

RESEARCH PORTFOLIO:

**THE REBEL, THE RETAINER & THE WANDERED: AN ANALYSIS OF THE
JAPANESE RONIN IN JIDAGEKI CINEMA**

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ABSTRACT:

The *ronin* figure, the master-less samurai, in Japanese period dramas known as *jidageki*, provides interesting insight into Japanese social and political opinion during the vital changes in Japan in between the 1920s to the 1960s. During this period, there was a flux in the representation of the *ronin*, especially in regards to the ronin's attitude towards authority, suggesting that major events such as the Great Kanto Earthquake, the Pacific War and the American Occupation had a lasting effect on Japanese filmmakers. With a focus on *Orochi* (Futagawa, 1925), *The Loyal 47 Ronin* (Mizoguchi, 1941) and *Yojimbo* (Kurosawa, 1961), this case study will examine and analyse the representation of the *ronin* and its development in relation to the historical and political context in which these films were released. It will begin by discussing Japanese culture and customs, with key scholarship addressing Japanese cinema. This will later contribute to the understanding of the textual analysis of these films. These texts will also aid in analysing the films with a more Japanese perspective, whilst attempting to avoid a western orientalist gaze. Further, these analyses, along with the work of other Japanese film scholars, will be compared alongside a Japanese historic timeline in order to draw links between the change in the *ronin*'s representation and the major historical events.

WORD COUNT: 215

RESEARCH REPORT:**Thesis:**

This study will determine whether the representation of the *ronin* in Japanese *jidaigeki* cinema from the 1920s to the 1960s is an important indicator of Japanese societal, political and cultural views and opinions, and if its portrayal evolves as the historical contexts transform and change. This dissertation will locate time periods in which the *ronin*'s representation drastically changes and connect this development with Japanese historical and political discourse of the same time period. The thesis of this dissertation will argue that the representation of the *ronin* has changed and developed over time due to Japanese filmmakers attempting to express certain opinions in the midst of social anxiety, sometimes even against Japanese norms and the status quo. Thus making the *ronin* figure a symbolic allegory, consciously created by directors to counteract to political and historical changes. The argument will be formed through a textual analysis of the *ronin* and its development in *jidaigeki* films *Orochi* (Futagawa, 1925), *The Loyal 47 Ronin* (Mizoguchi, 1941) and *Yojimbo* (Kurosawa, 1961). Research conducted into the political and historical contexts of the 1920s through to the 1960s will further the argument as it will be used to assess if the *ronin*'s development in its representation is connected to the major events in Japanese modern history. Further, the Japanese and the American Occupation's censorship in regards to the *ronin* figure provides an interesting insight into the government's views on what the *ronin* represented for Japanese filmmakers and spectators, which furthers the argument that the *ronin* is an indicator of social opinion whilst revealing that self-expression was a threat to the Japanese and

Occupational government of that time.

Chosen Films:

In order to examine a forty year time scale in such a small word count, this dissertation will split its research into three time periods: the pre-war era (1920s-1930s), during the Pacific War and the American Occupation (1940s-early 1950s), and post-war (1950s-1960s). Each of these three time periods represent the three major changes and developments in the *ronin*'s representation: the notorious rebel fighting against social norms, the ever loyal and self-sacrificing retainer and the lone wanderer, a unique hybrid of Japanese traditions and Western influence.

Three core films were needed to represent each time of the three periods and each of the three different *ronin*. When selecting these texts, it was important that they were *jidaigeki*, "films set in the feudal past" which the majority "are set in the Tokugawa period" (Thornton, 2008: 13). Further, the main character had to be *ronin*, a *benshi* who is not in service, as opposed to a samurai – a *benshi* who is in service (2008: 16).

