Volume 21 | Issue 6 | Number 3 | Article ID 5777 | Jun 03, 2023

Voices from an Unusual Archive: University Film Circle Writings, 1945-1960

Jennifer Coates

Abstract: *This article explores an unusual archive of student-authored film journals written between 1945-1960 in order to better understand the ideals, motivations, and expectations of a young, relatively elite, and ambitious section of postwar Japan's population who would go on to shape the direction of the country after defeat in 1945. These writings, archived in The Makino Mamoru Collection at the CV Starr East Asian Library in the University of Columbia contains, were generated by self-organized student groups known as film 'circles' (*sākuru*) or 'film study groups' (*eiga kenkyūkai*) based at universities around Japan. Many circles authored amateur publications, often modeled on commercial magazines or journals. However, there was one important difference between amateur and professional publications in the early postwar period: commercial publications were subject to censorship, whereas amateur publications were created for a smaller audience and under freer conditions. Student writings featured in university film circle journals therefore offer a unique view of early postwar attitudes during a period when professional media communications were censored by the Allied forces in charge of the Occupation of Japan (1945-1952).*

Keywords: *cinema, audience, circle, sākuru, student*

Student-organized film activities continue today. Kyoto, 2016, photograph taken by author.

Introduction

Imagine finding a diary by your student self, years later. Maybe you don't have to imagine—perhaps your parents kept your school-age writings, preserving your voice, opinions, and feelings from another era. You may have chosen to keep writing by your younger self independently, sensing something valuable in records of your formative moments and earlier ways of thinking. What can these very personal archives tell us about the culture of our youth, and our expectations, as young people, about our place in the world? This article applies these questions to an unusual archive of student-authored film journals

written between 1945-1960, in order to better understand the ideals, motivations, and expectations of a young, relatively elite, and ambitious section of postwar Japan's population who would go on to shape the direction of the country after its defeat in 1945. In the student writings discussed here, we catch a glimpse into the everyday politics, needs, and rights of ordinary people discussed alongside, and sometimes in tension with, the students' own efforts to develop themselves and their critical abilities.

These writings were generated by self-organized student groups known as film 'circles' (*sākuru*) or 'film study groups' (*eiga kenkyūkai*) based at universities around Japan. Student film circles were part of a larger culture of circle and group activities within Japanese schools and universities, reflected in a 'boom' in informal and self-organized group activities across postwar Japan. Andrew Gordon identifies three basic roles of circles in this era: 'recreation and self-cultivation,' the development of 'democratic citizenry,' and the creation of 'a national political movement' (2009: 98). While we might think of film circles as largely recreational, the format of the organized film circle, which tended to emphasize group discussion as well as group viewing, could nudge members towards consideration of wider issues including political and social problems.

Many circles authored amateur publications, often modeled on commercial magazines or journals. However, there was one important difference between amateur and professional publications in the early postwar period: commercial publications were subject to censorship, whereas amateur publications were created for a smaller audience and enjoyed freer conditions. Student writings featured in university film circle journals therefore offer a unique view of early postwar attitudes during a period when professional media communications were censored by the Allied forces in charge of the Occupation of Japan (1945-1952). These student publications commented more openly on many of the pressing issues of the day, discussion of which was banned or closely controlled by Occupation authorities. Press censorship, including censorship of radio, began on 10 September 1945 and banned all content that was not perceived to 'adhere to the truth or which disturbs public tranquility' (SCAPIN 16). More specifically, mention of the Occupation itself was banned in mainstream censored publications and entertainment products, yet appears in student-authored articles, and while "anti-American" sentiment was removed from commercial publications (MacArthur 1994: 239), it remained in student writings. The 1945 Press Code prohibited criticism of the Allied Occupation, the Allied Powers, and mention of everyday occurrences such as fraternization of Allied personnel and Japanese citizens, rationing, and black markets. While the student publications analyzed here focus on cinema, their accounts of everyday life in postwar Japan include incidental mentions of these topics banned from mainstream media, and so allow a glimpse of uncensored postwar life.

While student-authored diaries and communications are frequently examined in the field of Japanese history, they do not often appear in Japanese film studies. The field has become more expansive over the past decades, adding accounts of audience experience and viewer memories to a strong tradition of research on film history, film criticism, Japanese film theory, auteur or director-focused studies, star studies, industry research, and creativity and artistry in film production. Yet, we do not often see archival materials that preserve the memories of those outside the industry, perhaps due to the difficulty of finding such sources. The Makino Mamoru Collection at the CV Starr East Asian Library in the University of Columbia contains an invaluable archive in a sub-subseries titled 'Coterie Magazine/Dōjinshi,' in which the student

writings analyzed in this article were found. This sub-series series contains copies of amateur journals and magazines created by student members of film associations (*renmei*), circles (*eiga sākuru*), and research groups (*eiken*), many painstakingly hand-lettered and with hand-drawn cover designs. The authors of these publications variously refer to their projects as *dōjinshi* (volume created by like-minded people), *zasshi* (magazine), or *kikanshi* (commemorative publication), and translators and archivists collectivize the publications as coterie magazines, zines, or student journals. Throughout this article, I will use the designations chosen by the authors for both group structure and publication type.

The Unusual Archive as Time Capsule

At the time I collected these materials in 2019, I was working on a project that explored how memories of lived experiences of cinema culture in early postwar Japan met with, or diverged from, the expectations of industry producers and Allied Occupation personnel. This eventually evolved into a study of how people form and express a sense of self through talking about cinema memories (Coates 2022), and so I put aside these written materials to work on interviews, surveys, and participant observation as my methods shifted from archival research towards a mixed-method ethno-historical approach. Yet, the intensely personal nature of these amateur publications made a deep impression, and I continued to search for ways to incorporate them into my wider research.

I realized that this archive could be approached as a kind of time capsule that sheds light on the student-age feelings and beliefs that many of the participants in my ethno-historical study recalled in interviews and surveys. Ethno-history methods differ from social history in that ethnographic methods are used to collect memories which, while understood as not always historically accurate, tell us something about how an era or event lives on in the recollections and identities of those who experienced it. While the memories shared with me by now-elderly film fans during my fieldwork in 2014-2018 had the benefit of hindsight (and perhaps some light editing), the Makino archive contains less varnished accounts of everyday encounters with cinema culture in the early postwar.

We can also expect that amateur student-authored writings circulated largely among the student body would have been less closely restricted than early postwar commercial publishing, though there may have been university codes of conduct or practices of self-censorship at work in shaping the content. Critical assessment of the impact of the Occupation and the perceived Americanization of everyday life, as well as frank discussions of the effect of defeat on young people in postwar Japan can be found in the margins of accounts of cinema-going and film criticism in these student articles. This material captures a sense of the concerns driving young peoples' engagement with cinema culture in the first two decades after World War II, and offers a unique view on the role of cinema content and cinema culture in the reshaping of postwar Japan, from a focus on rebuilding society and developing democratic ideologies in the late 1940s to a shift toward considerations of artistry and the development of the Japanese film industry in the writings of the mid-1950s into 1960.

