

## Kagawa Kyōko—A New Look at Japan's "Most Unassuming Star"

Linda C. Ehrlich and Kishi Yoshiko<sup>1</sup>

An actress can serve as a vessel for a director's vision, an icon, a force in her own right. In his *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes (1957: 70-71) notes the gap between our perception of the face of Greta Garbo and the face of Audrey Hepburn ("the face of Garbo is an Idea, that of Hepburn, an Event"). Japanese actress Kagawa Kyōko would definitely fall on the Hepburn side—approachable, engaging, memorable in her beauty and integrity. As the world of the cinema changes, the lives of certain figures become milestones, and progress becomes not only a quick rush forward but also an appreciative look backwards at remarkable careers. The films remain as records, as heightened moments for actress and audience alike.

On May 16, 2003, we had the pleasure of spending several hours talking with Kagawa Kyōko in the National Film Center of Tokyo.<sup>2</sup> Our interview with her became a conversation between women—a conversation across languages and cultures, connected by a shared love of the cinema. For Ehrlich it was also a reunion since, 16 years earlier, Kagawa Kyōko had graciously responded to a letter from a doctoral student requesting a meeting to hear about the actress's memories of director Mizoguchi Kenji.

Although Kagawa Kyōko has appeared in some of the greatest Japanese films, starring opposite such luminaries as Mifune Toshirō, Tanaka Kinuyo, and Hasegawa Kazuo, her name is not as well known outside of Japan as that of some of her contemporaries. In a career that has spanned 50 years, she has appeared in close to 120 films. In 1998 she received the *Shiju Hōshō* award from the Emperor, an award given in the fields of art and scholarship. Many of her films have won awards in Japan (*Mother*, *Inazuma*, *Tokyo Story* have all figured into the Best Ten of the *Kinema Jumpō* awards). Talking to her is like watching a large portion of the history of Japanese cinema pass before one's eyes.

Outwardly reserved and elegant, she is also capable of revealing the darker undersides of a woman's life. As an ingénue, her appearance on screen cast a kind of radiance into a scene. But she has also played a bitter woman pondering the limitations of her life with an increasingly paranoid husband, and a crazed young woman whose murderous hysteria may have been provoked by abuse. Older now, her smile still has the power to warm up a cold reception room.

Kagawa Kyōko often refers to herself from her early years in the cinema as a *kodomo* (mere child), and expresses appreciation about how everyone aided her. Over and over in our interview, she gently cast aside any suggestion that her skill and talent were the reason for such stellar performances. Film

critic Max Tessier (1996: 13) justly referred to her as ‘*une star modeste*.’ In fact, in Japanese she is still referred to as *joyū rashiku nai* (“un-actress-like”). Looking back at her own career, she states that it might have been relatively easy for directors to use her (*tsukaayasukatta*), because she didn’t have such strong idiosyncratic aspects (*kosei ga sō tsuyoku nai desshō*). Note the well-known quote by the director Naruse Mikio in *Yomiuri Shimbun* (1953): “What is special about Kagawa’s acting is the way it makes us feel something clean, innocent, and simple...just like watching a young girl you might meet here and there on the street.” Her melodic speaking voice was used by directors in different ways—to show an adolescent’s growing sense of confidence, to express a mother’s concern for her child, to trap men who should have known better. Her secret for her long career: “*muri no nai yō ni*” (not to overdo, or to act too forcefully).

## Background

Born in 1931 (Showa 6) in Ibaragi prefecture, Ikebe Kyōko later took the artistic name of “Kagawa Kyōko”—an amalgamation of the *kanji* of her original name and her mother’s name Kasumi.<sup>3</sup> Her father was an engineer who traveled on the Osaka Shosen Kaisha naval line running between Japan and Europe. She grew up in a close family, with an older brother and younger sister. In 1937, the family moved to the Ikebukuro area of Tokyo, where she learned to play the piano and attended a girls’ high school. At the height of Japan’s involvement in World War II, she was sent to Shimodate in Ibaragi prefecture for protection from the bombing. Fortunately, at the end of the war, her family’s home in Ikebukuro remained standing, and everyone in her immediate family was safe.

Returning to Tokyo in 1945, at the end of the war, she graduated from high school in March 1949 without any set plans except for a strong desire to have her own work and not just be an “O.L.”—office lady (*jibun no shigoto o mochitai’n desu*). She recalls how she enjoyed watching plays and films, and thought it would be wonderful to be able to give that sense to others.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, as someone who disliked speaking in public, it didn’t cross her mind to imagine herself an actress.