Orochi is one of the first Japanese films that broke "the superhero mold [within Japanese cinema] with a master-less samurai loner protagonist..." who was as "prone to human frailty as anyone" (McDonald, 2006: 4). *Orochi* will be the provider of core evidence of the *ronin*'s first major change in its representation as well as evidence into filmmakers' anxiety around the 1920s, when the rebellious and human *ronin* first appeared in Japanese cinema. This argument, and *Orochi*'s analysis, will be supported by similar evidence of the unusual *ronin* protagonist found in *Humanity*

and *Paper Balloons* (Yamanaka, 1937) and *Zanjin Zamba Ken* (Daisuki, 1930).

The *Loyal 47 Ronin* was chosen for analysis of the “loyal follower” of the 1940s propaganda films, as it was a retelling of a classic Japanese story that has been adapted over the centuries. This dissertation will conduct a comparative analysis of the differences between Mizoguchi’s *The Loyal 47 Ronin* and the previous adaptations of the Japanese tale *Chushingura* that the film is based on, whilst examining the drastic change from Mizoguchi’s film work, prior to *The Loyal 47 Ronin*. This will provide an insightful framework on how the Pacific War effected the representation of the *ronin* and its consequences on filmmakers and spectators.

Yojimbo will be used the core text for the analysis of the lone wanderer in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as there is a significant amount scholarly framework and research around Akira Kurosawa, many sources were readily available for this film unlike the two previous core films mentioned. Kurosawa’s image, according to Yoshimoto (2000), is complex due to the fact he is seen as the most westernised Japanese director whilst also representing a national identity that Noel Burch (1979) often refers to as “Japaneseness”. *Yojimbo*’s textual analysis will support the argument that the *ronin* has yet again developed as a consequence of the Pacific War, American Occupation and Japan’s financial crisis. This will be further supported by *Harakiri* (Kobayashi, 1962), a film which also represents the *ronin* as a mysterious wander whose morals and intentions are not as black and white to the spectator as it had previously been in Japanese cinema.

Research Methods:

This dissertation textually analyses *Orochi*, *The Loyal 47 Ronin* and *Yojimbo* in order to understand the changes in the representation of the *ronin* figure alongside Japan's history, society and culture. Looking at these films both in narrative and form, this dissertation will be using Yoshiko Okuyama's *Japanese Mythology in Film* (2015) to understand the semiotic and mythology of Japanese films in order to decipher meanings from the mise-en-scene. The study of mythology is essential when deciphering meaning through textual analysis because "myths can teach us how the members of a cultural group are expected to behave and deal with values such as ethic altruism, and compassion within their community... these myths help the outsider understand the meanings of culture-specific behaviours and events." (Okuyama 2015: 32). Further, Donald Richie's "Viewing Japanese Film: Some Consideration" (1986) and Keiko McDonald's *Reading a Japanese Film* (2006) provide insightful guides on how to reading a Japanese film, especially in regards to film form, with McDonald simultaneously putting these guidelines into practice using her own textual readings of Japanese films as examples. With these pieces of scholarships in mind, as well as works by pioneers such as Noel Burch, Catherine Russell and Isolde Standish, an accurate textual analysis from these Japanese films can be conducted in order to understand Japan as a culture and a society.

Theoretical Background:

This dissertation will use textual film analysis to understand another nation's culture, politics and history. Therefore, film theory was not as essential as research conducted into Japanese society, specifically social norms, codes and conduct. Using Kurt Singer's *Mirror, Sword and Jewel* (1973) to pinpoint Japanese ideologies, characteristics and symbolism and using Ian Buruma's *A Japanese Mirror* (1994) to understand Japanese traditions and taboos, this dissertation will be able to decipher a clear and accurate meaning from the films concerned.

Research into the history of Japan is essential for understanding the contexts and conditions in which these films were released in. Starting with John Clement's *A Brief History of the Samurai* (2010), this dissertation uses this source to understand the samurai and the *ronin*'s role throughout history and pop culture. This dissertation then uses Richard Storry's *A History of Modern Japan* (1960) to construct a timeline of events between the 1920s to the 1960s in order to link the changes in the *ronin*'s representations with historical changes. Though Storry's scholarship on Japan is a pioneering piece of work, it has gaps within its research, especially in regards to political changes within modern Japanese history; Elise K. Tipton's *Modern Japan* (2008) fills in those holes as well as expanding on how major events in modern Japan's history effected different classes of Japanese.

