene resonated as a “crucial moment” and he thereby kept filming it until he “shot the moment that one poor wounded soldier, in his anger, took off his glasses and cried.”

Besides its graphic depiction of the scarred bodies of the Resident Korean soldiers, the fight scene would have likely been edited out—if it had been filmed in the first place—by other directors because the reason why the fight occurred is obscure. Although the unknown cause of the fight could be seen as a hindrance in comprehending the documentary, Ōshima, in his article “Wasurerareta kōgun no hitotachi” (忘れられた皇軍の人たち The People of The Forgotten Soldiers), states that “the facts I saw and heard during the shooting were much more darkish” than the actual material that was filmed and released to Japanese television audiences. Satō speculates that the words used by the soldiers could have been “attacking someone”

---

808 Ibid, p.125.
809 Ibid.
810 Ibid.
811 Ibid, p.129.
812 Ibid, p.126.
directly and, if Ōshima and his staff had filmed these sequences or if they had simply mentioned them, the making and broadcasting of the film would have been impossible.\textsuperscript{813} Thus, this experience shows how the “factuality” of documentary films must be questioned because, not only are the films created in such a manner in order to match the desires of the directors, outside forces also control what contents can be placed within documentary films.

Ōshima hones his camera in on the Resident Korean veterans’ scars and missing limbs while they engage both in their merriment, as one of the members keeps the rhythm of the singing by “tapping only half the length of an arm,” and in the fight, showing the soldiers’ “entangled deformed arms.”\textsuperscript{814} As these scarred men continue their fight, the narrator reflects on “this sad fight” and states that it is the result of “pent-up anger that can only be vent on their fellows” instead of the ones who directly caused their suffering.\textsuperscript{815} After this fight comes to a close, the veterans prepare to leave with only the blind Seo Nak-wan hesitating. It is at this point that Seo takes off his dark glasses and points toward his empty socket with its tears pouring down his cheek.\textsuperscript{816}

\textsuperscript{813} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{814} Ibid, pp.127, 128.
\textsuperscript{815} Ibid, p.128.
\textsuperscript{816} Ibid.
Highly corporal, Ōshima’s close-ups of Seo’s empty eye are what give *The Forgotten Soldiers* “definitive significance” and thereby mark it as a changing point for Japanese documentary and narrative films concerning Resident Koreans.\(^{817}\) Ōshima’s simple goal for creating this film was that he “wanted all Japanese to see brutal scars and miserable lives” of the Resident Korean veterans.\(^{818}\) However, even more importantly for the director, *The Forgotten Soldiers* acted as a method to make the Japanese audience realize that the “wounds on their (the Resident Korean Soldiers’) hearts were more brutal and more miserable than their bodily scars.”\(^{819}\) For this purpose, Ōshima believed the most effective method was to film “their fight at the party after the demonstration parade and the tears flow[ing] from the empty eye.”\(^{820}\) It seems this strategy implemented by Ōshima was effective because it unnerved the Japanese audience and made them truly pay attention to the documentary appearing on their televisions one late summer night.\(^{821}\) Thus, the film was successful as a small protest against the Japanese who had only shown indifference to the wounded soldiers.

Documentary films created during the mid and late 1960s by leftist directors tended to be highly energetic works centering upon “dramatic action” created by

\(^{817}\) Ibid, p.125.  
\(^{818}\) Ōshima Nagisa as quoted in Satō, *Ōshima Nagisa no sekai*, p.126.  
\(^{819}\) Ibid.  
\(^{820}\) Ibid.  
\(^{821}\) Yang, “Sengo Nihon eiga ni okeru “Zainichi” zō wo meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.82.
individuals such as “student protesters and workers engaged in political resistance.” This was a sign that the “avant-garde notion of “film as a weapon” had become deeply entrenched within the works of leftist filmmakers and they used their cameras as “inexhaustible expropriator(s) of image-weapons” Ōshima supported this notion while it was in its early stage of development with The Forgotten Soldiers. “Film as a weapon” was a serious issue for the directors who leaned towards it because they hoped that their works could provoke a “‘war,” which was then “not something we should object to but something we should start” in order to change Japan.

Besides the skilled and finely honed manner in which Ōshima directed and edited The Forgotten Soldiers, Satō believes that the success of the documentary can also be linked to the willingness of the wounded veterans to release their pent-up “anger without paying any regard to appearances” and by letting Ōshima take it in with his camera.” Of course, part of this willingness simply developed from coincidence, but a good portion of it likely developed from Ōshima’s personal attitude as he filmed the wounded veterans as well. Satō states, a “feeling of shared anger was formed” at the filming locations because Ōshima did not hesitate to display his own opinions and

---

823 Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.345.
825 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.130.
emotions within a work. If Ōshima had acted differently and simply asked questions and absorbed the answers in order to mull them over later, *The Forgotten Soldiers* could have been a very different type of film.

Although *The Forgotten Soldiers* lacks images of “police brutality, picketing workers, [or] marching students,” it does “convey a sense of eventfulness and human action” that was commonplace for leftist documentary films during the 1960s.

Ōshima’s anger in this film, as well as its presence in his other documentaries concerning Resident Koreans, hints at how many directors would become directly involved with the actions in their works. For example, as we saw in the discussion of the theory of landscape, the prominent director Ogawa Shinsuke, who had become “apathetic towards politics while making PR films,” felt the “urge to do something about the reality presented” while filming student protestors engaged in an altercation with riot policemen at Meiji University. Matsuda Masao, who would later critique action-oriented documentary films, admired how Ogawa puts aside his camera and attempts to “guard the masked fighters – those student troopers – with his own body” from being brutalized by the police. Matsuda wrote that Ogawa’s bodily actions were

---

827 Ibid.
830 Ogawa Shinsuke as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.348.
what made the documentary “turn into a masterpiece in front of our eyes.”

Although the directors’ bodily engagement within their films reflects their need to be actively involved with political movements, it also has the effect of making the viewers crave “the thrill of independence” and the experience “of crossing barricade lines and taking sides.” Thus, being captivated by the “fiction” of the documentaries and seeing the directors as “cultural heroes of the left,” the viewers are led to consume the filmmakers’ desired ideals.

3.8 Narration in Ōshima’s Documentaries

The year after he completed The Forgotten Soldiers, Ōshima would travel to South Korea in order to film Seishun no ishibumi (青春の碑, The Tomb of Youth, 1964) also for the television program Nonfiction Theatre. While collecting information for filming, Ōshima took many photos of Seoul’s poorest areas and their denizens while paying particular interest to the street children. After completing The Tomb of Youth, Ōshima would use these photos to create a short film that consisted of nothing but these

832 Ibid.
833 Abé Mark Nornes as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.348.
834 Abé Mark Nornes as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.348; Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.357.
835 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, pp.131, 137. Although the Tomb of Youth involves Koreans, its content does not match the issues that I am writing about in this section. It is for this reason that I will only mention it when appropriate instead of writing a section solely about this film.
836 Ibid.
photographs, recitations of excerpts from a young Korean boy named Yi Yun-bok’s 李潤福 diary, which had been translated by Tsukamoto Isao 塚本勲 and proved to be quite popular in Japan, and narration by the actor Komastu Hōsei 小松方正 (1926-2003).\textsuperscript{837} The film was completely produced by Ōshima independent production company Sōzōsha and it was commonly screened through “four-walling.”\textsuperscript{838}

Although Ōshima would name the short film Yunbogi’s Diary after the Japanese translation Yi Yun-bok’s diary, the film is not a direct representation of the diary because the photographs were taken before the idea of the film began to germinate.\textsuperscript{839} Thus, at first glance, the film seems to be little more than an assemblage of photographs of desperately poor children selling various goods, shining shoes, and simply playing in the streets.\textsuperscript{840} As these images flash across the screen, a voiceover quotes from the diary and the audience learns about the difficulties Yi Yun-bok faced when he peddled gum or shined shoes, such as being stalked by reform officers and harassed by the owners of local businesses who did not want the young boy near their premises.\textsuperscript{841}

If the short film’s content had limited itself to the format of presenting

\textsuperscript{837} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{838} Ibid. Four-walling or four wall distribution is the screening process in which a production company will rent a theatre for a bulk rate and take in all the profits from ticket sells.
\textsuperscript{839} Ibid, pp.137-38.
\textsuperscript{840} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{841} Ibid, p.138.
photographs with voiceovers reading from Yi Yun-bok’s translated diary, it would have likely not gone beyond a work that tugged at the Japanese audience’s heartstrings when they viewed the poverty and wretched conditions the South Korean people lived in and heard the harsh life experiences Yi Yun-bok had already gone through at such a young age. However, Ōshima created a deeper work by inserting images of the 1960 April Revolution (Shigatsu kakumei 四月革命), in which laborers and students rose up in revolt and were able to oust the autocratic first president of South Korea, Syngman Rhee, from power.842

As we saw in my discussion of the theory of landscape, leftist documentary directors tended to focus on images of the “revolutionary view of history, which privileges dramatic moments of rupture and change” in their films.843 Ōshima, cinematically embodying Matsuda Masao’s statement that “‘War’ is now not something we should object to but something we should start,” continually states that “the boys were there” in reference to the April Revolution and “among the victims killed by an assassin’s bullets.”844 Ōshima, through Komatsu’s voice, embraces his own hatred against the conservative American lapdog tyrant Syngman Rhee and states how the boys were “asking for an ideal, hating reality,” “hating tyranny,” and “hating people who hurt

842 Ibid.
national pride.”845 Filled with hatred, “the boys throw stones;” “full of pride, they throw stones.”846 Having wedged these images of the young Korean men who had tossed stones at their oppressors in the minds of the Japanese audience, the narrator directly asks the boy, “Yunbogi, will you too throw stones someday?” and answers his own question by stating “Yunbogi, will you too throw stones someday!”847

