The Early Development of the Gendaigeki Screenplay : An Introduction, 1908-1917

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In the early twenties the director Taguchi Ōson went to Hollywood to tour the famous American studios. When he returned to Japan, he was chosen to direct the first film to be released by the newly established Shōchiku Cinema Company. Shōchiku was determined to follow only the most modern production techniques, and Taguchi duly set about putting into practice the expertise he had acquired during his study abroad. First, he ordered the script to be typed in the roman alphabet. Then he explained that in Hollywood, actors merely did what the director told them, and therefore did not need to read the script. This production understandably suffered technical complications and was abruptly discontinued, but Taguchi, undaunted, persisted in his mission to modernize Japanese films. He directed his next attempt shot by shot with neither story nor continuity script, and instructed the actors to laugh or cry without the slightest hint at motivation. Another colleague just back from Hollywood employed similar methods. According to one report, in order to elicit fear from an actor he would simply shout that a lion was coming and they should be afraid, though the story being filmed had absolutely nothing to do with a lion.[1]

By 1930, when Yoda entered Nikkatsu's Uzumasa studio in Kyoto, the situation was greatly changed. Even then there was no standard approach toward writing a silent screenplay, but novices like Yoda learned the basic steps in writing continuity from their seniors in the screenwriting department, and they attended workshops to study and analyze their own transcriptions of popular foreign films like Murnau's *Sunrise* (1927) and Josef von Sternberg's *The Docks of New York* (1928). The minute analyses they carried out based on their transcriptions included breaking them down scene by scene, then learning how to identify the narrative function of each scene.[2] They also compiled charts comparing the ratio of titles to cuts per scene and did exhaustive comparative studies based on their findings. The legitimacy of the screenplay was no longer in question.

From its earliest days the Japanese film industry never lagged far behind

that of the West, and in the late teens the struggle abroad to assert the uniqueness of the silent "photoplay," as opposed to the stage drama, had repercussions in Japan. There it took the form of the *jun'eiga-undō* (Pure Film Movement, 1918) initiated by a young director, the author of the first critical work on Japanese film, Kaeriyama Kyōsei (1893－1964). Kaeriyama's primary objective was to liberate the Japanese film from the conventions of the commercial theater, and he emphasized the need to recognize the importance of the screenplay and the ways in which it differed from a play written for the stage. In his own words, he regarded a detailed and well-written script as the "foundation of a film."[3] Kaeriyama applied his principles to several films he directed between 1919 and 1924; during the production of his first film, for example, he held a script reading for the entire cast and crew, a practice unprecedented in the history of the industry.[4]

The Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 further facilitated the movement to modernize Japanese film. The damage suffered by the head studios in Tokyo provided the opportunity for a major restructuring of the industry and the consequent elimination of time-worn theatrical conventions. When a vigorous popular culture arose in the wake of the disaster, the director who best responded to the new sprit of the times was a colleague of Kaeriyama's, Murata Minoru (1894－1937).

Along with Mizoguchi Kenji, Murata was among the directors transferred to the Kyoto branch of Nikkatsu after the earthquake. There he continued the reform movement begun by Kaeriyama, and he remained in close touch with his colleagues in Tokyo. Together with Kaeriyama, he continued to hold study groups and screenings of amateur films, and with the director Ushihara Kiyohiko, then working at the Kamata Shōchiku studios in Tokyo, he supervised the publication of the quarterly, *Eiga Kagaku Kenkyū* (Scientific Film Research), started in 1928.[5] Transcriptions of popular films currently being imported from Europe and Hollywood were a special feature of this quarterly, and they regularly appeared with either a forward by Murata highlighting the qualities of each script or a note on writing for the screen in general.

Murata was the head of the screenwriting department and the top director in the *gendaigeki* (contemporary film) division when Yoda entered Nikkatsu. Yoda was familiar with Murata's screenplay critiques in *Eiga Kagaku Kenkyū*; Murata remembered Yoda from a 9 1/2 mm amateur film he had seen at one of the regular screenings he sponsored with Kaeriyama. Yoda had played the part of a photographer with memorable virtuosity. In retrospect, Yoda

wonders if perhaps that was why Murata seemed to take a special interest in him.[6] The director made Yoda his personal assistant, and the young apprentice worked his way up from the bottom ranks of assistant directors to write his first scripts for Murata .