With knowledge of Japanese culture, society and history, which was obtained through the pieces of scholarship mentioned, accurate textual readings of *Orochi*, *The Loyal 47 Ronin* and *Yojimbo* were conducted.

Research Problems & Dilemmas:

Due to this dissertation analysing another nation's history, society, culture and art, there is a limited amount of access to research sources, especially Japanese films prior to the Pacific War. As stated previously, this dissertation will aim to avoid an orientalist perspective, therefore Japanese scholarship must take priority over western. However, it must be noted that there is a lack of Japanese sources that have been translated into English. Due to this, even with a conscious awareness, this dissertation may end up looking at Japan and its cinema through an outsider's gaze.

Proposed Structure:Introduction:

The introduction will propose the thesis and methodology of the dissertation. It will then introduce key concepts in Japanese culture and society, which will be vital in understanding the findings in the textual analysis of the films discussed. This will then link to the samurai and the *ronin*, defining what they are and how they play a part in Japanese culture. This will include an introduction into their development through history, including in film. The introduction will then briefly discuss the origins and history of Japanese cinema. This will be followed by key Japanese film scholar Donald Richie's research on how to read Japanese cinema as a Westerner as each film is introduced with the layout of each chapter to come.

Chapter 1: The Rebel

This chapter will discover why *ronin* are represented in Japanese cinema as rebellious and defiant in the late 1920s through to the 1930s compared to the traditional feudal Japan samurai portrayed in early Japanese cinema and Kabuki theatre.

In this chapter, the dissertation will briefly re-establish some of Japanese cinema history mentioned in the introduction with a timeline of major events that happens in the 1920s and 1930s, including the Prime Minister Hara Takashi's assassination, The Great Kanto Earthquake and the passing of the Peace Preservation Law. It will then undertake a textual analysis of *Orochi*, using previous Japanese films and kabuki theatre plays to do a comparative study of the changes in representation from the ever-loyal samurai to the rebellious *ronin* of the late 1920s.

Chapter 2: The Retainer

This chapter will answer the question of how the Japanese military government and the Pacific War effected the representation of *ronin* in Japanese films in the 1940s.

This chapter will first introduce origins of the well-known Japanese tale *Chushingura*, which *The Loyal 47 Ronin* is based on, whilst examining examples of variations in adaptations of this story. This will then lead to a comparative study of these versions of *Chushingura* and Mizoguchi's *The Loyal 47 Ronin*. This will be used to argue that the Japanese military government that took over in 1940 used filmmakers to promote their propaganda and feudalistic views. This will be further supported by the sudden break in Mizoguchi's usual central theme of female

struggle in regards to conformity. This is prominent in the sudden change of the more liberal version of the *ronin* to the now self-sacrificing retainer.

This chapter will conclude with the laws and rules upheld by the American Occupation, starting in 1945 and how this affected the film industry and filmmakers.

Chapter 3: The Wanderer.

This chapter will deduct how the American Occupation and its long-lasting effects changed the representation of the *ronin* during the post-war period of the 1950s and 1960s. This chapter will continue on from chapter 2 in relation to the effects of the American Occupation on filmmakers and how it has had a long-lasting effect through the 1950s and 1960s. This will then lead to the textual analysis of *Yojimbo*, and how it represents a nostalgic look at Japan's past as well as a more liberal and human portrayal of the *ronin*, like the one in the 1920s to 1930s, but less aggressive and anti-authoritarian. The chapter will then discuss similarities between the *ronin* and the cowboy, using *Harakiri* as another text to support this argument.

The chapter will conclude with the concept of the wandering *ronin* now being a hybrid of the rebel and the retainer – this will also provide a counter argument into David Desser's Post Samurai Film structure (1992).