Japanese Cinema Under Occupation (1945-1952)

Cinema technologies, narratives, and exhibition practices were at the heart of the Allied initiative to reform Japan after 1945. Japan had been a relatively early adopter of film technology, beginning in the 1890s, contemporaneous with many countries around

the world and not far behind France and the USA, where the original technologies were developed. Borrowing technologies and tropes from North America and Europe, Japanese cinema developed into an organized system which, by the 1920s, had begun to bear a resemblance to Hollywood (Kitamura 2010: 13). Popular cinema themes, genres, and tropes ranged from *jidaigeki* period dramas to contemporary stories exploring the impact of modernization and perceived Westernization on Japanese society. By wartime, this organized studio system was incorporated into the Imperial propaganda effort to mobilize the public in support of military expansion and war (Fujiki 2022). Cinema narratives were reoriented under wartime propaganda initiatives to focus on pro-war themes including patriotism, self-sacrifice, and duty. After 1945, the same studio system, superficially re-organized (Standish 2005: 272), became a major component of the Allied Occupation forces' attempt to remodel Japan into a modern democratic capitalist nation-state. Cinema offered an unparalleled means of communicating to a broad cross-section of the Japanese population, as the popularity of film grew rapidly from 1945 culminating in a peak admissions count of 1,127,452,000 in 1958 (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan, 2022). In particular, younger audiences and non-literate audiences could be more easily reached through cinema than radio or print media. Free or cheap film screenings in public spaces and schools also increased the reach of cinema narratives.

In a 'Memorandum Concerning Elimination of Japanese Government Control of the Motion Picture Industry,' circulated on 16 October 1945, the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Forces (hereafter SCAP GHQ) directed an end to wartime censorship, 'to permit the industry to reflect the democratic aspirations of the Japanese people' (Allen 1945: 3). A new Occupation censorship process was designed to shape film viewers' ideologies and expectations in the democratic capitalist mode, modelled by the Occupiers themselves. Cinema was recruited to popularize Occupation reforms including universal suffrage, extended early-years education, expanded public roles for women, the valuing of romantic love over arranged marriage, and the rights of women to initiate divorce. The occupiers invested cinema with the power to persuade audiences to embrace these new reforms, which were later enshrined in the 1947 Constitution of Japan. But could cinema really have such an impact? Do we form ourselves through engagement with popular media to this extent, and can that same media change our self-formation? A close reading of selected student-authored film publications from 1945 to 1960 allows us to explore how students engaged with cinema culture during this period of rapid change, and how that engagement shaped their senses of self and their understandings of their place in postwar Japan as democratic citizens, as a new generation of Japanese people, and as elite university students with significant potential to shape the country in future decades.

Methodology

My methodology is closely informed by the archive in which these materials are housed, and which I will briefly introduce here. Film director, critic, and author Makino Mamoru (1930-), whose collection of film memorabilia was purchased by Columbia University in 2006, casts a long shadow in Japanese film studies—in fact, the collection itself is measured at over 900 linear feet (Cheng and Katzoff: 2013). Makino's archives have been recognized as 'unparalleled resources for research on Japanese and Asian cinema' (Donovan 2001: 226), and as this article seeks to demonstrate, can also provide a unique snapshot of student lives and attitudes in postwar Japan. However, as Joanne Bernardi

notes, personal collections should be considered a kind of 'alternative archive' (2013), reminding us that an archive collected by an individual is a kind of field site in itself, with its own obsessions, omissions, and opportunities. I am therefore wary of extrapolating from trends and themes observable in this archive to make broader arguments about areas of concern among student societies more generally. Instead, I approach the student-authored articles discussed below as examples of the kinds of conversations that student-led film circles could make possible in the postwar period, and consider how the students used cinema culture in a variety of ways as a means of developing a sense of self and understanding their place in the postwar world.

The Makino Mamoru collection comprises over 80,000 items characterized by a focus on 'the items being ignored by both libraries and fellow collectors' (Gerow and Nornes 2001: 4), and it is of course impossible for one article to deal with the full collection. The focus of this article is the contents of Subseries XI.3: Post-War Magazines: Newsletters and Coterie Magazines, and Sub-subseries VI.20.2: Coterie Magazine/Dōjinshi/同人誌, 1920-1979. The archive of self-published journals by student film club members discussed here is part of a larger collection, which encompasses 115 folders largely dating from the pre-war era. While the majority of the articles within these journals are authored by student members of the clubs, circles, and study groups which produced them, some are also contributed by professional film critics. There is no clear information on how each journal entered the collection, but many of the pre-war issues were formerly owned by film critic, screenwriter, and director Kishi Matsuo (1906-1985), and Makino appears to have expanded on this further by collecting similar amateur publications from the postwar era. Some early issues are marked as gifts to the Proletarian Film League of Japan (Prokino), of which Kishi was a leading member (see Makino 2001), suggesting the ideological nature of this material. There are 89 titles categorized as *dōjinshi* in the Makino Collection, with 274 issues in total: 50 titles are related to specific university-based groups and clubs, while 39 titles do not express a formal connection with a university (Katzoff 2012).

This is a rare and special resource, as such collections are not available even in Japan. At the same time, we must acknowledge the patchy and incidental nature of research on a collection that depends on student groups voluntarily sharing their productions with Kishi or Makino. The fragility of many of the hand-lettered journals suggests that similar items in personal collections may not have survived, while the amateur origins of the publications all but guarantees human errors, misspellings, irregular formatting, and incomplete information and attribution. While these *dōjinshi* offer a precious window into the conversations held among students around postwar cinema culture, they can be unreliable and difficult to use for the researcher seeking factual information. Instead, I approach these charming communications as a kind of time capsule or message in a bottle—hard to decipher in places, but saturated in the spirit of the time.

The earlier publications contain asides and incidental background information about the authors' lives that communicate rare uncensored glimpses of everyday life in early postwar Japan, while the post-Occupation writings show student authors experimenting with styles of criticism which would become core to Japanese cinema culture writing in the late 1950s and 1960s. Professional film critics such as Hatano Kanji considered student film clubs to be 'the backbone of the cinema audience' (1958: 744), in that their insistence on the importance of cinema and serious efforts to understand how filmic effects were created formed a supportive structure for film viewing in wider society, where citizen film clubs and

workplace film circles modeled studious approaches to understanding film along the same lines. In postwar Japan, film criticism was often connected to ideas of democracy, and so learning how to practice film criticism was understood as a means of enhancing critical faculties in a more general sense. In this way, the student film circles discussed in this article could be considered not only the 'backbone' of the cinema audience, but also core to the development and dissemination of a democratic consciousness predicated on sustained critical thinking.

This article primarily employs critical discourse analysis of student-authored materials to understand how members of university film circles and film research groups characterized their engagement with postwar cinema, how that engagement developed and changed over the period 1945-1960, and to what extent student attitudes kept pace with, diverged from, or challenged 'top down' views of the role of cinema culture in engaging and educating the postwar Japanese public. My contextual analysis draws from the findings of my recent book (Coates 2022) which employed mixed methods, including interviews with film viewers who attended the cinema regularly between 1945 and 1968, a long-form questionnaire project involving eighty-seven participants, and participant observation conducted at several cinemas and film groups specializing in Shōwa era film (1926-1989). The ethnographic material generated from this wider study has provided background and context for the analysis of the student-authored film criticism below.

University Circles, Clubs, and Film Research Groups in Postwar Japan

Circles, or *sākuru*, are not specific to film culture in Japan, nor are they restricted to university spaces, or to the postwar period. The student groups discussed here were part of a broader 'circle movement' in which 'small voluntary associations called circles (*sākuru*)' were established 'within workplaces and communities throughout Japan' (Bronson 2016: 124). Justin Jesty notes that circles in the 1950s and 1960s were too numerous to categorize, whether they were affiliated with universities, workplaces, schools, or political institutions, or 'just for fun' (2018: 22-23). Larger workplaces and local areas even 'had multiple circles in a particular genre with competing identities' (Jesty 2018: 23). The writing produced by these circles were sometimes published as paperback volumes for mass readership, or more often as mimeographed copies 'distributed within the circle and then circulated in the workplace and community' (Bronson 2016: 124). These were not understood as vanity projects, but rather as a serious attempt to grapple with the question of how cultural consumption and discussions about cultural products could contribute to the building of a new postwar society. 'Observers of the movement believed that this cycle of observing, writing, and discussing might produce citizens capable of realizing the promise of postwar democracy' (Bronson 2016: 124).