What follows afterwards is nothing short of astonishing. She herself still expresses wonder at it. On a whim, she sent in her high school graduation photograph (“no make-up, no fancy clothes”) to a “New Face” contest co-sponsored by Tokyo Shimbunsha [newspaper company] and by Shin-Tōhō and Shōchiku film studios. At the same time, she also applied for an ordinary sales job with Hattori Department Store (present day Wako). When she didn’t hear from the contest, she assumed that she had not been chosen. After all, what were the odds! Out of 6,000 entrants, only nine were eventually chosen

(three for Tōhō, three for Shin-Tōhō, and three for Shōchiku). In the meantime, she pursued the salesgirl possibility. By coincidence, the final interview for the department store job, and the camera test for the competition, were scheduled for the same day, same time. She chose the camera test and this changed her life. In January 1949, Kagawa Kyōko entered Shin Tōhō for three months of acting training with the other New Face winners. She was 17 years old at the time.

She began as an “extra”—as a young woman in traditional hairstyle walking in a New Year’s scene, a figure in a crowd... Her first lines on screen? A mere “thank you” (*arigatō gozaimashita*) as a coatcheck girl in a cabaret handing a guest his hat, in a film directed by Sato Takeshi entitled *Damoi Kikoku*.

A series of (generally upbeat) younger sister and daughter roles followed, in films like *Mado Kara Tobidase* (Shima Kōji, 1950), and *Kujaku no Sono* (1951), where she played actress Kogure Michiyo’s younger sister. Never having attended a drama school, she learned by watching on the set. She became known for her ability to project certain qualities, described in Japanese as: *junjō* (a pure feeling), *karen na* (beautiful, like a flower, somewhat fragile), *akarui* (bright). She herself adds the adjective “*ganko*” (strong-willed, somewhat stubborn). “I was 17...tanned...of course without any make-up...I kept wearing the same skirt to the studio... no wonder the people there took care of me like a child!”

Her uncle, Nagashima Ichirō, an advertising executive for Shin-Tōhō studio, offered her advice and some guidance. In June 1952, at a rather early point in a young career, she decided to become a “free agent” from Shin-Tōhō and was then able to receive offers from other studios. She insisted on only appearing in films that appealed to her, even when others urged her to do otherwise.

In 1963, Kagawa Kyōko married *Yomiuri Shimbun* journalist Makino Takuji. Their first child was born in June 1965 (when she was 33 years old), and in October of that year, she moved to New York City where her husband was a reporter at the United Nations. Their son was born in the U.S. In October 1968 she returned to Japan, but didn’t return to filmmaking until 1974.

### Notes from Some Films<sup>5</sup>

*Tokyo No Heroine* (1950, Shima Kōji, Shin Tōhō)

Kagawa Kyōko describes this film as somewhat ahead of its time, with an unusual sense of modernism. In her view, this was one reason Shima Kōji’s films didn’t receive such wide popular acclaim. She was cast in the role of a younger sister to the heroine, and also performed with the great actor Mori

Masayuki (who played the heroine's lover.), but she especially recalls the ballet scene—a partial answer to her unfulfilled dream of becoming a ballerina!

*Ginza Geshō* (Ginza Cosmetics, 1951, Naruse Mikio, Shin Tōhō)

In this film she plays a young woman (“Kyōko”) who manages to preserve a sense of purity in the rough climate of postwar Japan. Befriended by the “madame” of a slightly seedy Ginza bar (played by Tanaka Kinuyo), she sits with customers without being compelled to entertain them further. (When Kagawa Kyōko started preparing for this film, she had no personal awareness of what a bar was like, so she visited one to try to meet someone with the background of the character of Kyōko in the film.) The other bar women in the film are tough and know how to manipulate men, but it is Kyōko's sincerity and shyness that captures the heart of the son of a real-estate magnate (nicknamed “Boya” by one of the older and craftier women).

Kagawa Kyōko recalls Tanaka Kinuyo as small in stature but very determined; very polite and easy to talk to off the set. “But once the filming started, we knew we must never approach her or break her concentration.”

Not only was this Kagawa Kyōko's first film with Naruse Mikio as director, it was also her first role that allowed for a wider scope for interpretation. She described Naruse as a very quiet person who filmed strictly on schedule (from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) and always according to plan.