Conclusion:

The conclusion will summarise the answers to the questions in the three chapters. It will then continue on to other possible areas of study whilst also pointing out a possible counter argument to Chapter 3's conclusion using the film *Sword of Doom* (Okamoto, 1966) as evidence of not all *jidaigeki* films of the 1950s-60s represent the *ronin* as a lone wanderer. This will further argue that there is the potential for other

exceptions to the structure and rules this dissertation has established.

Contribution to the Field:

According to Yoshimoto, American Scholarship on Japanese cinema can be divided into three phases: “(1) humanistic celebration of great auteurs and Japanese culture in the 1960s, (2) formalistic and Marxist celebration of Japanese cinema as an alternative to the classical Hollywood cinema in the 1970s, and (3) critical reexamination of the preceding approaches through the introduction of discourse of Otherness and cross cultural analysis in the 1980s.” (2000: 8). Catherine Russell expands on this saying, “it wasn’t until the 1990s that film scholarship took up a more historical inquiry into the cultural contexts of these classics” (2011: XIV), and at the beginning of the millennium scholars such as Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto and Isolde Standish began to criticise previous Japanese film scholarship on their orientalist perspectives. This dissertation does not aim to create new wave of Japanese film scholarship, nor does it attempt to compare Japanese cinema to Western cinema in order to highlight differences within culture and society, as has occurred throughout western scholarship on Japanese film. This dissertation is not a celebration of Japanese cinema and its “Japaneseness”, nor does it entail a full critique on previous scholarship, but instead a critical reflection with a simplistic, yet straight forward, approach. This dissertation simply attempts to read and analyse Japanese cinema, along-side Japan’s history and politics, as a means of understanding Japanese filmmakers, spectators and expression. As Yoshiko Okuyama says, “a narrative is a centuries-old way of making sense of our experiences.” (2015: 36),

and this dissertation aims to make sense of Japanese experience in Japanese
modern history

WORD COUNT: 2144

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BURCH, Noël. 1979. *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in Japanese Cinema*. United States: University of California Press.

Burch introduces Japanese Cinema to the West through comparative analysis of Japanese and Western cinema. Burch states that Japanese Cinema is not entirely unique, as previously thought, and that Japanese filmmakers have borrowed and adapted various Western film techniques. Using Western examples in order to understand form and meaning in Japanese cinema, Burch manages to give a comprehensive guide for western spectators to understand Japanese cinema as well and its history and origins linking to kabuki theatre.

Even though this book has been criticised for being engaged in “orientalist project”, (Yoshimoto, 2000: 20) it is a vital piece of research for this dissertation due to it Burch being a leading pioneer “who reinvigorated an academic study of Japanese cinema in the late 1970s” (Yoshimoto 2000: 1).

BURUMA, Ian. 1994. *A Japanese Mirror: Heroes and Villains in Japanese Culture*. London: Phoenix.

Ian Buruma examines the social norms and codes within Japanese society, pinpointing traditions, taboos and major differences between Japanese and Western life and culture.

Chapter Nine, ‘The Loyal Retainers’ (p150-166), is essential for this dissertation because Buruma addresses the concept of loyalty within Japanese society, stating

that every Japanese is born in debt to some high force, be it his ancestors, his parents or, before the end of World War Two, the emperor. Buruma indicates that “life in Japan is ruled by these mutual debts and obligations” (p150) and that this debt by birthright is known as ‘*on*’.

Burma demonstrates the concept of ‘*on*’ through the story of well-known Japanese tale *Chushingura* as well as the various media adaptations of it, revealing that though the story has many variations in never strays from this sense of duty that comes with ‘*on*’. This will be used to discuss Mizoguchi’s 1941 *The 47 Loyal Ronin* in Chapter Two of this dissertation.

CLEMENTS, Jonathan. 2010. *A brief history of the Samurai: A new history of the warrior elite*. London: Robinsons.