Albeit heavy-handed, this is a poignant scene because Ōshima, through the narrator, is emphasizing the revolutionary potential that can be found in South Koreans, which is lacking in the Japanese because of their concerns about their own paychecks and consumer goods.848 When the narrator emphasizes Yunbogi’s power to become a revolutionary who throws stones at the establishment, this can be interpreted by the audience as “something that you want to be” or want someone else to be.849 Thus, the “person idealized in your thoughts” is not who he or she really is. As a result, this makes Ōshima guilty of stereotyping Koreans in a manner similar, albeit for different purposes, to that of the leftist humanist directors during the late 1950s and early 1960s.850

Although Ōshima’s documentary films were already breaking new ground through their subject matter, Satō notes that the director also had a unique manner in

845 Ibid.
846 Ibid.
847 Ibid.
848 Ibid, pp.140-41.
849 Ibid.
850 Ibid, p.140.
which he, or his narrators, narrated his works.\textsuperscript{851} Beginning with his early documentary *Kōri no naka no seishun* (氷の中の青春 Youth on Ice, 1962), Ōshima adopted a narration style that resembled a monologue.\textsuperscript{852} Far from being an authoritative voice, Ōshima gazed “at people’s actions he could never understand” and attempted to determine why the individuals within his documentary did things in a particular way or why they did them in only one way.\textsuperscript{853} Understanding that he would never fully understand the actions of those he filmed, Ōshima made no attempt to interpret or represent the feelings of the young fishermen in *Youth on Ice*.\textsuperscript{854} Having this feeling for his own countrymen, albeit ones of a vastly different background, Ōshima was more hesitant in attempting to dissect the feelings of the wounded veterans in *The Forgotten Soldiers*.\textsuperscript{855} Instead, he developed a narration method that displayed his surprise and the shame of coming to understand the wounded veterans’ situation in Japan.\textsuperscript{856} Highly emotional and apologetic towards the Resident Korean veterans, Ōshima seems to be asking himself “What on the earth was I doing?” when it came time to dissect his own past history with the soldiers. Ōshima hoped that his audience members would also question their own histories of ignoring the wounded veterans as the narrator continued.

\textsuperscript{851} Ibid, p.139.
\textsuperscript{852} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{853} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{854} Ibid, pp.139-40.
\textsuperscript{855} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{856} Ibid.
one-sided dialogue with the wounded men. Thus, the authoritative narration within

*The Forgotten Soldiers* could be considered to follow a slightly skewed version of the “voice of God” model. As Stella Bruzzi writes, the purpose of the “voice of God” narration style is “to offer an omniscient and detached judgment” and “to guide the spectator through events” while telling them how they should be interpreted.

Because Ōshima’s narration style shies away from interpretation and instead offers loose monologues with the filmed individuals, it might be better to call it the “voice of Ōshima” instead of the “voice of God.” Also, despite the fact that the “voice of Ōshima” refrains from interpretation and spoon-feeding the audience information, it does work its way into the consciousness of the viewer and makes him or her reflect on their own history of interacting with the wounded veterans. This type of narration could lead to the viewer expressing emotions similar to those of the narrator, which acts as a call to action.

Besides using narration styles to make the audience members experience certain emotions, narration is also an effective method to add creative qualities to a documentary film. In *The Tomb of Youth*, which was filmed in South Korea and whose subjects were real individuals, Japanese narration overlaps with Korean dialogue as the

---

857 Ibid, p.140.
narrator reads the dialogues of the characters in the film. Because of this and Ōshima’s deliberate directing of the subjects of the documentary, *Tomb of Youth* is a documentary that has the “dramatic storytelling” of a narrative film.\(^{859}\) As a result, one has to question the translated dialogues of the filmed South Koreans because one does not know how influenced they are “by the creator’s thoughts or ideas and how much it is by his empathy.”\(^{860}\) With this in mind, it is possible to think of the characters’ “translated words” as the tools of the director. In a similar fashion, Ōshima’s impassioned narration in *Yunbogi’s Diary* is the expression of the creator’s thoughts, not of facts.\(^{861}\) Having established Ōshima’s use of Resident Koreans in his earlier documentary films, I will now turn my attention to the documentary aspects found within his film *Death by Hanging*.

\(^{859}\) Satō, *Ōshima Nagisa no Sekai*, pp.134, 140.

\(^{860}\) Ibid, p.140.

\(^{861}\) Ibid, p.142.
Chapter 4: *Death by Hanging*: the Creation and Destruction of Ri Chin’ U

4.1: A Korean Rapist and Murderer

Ōshima Nagisa’s film *Death by Hanging* is the highly fictionalized cinematization of the aftermath of the *Komatsugawa jiken* (小松川事件 Komatsugawa Incident) in which the Resident Korean factory worker Ri Chin’ U 李珍宇 (1940-1962) was arrested and later executed for the rape and murder of the student Ōta Yoshie 太田芳江. The strangled body of the coed Ōta Yoshie was discovered on the roof of Komatsugawa High School where she was enrolled as a student in August of 1958. Ri Chin’ U, who was a part-time student at the same school, anonymously called the police informing them of the murder; he was eventually arrested in September of the same year; he was given the death sentence by the court in 1959, his final appeal was rejected in 1961, and he was finally hanged at Sendai Prison in 1962.

The death of Ōta cut deep into the psyche of the Japanese populace because of the manner in which Ri handled himself after the murder took place. For one, Ri called the offices of the *Yomiuri Shinbun* in order to inform the police of the location of Ōta’s

---

body and, secondly, he went as far as to mail the schoolgirl’s belongings that he had pilfered from her dead body to her family and the detective in charge of the case to prove that he was the true killer.\textsuperscript{864} As Ri seemingly reveled in the difficulty that he was causing the investigation authorities, he was dubbed the koedake no hannin (声だけの犯人 criminal with only a voice) and the jokōseigoroshi (女高生殺し high school coed murderer) by the media as his voice was broadcasted on the radio in hopes that someone would recognize it.\textsuperscript{865} Eventually, Ri was arrested because the flowery seat cover on his bicycle matched one spotted outside of a phone booth in Komatsugawa at the time the call was made to the Yomiuri Shinbun.\textsuperscript{866} At the time of his arrest, Ri confessed that he had also murdered a female cook four months earlier.\textsuperscript{867}

The media quickly labeled Ri Chin’ U as an “abnormal personality,”\textsuperscript{868} an impression exacerbated by the fact that he, as a “literary enthusiast” who wrote his own short fiction, had written a short work titled “Warui yatsu” (悪い奴 The Bad Guy), published within his high school’s literature journal, whose contents supposedly hinted of “his criminal tendencies” and thereby gave “evidence of his heartless personality.”\textsuperscript{869}

Ri’s image was further blackened, in a similar fashion as Meursault’s in Albert Camus’

\textsuperscript{864} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no Sekai, p.225; Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.65.
\textsuperscript{865} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{866} Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.66.
\textsuperscript{867} Ōshima, Ōshima: 1968, p.154; Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, pp.224-25.
\textsuperscript{868} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.225.
\textsuperscript{869} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.225; Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.71.
*L’Étranger* (The Stranger, 1942), when, after being apprehended, he displayed no repentance and remained calm as if the murders had nothing to do with him.\(^{870}\)

Without overlooking the horrendous nature of the crimes committed by Ri, it is important to examine the manner in which the Japanese populace consumed the mediated images of the young Resident Korean rapist and murderer. As Christopher Donal Scott writes, Japanese newspapers, besides the *Asahi Shinbun*, which simply referred to Ri as *kōin* (工員 factory worker), readily published Ri’s age, occupation, and address.\(^{871}\) This was “highly unusual and unethical” because, having been born on February 28, 1940, Ri was a minor at the time of the crimes and, under Japan’s Juvenile Law, it was illegal to publish personal information of an underage individual whose trial had been brought to Family Court.\(^{872}\)

The newspapers readily referred to the young criminal as *Ri-shōnen* (李少年 Juvenile Ri) instead of implementing the common practice of refereeing to juveniles and their family members by their initials.\(^{873}\) More importantly, the surname Ri (李) openly revealed and drew attention to the young man’s Koreanness.\(^{874}\) By doing this, the Japanese media supported the “criminalization of zainichi Koreans” and, according to

\(^{870}\) Satō, *Ōshima Nagisa no sekai*, p.225
\(^{871}\) Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.66.
\(^{872}\) Ibid, pp.66-67.
\(^{873}\) Ibid.
\(^{874}\) Ibid, pp.67-68.
the Resident Korean writer Suh Kyung-sik 徐京植 (1951-) the media implemented
“outright discrimination” in their handling of Ri’s case by highlighting the information
that Ri lived in a Chōsen buraku (朝鮮部落 a Korean slum) and that his permanent
residence was in Keijō (京城), the colonial name for Seoul.\(^{875}\) Besides singling out his
Koreanness, the establishment of Ri’s place of residence and place of “permanent
residence” acted as a strong method to denote that he originated from “deviant or
pathological place(s)” that firmly placed him outside of Japanese society and confirmed
his “dubious morality” as well.\(^{876}\) Similar to the manner in which Japanese society
thought about its native outcaste peoples the Burakumin 部落民, it was believed that
Resident Koreans were enmeshed within “a culture of pathology” that was given
concrete form within the “crime-bound surroundings” in which they were raised.\(^{877}\) As
a result, the Japanese populace came to embrace a type of “geographic profiling” which
employed the “place of residence as the key determinant of ethnicity and likelihood of
committing a crime.”\(^{878}\)

Although the belief that Ri was “predisposed to criminality based on his
geographical origin” freed the Japanese of the responsibility of being the cause of

\(^{875}\) Suh Kyung-sik as quoted in Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.68.
\(^{876}\) McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.66.
\(^{877}\) Ibid.
\(^{878}\) Ibid, p.76.
Resident Korean misery in Japan, his presence, and the possibility that there were more Resident Koreans like him who were predisposed to violent crime, “set off a kind of racial panic about the visibility and invisibility of zainichi Koreans.” The mediated image of the Resident Korean rapist and murderer was thus brimming with Japanese prejudices towards Koreans and Resident Koreans.