Kagawa Kyoko and Tanaka Kinuyo

*Kantarō Tsukiyo Uta* (1952, Tasaka Katsuhiko, 33 min., 16mm)

This fast-paced *matatabi-mono* provides a fine example of what David Bordwell (1988: 23) refers to as the “calligraphic style”—offering themes of self-sacrifice, betrayal, and the triumph of good over evil. Only a fragment of this film remains, and is available for viewing at the National Film Center in Tokyo. In this fragment, we learn that Kantarō (Hasegawa Kazuo), a noble-spirited rogue popular with the ladies, has been betrayed by his friend Shinkichi who believes lies told by the evil *oyabun*. As Umi, a young girl in love with the dashing ronin Kantarō, Kagawa Kyōko gives a touching performance. In one scene, she and Kantarō meet in the temple garden where she announces her intentions to sacrifice the money saved for her future wedding to aid him.

In the end—after several battles and twists and turns—order is restored. Kantarō takes to the road again in a lonely hour, as four figures see him off—Umi and her father on the left, and the lovers Okyō and Shinkichi (soon to depart on their own *michikyuki* [lovers’ journey]) on the right.

Kagawa Kyōko expresses appreciation for the help offered by Hasegawa Kazuo in this film, and in the film *Chikamatsu Monogatari* that followed. “Here I was, a young girl with no experience in *jidaigeki*, with no real ‘sex appeal,’ and I played the love interest!...He was so patient!” She notes Hasegawa’s close attention to details: “He’d walk on the set and say things like: ‘The position of that third light...it’s a little wrong, isn’t it?’”



Hasegawa Kazuo and Kagawa Kyoko, filming *Chikamatsu Monogatari*

*Inazuma* (Lightning, 1952, Naruse Mikio, Daiei)

Based on a novel by Hayashi Fumiko, this film stars Takamine Hideko as a 23-year-old woman (Kiyoko) who earns her living as a tour bus guide while imagining a better life. Living in the *shitamachi* (working-class) section of Tokyo with a family that can only be described as dysfunctional, she has adopted a protective cynicism. Her rough-mannered and childlike mother has had four children, each one with a different man; needless to say, the four siblings only feel a fluctuating loyalty to one another. The eldest daughter, suddenly widowed at a young age, struggles to survive. Kiyoko (Takamine) escapes from her scheming, argumentative siblings by renting a room in a house in the uptown Yamanote area of Tokyo. There she meets her new neighbors—a rather idealized brother-and-sister (Kagawa Kyōko)—orphaned siblings struggling to fulfill their musical aspirations.

Naruse made six films based on Hayashi's writings.<sup>6</sup> In her article "From Women's Writing to Women's Films in the 1950s: Hayashi Fumiko and Naruse Mikio," Catherine Russell (2001: 104) writes: "For Hayashi, the *shitamachi* is a site of an ongoing struggle for survival, but it also bears the traces of the good life, traces of the Edo-era gay quarters even as they were being trampled into the bustle of the modern metropolis." Russell questions the ending of *Inazuma* as ambivalent—a sterile suburban room as a formula for happiness—and describes the Kagawa Kyōko character and her brother as "plastic and artificial" (109). In this, she notes "Naruse's tendency to balance progressive feminist attitudes with more conservative ideals of femininity" (117).

*Himeyuri no Tō* (Tower of Lilies, 1953, Imai Tadashi, Tōei)

Kagawa Kyōko plays the central figure in a group of high school girls who leave school to help with the war effort. She herself had experienced war and could recall the days of bombing and the preponderance of military songs in everyday life. Therefore, she didn't find it a "stretch" to portray a determined young woman who was also terrified of war. In her own life, her memories of high school are connected with her memories of wartime. She felt that Imai Tadashi wanted to make this film to help the new generation of Japanese know about those wounds. "Even though *Tower of Lilies* was very violent, something poetic could also be felt. The beauty comes through the sadness." In her writing on this film, she notes: "For the tragedy of war not to be repeated, we need to first know the true nature of war" (Richie, 1984: 20).