A modern take on Samurai history, from the birth of the first samurai in the seventh century, who were born out of loyal servants, to the death of the samurai with the fall of the Republic of Ezo in 19th century. Unlike most other Samurai introductory sources, Clements examines both the factual and the fictional tales of the warrior society often using comparisons in western culture to convey his points. Clements concludes with a chapter analysing the samurai as a mythical symbol, as opposed to an historical figure, and links it to the rise in jidaigeki films and its influences in both Eastern and Western pop culture. This source will enhance this dissertation as it provides historical evidence of who and what the *ronin* was in reality compared to the mythical figure portrayed in jidaigeki films.

DESSER, David. 1992. 'Towards a Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai'. In Arthur Jr. NOLLETTTO and David DESSER (eds.). *Reframing Japanese Cinema: authorship, genre, history*. United States: Indiana University Press, 145–164.

David Desser categorises postwar samurai films into four groups: The Nostalgia Samurai Film, The Anti-Feudal Drama, Zen Fighters and The Sword Film. The Nostalgia Samurai Drama often embodies the Japanese sentiment of *mono-no-aware* (the feeling of a sweet and pleasurable sadness in one's mortality), which is often represented through the struggle of the ronin. The Anti-Feudal Drama was a rebirth of the Rebel Samurai subgenre, mentioned by Lisa Spalding in the same book, where filmmakers represented Japanese confusion and angst through the *ronin* who refused their fate and fought back against authority. The Zen fighters moved away from the noble yet tragic death of the samurai towards a more hopeful image of success. Finally, The Sword Film are the films which share elements with the Western Genre, such as guns(swords)-for-hire and using settings as a backdrop for stand-offs. Though Desser states that many samurai films will blend into multiple categories, he does fail to set clear boundaries and criteria for the subgenres, often confusing the reader by mentioning the same films in every category. This dissertations will use its own findings as a counter argument to Desser's four categories.

FANU, Le Mark. 2005. *Mizoguchi and Japan*. London: British Film Institute.

Mizoguchi and Japan is the first full-length study for over twenty years on acclaimed director Kenji Mizoguchi, focusing on his connection to the film industry in relation to the modern history of Japan as well as analyzing major themes and techniques within his work linking them to his own personal life and traumas.

One of the main focuses in Fanu's book is Mizoguchi's female protagonists, and their struggles in a male dominated society as they battle with their sense of duty and their personal feelings; a Japanese concept known as *giri-ninjo*. This study is vital to this dissertation due to the fact that *The Loyal 47 Ronin* breaks away from Mizoguchi's usual central theme of questioning conformity through female characters. As Fanu states, "women are the centre of Mizoguchi's art, so they were at the centre of his existence," (p23) which raises questions on why the sudden break from his usual themes and motives? This can be used to support the argument that *The Loyal 47 Ronin* was a film produced with the intention of using it as propaganda to enforce obedience within Japanese citizens during the Pacific War.

KYOKO, Hirano. 1992. *Mr Smith goes to Tokyo under American Occupation, 1945-1952*. London: Smithsonian Institution press.

Mr Smith goes to Tokyo examines the effects of censorship on Japanese films, focusing mostly on the occupational period 1945 to 1952 but also dwelling upon prewar time censorship. Kyoko examines both the negative and positive impact of censorship. He suggests that the American government gave back Japanese

filmmakers their freedom of speech by abolishing the Peace Preservation law of 1925 whilst simultaneously restricting filmmakers by introducing a list of 13 forbidden subjects that banned feudal, yet still very Japanese, themes and traditions.

This is a vital source for this dissertation as censorship is often used as a political tool, especially in the case of the ronin figure who has been heavily censored and even banned throughout the years.