4.2 Passing, identity, and imagination

The third of nine children, Ri was born in a Koreatown located in Kameido to a day laborer father who had spent time in prison and a deaf-mute mother. As can be expected from these circumstances, Ri’s family lived in extreme poverty and in an exceedingly underprivileged environment. As was common for someone who lived in such dire circumstances, Ri became a habitual thief; however, instead of stealing money, the young man focused on stealing library books, which helped fuel his love for the works of Dostoyevsky and his desire to write short fiction. Ri performed well at school and participated in the student government during his elementary and middle school years. The unrelenting weight of his crushing poverty prevented Ri from

---

879 Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.68.
880 Desser, Eros Plus Massacre, p.155; Satô, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.222.
882 Ibid.
883 Desser, Eros Plus Massacre, p.155; Satô, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.222.
being able to attend a normal high school, so he attended Komatsugawa High School part-time as he worked at a factory.  

Until the time he was arrested, most of Ri’s classmates were unaware that the young man was a Resident Korean. Like a good portion of other Resident Koreans, especially those belonging to the younger generations, the young man used a Japanese "tsūmei (通名 common name), which, in combination with the respect he garnered from his fellow students and teachers through his good academic record, kept him from being discriminated against during his elementary and middle school years. The sense of betrayal and unease that Kaneko Shizuo’s 金子鎮宇, Ri Chin’ U’s Japanese name, caused his classmates when they learned that he was Resident Korean shows how thoroughly effective the Japanese government’s efforts to erase the presence of Resident Koreans had been.  

Ri Chin’ U, although he was a habitual thief, attempted to overcome his poor background by excelling in both elementary and middle school, but, as Satō Tadao suggests, the extreme poverty that he experienced during his early years likely distorted his personality. Although ordinary sensory perceptions would easily allow Ri to understand that he was much poorer and from a “much more miserable home

---

884 Ibid.
885 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.222.
886 Ibid., pp.222-23.
environment” than his Japanese classmates, his sense of inferiority was likely magnified tenfold by the fact that he was forced to pass as Japanese each day. As Terayama Shūji writes, each day an individual “take(s) on the burden of a particular way of being.” Although we tend to think that an individual “‘puts on’” or “takes on the self” he or she is in fact putting on a largely prefabricated self that was “mediated through culture, language, [and] history” that has dashes of individuality due to “reiteration.” Thus, what one considers to be the self has already been constructed before sparks of individuality are added. Although it is disconcerting, this prefabricated self can be considered part of the “luxury” of being included within a nation’s “all inclusive structure(s)” that generally strictly divides a population into natives and outsiders.

On the other hand, Ri Chin’ U was forced by Japanese society to create a fabricated self that was actively hostile to his true self. It is due to this, to paraphrase W. E. B. Du Bois, that Ri was forced to look at himself through the eyes of the other and thereby consume his Korean origins in a similar fashion to that of the Japanese.

Having to put on a Japanese mask that represented all that was against his Korean origins was not unusual for a Resident Korean. However, Satō believes that Ri

887 Ibid.
888 Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.102.
889 Ibid, pp.102-03.
890 McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, pp.30-31.
was particularly hurt by the process due to his keen intelligence, which had allowed him not only to gain the praise of the Japanese, but also to further wedge himself into Japanese society. Thus, when his poverty, which in many ways could be seen as a direct result of his being Resident Korean, kept him from entering into a normal high school, and his lack of education and Korean origins kept him from entering a prosperous company, this wounded Ri. He felt that he had fully embraced the idea of Japanese assimilation in order to get ahead in life only to be struck down by old, deeply rooted Japanese prejudices toward Resident Koreans.

In order to escape his situation in life, Ri at first turned to books, especially his beloved Dostoyevsky and Goethe, as an escape. However, these books only allowed for a superficial release from his troubles, so Ri embroiled himself deeper into his Japanese persona “while he avoided looking at himself as a discriminated person.” Supposedly, this deep contemplation of his “Japaneseness” led to Ri’s imagination becoming overly “fanciful” and he progressively lost the ability to distinguish between imagination and reality. Because he was “always mentally hungry in his real life,” yet his Koreanness limited him in Japanese society, he began to spend more time within

---

891 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no Sekai, pp.223.
892 Ibid.
893 Ibid.
894 Ibid.
895 Ibid.
his mind in which he imagined himself committing crimes in minute detail. Seemingly content within his imaginary world of crime, Ri became entrapped within his imagination and showed little care for individuals in the real world.\footnote{Satō Tadao, “Jibun o korosu mono no deai.” Eiga Hyōron 25:3 (March, 1968), p.28.}

Although content in his world of imagination at first, the burden of not being able to distinguish between imagination and reality became a “suffocating” experience for Ri. Therefore, he intently waited for a moment when “imagination and reality corresponded” with each other in order to finally understand again what was real and what was fantasy. Being a young man who was rendered impotent by both his poverty and Korean origins, it is not surprising that Ri tended to focus on masturbatory fantasies in order to find some satisfaction in life. However, due to his near total enmeshment within his fantasy world, his imagination simultaneously became more “realistic” and more warped.\footnote{Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.226.} As Ri himself explained in a letter to his confidant, the North Korea supporting journalist (and later filmmaker) Pak Sunam 朴壽南 (1935-), in order to establish a “realistic stage” within the imagination he began with simple “assumptions,” such as an imaginary “girlfriend” who could be used for masturbatory fantasies, but, as he was pulled deeper into the imagination, things became more detailed and realistic.\footnote{Ri Chin’U as quoted in Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.226.}

With his imaginary world leaking into reality, Ri began to contemplate how to make his
imaginary world perfectly overlap with the real world by assaulting women.\textsuperscript{899}

Having replayed his desired scene of violence countless times in his head, Ri was unable to simply attack an unsuspecting individual. Instead, he had to come across a situation like the one he had created in his head to act upon it.\textsuperscript{900} The importance for the real situation to exactly match the one in his mind was so strong that a planned attack would cease if his intended victim walked on the wrong side of the road.\textsuperscript{901} The appearance of the intended victim was supposedly of no importance, but she needed to behave in the manner that Ri had envisioned within his mind.\textsuperscript{902} Thus, when Ri was finally able to encounter the situation that he had dreamed of for so long, he felt that he had finally found the spot where fantasy and reality met.\textsuperscript{903}

\textbf{4.3: Backing the Invisible Monster: Leftist Support for Ri Chin’U}

Due to the fact that he was an incredibly intelligent Resident Korean minority who had committed a vicious crime, Ri attracted the attention of a number of left-leaning Japanese and Resident Korean intellectuals who were willing to come to his

\textsuperscript{899} Ibid, pp.226-27.
\textsuperscript{900} Ibid, p.227.
\textsuperscript{901} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{902} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{903} Ibid.
As stated above, one of Ri’s strongest supporters was the pro-North Korea Resident Korean journalist Pak Su-nam who believed that the cause of Ri’s murderous ways was the fact that he had been denied his Korean heritage. As Pak writes, “for 18 years, until the boy was led to his crime, he continued to flee from his real name “Ri Chin’ U” and deceive himself and others as Japanese." As a result of having denied his own Koreanness and having his Japanese identity denied by both Japanese society and the Japanese government, Ri became a young man who was neither Korean nor Japanese. This made him lose his own “sense of place,” as well as his “personal self,” drawing him deeper into his own world of imagination. Thus, although he understood that he had killed the two women, he could not truly think of the actions as his own because he had done everything as if “through a veil” that separated fantasy and reality.

Although many later generation Resident Koreans suffered from a similar identity crisis, Ri’s situation was made worse by the fact that his family was isolated within his own Korean ghetto. Although there is no definitive reason given for why Ri and his family were outcasts among outcasts, it is speculated that Ri’s mother’s being

---

906 Pak, “Zuihitsu,” p.73.
907 Ri Chin’ U as quoted in Pak, “Zuihitsu,” p.73.
908 Pak, “Zuihitsu,” p.73.
a deaf-mute might have played some role. As I mentioned in chapter one, social networks among Resident Koreans were vital to their survival because they were, especially during the first couple of decades after the war, blocked from receiving many of the governmental benefits given to Japanese citizens. However, possibly because of the mother’s disabilities, Ri’s family was unable to establish itself into one of these networks so the family’s position was truly wretched even within the Korean ghetto. As a result, Chin’ U and his siblings did not socialize with other Resident Koreans in the community, limiting their interactions to only family members. Having a deaf-mute for a mother, of course, also played a role in the children’s inability to acquire even rudimental Korean language speaking skills. Ri, with his well-known thieving ways, likely harmed his family’s reputation as well because, whenever an object went missing in his area, fingers were pointed directly at him.

Ri’s defense team recognized that Ri had been “systematically denied his heritage as a Korean” while simultaneously being “denied access to economic and social advancement” because of this same Koreanness. Thereby, the defense attempted to prove to the court “that it seemed hypocritical, at least, to discriminate

---

910 Ibid.
911 Ibid.
someone of a different ethnic background while at the same time expecting him to act like a member of the dominant society.” The court, however, remained unconvinced that Ri’s split Japanese and Korean identity made him into a killer. Instead, the court believed that Ri’s crime had resulted “from the weakness of his own moral and ethical sense.” As a result, Ri was sentenced to death and was executed in 1962.