*Tower of Lilies* could not be made in Okinawa in 1953, because the island had not yet been returned to Japan. Instead it was filmed in Chiba prefecture, as well as on an open set. She recalls the filming from October to December as a "battle" with the cold (ironic for a film ostensibly taking place in a tropical clime!). *Tower of Lilies* benefited from the youthful spirit of its actors (Kagawa Kyōko was 21-years-old at the time). "In the scenes where our legs didn't

show, we'd put a kerosene can with a hole punched in it, filled with hot coals, in front of our legs to warm us up! It was very primitive." They also put ice in their mouths and then took it out before delivering their lines, so their breaths in the cold air wouldn't appear (white) when filmed.



Kagawa Kyoko (first row, far right) with cast of *Himeyuri no To*

Kagawa Kyōko's role was that of a young girl who joined the brigade after her father was killed in the war. The schoolgirls, wearing white headbands, and with their faces streaked with mud, present striking group formations. Their physical and emotional survival depended on staying together, under the watchful eye of their devoted teacher. When two of their comrades are buried alive in a landslide, all of the others work together feverishly through the night to rescue them. The saddest shot is that of an injured girl, alone in the frame, calling out to her mother and father. The price of the brigade girls' sacrifice is high. Of the ones who survive, one girl is blinded by her injuries, and the teacher becomes permanently deaf from the explosions of battle.

The grim, grainy feel of the film makes the smoke of battle seem to permeate each shot. Moments of respite include an impromptu game of ball (using a cabbage as the ball), an Okinawan folk song, and a particularly charming Okinawan folk dance, performed by Kagawa Kyōko. These moments remind us how far from normal life the Lily Brigade has traveled.

In the film, bombing interrupts the girls' graduation ceremony. They leave their scrolls, and childhood, behind to work side-by-side with adults. In 1979,

Kagawa Kyōko went to Okinawa for the first time and attended a belated graduation, 34 years later, for some of the women depicted in the film. The NHK documentary of her visit and of this graduation became the story of her book *Himeyuritachi no Inori: Okinawa no Messēji* (The Prayer of the Lily Brigade: The Message of Okinawa). Calling Okinawa her “*kokoro no furusato* (heart’s homeland),” she expressed her appreciation for that belated graduation, but remained hopeful that there would never be a need for that kind of graduation again. In more recent years, she has appeared in television dramas about the graduation, notably “*Sōshiju no Uta*,” “*Himeyuri no Uta*,” and “*Shirohata no Shōjo*.”

*Okāsan*, (Mother, 1952, Naruse Mikio, Shin Tōhō)

While filming *Okāsan*, Kagawa Kyōko realized there was a roletype she could handle well: that of a working-class young girl growing into maturity (*shominteki na onnanoko, nobi-nobi to yareta n desu*). She recalls that it



Kagawa Kyoko, director Naruse Mikio, Okada Eiji, *Okasan*



was also during the making of this film that she started to really think about what acting actually entailed.

*Okāsan* offered her a chance to try her skill at comic timing—as a young girl who both flirts with, and torments, the young man interested in her (played by Okada Eiji). We learn of the story through the daughter's eyes, through her off-screen narration. Naruse offered a succinct quote to describe Kagawa Kyōko's performances of that time: "The good qualities of 'Kagawa-kun' is her simple, unaffected style of acting. She has managed to maintain that ability right from the very beginning" (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 1953).

Kagawa Kyōko recalls that Naruse tended toward short cuts. "He would even yell 'cut' after a short line of dialogue." Kurosawa, who served as an assistant for one of Naruse's films (*Nadare* [Avalanche], 1937), also took note of this: "The flow of short shots that looks calm and ordinary at first glance then reveals itself to be like a deep river with a quiet surface disguising a fast-raging current underneath" (cited in Hasumi and Yamane, 1998: 13).

*Tokyō Monogatari* (Tokyo Story, 1953, Ozu Yasujiro, Shōchiku)

Kagawa Kyōko's character in *Tokyo Story* (also named Kyōko) was a young woman who still lived in a kind of liminal period between adolescence and adulthood. Near the end of the film, Hara Setsuko's character gently instructs her on some of the harsher aspects of life.

"I recall Ozu's precision...for example, he asked an actor to look at his wristwatch after waving a fan three times." She also recalls, with some embarrassment, how the most junior of the assistant directors on that set,



Kagawa Kyoko and Hara Setsuko, *Tokyo Story*

Imamura Shōhei, would be in charge of such tasks as getting her sandals ready. With the recent one-hundredth anniversary of Ozu's birth, Kagawa



Ozu Yasujiro and Kagawa Kyoko, *Tokyo Story*

Kyoko has often been asked to comment on her recollections of him. Having been in only one of his films, this has posed some difficulties for her.