MCDONALD, Keiko. 2006. *Reading a Japanese Film: Cinema in Context*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Keiko McDonald educates spectators in great depth on how to textually read and analyses a Japanese film. In her introduction, McDonald contextualizes historically the approaches to film analysis, whilst introducing the different aspects and contexts one must consider when analysing Japanese cinema. Further, McDonald applies her theories to sixteen different Japanese films, ranging from the greats by Kurosawa and Ozu to the younger generation of directors, providing in depth examples of textual analysis.

MUELLER, Eddy Von. 2000. 'Naked Swords: The Zen Warrior Tradition and the Intertextual Odyssey of the Nameless Ronin in Seven Samurai, Yojimbo, and Sanjuro'. *Essays in Film and Humanities*, 20(1), 53–67. Available at: [Accessed 2 October 2015].

Eddy Von. Mueller links Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, *Yojimbo*, and *Sanjuro* to the concept of Zen, looking specifically at the ronin figure. Though Mueller does not quote David Desser's 'Towards a Structural Analysis of the Postwar Samurai' (1992: 145-164), a chapter in which he defines four types of postwar Samurai films, this article acts as an expansion to Desser's work on the Zen Fighter films.

Mueller examines the problematic image of the Samurai due to the Pacific War and its aftermath; Samurai films that represented Japan's barbaric past and its martial traditions, according the Americans in the occupation, is what led the Japanese to war. Mueller focuses on Kurosawa's films and how he reclaimed the samurai figure by divorcing the samurai from its association with bloodshed and war, and reroots the Buddhist foundations of *bushido* (the warrior's way) within a uniquely Japanese tradition. By doing this Kurosawa finds the key to this metamorphosis within zen, "a Japanese innovation in Buddhism which paradoxically, historically encompassed both the goal of peace and the craft of war" (p55).

OKUYAMA, Yoshiko. 2015. *Japanese Mythology in Film: A semiotic approach to reading Japanese film and anime*. London: Lexington Books.

A modern take on how to textually analyse film, including Japanese films, through signs, semiotics and mythology. Yoshiko Okuyama gives a detailed definition of

what semiotics whilst simultaneously focusing on some of the issues one should consider when doing a textual analysis, For example, one must consider who the spectator is, their background and surroundings, and also cultural and political factors which and how these factors can potentially change the reading of the text; “To interpret these [Japanese] mythological signifiers, one must understand the typical Japanese mindset” (p31). This dissertation refers to this source to conduct its own textual analysis of Japanese films, whilst using it to understand Japanese mythology and how it applies to its nation’s cinema.

RICHIE, Donald. 1986. ‘Viewing Japanese Film: Some Consideration’. *East-West Film Journal*, 1(1), 23–35.

Donald Richie is a pioneer Japanese Film scholarship, who first began his writings on Japanese cinema when he first visited Japan in 1947, during the American Occupation.

This article describes the major differences in Western Cinema and Japanese Cinema, and how western audiences often misread the messages within Japanese cinema due to the gap in culture. Richie focuses on cultural and social differences whilst deciphering meaning in Japanese cinema in regards to film technique and narrative. Through this article, a western spectator can accurately understand and analyse meaning within a Japanese film, with the cultural and societal understanding of the contexts of the film.

RICHIE, Donald. 1990. *Japanese Cinema: An Introduction*. 1st ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Richie gives a brief, yet detailed, recount of the history of Japanese cinema. The first chapter focuses on the beginning of Japanese cinema and its origins to Kabuki Theatre whilst breaking the misconception that Japan was unaware of Western cinema by describing the film techniques the Japanese adopted from the West. In chapter 2, Richie introduces Shin Jidaigeki, new period films from the 1920s and 1930s which often embed political statements within the traditional Jidaigeki genre. Chapter 3 concentrates the military's influence in 1940s Japanese Cinema and the list of 13 forbidden subjects that were introduced by the Americans during the Occupation. Richie then goes onto cover how well-known Japanese directors such as Kurosawa rose during the postwar, keeping jidaigeki films alive. This source is incredibly useful due to its pioneering work on Japanese film scholarship, as proven by how often it is referenced throughout in this dissertation's bibliography sources.