After Pak Su-nam established correspondence with Ri in 1960, she made it her mission to instill a sense of Korean pride within Ri. Ri, who was a devout Christian, had originally turned to his inner faith to guide him through the trial and his time in prison, and was reluctant at first to embrace himself as Korean. However, he would come to embrace the relationship he had developed with Pak and analyze his own psychology and its relationship to the crimes he committed. This is documented in numerous letters, which would later be published in a collection titled *Tsumi to shi to ai to* (Crime, Death, and Love), issued from San-ichi shobō in 1963.

Eventually, Ri came to embrace himself as Korean, and stated in a letter to Pak that “the thing we young folks need is national consciousness. To find the Korean in each of ourselves, that is what we exactly need!” Because he had already been

---

913 Ibid, p.156.
914 Ibid.
915 Satō, Oshima Nagisa no sekai, p.226.
916 Ibid.
917 Ri Chin’ U as quoted in Pak, “Zuihitsu,” p.74.
sentenced to death, Ri accepted the fact that he was going to die and not have the opportunity to fully become Korean, however, he supposedly found some solace in the fact that “[a]t this very last moment, I finally recognize myself as Chin’ U” and that he was able to die as his Korean self “rather than surviving as Shizuo,” the name he used to pass as Japanese.\textsuperscript{918}

Although it is noble that Ri supposedly came to accept himself as Korean, I find it a bit suspect because, being a man who had a difficult time distinguishing from reality and fantasy, Ri might have been very susceptible to Pak’s demands that he “should repent [his] crimes and become a terrific Korean.”\textsuperscript{919} Also, and more importantly, Ri’s Japanese side was completely ignored besides the fact that it was considered to be the source of Ri’s misery. While most media supported this vision, Ōshima Nagisa’s film \textit{Death by Hanging}, proposed a very different interpretation, focusing on how the state-implemented systems of being that Ri craved turned him into a murderer and ultimately destroyed him.

\textbf{4.4 Ri Chin’ U and Landscape}

As I discussed in chapter 3, promoters of the theory of landscape such as

\textsuperscript{918} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{919} Ōshima, \textit{Ōshima: 1968}, p.172.
Adachi Masao and Matsuda Masao put forth the view that the postcard-like homogeneous landscape that was spreading throughout Japan was the cause for the feeling of suffocation of disenfranchised members of Japanese society, and that it was this feeling that had led, for example, Nagayama Norio to become a serial killer.  

Homogeneous landscape caused this sense of suffocation because it was the outward manifestation of the “antagonistic ‘power’” of the state and thereby represented the “economic and political relations of domination and subjection.” The directors argued that this phenomenon was not unique to Nagayama, and that “all people know this sense of suffocation.” The severity of this suffocation was numbed if individual citizens had their proper place within the homogeneous landscape’s social fabric. However, if they deviated from the norm and were thereby unwilling to be rendered invisible and powerless, the state would take every action to eliminate them in order to preserve the homogeneity of the Japanese archipelago.

As I will demonstrate in this chapter, there is a clear parallel between Nagayama Norio’s experiences of vagrancy, murder, and execution and the Resident Korean Ri Chin’ U’s own experiences of murder and execution. Although Nagayama

---

920 Ibid.
921 Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.359; Matsuda Masao as quoted in Furuhata, “Returning to Actuality,” p.359
922 Adachi and Hirasawa, Eiga kakumei, pp.289-90.
was Japanese and Ri was Resident Korean, they were both outcasts, existing at the margins of Japanese society. If they had remained there they would have simply been ignored, but because they were searching for something more, the Japanese state blocked them from progressing and eventually eliminated them totally when they committed crimes after their frustrations became too much to bear. In this fashion, the Japanese state had effectively created a system that not only ostracized individuals, but also concretely eliminated them.

4.5: Searching for the Third Village in the Realm of Imagination

As Matsuda noted in his study of Nagayama’s case, an unfortunate consequence of the centripetal movement of migrant workers towards urban Tokyo was the fact that, although their original hometowns, or “first villages,” had contained a degree of originality, with the continued emphasis on Tokyo, a “second village” whose culture was recycled from the homogenized hometowns, even these remnants of originality gave way to homogeneity.923

Similarly, for first generation Resident Koreans, the Korean peninsula, albeit a highly ideated one, was firmly entrenched as their “first village” which acted both as

---

923 Matsuda, “Fukashi no mura no iriguchi de,” pp.115-16.
their “spiritual foundation” and as protection against Japanese assimilation policies.\footnote{924} Thus first generation Resident Koreans were simply not interested in looking for something more “original” in Japan because their originality was firmly based in the Korean peninsula. However, later generation Resident Koreans were, for the most part, unable to think of Korea as anything more than an “‘abstract’ homeland” that was both “artificial and alienating.”\footnote{925} In order to make Japan, which was their “cultural and practical home,” more authentically their homeland, many later generation Resident Koreans went on their own mental quests to establish themselves as Japanese as we saw in the case of Ri Chin’ U.\footnote{926}

Unlike Nagayama, who as we saw had gained his knowledge of something original through its representation on television, Ri Chin’ U gained the knowledge that there was something more than his pitiful life by being a Resident Korean passing as Japanese. This was an extraordinarily difficult position, yet at the same time Ri’s being caught in a “fissure” between Japan and Korea granted him a privileged point of view which was neither Japanese nor Korean, and enabled him to see himself as both subject and as object.

\footnote{924} Kim Tae-young. *Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete*, pp.18, 62. 
\footnote{925} Kim Tae-young. *Aidentitii poritikkusu o koete*, p.18; Field, “Beyond Envy, Boredom, and Suffering,” p.649. 
\footnote{926} Ryang, “Introduction,” pp.2-3.
This ability to think of “one’s self by way of seeing the other” allowed Ri to completely comprehend himself as being outside the social and intellectual structures which firmly placed individuals into the categories of natives and outsiders. This, as I stated earlier, damaged Ri mentally because, although he gained the praise of the Japanese because of his academic achievements and although he had been able to enmesh himself somewhat into Japanese society by passing as Japanese, the full benefits of being Japanese were not available to him. However, instead of turning to his Korean roots or attempting to make the best of his situation, Ri chased the elusive authentic Japaneseness and attempted to get through his troubles by increasing his assimilation efforts.927

Similar to Ri Chin’ U’s pursuit of authentic Japaneseness, Nagayama Norio left his hometown in order to find the “original hometown’ in Tokyo. Although in the capital he only found the same worn-out landscape that existed in his former home of Itayanagi in Aomori prefecture, Nagayama took it upon himself to attempt to find the “third village which is supposed to come into existence at the end of the centripetal flow to the second village from the first village.”928

Matsuda, drawing on the work of Kamishima Jirō, wrote that this is an

927 Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, pp.223.
“invisible village” that exists solely in the “daydream(s)” of those searching for it. The search for the third village, however, was necessary for individuals like Nagayama because it gave them some hope that there was a way to escape the vicious circle between the first village and the second village. The search for a daydream, of course, was an impossible task so it effectively ensnared Nagayama into a life of vagrancy which, as I have already shown and will detail more later, would end in tragedy. 929

Ri Chin’ U did not physically leave his Korean ghetto in Kamishinozaki, but rather began his own search for a third village through his imagination. Indeed, as Danvers and Tatum state, the world of imagination appeared for Ri, and his filmic counterpart R, when the “restricting and oppressing frames of the nation” would not relent no matter how assimilated he became. Rendered desperate, R(i) fled to the third village inside his head to satisfy his material, mental, and sexual desires that remained unfulfilled in his day to day life with the second village of Tokyo. 930

Although Ri had experienced racial discrimination and lived in an extremely poor environment, not all of his thoughts were masturbatory rape and murder fantasies. One of the most important sequences within Death by Hanging involves Ri’s filmic self R revealing both his imaginary world and the contentedness that he is able to find there.

930 Danvers and Tatum, Jr., Nagisa Oshima, pp.207-9.
Occurring after a sequence in which his would-be executors display their deeply rooted racist beliefs toward Koreans/Resident Koreans, R is ordered by the Education Officer to engage in a role play with the Public Prosecutor’s Secretary, played by Matsuda Masao, and two of the prison officers in order to help the condemned man remember his crimes. With the officials acting as R’s younger sisters, the Education Officer orders the Public Prosecutor’s Secretary to ask R for some money for a school excursion. However, instead of “giving” the sister the money, refusing to do so, or stating that there was no money available, R asks his sisters to close their eyes and imagine that they are going on a trip. Holding their hands, R gives them a detailed account of their imaginary trip telling them of the locales they pass by on their way to the Ueno Zoo. R asks them to take a close look at the animals. However, since the “sisters” have their eyes closed, they, of course, are unable to see the animals. R then suggests that he and his sisters should go to “somewhere that is nowhere.”