*Sanshō Dayū* (Sansho the Bailiff, 1954, Mizoguchi Kenji, Daiei)

As in her role in *Okāsan*, the role of Anju mirrored her actual age. In preparation for the role, Mizoguchi instructed her to go to Nara to view the face of the Asura Buddhist statue in Kōfukuji as a model for Anju.

Kagawa Kyōko praised Mizoguchi for the way he saw into deeper aspects of emotions and scenes (*oku made mitosu yomikata*). His instructions to her were mostly to place herself in the interior sentiments of the character—then, he informed her, the performance would be accurate. “Mizoguchi disliked it when actors performed from set patterns or from outward appearances (*katachi*).” Like so many of his actors, she did bemoan the fact that, when she would arrive at the studio in the morning, the lines of dialogue were often different than the ones she had prepared.

She recalls Mizoguchi as gentle, but very strict on the set. His tendency toward the “one-scene-one-cut” helped her act and move naturally, and allowed for feelings to build up naturally. One keen memory of the film was that, in February, the water in the lake (for the suicide scene) was freezing cold. “The assistant directors put a board in the lake for me to step on, for safety reasons.” The cinematographer for *Sanshō Dayū*, Miyagawa Kazuo, praised her fortitude

in that shot. "After filming the scene in the lake, she ascended the hill, her clothes dripping wet in that cold air, without a word, as if she had truly entered another world" (Miyagawa, 1988).



Hanayagi Kisho and Kagawa Kyoko, *Sansho the Bailiff* (Sansho Dayu)

*Chikamatsu Monogatari* (A Story of Chikamatsu, aka The Crucified Lovers, 1954, Daiei)

Upon arriving back in Japan from the Venice Film Festival (where *Sansho the Bailiff* had won the Silver Lion), Kagawa Kyōko received the unexpected message from Mizoguchi: “You’ll play Osan in *Chikamatsu Monogatari*.” One week later she found herself in Kyoto.

She refers to this film as both a crucial turning point in her career, and as “*kurushimi no renzoku*” (a chain of hardships/challenges). The “*kurushimi*” partially derived from so many “firsts”: the first time to portray an (upper-class) wife, to speak in Kyoto dialect, to move in an elaborate kimono. She was greatly aided by Naniwa Chieko, the older actress who played the role of her mother in the film. Over and over Kagawa Kyōko worked on the details while listening to recordings of *Kyoto-ben* (Kyoto dialect). (In some contemporary Japanese films she notices that, at times, care isn’t taken with details like it was in the earlier films—details like how to carry a child on one’s back, how to wear a kimono. “For example, in earlier years, children’s underpants were different from those worn today, so their style of walking would be different than what some contemporary actors portray.”)

The famous boat scene was shot on a very cold January day, partially on Lake Biwa, near Kyoto, and then the final part was shot in a set. Mizoguchi sat upright with white gloves on, and no sign of cold on his face, until the preparations were ready. Everyone else was freezing! When the boat scene started, she wondered “what should I do?” but as it progressed she recalled that she truly felt like she wanted to die. “Once I was watching this film in a movie theatre. When Hasegawa Kazuo (as the clerk Mohei) confessed his love for Osan, and then said the lines ‘Now I don’t want to die, I want to live,’ I heard a college student seated nearby say under his breath ‘*sugoi naa*’ (that’s incredible!). I still recall this—how pleased I was that a young person was deeply moved by this kind of story.”



Kagawa Kyoko and Hasegawa Kazuo, *Chikamatsu Monogatari*

In the scene at Osan's mother's house (after having been caught with Mohei), Kagawa Kyōko sat with her eyes closed while her mother was combing out her hair, and her elder brother was complaining to her. Mizoguchi goaded her: "Can you (Osan) really stay seated that way?" She went to the corner of the room. This is how Mizoguchi would "pull" on his actors with language. Looking back on this training now, she realizes that this film marked the first time that she fully realized how she herself had to form her own interpretation of her roles.

The last shot filmed was when she ran down the hill to run away from Mohei (in an attempt to free him of the outcome of their illicit love). The downhill run was shot on location, but the moment at the bottom of the hill (the embrace) was shot on a set. At first she couldn't get the scene right but then, by accident, she fell and the right feeling came across.