Film study groups, clubs, and circles had been popular in Japan since the late 1920s. Professional film critic Uryū Tadao points to 1947 as a rough starting point (or re-starting point) of film circle and club activities in postwar Japan after the pause dictated by mass mobilization from 1937 to 1945 ([1958] 1994: 747). Uryū attributes two key elements of postwar life to the rapid reformation of film clubs and circles: the first was the adoption of the 6-3-3-4 schooling system which created new high school and university systems where pupils and students 'could freely watch films and were able to discuss and theorize about them' ([1958] 1994: 747). The film circle 'was given an organizational form' and rapidly expanded as a kind of bridging activity between high schools and universities (Uryū [1958] 1994: 747). While school film circles were often

organized by teachers or adult supervisors, self-organized student circles at university drew on the model provided in schools and were most likely led by students with experience of attending school film circles.

Film clubs and circles within educational establishments were part of a larger national boom in circle culture more generally, and film circle culture in particular. The Tokyo Eiga Sākuru Kyōgikai (Tokyo Film Circle Convention, shortened to Tokyo Eisakyō) was formed in 1948 to encourage the creation of democratic films, support the activities of democratic cultural groups, and to 'protect' Japanese culture (Uryū [1958] 1994: 748). The labor disputes and high-profile strike action at Tōhō film studios from 1946-1948 is commonly credited with inspiring the organization of amateur film appreciation groups in schools, universities, workplaces, and communities (Fujiki 2022: 357; Satō 1961; Uryū [1958] 1994: 749). By 1955, 300,000 people across Japan were members of a film circle (Fujiki 2022: 357; Nakai 1958: 60). At this time, film circles were authorized to distribute discounted cinema tickets (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749) which increased their popularity among people who were looking for ways to watch films cheaply, as well as those interested in joining film circles' discussion sessions and creative activities. 'Some members supported this, and some did not, being more concerned with artistry than economics' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749). However, in 1957, Tokyo Eisakyō's successor, Tokyo Eiga Aikōkai Rengokai (Association of People who Love Film) stopped the distribution of discounted tickets (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749). As a result, membership fell rapidly from 50,000 to 30,000, stabilizing at 40,000 in 1958 (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749).

The student-authored amateur film journals in the Makino Collection record primarily viewer-based and discursive activities within the circles, with content focused on essays of amateur film criticism, transcripts of group discussions and roundtables, and notices or reflective writing about the organization and structure of the circles and clubs themselves. However, many film circles both within and outside universities were formed in order to make as well as watch, discuss, and critique films. Amateur and independent films were screened by many film circles, supported by a national organization formed specifically for this purpose in 1949 (Fujiki 2022: 433). Professional filmmakers who had been removed from Japanese film studios during the Red Purge (MacArthur 1950) began to establish independent film companies, generating a new movement devoted to independent filmmaking and film screenings (Fujiki 2022: 433). While this movement was undermined in the mid-1950s by the subcontracting of these independent filmmaking companies by major cinema companies, and further endangered by the Association for Exhibition's suspension of discounted tickets for group admissions, independent film screenings organized by film circles enjoyed strong audience support into the late 1950s (Fujiki 2022: 434).

In 1958, a special section of the professional *Kinema Junpō* film journal (Film Record, or The Movie Times) was devoted to 'Film and Circles: The Power Advancing Japanese Cinema' (*Eiga to sākuru: Nihon eiga o zenshinsaseru chikara*). Professional film critics Okada Susumu, Hatano Kanji, and Uryū Tadao argued that film circles 'were born from the liberation of film audiences' expression immediately after the war' ([1958] 1994: 744). Many film circles expressly positioned themselves as actors changing the landscape of Japanese cinema culture, adopting the slogan, 'Support the development of good films, boycott worthless films' (*yoi eiga o sodate, kudaranai eiga wa boikotto suru*) (Uryū [1958] 1994: 748). This repeated sentiment echoes the 'power' mentioned in the *Kinema Junpō* special section title, emphasizing the role of the film circle in

creating audiences for films approved by the circle leadership, and withholding audience numbers from 'bad' films. While different film circles had differing definitions of 'good' and 'bad' films according to the location and membership of the circle and the ideological positions these factors engendered, the important point here is the significant power that circles could wield in providing or denying access to large groups of viewers. Audience numbers impacted box office takings, which determined the fate not only of a particular film, but often also of the filmmakers and producers involved. As film circles could command discounted cinema tickets for large groups, membership also allowed viewers to see certain films more cheaply: 'A popular slogan for many film circles today is, 'Making good films cheap'' (*yoi eiga o yasuku*) (Okada [1958] 1994: 744).

By the late 1950s, as the number of film circles increased, there was a boom in journalism and critical commentary on film circle activity (Fujiki 2022: 356). University film circles, often collectivized under the name *eiken*, were of particular interest to professional critics, perhaps because elite *eiken* such as those formed at Kyoto University and Tokyo University had begun to produce film industry professionals such as directors and film critics (Uryū [1958] 1994: 747). In this way, film circles and viewers' organizations often produced the film industry professionals of the future, and provided a framework for the later boom in independent film production (see Coates 2022 for an example of a film circle which moved into independent film production).

Uryū made a distinction between *eiken* (film research groups), *eiga kanshōkai* (film viewing meetings), *eiga sākuru* (film circles), *shokuiki sākuru* (workplace circles), film theatre friendship groups (*eigakan no tomo no kai*), and other organizations created to bring film to groups of viewers, and host discussions about those films. Collectivizing these varieties of film organizations under the term *eisa*, Uryū argued that because these organizations brought together people of various genders, ages, employments, ideologies, and feelings, 'not investigating the nature of these organizations and circles would really be a waste' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749). University-based student-led film circles were, of course, more uniform in their membership, tending towards young male film fans. However, in the early postwar years, these students would have been far from the standard demographic, as many had suffered delays to education due to wartime conscription, drafted labor, and personal hardship. In the period from 1945-1960, many universities became co-educational and a steady increase in female student numbers as well as student numbers overall contributed to an increase in the number and diversity of university students.

Introducing Two Postwar University Film Circles

While individual film circles formed around specific membership groups and with particular goals, from developing new forms of film criticism to supporting the making of student films, there are some enlightening documents in the Makino Collection which give us a snapshot of how these groups organized themselves and how they articulated their aims. Understanding the actors and drivers within postwar university film circles can give us a clearer understanding of the broader cinema culture of postwar Japan, if in fact the *eiken* were 'the backbone of the cinema audience' (Hatano 1958: 744) as often claimed. This section will compare two very different university film circles to illustrate the variety of organizational frameworks and members' aims.

The Morioka Gakusei Eiga Renmei (Morioka Student Film Association) created a publication titled *Ecran*, and the 25 December 1948 issue

in the Makino Collection would appear to be an early issue, based on the inclusion of material related to the formation of the group. The association, established four months prior to publication, is described as a meeting of like-minded group members (*dōkōkai*) and the publication as a regular magazine for and by like-minded people (*dōkō kikan zasshi*) (Takeuchi 1948: 3). Student author Takeuchi Shirō positions the publication as a response to the need for students to 'pay attention to culture' (*bunka ni me o mukeneba uchinai*) (1948: 2). Against the background of a growing 'doubt and decadence' Takeuchi argues 'only the students, with their lofty ideals [*sūkōna risō*] want to understand culture [*bunka*] better and draw from it in a practical way' (1948: 2). In this framing, the 'culture' of cinema is distinguished from mass popular culture entertainment products such as *kasutori* ('dregs') magazines which communicate 'doubt and decadence.' While Takeuchi describes students as a group uniquely suited to applying the lessons communicated by cultural productions such as cinema, he also positions engagement with that same culture as a means to counteract negative characteristics among the student population. 'These days, students in general seem to be too indifferent and lethargic,' Takeuchi writes, but the 'breakthrough' created by the activities of the association is already 'clear to see' (1948: 2). The 'indifferent' student appears to be characterized by a lack of interest in social issues and politics, leading to a sense of lethargy or reluctance to engage in actively shaping their environment. This articulation of engagement with culture, and particularly cinema, as a means by which young people could contribute positively to a changing postwar Japan, and at the same time as a means of self-improvement, is a common trope across the materials surveyed for this article.