This “somewhere that is nowhere” is not an overly fantastic locale. R explains that there are businesses such as a bookshop and a noodle shop. The sisters become involved with the fantasy and ask if the location has a supermarket as well. The Public Prosecutor’s Secretary, delving deeper into his role as R’s sister, voices his concern that

931 Yomota, Ōshima Nagisa to Nihon, p.173.
“we haven’t got any money.” R nullifies this worry by stating that “everything is free here” and that there were no shopkeepers to keep R and his sisters from taking these free items. Finished with the imaginary shopping district, R then takes his sisters to a street of “grand houses” that contain material comforts such as record players, televisions, and refrigerators. R describes the family’s own house as having a veranda and two stories. This fantasy is eventually broken up by the Education Officer because he feels as if the role-play has no role in reminding R of his crimes. However, this scene is crucial in gaining a better understanding of R(i)’s third village because it shows that his ideal life, besides the free shops, is not overly fantastic but one that is open to a good portion of the Japanese populace whose paths are relatively unblocked because they are Japanese. Thus because he was completely defeated by the social fabric that makes up homogeneous landscape in real life, Ri, initially turned to his imagination where he could have his fill of candy and nice clothes and simply be happy.932

4.6: Homogeneous Landscape as the Enemy

Living within a third village through imagination or searching for it tirelessly can be dangerous for the pursuant because, as the Japanese archipelago rapidly turned

---

into one massive second village based on Tokyo, the “real” third village became more difficult to locate and those pursuing it no longer knew where to stop. Thus, they become ensnared within an “endless journey” to find something that does not exist.\footnote{Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.17.}

One could argue that Nagayama and Ri might have found some solace if they had simply given up on the idea of finding the third village through endless vagrancy or by delving deeply into the imagination. However, Matsuda writes that the very idea of being able to return to the first village is nothing more than a “helpless illusion.” As a result, individuals such as Nagayama and Ri became “eternal rebel(s)” in search of the evasive third village.\footnote{Matsuda, “Naraku e no tabi no tojō de,” p.88-89.}

Another reason why individuals such as Ri and Nagayama became eternal rebels was that their normal lives back home were simply too much to bear. Like Nagayama, Ri Chin’ U was enmeshed within a terribly deprived life. With his alcoholic father, deaf-mute mother, and five siblings, Ri lived in a room that was the size of six \textit{tatami} mats.\footnote{Anonymous, “‘Komatsugawa jiken’ de no sabetsu jochō to ‘Hokusō’ e no sanji,” p.10.} Not having enough privacy to even masturbate, Ri fled to his favoured destination, “somewhere that is nowhere,” or the imaginary third village. As this imaginary place continued to grow within his head, Ri was pulled even further away
from reality.\textsuperscript{936} During adolescence, Ri began to create imaginary women to serve as masturbation fuel; at this point, his imaginary third village became a disturbing place that allowed him to fulfil rape and murder fantasies.\textsuperscript{937}

Ri attempted to excuse his rape and murder fantasies by stating that his heart was “distorted by the stimulation of imagination,” but, more importantly for this thesis, these fantasies coincided with the time in which Ri was becoming concerned that he was too deeply caught within his imagination.\textsuperscript{938} Satō states that, at this point, Ri was so entangled within his own imagination that he was no longer able to connect with others.\textsuperscript{939} However, Ri still wanted “to touch reality directly” in order to “shake off his too swollen world of imagination (the imaginary third village) at once.”\textsuperscript{940}

At this point, we can see that the powers that had homogenized Japan’s landscape had effectively prevented undesirable individuals like the poverty stricken lumpenproletariat Nagayama Norio and the Resident Korean Ri Chin’ U from being able to find their own spaces with Japan’s social fabric. As a result of this experience, Nagayama Norio, who “had acutely felt and realistically experienced the feeling of suffocation” caused by continuously encountering homogeneous landscape as he

\textsuperscript{936} Satō , “Jibun wo korosu mono no deai,” p.28.  
\textsuperscript{938} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.226.  
\textsuperscript{939} Satō, “Jibun wo korosu mono no deai,” p.28.  
\textsuperscript{940} Ibid.
desperately searched for his third village, would eventually steal a pistol and shoot the landscape. The purpose of these shots was to rend the fabric of homogeneous landscape in order to separate the fiction of the second villages and find the originality of the third village. However, the shooting of the homogeneous landscape would make the man into a serial killer.

In a similarly violent method, which I have detailed above, Ri Chin’ U hoped to escape the imaginary third village that he had created in his mind by raping and murdering a woman in the exact same fashion in reality as he had done countless times within his imagination. Thus, for Ri, murder and rape were not simply due to his “abnormal personality or just an outpouring of a rebellious spirit” but constituted a way to “escape from the pain of forced imagination.”

Thus, again without excusing the crimes that they committed, one could say that both Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin’ U were driven to their violent crimes because they were denied entry into Japanese society by the social fabric that created Japan’s homogenous landscape. In the next section I will detail what they actually wanted to find within Japan’s homogeneous landscape, and how their desires destroyed them.

---

941 Adachi and Hirasawa, *Eiga kakumei*, pp.290-91; Matsuda, “Fukashi no mura no iriguchi de,” p.120.
942 Harootunian and Sabu, “Messages in a Bottle,” p.73.
4.7: Changing Power Sources: From Body to Landscape

As I discussed earlier in this thesis, in his early documentary films concerning Koreans and Resident Koreans, The Forgotten Soldiers and The Tomb of Youth, Ōshima Nagisa incorporated a very corporal type of filmmaking in which the scarred bodies of his filmed subjects were readily put into focus in order to shock his viewers out of complacency. Also, in his short film Yunbogi’s Diary the director freely uses documentary footage of the 1960 student protests in South Korea to inspire the Japanese to rise in protest in a similar manner. Thus Ōshima often used physical bodies and bodily confrontation to show the struggles of Koreans and Resident Koreans.

Although these depictions of physical confrontations were appropriate for early 1960s documentary films, Adachi Masao states that, by the late 1960s, the culture of confrontation in Japan had changed. The bodily supporters of state power, as manifested in the figures of soldiers and police officers, still existed and they offered the state “a mechanism of violence” which could be used to preserve power when needed, but such displays represented “only a small portion of power” that the state possessed.944 Indeed, as Terayama Shūji displayed in his play Nuhikun (奴婢訓 Directions for Servants, 1978), when most of the physical power of the “master” remains unseen, it can grip

those under its control more severely than in its corporal form.\textsuperscript{945} It is for this reason that filmmakers such as Adachi and Ōshima, as we saw in \textit{The Man Who Left His Will on Film}, turned to homogenous landscape to find the locale where power manifests itself.\textsuperscript{946}

The process of finding the invisible powers behind homogeneous landscape was not an easy task because it involved looking away from easily noticeable manifestations of state power such as the military or riot police to find something deeper within Japan’s social fabric. In fact, these hidden sources of power were so finely engrained into the mundanity that many simply did not notice their presence or, if they were aware of their presence, they felt as if they had no power to change them.\textsuperscript{947} Thus, in order to locate these hidden mechanisms of the state, Matsuda implores his readers to carefully critique the “ordinary, casual, touching, ubiquitous, and filthy ‘landscapes existing everywhere.’”\textsuperscript{948}

By immersing themselves into homogenous landscape in order to find the power behind Japan’s social fabric, filmmakers such as Adachi and Ōshima, were able to detect what Gilles Deleuze referred to as the “diagram” of the “microphysics of

\textsuperscript{945} Sas, \textit{Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan}, p.53.
\textsuperscript{946} Harootunian and Sabu. “Messages in a Bottle,” p.86.
\textsuperscript{947} Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.232.
\textsuperscript{948} Matsuda, “Yūtopia no hango,” p.136
power,” which actualizes the invisible relations of power within a “historically specific social formation.” Described by Deleuze as a type of “cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field,” one should not think of the diagram as a singular underlying power source, but as a series of unseen and unheard sources of power that act as the controlling agents within, for example, the military, schools, and hospitals.

Similar to Michel Foucault’s theorization of Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon, Deleuzian diagrams observe and regulate the actions of the populaces that they control while the observed go unaware. As I noted earlier, the photographer Nakahira Takuma, in a similar fashion to The Man Who Left His Will on Film’s protagonist Motoki, states that he is unable “to physically intrude in the landscape that lays before my eyes,” but that the homogeneous landscape itself, embedded with the all-controlling diagrams, “brutally returned to” Nakahira his vision as it deeply noted his actions.

This is the true power of homogeneous landscape. As I noted in chapter 3, the film crew of The Man Who Left His Will on Film had an incredibly difficult time locating landscape that supposedly existed everywhere. Part of this difficulty was

spatial, meaning that their perspective was simply off when they entered a particular landscape. However, more importantly, the nature of homogeneous landscape allowed it to exist everywhere and nowhere simultaneously. This resulted in the individual being unable to “see” the landscape, but the landscape itself, or at least its embedded diagram, being able to see the individual completely. By possessing unobstructed sight while rendering those it observes blind through its evasiveness and homogeneity, landscape was able to swallow up the subjectivity of Japan’s populace. Tangled within the power of landscape, a large portion of Japan’s population was under the subjection of the Japanese government’s ideological control as well.

4.8: Desiring to be Controlled

The novelist and essayist Sakaguchi Ango 坂口安吾 (1906-1955) welcomed the absolute devastation of the early postwar period because it released the Japanese population from the ideologies that had led the country to devastation in the first place. However, because of the “constitutive inescapability” of state-enforced ideologies, or, in Ango’s opinion, “human weakness,” Japan’s populace was entrapped by the resurfacing

---
953 Ibid.
954 Ibid, pp.131-32.
955 Ibid, p.137.
956 Harootunian and Sabu. “Messages in a Bottle,” p.73.
957 Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.5.
of prewar and wartime conservatism. Indeed, although *daraku* 堕落, the id-infused chaos of the early postwar years caused by the destruction of Japan’s state institutions, offered the Japanese a taste of freedom from their past, many were still drawn to the country’s “will of history,” which Sas defines as a “deterministic deus ex machina,” which acts as a type of “morality” for a population. This state-created morality is more powerful than armed soldiers or bloodthirsty riot policemen because it “exists as a something internalized in every subject’s consciousness” which can influence an individual no matter if they are obedient or disobedient to the state.  

In other words, homogeneous landscape does not simply observe the individual subject like an unseen guard within a panopticon, but through our own eyes because it is part of us. While the idea of being observed inside and out by the will of history or diagram embedded homogeneous landscape is rather unnerving, one must always keep in mind that these concepts are easily accepted by the majority of a populace.  