Thinking back on this pivotal film in her career, she now realizes: "My 'panic' mirrored the character Osan's own panic. Osan's earnestness met up with my total immersion in the role and, at some point, became one... If I could have done this role with more experience, I might have been slightly more proficient but, at the same time, it might not have been any good at all."

*Shīnōmi Gakuen* (The Shiinomi School, 1955, Shimizu Hiroshi, Shin Tōhō)

She played the role of a teacher at a school for handicapped children.

*Shu-u* (Sudden Rain, 1956, Naruse Mikio, Tōhō)

Kagawa Kyōko plays Ayako, an innocent, if judgemental, newlywed who complains that her husband has behaved badly on their honeymoon—flirting with maids at the inn, staying out all night drinking, and sleeping with his mouth open. When Hara Setsuko, an older, more resigned wife, cautions her that this is the way men are, she replies "I've had enough lectures (*osekkkyō*)."

In the end, however, in a voiceover, a letter from Ayako informs us that she is now doing well with her husband.

Film critic Phillip Lopate (1986: 21) has this to say about Naruse films: "The key to the restorative, consoling power of Naruse's films lies in their evenness. A sense of balance and peace radiates from Naruse's own calm attitude that all these troubles have their rightful place in the world." Kagawa Kyōko's role in *Shu-u* continued this stage in her career when the adolescent roles were giving way to more mature ones.

*Joshū To Tomo Ni* (1956, Hisamatsu Seiji)

She played the role of a model prisoner, and leaves the prison as a bride (in traditional kimono).

*Neko To Shōzō To Futari no Onna*, (Shozo, A Cat, and Two Women (1956, Toyoda Shiro, Tōei)

In this rather unusual role for Kagawa Kyōko, she was cast-against-type as a brash woman (Fukuko) married to a lazy man who is mostly enamored with his cat Lily. As the second (younger) wife, she is considered a “modern girl,”—dancing the mambo, spending hours in the beauty salon. This film, co-starring Yamada Isuzu (as the vindictive first wife Shinako), is based on a satiric novella by Tanizaki Junichirō. In the novella, the character Kagawa Kyōko plays is described as an “oversexed former juvenile delinquent” who had only attended a few years of secondary school, and who, as a wife, tended to just hang around the house feeding her face and reading magazines. Shōzō is the stereotypical dominated husband, described as “the typical Tanizaki hero—spoiled, self-indulgent, and obstinately ineffectual” As Tanizaki reminded: “Of course Fukuko was young and had the kind of looks men liked...she would bring with her a considerable dowry. Shōzō could hardly be expected to throw down his chopsticks at this carefully prepared feast.”<sup>77</sup>

For this role, Kagawa Kyōko had to master a rather lively (if somewhat vulgar) kind of Osaka dialect. “I can’t say this role was totally a success... When I asked the director why he cast me as the younger wife, he said ‘If I had cast someone like Awaji Keiko, it would have been more her type of role, but it’s more interesting to cast someone like you.’”

*Donzoko* (The Lower Depths, 1957, Kurosawa Akira, Tōhō)

Kagawa Kyoko found the character of Okayo (the Natasha role in the original play) in *Donzoko* a special challenge. Here was a complex young woman—gentle, wanting to trust, yet aware of the duplicities around her. Rather than resting in her established roleytype of the cheerful and positive (if somewhat vulnerable) young girl, she embarked on the role of the disillusioned Okayo with special enthusiasm. The film even offered a fight scene between Okayo and her more manipulative sister (played by Yamada Isuzu). Donald Richie (1998: 127) describes the Okayo character as: “not nearly so far into evil [as her sister]...still, distrust and suspicion are sometimes the beginnings of a dedicated badness, and these she certainly has.”

Mifune Toshirō (who played the thief and love interest Sutekichi in *Donzoko*) first performed with Kagawa Kyōko in the 1951 film by Yamamoto Kajirō: *Onnagokoro Dare Ga Shiru?*<sup>78</sup> She describes Mifune as very “*ningenteki*,” (with the qualities of an ordinary, caring person)—attentive to small details, gentle, pitching in to help carry the cinematographer’s equipment, or whatever, when help was needed. He tended to refuse the kinds of personal assistants most stars relied on. “On the set, all of us were ‘Mifune fans’!....Kurosawa really trusted Mifune. If the actor would do something

unexpected during a performance which fit the character exactly—Kurosawa wouldn't say anything."