The goal of *Ecran* as stated by founding members was to improve the students' perception and ability to analyze film. Activities were focused largely around film viewing, and Takeuchi observes that the films screened should 'match' the members' 'everyday life activities' (*nichijō seikatsu ni macchisaseru*) (1948: 3). This emphasis on understanding everyday life through film viewing is another common trope, suggesting that many students understood engagement with cinema as a means better comprehending real life issues.

While the observation of everyday life through film may appear to be an apolitical activity, by the late 1960s *nichijōsei* or 'everydayness' had become a core concept for 'self-revolution' (Ando 2013). Identifying the 'everyday' as the location of problematic depoliticized consciousness among the general population, new leftist movements, including student groups such as Zenkyōtō, deployed the phrase to encourage young people to awaken to the controlled nature of their society and lives (Ando 2013: 9). While the authors of *Ecran* were writing 20 years before this development, we may observe the beginnings of the politicization of the term 'everyday' in their injunction to circle members to use cinema to closely study the conditions of their lives with a critical eye. Morigaoka film circle members were also encouraged to 'nourish their critical abilities' (*hihanryoku*) through regular meetings (Takeuchi 1948: 3). 'Perhaps a film director may emerge from these activities,' Takeuchi concedes, but the goal of the association and its activities was to establish a critical 'like-mindedness!' (*dōkō no kokorozashi yo!*) (1948: 3). We can understand this critical like-mindedness as a foundation for the organized student activism which emerged in the late 1950s and took over the 1960s.

Compare this introduction from a newly established film circle at a smaller institution with the re-introduction written by the Waseda Daigaku Eiga Kenkyūkai (Waseda University Film Research Group) in the 4th issue of the university journal *Eiga Seishin* (*Film Spirit*, 1957) in order to recruit new members. The

notice draws attention to the group's 'tradition of more than 30 years' and emphasizes that the group 'has inherited the orthodoxy of filmmakers from Waseda University' (1957: 39). 'We hope that many of you, who aspire to think more deeply about movies and study movies together in company, as a means of education and a source of enrichment in your life, will participate' (1957: 39). The Waseda *eiken* is positioned as a more professional organization, with clear goals for how to reach a wide range of readers, claiming that 'We publish the results of our research both domestically and internationally through the journal *Eiga Spirit* and various exhibitions' (1957: 39). The scope of the journal is notably more artistically inclined (and perhaps more pretentious!) than the earlier Morioka circle publication, with article themes including 'Breaking the Stagnation of Cinema' (*Eiga no teitai o yaburu mono*), 'Problems Raised in Movies' (*Eiga ni egakareru mondaiteiki*), 'The Pursuit of the Creative Subject' (*Sōzōteki shudai no tsuikyū*), 'Problems Surrounding Film and Literature' (*Eiga to bungaku o meguru shomondai*) and a section devoted to the work of director Okamoto Kihachi. The tone is highly educated and the volume as a whole insists on connecting cinema to literature and philosophy rather than to entertainment culture.

Alongside the journal, the Waseda group organized 'various exhibitions' to circulate the results of group study sessions, and emphasized the opportunity to 'collaborate with six universities through the Tokyo Metropolitan University Film Federation, gathering together with like-minded people to talk and review' (1957: 39). The Waseda *eiken* was separated into 4 core groups dedicated to various pursuits and outcomes: a theoretical research group; a filmmaking research group; a scenario writing and research group; and a discussion group. The admission fee for screenings was 300 yen, and membership was 100 yen per month, with members required to pay 2 months in advance. Compared to other student-authored publications which note that students could buy discounted film tickets for only 50 yen (Kojima 1951: 6), the Waseda group seems to have been more focused on artistry and production than making cinema cheaply available. Perhaps the members, students of the elite central Tokyo university, were understood to be more interested in theory and literary criticism than accessing cinemas at discounted rates. It is also clear that the 'like-mindedness' fostered by the Waseda *eiken* is of a different nature to that discussed by the Morioka authors, in that the Waseda writers emphasize the group's links to other elite Tokyo universities.

These specific articulations aimed at introducing two very different film circles to potential new members within the student body indicate the wider variety of activities and orientations encompassed within the film circle or *eiken*. However, there are also some recurring characterizations of the kinds of students who became involved in these activities within the pages of the film circle publications themselves. For example, many authors agreed that discussion was an important part of the film circle's activities, and so many film circle members were people who 'like to talk' (Anon 1957: 52). This suggests that the social aspect of discussing films, or perhaps simply the opportunity to speak in public, was at least as important as the viewing of the films themselves (see Coates 2022). The focus on 'like-mindedness,' which appears to mean slightly different things to different circles at different times, across large and small, elite and lesser-known, and earlier and later film circle communications is also interesting in light of high-profile discussions around subjectivity and independent thought which characterized the first decades after the war (Maruyama 1965; Koschmann 1981; Kersten 1996; Coates 2022). The importance of discussion and the formation of 'like-mindedness' can be understood as the foundations for recurring ideological and political themes that emerge across many

dōjinshi in the Makino collection.

Recurring Themes in Postwar Film Circle Writings

While the early publications of the 1940s and 1950s were mostly hand-lettered and illustrated, from 1960 many journals moved to a printed format, and their professionalism increased. Early publications seem to contain more content that reflects on the position of the student authors themselves, in relation to postwar society more broadly and in relation to the film industry, understood as a flagship entity representing postwar Japan at a national and international level. From 1960, however, the journals increasingly appear to have modelled themselves after *Kinema Junpō* and similar scholarly film publications, and elite institutions such as Waseda University's film club included transcripts of talks by emerging film directors and interviews with industry personnel as well as amateur film scenarios in their publications.

There was a general focus on film criticism, and almost every issue in the collection included critiques of contemporary films and reflections on film criticism as practice. For example, the April 1951 issue of Tokyo University's *Eiga Kenkyū* (Film Research) included an article titled 'The Position of Film Criticism' (*Eiga hihyō no tachiba*) which explored 'types' of criticism, from that focused on artistry (treatment of light and shadow, color, and editing) and music, to criticism that focused on adaptation, storyline, ideology (the perceived politics of the filmmaker and of key characters), and performance (Kinoshita 1951: 13). Many journals closed with a 'Best Ten' list similar to that produced each year by *Kinema Junpō*, ranking the year's productions in order of critical acclaim. An enduring interest in the differences between the preferences of educated or elite film audiences and the mass publics of entertainment cinema is apparent in the tendency for student authors to compare critics' selections with the films which made the most money at the box office, indicating popular appeal. The 'general viewer' (*ippan kankyaku*) was regularly invoked (Nakajima 1953: 17), often in pejorative relation to the perceived scholarly tastes of the student audience. For example: 'For the general audience [*ippan kankyaku*], any kind of film is fine. Those people [*sono hitotachi*] only want to see spectacular scenes in films, and they aren't interested in any degree of artistry. If it's an entertaining way to pass the time, that's fine [for them]. This is quite a large part of the audience' (Tada 1948: 7).