When Yoda began working with Mizoguchi in 1936, he addressed him, as his senior, with the honorific "*sensei*," or "teacher." Mizoguchi corrected Yoda, saying, "Don't call me "*sensei*." Murata's the only one you can call by that name."[7] Although Murata and Mizoguchi were rivals who had different approaches to the modernization of Japanese film, Mizoguchi had great respect for the man who played a major role in shaping his collaborator's early career.[8]

Observing Murata on the set, analyzing dramatic structure under the director's supervision, Yoda began to develop the sensitivity for realistic portrayal that later distinguished his work with Mizoguchi. In order to understand the significance of Yoda's training under Murata and the extent to which it influenced his later work, this study of Yoda Yoshikata, screenwriter, begins with an outline of the earliest stages in the development of the screenplay, leading up to the influential reforms of Kaeriyama and Murata.

"*First the Story*"

In 1896 Edison's individual "peepshow" Kinetoscope was imported to Japan. This was followed by the Vitoscope and Lumière's Cinematographe, which enabled the first public showings, and within a few years domestic films were being screened together with films imported from abroad. These earliest films, like their foreign counterparts, were only one or two reels in length. Typical subjects were street scenes, highlights from Kabuki plays, and dances performed by geisha. Most of these films were straight recordings; possibly, a few were improvised or, at most, they might have originated from an idea randomly jotted down on paper.

The first studios began springing up around 1904, and at one of these an enterprising *shōgekijō* ("small theater") manager, Makino Shōzō (1878−1929), started directing occasional one-reelers in 1907. Within two years he had discovered Japan's first popular star, Onoue Matsunosuke, and together they made a total of 168 films between 1909 and 1912, earning Makino the title of "the father of Japanese film," and the distinction of being the first Japanese director "in the Western sense of the word."[9]

Most of the films Makino made with his star were only one reel long. Nevertheless, at the rate of some fifty films a year he was working

at a phenomenal speed, often under pressure to complete a film a day.[10] This was before it was customary to make extra prints for circulation, and Makino and his crew had to shoot the same film several times in order to fulfill distribution demand. As a result, they were steadily working on the set with little time left to write out even the simplest form of continuity for each film. Instead, the director carried the plot in his head, improvising lines for the actors to repeat while the camera was running.[11] Makino's method of delivering lines in this way, called *kuchidate*, resembled the *jōruri* narration of the traditional Bunraku puppet drama.[12]

After three years of such work, Makino learned to appreciate the role of the well-prepared script. He eventually established his own production company in the twenties, and promoted the first generation of *jidaigeki* (period film) screenwriters. The scripts they wrote were particularly detailed with a strong element of psychological realism, and the writers were well rewarded for their work. At his peak of popularity Onoue Matsunosuke earned an unprecedented salary that corresponded with his tremendous success, but the salary Makino later alloted to his main writers exceeded the earnings of his most popular stars.[13] Makino summed up his production philosophy with the famous words: "First, the story; second, a clear negative; third, the action." The "father of Japanese film" did little to free the camera from the conventions of stage drama, but he was the first director to be aware of the importance of the screenplay.

From A Cheaper Form of Theater to a New Form of Art

Around the time Makino discovered Onoue in Japan, the French Film d'Art brought to the screen the great Sarah Bernhardt and other stars of the Comédie Française, and succeeded in drawing a more respectable, better educated film audience in the West. In Japan, however, movies had always enjoyed the same audience that frequented the theater, a relatively mixed crowd including the educated elite as well as the working class, an audience attracted by both the exoticism of the West and the notion that movies were a cheaper form of theater.[14]

In fact, not only were the majority of the earliest domestic films stage presentations of scenes from Kabuki, or the new and increasingly popular, nontraditional Shimpa ("new school") plays with contemporary settings, but the stage actors who starred in these films often provided the scripts as well.[15] In addition, the majority of the studio staff came from theatrical backgrounds. This was not unlike the situation in America and Europe, but in Japan

these people brought with them a multitude of highly stylized stage conventions. The static stage presentations of the Film d'Art were relatively short-lived, but the relationship between the Japanese theater and film was complex and far more enduring.