Kurosawa Akira and Kagawa Kyoko, *The Lower Depths* (Donzoko)

*Anzukko*<sup>9</sup> (1958, Naruse Mikio, Tōhō)

In *Anzukko* (based on a novel by Murō Saisei), Kagawa Kyōko was given a starring role that differed in tone from her earlier ones. In the story, Anzukko and her family have settled temporarily in the mountains of Karuizawa to escape the wartime bombing, and the film opens with spectacular mountain landscapes.<sup>10</sup> In a particularly long sequence, Anzukko and her father (Yamamura Sō) walk her bike along a mountain road as he gives her advice on "*seikatsu no omoshirosa*" (what makes life interesting). Father and daughter share a close bond based on mutual respect. As an eligible daughter of a well-known Japanese writer, Anzukko is visited by a series of potential (and sometimes comic) suitors but ends up marrying Ryōkichi (Kimura Isao), an aspiring writer and the shy son of a bookstore owner. Unfortunately, the young husband turns increasingly to drink to bolster his sagging ego as his lack of talent as a writer becomes apparent.

Naruse's penchant for depicting weak men made the quiet, and sometimes quietly resentful, strength of women move to the foreground of his films. Loyal, yet no longer so submissive, Anzukko slowly becomes open to the possibility of leaving her husband. Naruse tells her story with the simple close-up—a worn pair of high-heeled shoes or Ryōkichi's face peering out through the glass of a small window onto the father's carefully tended garden

(before later tearing apart the garden in his rage).<sup>11</sup> In comparison to her earlier Naruse films, Kagawa Kyōko describes this film as “dark” (*kurai*), with the main humorous note provided by the repetition of bike rides with potential suitors.

She recalls how cold it was during the filming—“In the scene where I hung the laundry up to dry, it was soon frozen stiff!” The combination of the cold and her nervousness made it doubly tense for her. Since she had never really cooked in a kitchen—still relying on her mother’s cooking, at this stage—it was hard for her to do the kitchen scene in the small apartment. It took a week to film that scene, but then there was a flaw in the filmstock and it had to be done again. “The director was furious, but I was overjoyed—the first week had been like a long rehearsal!”

A contrast to Anzuko’s marriage is that of her younger brother Heinosuke who falls for the “cool beauty” Risako, a Japanese version of the “material girl.” This marriage, while unconventional, seems to promise happiness, as the formerly unruly Heinosuke succumbs to the whims of the strong-willed (but not uncaring) Risako who knows she wants the good life.

In crucial moments of decision, Naruse’s women stand at the top of stairs. From their poor lodging, Anzuko poses this way, leaving her drunk husband on the futon inside as a nosy neighbor peers up from below. The moment passes, however, without becoming a major turning point. At the end of a Naruse film like *Anzuko* and *Ginza Geshō*, the women walk away from the camera, down the street, resigned to the probable lack of change in their lives.

In contrast to the ending of the film, which could be interpreted as (marginally) open, the novel itself shows both Anzuko and her brother divorced from their respective spouses. The power of the father in Anzuko’s life is thus reinstated. The film’s ending is more in line with the observation by Audie Bock: “There are no happy endings for Naruse, but there are incredibly enlightened defeats” (cited in Lopate, 1986: 20).

*Mori To Mizūmi No Matsuri* (1958, Uchida Tomu, Tōei)

In this film based on a novel by the same name by Takeda Taijun, Kagawa Kyōko plays the role of a female painter who goes to Hokkaido and falls in love with a young Ainu man (played by action star Takakura Ken). Although there are some scenes of Ainu ceremonies, and the film was shot entirely on location, it tends toward the stereotypical. Kagawa Kyōko recalls: “Uchida Tomu demanded boldness and stalwartness from all his actors, male and female alike.”

*Ningen No Kabe* (Yamamoto Satsuo, 1959, based on a story by Ichikawa Tatsuzō)



Kagawa Kyōko considers it extremely helpful that she could become free of studio contracts early in her career. After becoming independent, she was able to act in films by directors like Yamamoto Satsuo. She praised the atmosphere of those low-budget films as “egalitarian, able to show contradictions in life, the pain that flows beneath the surface.”

In 1959, Kagawa Kyōko also appeared in the Cecil B. DeMille-style epic *Nippon Tanjō* (The Birth of Japan), based on Japan’s oldest historical tales, the *Kojiki* and *Nippon Shoki*.

