

J-Horror and Ghibli: Ideology in Japan's Two Global Cinemas

シヨーン, ハドソン

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氏 名 : Seán Hudson

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(Jホラーとジブリ : 日本の二つのグローバル・シネマにおけるイデオロギー)

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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

This research project is an articulation of the links between ideology and contemporary Japanese popular cinema in both an international and domestic setting. Its foci are what are argued to be the two most critically and financially successful bodies of Japanese films on an international scale since the globalization of Japanese popular culture in the late 1980s: the animated Studio Ghibli-produced films and the 1990s-2000s wave of horror films known as “J-Horror”. The aim of this project is to reveal how these two apparently unrelated groups of films both interact with and reinforce certain hegemonic narratives of Japan, both domestically and abroad. The primary methodology undertaken is the application to Japanese cinema of concepts relevant in the field of Cultural Studies – more specifically, the concepts of “assemblage” (as articulated by Gilles Deleuze) and “transpacific complicity” (as articulated by Naoki Sakai) are employed as frameworks to explore the interrelated nature of various ideological concerns, especially those developed in the immediate postwar period, which have accommodated the material processes of globalization within the industries and images of J-Horror and Ghibli. This thesis analyses journalistic and academic responses in addition to the filmic texts themselves, as well as merchandise and non-filmic visual media (such as video games that were produced as part of the cinema-led J-Horror boom). From the results of these case studies this thesis considers the domestic and international impact of Japanese popular cinema and its role in identity formation in various contexts.

The first chapter outlines the contextual knowledge that informs this study. It begins by summarizing the historical friction between area studies and cultural studies, and ends with a

summary of Sakai's articulation of the postwar arrangement between Japan and the United States as the advent of a new ideological apparatus. The next chapters outline the emergence of J-horror, with Chapter Two applying the concept of extensive multiplicity to explore new iterations of Orientalist ideology, and Chapter Three applying the concept of intensive multiplicity to explore new iterations of gender ideology. Both chapters also highlight the role of genre in these changes. Chapter Four applies Sakai's transpacific complicity to articulate the new relationship between the Japanese and American film industry that emerged from the J-horror boom, and Chapter Five continues this approach with regards to the rise of Studio Ghibli. Chapter Six shifts the focus from industry to images and reception as it considers the Ghibli films in relation to the ideology of victims' consciousness. The seventh chapter is a comparative analysis between J-horror and Ghibli drawing on what has been discussed so far, and arguing that despite their differences they are uniquely representative of what can be termed Japan's two global cinemas.