The Film d'Art also helped set the precedent in the West for longer films after 1910, and Japanese filmmakers soon followed this trend. At this point the development of the screenplay in Japan and abroad diverged as this new art form stuggled for independence from the "legitimate" stage drama.

In the West, longer films required detailed and developed scripts that contained a description of the action as well as lines of dialogue. This dialogue was mimed during the shooting and summarized on titlecards referred to as insert titles. These were, as the term implies, inserted between the appropriate scenes. In addition to lines of dialogue, they often explained action occurring off screen.

As the art of the silent film became more sophisticated, there was a tendency to move away from the use of titles. The German *Kammerspielfilme*, a strong influence on the Kyoto Nikkatsu directors in the twenties, is a notable example. Fewer titles, it was believed, brought the viewer closer to understanding the psychology of the characters, forcing him to guess their thoughts, and these somber German "chamber dramas" — described as "silent dialogues of the soul" — often had no titles at all.[16]

Fewer titles also relieved the viewer from the strain of constantly shifting from images to verbal information, often flashed on the screen at awkward moments for "as long as the less literate required to spell out the words."[17] The midteens marked the appearance of the first books in English on film technique and the virtue of the medium as art, and these early treatises stress the need to grasp the visual necessities of the screenplay with no spoken dialogue. Unanimously, they call for an understanding of the differences between the "photodrama" (or "photoplay") and the stage drama. As one author writes: "Dialogue is of the *essence* of drama. Its analogue in the photodrama — the 'caption' or 'leader' [title] — is only an *adjunct*. This distinction is fundamental."[18]

These books make it clear that in the West it was the less talented writer who failed to "cultivate the 'picture eye,'" and visualize his story in terms of the screen, resorting instead to using titles, "a much more crude way of expressing his ideas." The truly talented writer was a "cinema-composer" intent on achieving "the delineation of human character." Titles were to be avoided. They were only justified when used to explain dramatic

action that could not be depicted on screen "either because it is mechanically impossible to do so or because propriety forbids."[19] For the early writer of silent scripts in the West, the emphasis was on mastering the technique of writing in a visually expressive manner, without resorting to the nuisance of titles.

In Japan the formal development of the silent screenplay moved in a different direction. The actors' theatrical mannerisms and the heavy dependence on stage material for plot sources were problems that were shared, to an extent, with the West. However, the presence of a narrator, the *benshi*, during film presentations, and the use of female impersonators, *oyama*, instead of actresses, for example, were lingering theatrical conventions particular to Japan.

The Benshi Intervenes

Contrary to the situation in the West, the earliest Japanese films did not have titles. They did not need them. Even these brief one-reelers were accompanied by the *benshi* narrator, whose role has been compared to that of his counterpart in the traditional Bunraku theater. However, unlike the narrators of the Bunraku theater, who strictly follow the text of the play, the *benshi* were prone to improvisation.

The foreign films arriving in Japan did not come with fully developed scripts for the *benshi* to follow, although after 1910 they were given rough translations of the dialogue, or, in the case of domestic films, simple scripts.[20] Even in such cases, the *benshi* routinely elaborated on these narrative outlines in addition to providing the dialogue. That was the attraction of his performance, a "continually shifting commentary, at times objective and at times subjective."[21] Instead of strictly following the text, these "poets of darkness" (as they often referred to themselves) entertained the audience with their observations and opinions, and often prepared their own texts based on their personal interpretation of the stories.[22]

The *benshi's* presence delayed the innovations in camera movement and editing technique — the development of a cinematic language — being explored abroad, because Japanese filmmakers could rely on him to smooth out any narrative ambiguity in their stories.[23] In the same manner, although longer, more complex stories required written scripts prepared in advance, there was less demand for these scripts to be detailed or elaborately constructed due to the nature of the *benshi's* performance. In short, the *benshi's* presence helped weaken the importance given to the screenplay during production.