An elevated critical tone was maintained through an interest in celebrated and award-winning auteur filmmakers such as Kurosawa Akira and Kinoshita Keisuke, with whole issues devoted to prominent Japanese and non-Japanese directors (e.g., *Eiga Kenkyū* 1951; *Eiga Kenkyū* 1952). The 1950s publications demonstrate an interest in film music consistent with professional film publications, while by 1960 authors paid more attention to new directors. The period 1945-1955 is further characterized by a focus on Hollywood film, while 1960s contributors focused more on Europe and European cinema trends, particularly Italian Neo-Realism and the French New Wave. To an extent, these patterns reflect trends in film importation and availability, as well as the attempts by major studios such as Shōchiku to package new directors in a so-called Japanese New Wave branded after the French *nouvelle vague*. Over the first fifteen years after Japan's defeat in 1945, the following broad themes are dominant in the student-authored publications in the Makino Collection.

Social and Political Conditions of Postwar Life

Professional film critic Uryū Tadao noted that that the postwar reform of the school system

introduced high school film circles to political issues through a focus on film: 'students showed a strong interest dealing with the social aspects of movies' (*eiga no shakaisei o mondai to suru*) (Uryū [1958] 1994: 747). 'In the early years of the postwar, the emphasis on political and social elements of the film circle was strong… American films were borrowed [through SCAP lending services] and shown, and taught viewers about democracy' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 747). In this way, film clubs and circles were used to encourage film viewers to think about Japan's future in this early stage of the postwar era. As the university students of the late 1940s and 1950s would have been high school students during the immediate postwar years, it seems reasonable to suggest that their determination to find lessons for everyday life in the narratives of the films that they viewed and discussed may have had a basis in this early experience of postwar school film culture.

Uryū observed that learning life lessons from cinema 'involved reflecting the good and bad of real life. There was material poverty—no film, no electricity, cinema entrance fees were not affordable for all, but there was also a poverty of imagination as the film world could not envision the new age it was burdened with showing' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 747). While the censorship processes detailed above prohibited filmmakers from depicting the harshest conditions of postwar life, deprivation was nonetheless evident to many film viewers in the state of the films and cinema theatres themselves. A number of student-authored critiques of contemporary Japanese cinema complained of 'the bad atmosphere of the movie theatre, crude performances, poor filming techniques, cheesy music, and sarcastic performances showing self-righteousness' which caused the students 'various sorrows, resignations, and resentments' when compared with Hollywood or European films (Ōhashi 1948: 5). The perceived inferiority of Japanese film production standards compared with Anglo-European productions reinforced a pervasive postwar understanding of defeated Japan as inferior to the victorious Allied nations.

Crafting New Postwar Ideologies Through Censorship

Students demonstrated their familiarity with the socio-political background of the films that they viewed in surprisingly frank references to Japan's defeat and occupation, rare in that Occupation control of media content extended to a ban on representations of the Occupation itself, and so professional film journals could not discuss this aspect of postwar life. In this respect, the student-authored journals dating from the early Occupation period offer a view on the cinema culture of the time not found in professional publications, which were subject to censorship. As film content was also restricted, student journals of the era can be understood as offering a relatively uncensored view of the censor-controlled cinema culture of the Occupation period.

Censorship of the Japanese media was not total, but it was far-reaching. Film content was particularly closely monitored, with film productions subject to pre- and post-production checks. The stated goal of Occupation-enforced censorship and content restriction was the re-education of the Japanese public, against the pro-war and militaristic attitudes supported by the wartime government and towards a capitalist democratic structure based closely on that of the US. On 22 September 1945, the Head of the Motion Picture and Theatrical Division of the Civil Information and Education Section (hereafter CIE) David Conde met with film and theater producers and forty Japanese Bureau of Information officials (Brandon 2006: 18). Reading from a draft document entitled 'Memorandum to the Japanese Empire,' written two days earlier, he urged those present to

cooperate with the Occupation's goals, particularly in promoting 'fundamental liberties' and 'respect for human rights' (SCAP 1945). Conde advised producers to develop entertainments to educate citizens about democracy, individualism, and self-government (Brandon 2006: 18). However, censorship conducted by the CIE itself began the very next month. Filmmaker Iwasaki Akira, who was forced to work closely with the censors, recalled that the Occupation personnel 'were convinced that cinema was a most important instrument for effecting the necessary changes to make Japan a peaceful and democratic nation' (1978: 304).

This idea of cinema as the ideal tool to influence new ideologies for the postwar era is reflected in the student-authored journals in the Makino Collection. For example, the foreword to the first issue of Morioka Gakusei Eiga Renmei's journal *Ecran* argued that '1948 is the most memorable year in cinema history' because 'the film world is now entering an era of new things' leading the authors to 'big hopes for film's future' (Anon. 1948: 1). Some authors anticipated new genres and an improvement in Japanese cinema quality, while others looked forward to more imported films. Student contributor Kojima Junji expressed hope that this new dawn in Japanese cinema would bring 'fantastical movies' like those he believed were being made in France, and he connected this explicitly to the 'reality of defeat' experienced by postwar Japan; 'You might say that making such fantastical movies while exposed to the reality of defeat is a kind of escape. It's a way to express things than cannot be phrased' (1948: 7). In the early postwar years, cinema was often discussed as a means of distracting oneself from the harsh conditions of defeated Japan, and so Kojima's hope appears to borrow from an imagined French cinema tradition that he envisioned would at once elevate Japanese cinema culture and distract audiences from their everyday hardships. At the same time, the claim that, 'it's a way to express things that cannot be phrased' suggests that Kojima may also imagine fantasy genre films as a means of circumventing Occupation censorship. In this way, student writing of the early Occupation era shows authors reflecting not only on the censored cinema texts in front of them, but also on how cinema itself could be imagined differently.

Commercialism versus Politics in Post-Occupation Cinema

The formation of film circles continued apace in 1952 and 1953, developing together with the *dokuritsu pro* (independent film production) movement. Uryū notes that at first, '*dokuritsu pro* were considered dark and not always interesting,' but the formation of the national association for film circle activity changed that: 'Zenkoku Eisakyō applied pressure to force a turn to brighter filmmaking' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749), and a boom in *dokuritsu pro* films followed. The shift from depicting hard and hopeless circumstances to more uplifting stories of growth and success proved popular with audiences. This demonstrates the power that film circles could hold, not only in discussing and reflecting the cinema production landscape and the political concerns of the day, but in applying pressure to change one, thereby influencing the other. Film circles were increasingly publicized as places that anyone who loved film could enter, as well as places that brought good films to audiences cheaply (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749). As the provision of high quality and rare or interesting films at cheap rates came to characterize the postwar film circle, taking precedent over political discussions and affiliations, Uryū characterized this as 'the movement's strong point' (Uryū [1958] 1994: 749) while Satō lamented the change as a 'degeneration' (1961), perhaps prioritizing political debate over commercial power.

Yet, students held on to the hope that there

was something potentially politically redeeming in watching, discussing, and writing about cinema. In the month after the official end of the Occupation of Japan in April 1952, student Suzuki Yosuke confirmed a continuing expectation that cinema could influence the development of not only Japan, but also the world in a positive aspect: 'I love Japanese films as a genre of Japanese culture, and because I hope that Japanese films will contribute to the improvement of world peace and culture with their originality, I will watch Japanese films patiently' despite the 'irritating aspects of Japanese cinema' (1952: 19). These irritating aspects mostly related to characterizations which fell below expectations. Suzuki complains that '90% of main characters seem to have never dreamed of having troubles in their life' and have attitudes 'like Marie Antionette… if there is no bread, eat cake' (Suzuki, 1952: 8). Such 'half-baked tendency films' (*chūtohanpana keikō eiga*) are critiqued as overly simplistic in narrative and characterization, and 'too many things are too neatly presented in Japanese films today' (Suzuki, 1952: 8). While certain films depict the 'confusion of the young', in the end, narratives are neatly wrapped up without any unexplained elements left (Suzuki,1952: 19). Rather, Suzuki argues, 'realism is also essential' and students, in particular, 'want to see stories based on real life' (1952: 19).