RICHIE, Donald. 2005. *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film (revised)*. London: Kodansha International.

A further and more up to date expansion on the previous book mentioned, but covering all aspects of Japanese cinema but in less detailed. A very useful guide to find the overall information regarding certain Japanese films or certain movements and time periods in Japanese cinema.

RUSSELL, Catherine. 2011. *Classical Japanese Cinema Revisited*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group.

An introduction to classical Japanese cinema, which focuses heavily on the contradictions of Japanese modernity in classical Japanese films by canonical directors Akira Kurosawa, Yasujiro Ozu, Kenji Mizoguchi and Mikio Naruse. Russell analyses these director's films in order to understand what exactly classical Japanese cinema is. Simultaneously, Russell uses her readings of these films to understand and convey Japanese ideologies, historical and social contexts and the transformation of Japanese cinema from the 1930s to the 1950s, a similar time period and subject of interests to this dissertation's study.

SINGER, Kurt. 1973. *Mirror, Sword & Jewel : A Study of Japanese Characteristics*. Surrey: Japan Library.

An introductory book to Japanese ideologies and social conventions, focusing on the importance on societal relationships, beliefs, characteristics and symbolism. Singer begins with the importance of parental relationships and how the closeness of the mother and the distance of the father often molds the child's expectations of life as well as their role within society. Throughout the book, Singer emphasizes the importance of conformity and social order within Japanese culture to the point that justice can be "deemed inappropriate if the peace of the community is thereby threatened by it" (p62).

This source is vital for my dissertation as the ronin figure often disrupts social order in the pursuit of justice, raising questions on whether the ronin is a hero or a villain in regards to Japanese social norms.

SPALDING, Lisa. 1992. 'Period Films in the Prewar Era'. In Arthur Jr. NOLLETT and David DESSER (eds.). *Reframing Japanese Cinema: authorship, genre, history*. United States: Indiana University Press, 131–144.

In her chapter, Lisa Spalding concentrates on the major changes in jidaigeki films in the pre Pacific war period. She argues that jidaigeki films emphasize the values and ideologies that were shaped by Feudal Japan, where “honor, filial piety, loyalty and righteousness were continuously held up” with the upmost importance (p133).

These values were embodied in the loyal and legendary Samurai. However, during the early 1920s, the Rebel subgenre of the Samurai film emerged which casted aside and rejected the old Feudal Japan values. The rebellious Samurai, often turned *ronin*, was glorified for standing up against authority – this genre became popular from 1923 to 1931, which was, as Spalding states, a period of economic and social instability.

STANDISH, Isolde. 2005. *A New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Film*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Isolde Standish splits Japanese film history into five periods and theoretical perspectives: modernism, nationalism, political discourse, humanism and transgression, with no fixed chronological timeline. As Standish states in her introduction, many Western commentators on Japanese cinema, such as McDonald

and Richie, give an interpretation of classics produced by selected Japanese auteurs through analyzation of content. By looking at Japanese cinema for its uniqueness and 'Japaneseness', Standish accuses these Western commentators of "inverted orientalism" (p.16). With this in mind, Standish takes Japanese film analysis a step further, looking at more than just the Japanese classics by directors such as Kurosawa, Mizoguchi and Ozu and looking at Japanese film form and techniques rather content alone.

STORRY, Richard. 1960. *A History of Modern Japan*. London: Penguin Books.

Richard Storry was a key scholar in Japanese History, an Emeritus Professor of Japanese Studies in the University of Oxford and an Emeritus Fellow of St. Antony's College. He began his academic study of Japanese history as a research scholar in 1947 and kept up his research until his death in 1982.

In this book, Storry recounts modern Japanese history, focusing on political view and how the West changed and shaped, for good or worse, modern day Japan. Even though this book as a source for a paper in 2015 may be questionable since it was published in 1960, I feel that since Richard Storry was a pioneering researcher and scholar of Japanese history, one who is often referenced in more modern texts, Storry's work is vital as a source.