In the studio, the director read the lines of dialogue aloud, and the actors were expected to repeat them in a manner similar to Makino's use of *kuchidate*. This procedure was necessary because the hectic shooting schedule made it impossible for the actors to remember their lines from one film to the next.[24] The director was also responsible for making sure the actors repeated their lines properly so they would later match the *benshi's* narration without too much discrepancy. Apparantly this was not as easy as might be expected. The actors on the whole were not concerned with giving faithful deliveries that would never be heard.[25] They were more interested in blocking out their actions (this was not as yet the exclusive responsibility of the director,[26] and consequently, it is unlikely such directions were mentioned in the continuity script), and they often could be seen joking, playing pranks, or muttering curses at the director during the shooting.[27]

During his presentation the *benshi* narrated the dialogue, called *kagezerifu* ("lines in the dark"), changing the pitch of his voice to portray the various characters, including women, in an attempt to simulate their emotions.[28] This technique, *kowairo*, dated back to the Genroku period (1968−1703), when the term was used for the custom of imitating an actor's rendition of his most memorable lines.

In the beginning, this *kowairo* was performed by a group of several narrators, and sometimes even the actors themselves sat behind the screen and delivered their lines alongside the *benshi*, who provided the explanatory narration. Gradually, however, the presence of a single narrator performng both functions became more common, and their popularity grew to the extent that their billing often upstaged that of the film's star. Neither the director nor the screenwriter had much presence or authority, and they were increasingly of the opinion that their positions would not change as long as the *benshi* continued to enjoy both power and popularity.

Filmmakers believed one way to override the *benshi's* perfomance was to use titles more frequently to tell the story.[29] As a result, early Japanese screenwriters began to experiment with titles at the same time writers abroad were devising means to eliminate them.[30] In Japan, however, this sudden concern with titles brought about a change in the function of the prepared script. Responsibility for narrative cohesiveness was no longer left in the hands of the *benshi*. Writers began to concern themselves with maintaining a balance between the verbal and visual elements of the story. Then they began to devise rhythmic patterns with the frequency of titles, or, for example, to use them for emphasis at dramatic moments.[31] The first step had been taken toward

achieving a cinematic screenplay with firm dramatic structure, realistic characterization, and dialogue that formed an integral part of the plot.

In the end, however, the institution of the *benshi* represented more a phase of development for the screenplay than a stubborn obstacle to overcome. For one thing, as films became more sophisticated, the *benshi's* performance did too, and popular narrators like Tokugawa Musei gradually replaced the histrionic *kowairo* with a more subdued, thoughtful style of commentary. In fact, the *benshi* was to remain an integral part of the film industry until the arrival of sound.[32]

The benshi's presence was only one aspect of the commercial theater's influence on the early development of the film industry. The proximity of the theater was a crucial factor in the founding of the first studios, and assured the solvency of the industry in its infancy; in one way or another, it continued to influence the subject matter of films being made throughout the first three decades of domestic film production.

From Shimpa Daihigeki to Gendaigeki

From the very beginning, the people who wandered into the movies from the theatrical world naturally turned to the most familiar material available as sources: stock pieces from the commercial theater. At the turn of the century, Japanese commercial theater was divided between the traditional Kabuki drama and a new form of theater, the Shimpa ("new school") drama, which first appeared around 1890 with plays based on contemporary plots. This distinction between classical and modern drama was observed in the film industry as well: "*Shimpa*" came to refer to films with contemporary settings, while the term "Kyūha" ("old school") was coined for costume dramas. The tendency to draw source material from both Kabuki and Shimpa survived even as the demand for longer films increased; as a result, even today Japanese films are divided into the two megagenres of period films (*jidaigeki*) and contemporary films (gendaigeki).