Although complicity with the prewar and wartime ideologies led to the Japanese archipelago being devastated and the ideologies being thoroughly discredited, they were not “fully overturned.” One of the major reasons why the Japanese populace was reluctant to let go of its prewar ideologies was that the “terrifying free fall” of *daraku*, a

---

958 Ibid.  
959 Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan*, p.6.  
landscape where one’s animalistic desires for food and sex were of utmost importance, was too much to bear in such chaotic times. Thus, instead of giving away to bodily anarchy, the Japanese populace, egged on and prodded by both the Japanese government and the American occupying forces, reinstated the “bulwarks against the free-fall of the social,” such as the emperor system, which kept the will of history alive.\textsuperscript{961}

Again, although it was promoted by both the Japanese and American governments, the “banal human reality that constitutively underlies the workings of ideology and the state” was also supported by the general populace.\textsuperscript{962} As Terayama Shūji writes, “Even as humans are being liberated from an institution…they begin assigning roles to other people and transitioning into another institution.”\textsuperscript{963} For the Japanese populace, this was not even “another institution” because they were supporting the very institutions they were supposed to have been liberated from. Terayama considers this form of thinking to be a dangerous gaffe because the “deformation that results from that mistake is extending outward into every part of the world.”\textsuperscript{964}

However, according to Sas, the dangers associated with clinging to these conservative forms of ideological thought are not as important as preserving the social order

\textsuperscript{961} Ibid, p.6.
\textsuperscript{962} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{963} Terayama Shūji as quoted in Steven C. Ridgely, \textit{Japanese Counterculture: The Antiestablishment Art of Terayama Shūji}. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p.103.
\textsuperscript{964} Ibid.
controlled by the powers that be. For example, in Terayama’s play *Directions for Servants*, the servants quickly restart a recording of their master’s voice so that he can regain his symbolic role even when his physical being is absent.\textsuperscript{965} Thus, the “chaotic fissure” of the master’s controlling presence, although it offers the servants a chance to gain freedom, is quickly reinstated in order for the servants to be engulfed in the control of a higher power.\textsuperscript{966}

The morality created by the state’s ideologies therefore forms within the individual subject’s self as a type of conscience. As Freud states, conscience (or anxiety) is the initial cause of “instinctual renunciations,” however, things eventually reverse themselves and these renunciations increase the power of the conscience.\textsuperscript{967} Thus, with each new renunciation, the conscience becomes more severe and intolerant and thereby develops “a dynamic source of conscience,” which fuels itself through the subject’s self-imposed denial of his or her desires.\textsuperscript{968} Although desired by the controlled subject, the “dynamic source of conscience,” is firmly enmeshed within the subject as well as in diagram-infused homogeneous landscape. Thus, although the power of homogeneous landscape might be invisible itself, its power is manifested in the actions and

\textsuperscript{965} Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan*, p.10.
\textsuperscript{966} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{967} Sigmund Freud as quoted in Sas, *Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan*, p.49.
\textsuperscript{968} Ibid.
prohibitions of the individual subject.\textsuperscript{969} The more embedded the dynamic force of conscience becomes within an individual, the more difficult it becomes to discern what is actually one’s individual choice (is there such a thing?) and what both external and internal powers have made one do. In some ways, because of the manner in which the state wants to control and the individual subject wants to be controlled, the state and the subject enter into a “contract-based system” because the subject gains the control he or she needs while the state gains its power over the subject.\textsuperscript{970}

As a result of this control created as a mutual agreement between the state and the subject, a large portion of the individual’s subjectivity, as we saw in the case of Ri Chin’ U, was created before one was even born. This was so, as Terayama states, because going out into any given society involves wearing that society’s cultural expectations.\textsuperscript{971} Molded by “a nature mediated through culture, language, history, and the very relationality of the subject in the exterior world,” the individual is oftentimes unaware that a large portion of their own being is controlled by something larger because they are able to make individual choices.\textsuperscript{972} However, these choices tend to be rather superficial, such as choice in consumer goods, in comparison to the controls the

\textsuperscript{969} Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.49.  
\textsuperscript{970} Ridgely, Japanese Counterculture, p.103  
\textsuperscript{971} Terayama Shūji as quoted in Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.102.  
\textsuperscript{972} Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, pp.102-03.
state has over the individual.\textsuperscript{973}

At first glance, the Japanese populace’s willingness to submit to prewar/wartime ideologies and thereby allow itself to be swallowed up by homogeneous landscape seems rather deplorable. However, one must remember that the Japanese government through homogeneous landscape, albeit suffocating, is incredibly protective of its citizens and that it is able to command obedience because of the comfort it is able to offer its population.\textsuperscript{974} Thus, Japan, thanks to the homogenization of Japan’s landscape, had become a “purgatory that is comfortable to live in” and it is this same “purgatory” that Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin’U were searching for through vagrancy and imagination in their quests to find their own elusive third villages.\textsuperscript{975}

The third villages that Nagayama and Ri were searching for did exist throughout the entire Japanese archipelago, however, because of their disenfranchised position, these third villages were sealed off for these individuals. Even though Nagayama and Ri could have become obedient to the Japanese state as the average salaryman, they were blocked off from doing so because they were considered outsiders who did not deserve the Japanese state’s protection. Denied simple entry into Japanese society, Nagayama and Ri searched for a way to belong; when they were denied that,

\textsuperscript{973} Ibid, p.238.
\textsuperscript{974} Adler, “First, Abandon the World of Seeming Certainty,” p.259-60.
\textsuperscript{975} Régis Debray as quoted in Matsuda, “Fūkei toshite no toshi,” p.19.
they both committed horrendous crimes out of despair. Japan was not a “purgatory that is comfortable to live in” for them, it was a unadulterated hell that denied them the lives that it offered the majority of its citizens and, after these two men fought back against the state through violence, it eliminated them through strangling the life out of their bodies.

Although homogeneous landscape is very protective of its desired populace, it wipes out things that interfere with its goals, and suffocates the individuals that do not conform. Those who fell into the parameters of desired citizenship were numbed to the oppressiveness of Japan’s homogeneous landscape because they were, supposedly, content and comfortable with the lives that they were offered through their obedience to the nation. However, poor and discriminate subjects like Ri Chin’ U were not given an opportunity to even become obedient citizens of the Japanese nation; rendered “homeless,” they committed violent crimes in order to find some crack in the landscape. Only at this point, the homogeneous landscape, with the Japanese diagrams of power fully embedded within it, did finally “notice” these people. Of course, it was not out of any sense of benevolence, but out of a desire to destroy the individuals that it had created by refusing them the same benefits it had given to its

---

desired citizens. This notion illuminates the deeper meaning of the pseudo-documentary that opens Ōshima Nagisa’s *Death by Hanging*.

### 4.9: Uncovering State Power through Pseudo-documentary

After a sequence of Godardian-styled title cards informs the viewers of the results of survey concerning the abolition of the death penalty given by Ministry of Justice in June 1967, Ōshima’s *Death by Hanging* begins with a pseudo-documentary mode, showing an aerial shot of the former Sugamo prison in Ikebukuro. If the viewer consumes Ōshima’s own “voice of God” styled narration without critique, one might think that it is simply overly detailed, however, through the lens of the theory of landscape, it becomes something much more critical in understanding the director’s purposes in opening the film in this manner.

From the very beginning of his narration, Ōshima informs the audience of the landscape surrounding the execution chamber and the curious architecture of the execution chamber itself. Supporting the director’s famous statement that “the darkest part of state power is kept secret,” the narrator explains that the execution chamber “quietly exists in a corner of the vast prison site” where it is screened off from the rest
of the prison by a “board fence made of worn-out wood.” However, instead of being a utilitarian building that simply possessed the mode of execution, the execution chamber resembles a type of Japanese accommodation called a *bunka jūtaku* (文化住宅 cultural accommodation), which was a common type of rental property for families and had helped transform the layout of Japanese urban landscapes during the postwar period. The homeliness of the execution chamber is further enhanced by the fact that it is nestled on top of a green hill with flowers such as cherries or azaleas and that it “is painted ivory and its roof, made of galvanized sheet iron, is shining in the sunlight.”

The art director Toda Shigemasa 戸田重正 (1928-1987), who worked on all of Ōshima’s films from *Hakuchū no Tōrima* (白昼の通り魔 Violence at Noon, 1966) until *Senjō no Merī Kurisumasu* (戦場のメリ・クリスマス Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence, 1983) designed the execution chamber to look like an ordinary family home because the system of death penalty was “wrapped in a very peaceful and ordinary place” that could easily go undetected within ordinary landscape. As Satō writes, the ordinariness of the execution chamber helps hide it from average Japanese citizens.

---

978 Satomi Ishikawa, *Seeking the Self: Individualism and Popular Culture in Japan*. (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), pp.150, 154. Originally, *bunka jūtaku* was a Japanese architectural style that originated during the late Taishō Era (1912-1926) and popular throughout the 1930s in which the outside of the home was given Western architectural design while the insides of the home was more traditionally Japanese.
979 Tamura, etc. “Kōshikei,” p.105.
because they do not expect that such a brutal ritual would be carried out in a building that, “if you ignore the thick rope to hang him dangling from the ceiling,” looks like the home of a “poor newlywed couple.”