A month later, fellow *Eiga Kenkyū* contributor Ishimatsu Yoshihiro reflected on the changes occurring 'in an independent country' (1952: 19). He recalled the effects of early postwar censorship, noting that 'the decline of historical dramas in the past was due to the 180-degree turn in the national situation after the defeat in the war,' and observed that the same *jidaigeki* genre was now proliferating in the early 1950s, indicating a change in cinema content and viewer interests (1952: 19). While student authors could see the impact of the Occupation on post-Occupation cinema, they also noted a quick reversion to earlier habits among the cinema-going public. As the challenging political narratives favored by students were replaced with popular samurai epics attended by mass audiences, several student authors considered post-Occupation cinema to be a return to the mass entertainment cinema of the pre-war period.

Charting New Trends in the Post-Post Occupation

Of course, the Occupation should not be understood as a uniform period of development in one direction, but rather an uneven period of change with shifting goals. From the early postwar years (1945-1947) characterized by discussions of democracy and new freedoms, yet largely controlled by strict censorship, to the 'reverse course' which reverted to a more conservative, anti-communist tone within the SCAP offices and at the same time looser censorship of popular media, political and social ideologies and practices were in flux and not always complementary. Japan's independence in 1952 was followed by a focus on economic growth and individual personal development, as memories of the hardships of war and occupation receded. By 1960, student writers observed the tide of popular feeling changing again, producing particularly interesting articles in light of the widespread protest movements taking off across Japan and within universities in the new decade against a background of increasing mass consumerism and commercialism.

Waseda University's film club produced a publication to commemorate a group meeting on the theme 'New Trends in Cinema' (*Eiga no atarashii chōryū o megutte*) at which the work of emerging directors Ōshima Nagisa and Yoshida Yoshishige (aka Yoshida Kiju) was discussed, and 8mm films screened. The students argued that, 'In the ten years since the war, Japanese cinema has always been captivated by the relics of the previous century,

the dreary, sad, and somewhat shaky 'Japanese sentiment' *(nipponteki shinjō*) which covered potentially political storylines and characterizations in expressions of individual suffering. Nakahira Kō's *Kurutta kajitsu* (*Crazed Fruit*, 1956) was the first work that 'boldly confronted such a Japanese spiritual climate' (Anon. 1960: 1), with its sharp focus on both individual dissatisfactions and structural oppression. Since then, the authors argued, directors such as Nakahira, Okamoto Kihachi, Masumura Yasuzo and Imamura Shōhei, using the 'physicality' of new stars such as Ishihara Yujiro, 'throw their own subjectivity on the screen in a naive way,' ushering in a new era of Japanese cinema and a new understanding of postwar subjectivity (Anon. 1960: 1). Here, the student writers connected the new postwar bodies modelled by the stars of the mid-1950s with the ongoing debates around subjectivity (Maruyama 1965; Koschmann 1981). This line of criticism developed in marked distinction from much of the mainstream commercial film publications of the time, which tended to either celebrate the new 'Westernized' physicality on Japanese screens (in the case of fan-focused, accessible publications), or to critique what was often understood as a kind of celebritization of Japanese cinema in the hiring of prominent and controversial public figures such as the Ishihara brothers (writer Shintarō and actor Yujirō). By emphasizing the 'naïve way' that new directors channeled their own subjectivities through the bodies of actors known for their physicality, the student writers observed something in this group of directors and actors closer to their own ages which had escaped older critics and journalists. The blunt style of acting deployed by these young actors could be deployed to create a fashionable sense of freedom that was appealing in its freshness, and yet also constituted a break with Occupation-era discourses of subjectivity which focused on the often abject form of individual desire understood as in tension with social responsibility. That the students perceive the directors to be 'throwing' their own subjectivities onto the screen is also interesting, in that they appear to anticipate the development of the celebrity director or *auteur* who would dominate the 1960s Japanese cinema landscape.

Realization of Self and Self-Improvement

The political arc perceptible in the writing of students in film circle publications from 1945 to 1960 can be mapped onto a broader history of engagement with politics and social issues within postwar circle culture. Many circles focused on the personal over the political and emphasized personal development as a means of developing a democratic postwar society. Adam Bronson argues that, 'For some, democracy promised new opportunities for creative self-expression' in the postwar era (2016: 127), connected to 'a new kind of subjectivity, one that might be fashioned through active participation in a circle' (2016: 128). The students writing in early postwar film circle publications often referenced personal growth as a key goal in their engagement with both circle culture and cinema culture. Student author Ōhashi Tsuneyo connected film viewing with attempting to achieve an adult's view of the world: 'Now, when we are beginning to understand, albeit vaguely, what the world is like in our daily lives, we do our best to grasp something familiar from movies' (1948: 4). 'After repeating this kind of self-reflection several times, I felt… that I had experienced the growth process towards becoming something like an adult' (Ōhashi 1948: 5). Reflecting on the power of cinema to draw out human development, Ōhashi writes, 'We want to demand that every movie is not just a list of beautiful things, but something that moves the human soul with laughter and tears. By doing so, we young people want to nurture true strength and develop a sense of humanity' (1948: 5).

Professional film critic Hatano Kanji similarly

argued for the power of *eiken* (film study groups) to drive the personal development of students: 'taking film as a key, students should undergo self-reformation, or self-reinvention (*jiko kaizō*) by enjoying good films amongst themselves' (Hatano [1958] 1994: 746). The same phrase, *jiko kaizō*, was used by theorists Tsurumi Kazuko and Tsurumi Shunsuke, who argued for circles as 'spaces for remaking the self' (Avenell 2010: 58). Hatano's observations were based on his own experience of 'two or three university *eiken* groups' in which goals for self-development and the development of the student body were closely tied to the aim of creating broader social transformations by 'learn[ing] how to enjoy film, and to enrich one's life from film' ([1958] 1994: 745).

Overall, however, the contribution of the university film club was framed in terms of 'a wider orientation towards the issue of 'film appreciation and humanity' (Hatano [1958] 1994: 745). Learning how to appreciate a film and how to produce film criticism was often linked to the goal of becoming a member of society who could contribute to the overall improvement of Japan by applying the critical thinking developed in the film circle or study group. While the *eiken* of the later 1950s moved on from the explicitly pro-democratic origins of the film study groups established in schools and universities immediately after defeat towards a focus on audience development and organization, it appears that a connection between cinema culture and self-improvement became deeply embedded in film circle discourse. In this way, both SCAP and student film circles understood cinema as an ideological tool. Yet, while SCAP personnel appeared to have imagined something like the now-outdated 'hypodermic syringe' theory of reception, in which audiences passively take in the message of the film text, student film critics' understanding was already more contemporary. They could grasp today's more nuanced understanding of reception in which the audience and text form a dialogue, and each individual audience member responds to the text in a slightly different way, accounting for personal circumstance, background, and experience. For the student writers whose work is surveyed here, the process of learning how to engage with a film text appears to be more important than simply understanding the message of the film.

As is clear from the excerpts shared above, phrases like 'try,' 'strive,' 'work towards' and 'make efforts to' appear regularly in the student-authored publications surveyed here, underlining the earnest (*majime*) approach that student circles often took to engaging with cinema (Hatano [1958] 1994: 745). Particularly in the hand-written journals from 1945-1959, the creative effort of the endeavor is palpable. Student author Takeuchi Shirō emphasized that 'we are making efforts to publish the bulletin with our own hands and to enrich and develop this association,' in order to 'grasp a part of culture through film, and embody our ideals' (1948: 2). Referring to the 'blood and muscle' expended in the effort to run the circle and create the magazine, he contrasted the high scholarly ideals of the student membership with the physical effort required to produce the handwritten magazine (1948: 3).