The first major Japanese production company was founded in 1909, when the four main studios then in existence merged to form the Nippon Katsudō Shashin (Japan Cinematograph Company), later shortened to Nikkatsu. By 1912 this company had four studios, two each in Tokyo and Kyoto. Every month four contemporary films were made in Tokyo, the heart of modern Japan and the home of the Shimpa theater, and four period films were made at the branch studios in Kyoto, where the majority of the staff was from the Kabuki stage, and the narrow streets and old buildings provided perfect locations for

costume drama. These films were then released in double billings of one "*Shimpa*" and one "Kyūha" film each.[33] This neat division between the two cities continued until 1923, when the damage caused by the earthquake forced the main studios in Tokyo to transfer part of their contemporary film staff to Kyoto.

In Kyoto, the period film gradually evolved from *kyūgeki* ("old drama") to *jidaigeki*. By the 1920s, for example, Makino's films had developed from staged dramas made with second-rate Kabuki actors to films based on the original screenplays of Susukita Rokuhei, who adaptated his own popular novels to become the first original author in that genre and, later, the first freelance screenwriter in the industry. In addition, period film director and writer Itō Daisuke perfected the use of titles, called "spoken titles," easing the transition to the "talkie" screenplay when sound films became standard in the 1930s.[34]

The contemporary film script being used in Tokyo was greatly influenced by the innovations in Kyoto, but the genre itself followed a different course of development as intellectuals like Kaeriyama and Murata emphasized the fundamental need to break away from the influence of the stylized Shimpa drama. The Shingeki ("new theater") movement, an attempt to modernize contemporary drama that was Japan's response to Ibsen and his contemporaries' realist reforms in Europe, was the catalyst in gradually phasing out Shimpa's overwhelming presence in the Tokyo studios.

Kabuki had been the dominant form of theater until the end of the nineteenth century, but in the midst of the cultural revolution that rapidly introduced Westernization to Japan toward the end of the Meiji period, there was a new demand for plays that corresponded to the changing society. The Shimpa theater emerged in response to this demand. Beginning with a repertory of political plays based on recent events, the contemporary nature of this new form of theater was its main attraction. The repertory soon expanded to include works inspired by European drama and literature, and it gradually came to share the popularity that formerly belonged to Kabuki alone.

Shimpa was the first attempt to portray a modern Japan on stage, and because the plays were written in colloquial language and borrowed source material from abroad it was regarded, at the time, as a "more Western" form of drama. However, it still retained several conventions of the traditional theater. For one, although Shimpa reintroduced actresses to the stage after a ban of about three hundred years, it continued to feature female impersonators. These female impersonators survived the transition to film, and the appearance of

actresses did not become a standard practice in the studios until the demand for naturalistic acting reached a peak in the early 1920s, forcing the *oyama* off the screen. In addition, Shimpa was based on a star system similar to that of Kabuki, and this custom also prevailed on the set. What Shimpa did introduce to film was the sentimental love tragedy in a contemporary setting, and because of their sad, melodramatic nature, these films were soon being referred to as *Shimpa daihigeki* ("great tragedies").[35]

The majority of Shimpa plays adapted to the screen were about star-crossed lovers whose happiness is prevented by their different social classes, or whose marriage (according to choice, not convenience) is thwarted by outside forces beyond their control. Whatever the situation, in the end there is no choice but to sacrifice their love.[36]

This was done in moving scenes of renunciation as the lovers resigned themselves to their fate, as, for example, "... a handsome young man, faced with the woman he loves, refrains from forcefully taking her in his arms, instead standing at a slight distance and kissing her forehead as he tells her why they must renounce their love."[37] Such sweet sentimentalism was popular with the general public, but the stylized mannerisms of the Shimpa actors, retaining so many traditional conventions absorbed from Kabuki, did little to advance the development of a modern screen narrative.