Toda, with his statement that the system of the death penalty was “wrapped in a very peaceful and ordinary place,” perfectly conceptualized why the concrete walls of Tokyo and the ones found within Tokyo-eseque cities and rural communities made Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin’ U attack homogeneous landscape through violence. They, because of their marginalization, were able to detect that there was something more to the world than what was being presented to them, however, instead of locating something that was beneficial to their being, they found something that ultimately destroyed them. Examining Karatani Kōjin’s柄谷行人 (1941-) study of Sakaguchi Ango, Sas writes that there is a difference between what passes as truth or reality that is easily articulated and understood, such as the concrete walls of Tokyo and the bunka jūtaku within Death by Hanging’s pseudo-documentary, and a deeper actuality, such as the execution chamber within a building that looks like a simple home, that resides beneath the former. Obviously, the deeper set reality that reveals the brutality of the Japanese state is something that those in power do not want obedient citizens to be fully

---

981 Ibid.
982 Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.70.
aware of, so the state masks its own brutality through the construction of homogeneous landscape. However, those who display “behaviors that do not fit to the framework of hierarchical nation-state,” especially if they are part of a minority group, fully encounter the dark reality behind Japan’s homogenous landscape.

As mentioned above, the interior of the *bunka jūtaku*-like execution chamber is just as homey as its exterior. With its walls painted salmon pink, all the materials used for this mortar-coated ferroconcrete building are standardized goods which would not be uncommon for the construction of an average urban home in 1960s Japan. The mundanity of the execution chamber is enhanced by the fact that it contains a drawing-room-like room with a sofa, chair, and table on the left-hand side. After the domestic nature of the execution chamber has been established, the spectator is given a view of some not so average rooms, such as a holding cell for the condemned man. Ōshima’s unhesitant transition from describing the more mundane features of the execution chamber to some of its more lethal aspects shows how finely engrained into day-to-day life an execution can be as long as it is hidden away in homogenous landscape outside of the vision of obedient citizens.

---

983 Ibid.
985 Tamura, etc. “Kōshikei,” p.105-06.
986 Ibid.
Ōshima shows the ultimate power of the state when the prison officials begin to prepare the condemned man for his execution. While he trembles so violently from fear that it seems “as if all the joints of his body are dislocated,” the prison guards handcuff him and blindfold him with a piece of white cloth. After the condemned man is thoroughly restrained and blinded, a curtain is pulled back revealing the execution chamber and three waiting guards. The scene gives a clear example of how homogeneous landscape, or the Deleuzian diagram embedded within it, controls (or eliminates) those within its power.

The condemned man’s case is, of course, the height of the power of the landscape/diagram, but the constant observation and powerlessness one feels when faced by landscape/diagram was the cause of the suffocation that Nagayama Norio and the filmmakers Adachi Masao and Matsuda Masao felt as they travelled through Japan. While the condemned man is being prepared for his execution, the prison officials ready themselves in a room where they can easily see him “through a viewing window of the execution room beyond the space above the stairs”. They can also easily see the space below the trapdoor where the condemned man will draw his final breath, having the privilege of seeing the condemned man both during his last moments alive and in his final moments of life.

987 Tamura, etc. “Kōshikei,” p.106.
first moments of death. They, the Public Prosecutor, the Chief of the Prison, the Education Officer, the Doctor, and the Chaplain represent law, capital punishment, education, medicine, and religion, i.e. the factors behind the homogeneous landscape/diagram of power’s demands that its people become obedient citizens; they are also the powers that can take away the lives of those who are not obedient to the state. Thus, after the condemned man’s execution comes to a close, the perfection of homogeneous landscape is again made whole.

Besides being a means to eliminate those who rebel against the homogenous landscape/diagrams of power, the process of executing a criminal was a “mechanical movement” that acted as an “expression of Japan itself” in its most powerful form.\footnote{Danvers and Tatum, \textit{Nagisa Oshima}, pp.203, 205.} Indeed, with the code of criminal procedure acting as the application and the prison officials acting as the machine, Ōshima was able to show the Japanese state at the height of its own efficient brutality.

One key aspect of this hidden state brutality is that it needs individuals like Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin U’ to empower it and to keep it running. As Terayama displayed in his play \textit{Kegawa no Marī} (毛皮のマリー, Marie in Furs, 1967), the sadomasochistic relationship between “mother” and “son” can only keep its (erotic)
power as long as the son is willing to resist the mother because “violation equals pleasure.” The mother, thus, needs “to confirm the violation” through punishment which allows both the sadistic power system to maintain its own power while it remains “a structure for maintaining order.” In a similar manner, the Japanese state eliminates individuals such as Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin’ U because it both ensures that homogenous landscape and the diagrams of power remain the controllers of the country while legitimizing that Japan and the Japanese people need its control. Indeed, locked in this system of cycle of “resistance, counterresistance, and restabilization,” homogenous landscape needs the Ris and the Nagayamas of the country to surround, exclude, and eliminate to establish the social norms of the common people, while keeping its power. Despite the brutality of this system, one must remember, that this, in many ways, is how the Japanese reformul[ed] institutions immediately after [their] liberation from them. Thus, the brutalization of outsiders plays its role in offering stability and comfort to obedient Japanese citizens.

990 Ridgely, Japanese Counterculture, p.104. The title is a tongue-in-cheek reference to Leopold von Sacher-Masoch’s Venus in Furs (Venus in Furs, 1870) and the content was heavily influenced by Arthur Kopit’s play Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma’s Hung You in the Closet and I’m Feelin’ So Sad (1959)
991 Ibid.
992 Ibid.
993 Ridgely, Japanese Counterculture, p.104; Sas, Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan, p.119.
4.10: R’s Failed Execution As Hermeneutic Tool

It is within this context that the condemned man’s failed execution plays a major role at the end of the pseudo-documentary. Although the original audience members would have likely known the film that they were viewing was fictional, the documentary-like aspects of the opening could have lulled them into consuming the opening as fact without critique. Thus, when the condemned man does not die as expected within a “documentary” film, the resulting shock acts as an alienating, distancing device that knocks the viewer out of complacently consuming the film.995

This failed execution represents the earliest idea that Ōshima had for what would later become the film Death by Hanging. As a law student at the University of Kyoto during the early 1950s, Ōshima and his law school friends wondered about and discussed what procedure the Japanese government would take if an execution failed and the question returned to him, along with the desire to film the question years later when he read the lawyer Mukae Teruyoshi’s book Shikei haishi-ron no kenkyū (Studies on the Anti-Death Penalty Debate, 1960).996 Although the future director and his friends were unable to find a conclusive answer to the question, Ōshima partially held on to the idea that if an execution failed,

995 Bruzzi as quoted in Standish, Isolde. Politics, Porn and Protest, p.120.
the condemned would be pardoned. However, after consulting with a jurist, Ōshima learned that this impression was completely false and that “the condemned convict will not be pardoned for such trifles. State power is merciless, so it will just do it (the execution) again.” The only condition in which the Japanese State would temporarily stop an execution is if the would be executed prisoner was rendered temporarily insane. However, even in such a condition, the condemned would not be spared, because the state would use any means necessary to revive the condemned in order to execute them.

The Japanese Officials’ desire to eliminate R after the failure of his execution is primarily engrained in the fact that his very existence inhibits the Japanese state to begin “reinstitutionalization process” it normally initializes after the fabric of homogeneous landscape has been torn. Indeed, preserving homogeneous landscape through execution can be seen as the state’s method for “reformulating institutions immediately after [an individual gained] liberation from them.” Nagayama Norio and Ri Chin’ U were able to momentarily escape the prison of homogenous landscape through their

---

998 Ibid, pp.156-57.
1000 Ibid.
1001 Danvers and Tatum, Nagisa Oshima, pp.203; Ridgely, Japanese Counterculture, p.107.
crimes which “undermine(d) the order of predominant power structures.”  

After they were captured and later executed, the Japanese state was able to close the fissures within the homogeneous landscape that they opened. R, however, because he was a pole within the gears of the state’s execution machine, continued to “work on the system” of homogeneous landscape, thereby leaving open fissures, through his failed execution.

If the matter was simply finishing the execution in order to suture the hole within homogeneous landscape, there is little stopping the prison officials from executing the unconscious man. However, as the Public Prosecutor’s Secretary states, “I’m sure that in section 479 of Regulations it is laid down, that one who has been un成功ously hanged shall be judged demented and the execution shall be stopped.” Unsure how to proceed, the Officials are relieved when R soon regains consciousness because they believe that they will be able to continue on with the execution. Yet, they soon learn that they are unable to carry out the execution again because the Resident Korean man has been rendered amnesic through his traumatic experience.

Although this regulation, at first, seems to have a small hint of humanity to it because it seems concerned with not causing the condemned further trauma, this is simply not the case. As shown in Ōshima’s conversation with a jurist, the state would

---

1005 Ogi, “*Kōshikei* o mite,” p.28; Satō, *Ōshima Nagisa no Sekai*, p.232.
use every effort in order to ensure that the condemned was revived and properly executed. However, more so than simply eliminating the condemned, the primary concern for the Japanese state is “making criminals accept their crimes.”\textsuperscript{1006} Thereby as the Public Prosecutor’s Secretary declares, the Japanese state’s purpose is to instill “a moral and ethical meaning to receiving punishment” within the condemned criminal’s mind so that they understand why they are to be eliminated.\textsuperscript{1007} In a nutshell, the primary thing that the Japanese Officials want R to admit is that he is under control of the “will of history,” which controls the homogeneous landscape that he had disrupted through the murder and rape of two women. By suffering the trauma of a failed execution, R lost the Freudian “dynamic source of conscience,” the moral core which makes one suppress instinctual desires, which had controlled most of his actions before his crimes. Thus, the Japanese Officials have taken it upon themselves to reestablish this “dynamic source of conscious” in order for R to be controlled again by the will of history or the internalized state.\textsuperscript{1008}

For Ōshima, the primary goal of the conservative Japanese government is to instill the will of history or internalized state within each individual who lives with in the Japanese archipelago. It is for this reason that the Japanese Officials will not budge

\textsuperscript{1006} Ogi, “Kōshikei’ o mite,” p.28
\textsuperscript{1007} Satō, Ōshima Nagisa no sekai, p.232.
\textsuperscript{1008} Danvers and Tatum, Nagisa Ōshima, pp.203-04.
an inch as they attempt to reestablish R’s memory so that he will accept his crimes and, afterward, be eliminated for his admittance.\textsuperscript{1009} The Prison Officials are trying to instill “authentic Japaneseness” within him because he is supposed to feel the same guilt towards the state as obedient Japanese citizens. However, because this “authentic Japaneseness” was denied him by the state, he is being made to feel guilty towards something that refused to embrace him. Thus, in this way, one can see the genuine hostility that homogeneous landscape holds for outsiders. They are forced into submissive positions by the homogeneous landscape while never being under its full protection and they can be eliminated by the powers within this landscape even though they never benefited from it.