Professional film critic Okada Susumu similarly emphasized the creative labor of bringing people together in a film circle, sourcing film prints and hiring screening spaces ([1958] 1994: 743). A number of student circles tasked themselves with further efforts, for example, Tokyo University's *Eiga Kenkyū* ran a section titled, 'According to polls' (*Seronchōsa ni yosete*) in which general viewers outside the student circle were interviewed about their motivations for watching films. 60 (40%) said they watched films for entertainment, 42 for their artistry (around 30%), 21 to experience the reflection of their everyday lives, 16 to pass the time, and 3 to encounter new topics (4 responded 'other') (Oe 1953: 21). These kinds of research activities provide invaluable

information for scholars about wider audience attitudes, but they also serve to increase the sense of separation that became increasingly apparent in the student-authored journals of the later 1950s and 1960s, which make clear distinctions between the educated elite student circle and the general viewership of popular cinema.

Tastemakers or 'Clumsy Geniuses'? Elite Student Film Criticism and Filmmaking

Professional critics also expressed an understanding of amateur circle activity as a means of honing taste and training elite students in critical assessment of film texts. Professional critic Hatano Kanji argued that such 'research work' as creating audience surveys 'offers an opportunity for committed members around the fringes and for studious members to come to the fore. Furthermore, students in that class or group with a committed disposition will surely grasp the correct way of appreciating film' (Hatano [1958] 1994: 745). Hatano's reference to a 'correct way of appreciating film' echoes the student writers' concerns that the student body as a whole were less interested in the artistry and intellectual themes of the films that they programmed, and more concerned with entertainment and killing time by watching movies. Professional critics appeared to agree on the necessity of film circles within universities to counter these tendencies in the wider student body, as well as the usefulness of the university film circle for producing future professional critics who could practice 'the correct way of appreciating a film.' The participation of professional critics in the student publications of the later 1950s and 1960 would appear to confirm their support for the students' activities.

At the same time, however, Hatano wrote in celebration of what he called, 'the principle of the amateur spirit' ([1958] 1994: 745). Arguing that 'amateur sensibilities are needed at this point' in the development of Japanese cinema ([1958] 1994: 745), Hatano extolled the contribution of amateur filmmakers within the university film circles to the Japanese cinema industry. 'Films made in the *eiken* are the future … I want to see a focus on amateur freshness, artlessness, eccentric conception, their shocking angles of genius and different perception. *Eiken* films have the feeling of clumsy genius' ([1958] 1994: 746). In this way, Hatano suggested that *eiken* could not only foster future film critics—'you could say the place is an 'egg' for film critics'—but also filmmakers of the future ([1958] 1994: 746).

Another distinction emerges here between filmmaking and film criticism, with 'amateur freshness' celebrated in filmmaking and 'the correct way of appreciating a film' essential to highbrow critical writing. Jaded academics may not be surprised to see the 'lofty ideals [*sūkōna risō*] (Takeuchi 1948: 2) of young students solidify so quickly into an acceptance of the hierarchies of social and cultural capital in order to join the ranks of the tastemakers and cultural commentators after graduation. In this aspect, the microcosmic world of student film circles echoes the broader cultural arc of postwar Japan in that an initial passion for anti-war and pro-democratic ideological principles in popular culture shaded into the construction of new orthodoxies of cultural consumption and discussion.

Conclusion: Beyond the 'Thinking Student'

As a self-appointed expert on student film circles, based on his personal experience in several before becoming a professional film critic, Hatano Kanji would likely appreciate the last word here. 'The "thinking student" is largely a withdrawn and thoughtful person. If you make an organization where such a student can watch good films, *eiken* will become only that, but could surely do more' ([1958] 1994:

746). The lively, engaging, and often opinionated writing in the student film club journals contained within the Makino Mamoru Collection indicates the truth of this claim. Through the practice of creating a collaborative publication, the thoughtful withdrawn student was brought into dialogue with a wider group concerned with better understanding the role of engagement with cinema culture in their everyday lives. Listening to the voices of the film club students preserved in the archives of the collection gives us a view into the worlds of young cinema audiences at this formative moment in their own lives and in the history of Japan, and shows them engaging with the pressing global and political concerns of the day alongside the enduring obsessions of students everywhere. While SCAP GHQ may have been ambitious in imagining that controlled cinema content and exhibition could change viewer attitudes totally, it does seem that young film fans were persuaded that cinema content offered a means of learning about everyday life and reflecting on the principles that could lead to a life well lived. At the same time, student authors often appeared conflicted as to whether reforming postwar Japanese society through cinema, or pursuing their own personal development through both film viewing and film criticism, should take priority. In this sense, the voices of this unusual archive offer a humanizing account of life in postwar Japan in all its confusion and excitement.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank the staff at the Makino Mamoru Collection who made this fascinating archive so accessible over the years; Beth Katzoff, Miki Masuda, and Director Jim Cheng. I'm very grateful to those who read and advised on drafts of this article, including the anonymous reviewers, editors Ivan Francheschini and David Slater, and my writing group members Hannah Airress, Hyun Kyong Hannah Chang, Alex Dennis, Carwyn Morris, and King Tung Wayne Wong.

Bibliography

Allen, H. W. 1945. 'Elimination of Japanese Government Control of the Motion Picture Industry.' SCAPIN 146, 16 October. Box 8565, Folder 31, SCAP records, National Archives. http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/9885209.

Ando, Takemasa. 2013. 'Transforming 'Everydayness': Japanese New Left Movements and the Meaning of Direct Action." *Japanese Studies* 33:1, 1-18.

Anon. 1948. 'Foreword.' *Ecran* (25 December), Morioka gakusei eiga renmei [Morioka student film association], 1. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301, folder 6; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Anon. 1957. 'Eiken da yori' [Eiken Newsletter: Resting Place]. *Eiga Seishin* [Film Spirit] no. 4 (July), Waseda University, 52. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 302, folder 5; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Anon. 1957. 'Waseda daigaku eiga kenkyūkai annai' [Waseda University film research group notice]. *Eiga Seishin* [Film Spirit] no. 4 (July), Waseda University. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 302, folder 5; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Anon. 1960. 'Shinjin kantoku ni tsuite' [On New Directors]. *Eiga no atarashii chōryū o megutte* [New Trends in Cinema], Waseda Daigaku Eiga Kenkyukai [Waseda University Film Research Group], 1-3. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6,

subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Avenell, Simon Andrew. 2010. *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the Shimin in Postwar Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bernardi, Joanne. 2011. Destination Japan: The Personal Collection as Alternative Archive. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q5FTPc3mLQ

Bronson, Adam. 2016. *One Hundred Million Philosophers: Science of Thought and the Culture of Democracy in Postwar Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Cather, Kirsten. 2014. 'Policing the Pinks.' In *The Pink Book: The Japanese Eroduction and Its Contexts*, edited by MA Nornes, 93-148. Ann Arbor: Kinema Club.

Cheng, Jim and Katzoff, Beth. 2013. Innovative Discovery of Unique Collections: The Case of the Makino Mamoru Collection at Columbia University. https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D8VD6WDB

Executive Secretary of the National Security Council. 1948. 'Note on Recommendations with Respect to United States Policy Towards Japan.' (7 October). Microfiche Sheet No. TRUMAN-4847 (Original Collection: President Truman Library). https://www.ndl.go.jp/modern/e/img_l/M008/M008-004l.html

Fujiki, Hideaki. 2022. *Making Audiences: A Social History of Japanese Cinema and Media.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gerow, Aaron and Nornes, Abé Mark. 2001. "Introduction." In *In Praise of Film Studies: Essays in Honor of Makino Mamoru*, edited by Aaron Gerow and Abé Mark Nornes, 1-7. Yokohama and Ann Arbor: Kinema Club.