After 1905, however, a new, more realistic form of drama appeared that challanged the popularity of Shimpa, and, consequently, its predominance on screen. Shingeki, the "new theater," began with the study and translation of Western dramatic works, primarily Scandinavian, Russian, French, and German plays, by two groups of naturalist writers and theater scholars: the *Bungei Kyōkai* (Literary Society), founded in 1905 and the *Ibsen Kai* (Ibsen Society), formed in 1907. In 1909 a member of the *Ibsen Kai*, Osanai Kaoru, founded the first theater and company for the presentation of these works, and the *Bungei Kyōkai* began staging its own productions two years later.

From a movement to promote the translation of Western drama, Shingeki became an experiment in staging actual productions of these plays — an experiment because such drama was not expected to be popular with the Japanese audience. It is true that the movement was never as financially stable as Kabuki, being a noncommercial endeavor addressed to an elite group of people, but it did succeed in revitalizing the domestic contemporary drama; it was only a matter of time before Japanese authors were writing original works inspired by the productions at Osanai's *Jiyū Gekijō* ("Free Theater").

As a dramatic movement, Shingeki greatly influenced the development of the screenplay as well. In attracting intellectuals to the contemporary Japanese theater, it also drew their attention to the potential of the domestic film for the first time;[38] as long as the *Kyūgeki* and Shimpa *daihigeki* dominated the industry, film-goers were divided in their preferences, with the intellectuals who looked toward the West during this period of rapid modernization patronizing the theaters showing imported films. Now these intellectuals turned to the West for inspiration in their attempt to modernize the contemporary Japanese film, just as they had looked to Western drama in order to reform the contemporary theater.

In particular, between 1910 and 1921, a vast number of the films imported to Japan introduced the advancements taking place abroad: first, Italian historical epics like *Cabiria* (with a script by the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio) and Chaplin's comedies, then films like Griffith's *Intolerance* — perhaps the most influential of all with its elaborate cross-editing and complex camerawork — and the German expressionist masterpiece, *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*.[39] While these foreign films were enjoying tremendous success with the Japanese audience and winning praise in the film criticism first appearing at the time, the native film was not only ignored, but scorned outright by a large portion of the audience, the educated elite. In time, they began to take the situation in their own hands. As Satō Tadao points out:

> The fact that Japanese films were rubbish compared to foreign films was common knowledge for all intellectuals from middle school students on up. The majority of intellectuals in Japan had no desire to see Japanese films until the mid-1920s. An intellectual who watched Japanese movies was either someone who was just crazy about movies, or an eccentric. Consequently, people who attended Japanese films were made fun of as "snotty-nosed little boys" or "nannies." The film companies didn't think it was necessary to use the fancy techniques seen in foreign films for such people. Instead, finding it more profitable to make many films cheaply, they forced studios with a minium number of employees to produce so many films they had no time to think of what they were doing. However, as the industry gradually expanded, the number of employees increased, and people dissatisfied with the way things were being done began filtering into the studios. They were the force that started to change this system from the inside.[40]

By the 1920s, this revolutionary "inside force" of intellectuals approached

the modernization of Japanese film from several directions. The reforms promoted by the intellectuals who led the Shingeki movement included the introduction of psychological realism to replace Shimpa's stylized romanticism with a modern, colloquial style of writing dialogue, a natural acting style, and the exclusive use of actresses. When such members of the movement as Osanai Kaoru and Murata Minoru moved into the film world in the early twenties they continued to push for these changes there as well. At the same time, young intellectuals not directly involved with the theater, like Kaeriyama Kyōsei, supported the application of similar realist reforms; Kaeriyama in particular proposed techniques gleaned from the American and European film literature that was beginning to be published at the time. Finally, the American film industry's sudden boom in production after World War I lured a number of young film hopefuls to Hollywood, and they brought news of the latest production techniques when they returned to Japan. The *Shimpa daihigeki* laid the foundation for the modern melodrama and influenced important directors like Mizoguchi, but by 1925 these stylized, romantic tragedies were being crowded out by the demand for greater realism on the screen.

Note: This paper is part of the introductory chapter to a study on the career of screenwiter Yoda Yoshikata.