Although R, understandably, is in a near vegetative state after his failed execution, he manages to put up a passive resistance against the Japanese Officials. Demanding that he embrace his lost “dynamic source of conscience” so that they can execute him, R’s resists their commands by simply ignoring them or by asking his own simple questions.\textsuperscript{1010} R’s failure to acknowledge the questions asked by the Prison Officials frees him from the function of either supporting or negating the questions asked. Thereby, he simply exists without establishing a relationship with guilt or

\textsuperscript{1010} Danvers and Tatum, \textit{Nagisa Oshima}, pp.205-06.
non-guilt with the questions.\textsuperscript{1011} The Japanese Officials, like the sadist mother in Terayama’s \textit{Marie in Furs}, want R to become actively involved so that they can resist him, execute him, and reestablish the harmony of homogeneous landscape.\textsuperscript{1012} R, however, does not put up a fight and is able to preserve himself through “disinterested abandonment” in which he demonstrates his “independence from that which [he] relinquish(s) by ‘walking away.’”\textsuperscript{1013} The mechanism is analogous to Gayatri Spivak’s notion of the “strategic withholding,” in which the subaltern resists the oppressor by refusing to fit perfectly “within the framework of a dominant paradigm,” which, in R’s case, corresponds to the violent Resident Korean minority from a bad background who wreaks havoc on the Japanese.\textsuperscript{1014}

R’s “strategic withholding” is quite individualistic because, while not responding to the questions asked by the Japanese Officials, he asks simple questions which play no role in the matter at hand. Thus, R is wedged somewhere in between the “half-absent presence of a half-present absence” where he is simultaneously engaging with the Japanese Officials as he is slipping away from them.\textsuperscript{1015} In this way, R is able to create a “radically individualized and actualized ‘self’” that is free from both what

\textsuperscript{1011} McKnight, \textit{Nakagami, Japan}, p.6.  
\textsuperscript{1012} Ridgely, \textit{Japanese Counterculture}, p.103.  
\textsuperscript{1013} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{1014} Sas, \textit{Experimental Arts in Postwar Japan}, p.24.  
the Japanese Officials think he should be and the will of history that powers the Deleuzian diagrams within homogeneous Japanese landscape. This is a difficult task because there is “no intersubjective, collective belief” created by the will of history to grasp on to, so R must recreate himself by himself without the comfortable purgatory of homogeneous landscape, which was not available to him in the first place. This represents true freedom for R and acts as a method of escaping homogeneous landscape.

4.11 Conclusion

As I discussed throughout this thesis, one major problem with the representation of Resident Koreans in Japanese films is that often Resident Koreans are not really the subjects of the films, but rather they simply act as the “device” and “stage” for the directors to fight such things as Japanese national identity and state ideology. As can be expected from this situation, many Resident Korean characters created during this time period were rather one-dimensional.

One manner in which avant-garde directors “reduced” their characters was through not giving them names. In Death by Hanging the protagonist is simply

---

1016 Ibid, p.29.
1017 Ibid, p.67.
known as “R.” Although this single letter name obviously is a reference to his historical counterpart Ri Chin’ U, Yomota states that another purpose for using this alphabetized name is that R has been reduced to an existence that no longer has a specific name or personality.\textsuperscript{1020} As a result of reducing R down to this basic existence, the Resident Korean character simply becomes a statistic: another unknown minority viciously wiped out by the power of the Japanese state.\textsuperscript{1021} Boiled down to his basic essence, R, in Ōshima’s own words, becomes an “abstract existence.”\textsuperscript{1022} R is not a subject himself, but exists in the execution chamber as “the other” where the Japanese Officials can build up their own drama.\textsuperscript{1023} Thus, he acts as a sponge for the evils of the Japanese state both past and present while remaining, in Ogi Morihiko’s terms, a “blockhead.”\textsuperscript{1024} Thus, in many ways, R is a rather unsatisfying character due to only being a mirror of the Japanese.

\textsuperscript{1020} Yomota, Ōshima Nagisa to Nihon, p.155.
\textsuperscript{1021} Standish, Isolde. Politics, Porn and Protest, pp.64.
\textsuperscript{1022} Ōshima, Ōshima: 1968, p.162.
\textsuperscript{1023} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1024} Ibid.
Conclusion

As a result of Resident Korean characters acting as mirrors to the Japanese, the Japanese filmic world during the 1960s had yet to receive a fully realized Resident Korean character.\textsuperscript{1025} The images of Japan’s largest minority were limited to “intellectual works” that did not truly reflect the Resident Korean community in Japan. However, as I demonstrated in my analysis of Oshima’s works, some directors built on this use of the Resident Koreans as mirrors in a more sophisticated, self-reflexive way, and used it as a basis for broader social critique.

Discussing Ōshima Nagisa’s film \textit{Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence}, Masao Miyoshi writes that the director was “determined to locate himself in the place of the Other and to look back at himself.”\textsuperscript{1026} Supporting this statement, Satō Tadao, writing on Ōshima’s early documentary work \textit{The Forgotten Soldiers}, states that the short work is considered a masterpiece among countless television documentaries made during the 1960s because of the manner in which the director filmed the disabled Resident Korean veterans.\textsuperscript{1027} Indeed, in this seminal work, the Resident Korean veterans broke the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{1025} Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.70.
\item\textsuperscript{1027} Satō, \textit{Ōshima Nagisa no sekai}, p.130.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
stereotypes created by leftist-humanist directors of their being happy and content individuals who were not degraded by their abject poverty by bursting into a violent fight.  

Part of Ōshima’s success in being able to film this scene was pure luck, but Satō believes that the Resident Korean soldiers allowed Ōshima to film their anger because he shared their sense of anger.  

Ōshima was supposedly able to “assimilate himself” to the manner in which Resident Koreans looked at the Japanese populace and then returned this gaze to his Japanese audiences so that they would better understand themselves through Resident Korean eyes. Thus Ōshima was able, in some ways, to find the “fissure” that Resident Koreans like Ri Chin’ U stood in that gave him a “privileged point of view” which allowed him to understand Japan from both a Japanese and a Resident Korean perspective. The director possessed a “parallax view” in which he was able to develop “two different but simultaneous interpretations” while viewing his filmed subjects through both Japanese and Resident Korean eyes. 

With his supposed ability to look through “multiple identities” while filming a subject, Ōshima’s desire to always add a “Korean point of view when we think about

---

1028 Ibid.  
1029 Ibid.  
1030 Ibid, p.131.  
1031 McKnight, Nakagami, Japan, p.1.  
1032 Ibid, p.2.
Japanese problems” seems quite profound. Indeed, he believed that since “Koreans are a mirror to the Japanese,” the Japanese populace could come to a better understanding of itself. However, one needs to take special care with the manner in which Ōshima, as well as other leftist intellectuals, used a Korean/Resident Korean perspective in order “to look back at himself” and the rest of the Japanese population.

For example, the playwright Kinoshita Junji, who wrote a play based on the Komatsugawa Incident titled *Kuchibue ga fuyu no sora ni* (A Whistle in the Winter Sky, 1961), stated that “If something called the zainichi Korean problem exists, then it is a problem created by the Japanese.” By believing that Resident Korean issues were totally “created by the Japanese,” many leftist Japanese used them as a mirror to reflect the aspects of being Japanese and living in Japan that they hated the most. Ōe Kenzaburō, writing about Ri Chin’ U and how the hardships of the young factory worker’s life led to his committing violent crimes, writes that “(w)e ourselves are the ones who committed rape and were hanged for it.” However, because they were the ones who simply led Ri to his crimes instead of actually committing them, they, the Japanese, also “belong to the side that placed the rope around his neck.”

---

1036 Ōe Kenzaburō as quoted in Scott, “Invisible Men,” p.95.
Deeper than simply being concerned about the welfare of Resident Koreans, Kinoshita, Ōe, and, of course, Ōshima use Resident Koreans as “devices and stages to project the problem of the state called Japan.”  

Deeply concerned with the state of the wretched state of their own Japaneseness, many Japanese leftists, as the anarchist and critic Takenaka Rō 竹中労 (1930-1991) wrote, used Resident Koreans, as the “symbol of alienation,” which was incorporated to reveal such things as “discrimination, a sense of national greatness, and various other rotten parts [that still] linger[ed] in [the Japanese] subconscious.”

---

1037 Yang, “Sengo nihon eiga ni okeru “Zainichi” zō wo meguru gensetsu kūkan,” p.84.
1038 Takenaka Rō as quoted in Yomota, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō,” p.70.
Works Cited

In English


___, *Writing Selves in Diaspora: Ethnography of Autobiographies of Korean Women in Japan and the*


In Japanese


___, “Nihon eiga to mainoritei no hyōshō: Zainichi kankokuujin no hyōshō.” In *Ajia no naka no nihon*

___. Ōshima Nagisa to nihon. Tokyo; Chikuma Shobō, 2010.