Gordon, Andrew. 2009. *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Hatano, Kanji. [1958] 1994. 'Daigaku eiken to eigabunka' [University film study and film culture] *Kinema Junpō* [The Movie Times] (15 November) reprinted in *Best of Kinema Junpō*, 744-745. Tokyo: Kinema Junpōsha.

Iwasaki, Akira. 1978. 'The Occupied Screen.' *Japan Quarterly* 25(3): 302-322.

Jesty, Justin. 2010. 'Arts of Engagement: Art and Social Movements in Japan's Early Postwar.' PhD diss. The University of Chicago.

Jesty, Justin. 2018. *Art and Engagement in Early Postwar Japan*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Katzoff, Beth. 2012. 'Coterie magazines (Dōjinshi/ 同人誌).' Makino Collection Blog. 26 March. https://blogs.cul.columbia.edu/makino/2011/12/16/coterie-magazines-dojinshi同人誌/

Kersten, Rikki. 1996. *Democracy in Postwar Japan: Maruyama Masao and the Search for Autonomy*. London; New York: Routledge.

Koschmann, Victor. 1981. 'The Debate on Subjectivity in Postwar Japan: Foundations of Modernism as a Political Critique.' *Pacific Affairs* (Winter): 609-631.

Kinoshita, Shinji. 1951. 'Eiga hihyō no tachiba' [The Position of Film Criticism] *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 3 (9 April), Tokyo University, 13-15. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Kitamura, Hiroshi. 2010. *Screening Enlightenment: Hollywood and the Cultural Reconstruction of Defeated Japan*. Ithaca;

London: Cornell University Press.

Kojima, Junji. 1951. 'Nihon eiga ni nozomu mono omoitsuku mama ni' [What to expect from Japanese cinema - whatever comes to mind], *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 3 (9 April), Tokyo University, 6-8. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301, folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

MacArthur, Douglas. 1950. 'Press Release: Letter from General MacArthur to Prime Minister Yoshida.' June 6, 1950. Sheet No. GS(B) 01751, National Diet Library, U.S. National Archives (RG331). https://www.ndl.go.jp/modern/e/cha5/description12.html

MacArthur, Douglas, and staff. 1994. *Reports of General MacArthur: MacArthur in Japan: The Occupation: Military Phase* vol. 1. Department of the Army.

Makino, Mamoru. 2001. "Rethinking the Emergence of the Proletarian Film League of Japan (Prokino)." Translated by Abé Mark Nornes. In *In Praise of Film Studies: Essays in Honor of Makino Mamoru*, edited by Aaron Gerow and Abé Mark Nornes, 15-45. Yokohama and Ann Arbor: Kinema Club.

Maruyama, Masao. 1965. 'Patterns of Individuation and the Case of Japan: A Conceptual Scheme.' In *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization*, edited by Marius B. Jansen, 489-532. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Maureen Donovan. 2001. "Challenges of Collecting Research Materials on Japanese Popular Culture: A Report on Ohio State's Manga Collection." In *In Praise of Film Studies: Essays in Honor of Makino Mamoru*, edited by Aaron Gerow and Abé Mark Nornes, 225-232. Yokohama and Ann Arbor: Kinema Club.

Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan (Eiren). 2022. Statistics of Film Industry in Japan. http://www.eiren.org/statistics_e/index.html

Nakai, Rei. 1958. 'Sākuru no undō no iku saigetsu' [The Period of the Circle Movement]. *Eiga hyōron* [Film Criticism] (November), 60.

Nakajima, Koreyoshi. 1953. 'Hihyō-ka to ippan kankyaku' [Critics and general audience]. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 10 (July), Tokyo University, 17-20. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Oe, Tatsuo. 1953. 'Seronchōsa ni yosete' [According to polls]. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 10 (July), Tokyo University, 21. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Ōhashi, Tsuneyo. 1948. 'Zakkan' [Miscelleneous Impressions]. *Ecran* (25 December), Morioka gakusei eiga renmei [Morioka student film association]. 4-5. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301, folder 6; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Okada Susumu, Hatano Kanji, and Uryū Tadao. [1958] 1994. 'Eiga to sākuru: Nihon eiga o zenshinsaseru chikara' [Film and circles: The power advancing Japanese cinema]. *Kinema Junpō* [The Movie Times] (15 November) reprinted in *Best of Kinema Junpō*, 743-749. Tokyo: Kinema Junpōsha.

Okada, Susumu. [1958] 1994. 'Kankyaku wa soshiki suru' [The audience is organized] *Kinema Junpō* [The Movie Times] (15 November) reprinted in *Best of Kinema Junpō*, 743-744. Tokyo: Kinema Junpōsha.

Satō, Tadao. 1961. 'Eiga' [Cinema]. In *Kōza gendai Geijutsu*, vol. 4, *Masskomi no naka no geijutsu* [Contemporary Art vol. 4: Art in the Media], edited by Minami Hiroshi et. al., 115-141. Tokyo: Keisō shobō.

SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) General HQ. 1945. 'Indication of Production Principles of IDS.' Draft Memorandum to Japanese Empire, issued by General Headquarters of Allied Forces, September 22, 1945, box 8563.

SCAPIN 16, 10 September 1945. [Also known as the "Freedom of Speech and Press" directive.]

Standish, Isolde. 2005. *A New History of Japanese Cinema*. New York: Continuum.

Suzuki Yosuke. 1952. 'Hara no tatsu Nihon eiga' [Angry Japanese Movies]. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 6 (31 May), Tokyo University, 19-21. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Suzuki Yosuke. 1952. 'Jidaigeki no shakai teki haikei to Geijutsu sei' [Social background and artistry of historical dramas]. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 7 (2 July), Tokyo University, 19-24. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Suzuki Yosuke. 1952. 'Taniguchi Senkichi ni tsuite' [On Taniguchi Senkichi]. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 7 (2 July), Tokyo University, 7-10. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Tada, Tomoteru. 1948. 'Eiga no geijutsu to kigyōsei ni tsuite: shu toshite kankyaku no tachiba yori' [Art and enterprise in film: From the audience point of view] *Ecran* (December 25), Morioka gakusei eiga renmei [Morioka student film association], 6-9. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301, folder 6; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Takeuchi, Shirō. 1948. 'Sōkan ni yosete' [On launching the journal]. *Ecran* (25 December) Morioka gakusei eiga renmei [Morioka student film association], 2-4. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301, folder 6; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Tokyo Daigaku. 1951. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 3 (9 April), Tokyo University. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Tokyo Daigaku. 1951. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 4 (25 June), Tokyo University. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Tokyo Daigaku. 1952. *Eiga Kenkyū* [Film Research] no. 6 (May), Tokyo University. The Makino Mamoru Collection on the History of East Asian Film; series 6, subseries 20, box 301 and folder 17; C.V. Starr East Asian Library, Columbia University.

Uryū, Tadao. [1958] 1994. 'Nihon eigakai ni okeru eiga sākuru no ayumi' [The development of film circles within the film world]. *Kinema Junpō* [The Movie Times] (15 November) reprinted in *Best of Kinema Junpō*, 747-749. Tokyo: Kinema Junpōsha.

Jennifer Coates is Professor of Japanese Studies at the School of East Asian Studies, University of Sheffield. She is the author of *Making Icons: Repetition and the Female Image in Japanese Cinema, 1945-1964* (Hong Kong University Press 2016) and *Film Viewing in Postwar Japan, 1945-1968: An Ethnographic Study* (Edinburgh University Press, 2022) as well as a number of journal articles and book chapters on cinema and audiences in postwar and contemporary Japan. Jennifer is a AHRC Innovation Scholar and recipient of the 2021 Philip Leverhulme Prize for Visual and Performing Arts.