NOTES

1. Satō Tadao, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," in *Nihon eiga no tanjō*, vol. 1 of *Kōza: Nihon eiga*, eds. Imamura Shōhei, Satō Tadao, Shindō Kaneto, Tsurumi Shunsuke, and Yamada Yōji (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1985), p.40; Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1982), p.42.
2. Yoda Yoshikata, *Mizoguchi Kenji no hito to geijutsu* (Tokyo: Tabata Shoten, 1970), p.36, 38.
3. Kaeriyama Kyōsei, *Katsudō shashingeki no sōsaku to satsuei hō*, 2d ed. (Tokyo: Seikōsha, 1921), p.41.
4. Sato, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," p.35.
5. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 20 March 1988.
6. Yoda, *Mizoguchi Kenji*, p.32.
7. Yoda Yoshikata, "Kantoku Murata Minoru," in *Musei eiga no kansei*, vol.2 of *Kōza: Nihon eiga* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1986), p.213.
8. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.

9. Richie and Anderson, *Japanese Film*, p.31. It has been pointed out, however, that in his early career Makino's role was really no more than that of a theater company manager, which was his job prior to entering films. See Yoda, "Kantoku Murata Minoru," p.214.
10. Richie and Anderson, *Japanese Film*, p.32.
11. Shindō Kaneto, "Shinario tanjō zengo," in *Nihon eiga no tanjō*, vol.1 of *Kōza: Nihon eiga* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1985) p.176.
12. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
13. Shindō Kaneto, "Ichi suji, ni nuke, san yakusha," in *Musei eiga no kansei*, vol.2 of *Kōza: Nihon eiga* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1986) p.154.
14. Richie and Anderson, *Japanese Film*, p.22; Iwasaki Akira, "An Outline of the Japanese Cinema, *Japan Film Yearbook 1936*, p.2.
15. Richie and Anderson, *Japanese Film*, p.27.
16. Lotte H. Eisner, *The Haunted Screen* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1973), p.179, 206.
17. Roger Manvell, "Screenwriting," *The International Encyclopedia of Film* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1975), p.450.
18. William Morgan Hannon, *The Photodrama: Its Place Among the Fine Arts* (New Orleans: Ruskin Press, 1915), p.38.
19. G.A. Atkinson, *The Art of Photo-Play Writing* (London: McBride, Nast and Co., 1916), p.39.
20. Richie and Anderson, *The Japanese Film*, pp.24－25; Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
21. Donald Kirihara, "A Reconsideration of the Institution of the Benshi," unpublished manuscript, n.d., p.13 (in author's possession).
22. Joseph L. Anderson, "Second and Third Thoughts about the Japanese Film," Richie Anderson, *The Japanese Film*, p.439.
23. Noel Burch, *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema*," (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1979), p.79.
24. Satō, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," p.31.
25. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
26. Richie and Anderson, *The Japanese Film*, p.27.
27. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
28. Iwamoto Kenji, "Japanese Movie Narrators (Benshi) and Montage," unpublished lecture, May 1973.
29. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
30. Richie and Anderson, *The Japanese Film*, p.46; see also Burch, *To the Distant Observer*, p.79.

31. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
32. The benshi never disappeared completely. Even today it is possible to enjoy performances, primarily at libraries and civic centers. The most active contemporary benshi, Matsuda Shunsui, has at least one young disciple whose public performances include narrating televised broadcasts of silent films, and video tapes of silent Japanese classics narrated by Matsuda himself are also available.
33. Satō, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," p.23.
34. Personal interview with Yoda Yoshikata, 21 June 1988.
35. Satō, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," p.23.
36. Satō, "Théâtre et cinéma au Japon'" in *Cinéma et littérature au Japon: de l'ère Meiji á nos jours*, ed. Max Tessier (Paris: Editions du Céntre Pompidou, 1986), p.35.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., 36–37.
39. *Cabiria* (1914) opened in Japan in 1916; *Intolerance* (1916) opened in 1919; Dr. *Caligari* (1919) opened in 1921.
40. Satō, "Nihon eiga no seiritsu-shita dodai," p.33. At the time mandatory education was only until 12 years old; therefore a middle school student would be considered a member of the educated elite.