TADA, Michitaro. 1986. 'The Destiny of Samurai Film'. *East-West Film Journal*, 1(1), 48–58.

In only ten pages, Michitaro Tada manages to summarise the history of Samurai films from the 1920s to 1970s, whilst focusing on major changes within the genre. This article also includes key events in samurai history, the development of the samurai and *chanbara* (swordfighting) films throughout the years as well as Japanese perspective and understanding of certain Samurai films, as opposed to a Western one, which will enhanced this dissertations argument by avoiding an orientalist perspective. Tado also identifies two distinct lineages in *chanbara* films: Sadao Yamanka belongs to the line founded by Mansaku Itami whilst Akira Kurosawa was followed by Masaki Kobayashi. This will be used in this dissertation in order to discuss and identify where certain opinions and allegories within these films and filmmakers originated.

TIPTON, Elise K. 2008. *Modern Japan: A Social and Political History (Nissan Institute Routledge Japanese Studies Series)*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Similar to Richard Storry's recount of modern Japanese History, Elise K. Tipton retells major events in Japanese history from 1600s to 2007, with a specific focus around the twentieth century. However, Tipton takes it a step further than Storry and focuses more on political and social history, often mentioning how key events affected different classes of Japanese citizens as opposed to Japan as a whole.

This book also contains a useful Japanese glossary with terms and phrases that can be added to my dissertation vocabulary as well as a neat chronology of major events throughout Japanese history.

THORNTON, S.A; foreword by Donald RICHIE. 2007. *The Japanese Period Film: A Critical Analysis*. United States: McFarland & Co.

Thornton analyses and depicts in detail the definition of what a Japanese period film truly is. Looking at the semiotics and iconography of the Japanese period film, Thornton proposes a link between the present Japanese narrative traditions and the past, revealing criticisms of the past and social norms embedded within the film texts.

Thornton's work is vital to this dissertation as it lays down the ground work for what a Japanese Period film is and how certain filmmakers used the codes and conventions of this genre to circumvent government censorship in order to express certain political opinions.

TUCKER, Richard N. 1973. *Japan: Film Image*. London: Littlehampton Book Services.

A Japanese cinema introductory book which is split into three sections: 'A Brief History': an historical account of the development of Japanese film industry, 'Japanese Cinema: an ethical spectrum': an examination of the underlining social and ethical attitudes in Japanese cinema, looking particularly at Ozu, Mizoguchi, Kurosawa, Ichikawa and Kobayahi, and finally 'Eros and Massacres': the major

changes in Japanese film in recent year, specifically in regards to exploitation films. The second section helps support this dissertation's argument that films, especially jidaigeki films, often have social undertones that represent the current political opinion and climate that the films are released in.

YOSHIMOTO, Mitsuhiro. 2000. *Kurosawa: Film studies and Japanese cinema*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto depicts the three stages in Japanese Film Scholarship conducted by the West: "(1) humanistic celebration of great auteurs and Japanese culture in the 1960s, (2) formalistic and Marxist celebration of Japanese cinema as an alternative to the classical Hollywood cinema in the 1970s, and (3) critical reexamination of the preceding approaches through the introduction of discourse of Otherness and cross cultural analysis in the 1980s." (p8).

As a Japanese scholar, he discusses the problems of each of the stages; often referring to Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, suggesting that Western commentators cannot discuss Japanese cinema without referring to "otherness", or "Japaneseness", or comparing it to Western cinema. He attempts to tackle these problems by doing his own analysis of Akira Kurosawa. He states that Kurosawa is a source of anxiety, to both Japan and the West, when it comes to Japanese cinema due to his complex and ambiguous role as a westernised Japanese director. This sources aids this dissertation in avoiding an outsider's perspective of Japanese film, whilst providing evidence to the argument that Akira Kurosawa's films represent a

nostalgic look of traditional Japan while simultaneously promoting the more liberal views of modern Japan.

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