*Warui Yatsu Hodo Yoku Nemuru* (The Bad Sleep Well, 1960, Kurosawa Akira, Tōhō)

In a rare moment of critique, the actress expressed irritation at her character in this film, the crippled daughter of the president of a government housing corporation: “Why didn’t that woman speak up for herself more?!” Richie (1984: 140)<sup>12</sup> compares her role to that of Ophelia in *Hamlet*.

In 1961, she played a photojournalist in the *kaiju eiga* monster film *Mosura* (Mothra), also starring Shimura Takashi, and the love interest in a Tōhō extravaganza *Osaka-jō Monogatari* (Daredevil in the Castle), also starring Mifune.

*Tengoku To Jigoku* (High and Low, 1963, Kurosawa Akira, Tōhō)

The fact that all of Kagawa Kyōko’s acting took place in the living room of the house made this a challenging film for her. She had few lines but she had to react to everything happening around her. All of this, combined with Kurosawa’s tendency not to give explicit instructions, made this an especially intense experience for her. “I recall losing weight while filming *High and Low*, from all the tension.”

She found out later that Kurosawa had envisioned the wife as someone like Elizabeth Taylor—“a woman who would never go out with a shopping bag.... Since I sometimes go out carrying a shopping bag, I feel like I let him down!”

In 1963, Kagawa Kyōko appeared in a television serialized drama *Hana No Shōgai* (NHK). Although she does not dislike television per se, she sees one result of the tyranny of television in the way it has made it harder for writers and actors to explore new roletypes in the cinema, because the number of movies being made is smaller. In that year, Kagawa Kyōko made her first stage appearance, with the Geijutsuza, in a play that also featured Yamada Isuzu. (Her second stage appearance was in 1980, with the Teigeki group, in *Onnatachi No Chūshingura* [Women’s Chushingura].)

In 1964, she appeared in the Tokyo Channel 12 remake of the film *24 Eyes* (*Nijūshi No Hitomi*), originally directed by Kinoshita Keisuke.

*Akahige* (Redbeard, 1965, Kurosawa Akira, Tōhō)

Kagawa Kyōko herself was surprised at the nature of the role she was chosen for—that of a seemingly docile, but deadly, young woman, a kind of “preying mantis.” Her character, the daughter of a wealthy merchant, had killed three clerks in her father’s employ. On her own initiative, Kagawa Kyōko visited a mental hospital and listened to the conversations between one of the psychiatrists and his patients. She noticed that, even though the patients seemed to be speaking in a normal way, there was something abnormal about their conversation. “From that point, I knew how to interpret the role.” She found the instant change in the character—from innocence to violence—quite interesting to perform.

There was no rehearsal for the scene where she seduces, and then attempts to kill, Yasumoto (Kayama Yūzō), but the scene was shot about 30 times, each time with the dangerous hair pin raised above his neck. “I was very frightened that the pin would inadvertently slip.” A howling wind blew outside during the seduction scene, and the sharp notes of a flute began as the young doctor drew closer. Shadows darkened on her face.

“It was a black-and-white film so you probably didn’t notice, but there was blue shadow all around my eyes, a very terrifying face. I didn’t like looking at myself in the mirror!”

*Tsubasa o Kokoro Ni Tsukete* (1978, Horikawa Hiromichi)

This award-winning 1978 film brought Kagawa Kyōko back in a role of a compassionate woman, but one who doesn’t indulge in sentimentality.<sup>13</sup> Even in a film like this one that resembles a television drama, she was able to maintain a subtle “edge” in her portrayal of a working mother.

The story reflects one of a parent’s worst fears—that her child will be diagnosed with a serious illness. Asato (Ishida Eri), an athletic, outgoing teenager without the greatest grades in school, learns that what had seemed like a case of juvenile rheumatism is actually bone cancer. The doctors recommend amputation to try to stem the spread of the disease. Following the surgery, Asato temporarily maintains the illusion that she still has use of her right arm.

Despite the high-key lighting and overall inspirational tone, this film does lead the viewer into several areas that have been relatively underrepresented in the Japanese cinema: the life of a working mother, life in a modern-day *danchi* (high-rise apartment building), the struggles of the handicapped, and the limitations of medical science.

Realizing that his daughter needs a goal, the father (played by Frankie Sakai) decides to encourage her to study hard to pass her exams. Frankie Sakai curbs in his usual comedic persona (except for one comic scene involving taking a group photo). Unable to attend the graduation ceremony at the school,

the principal arranges for a simple ceremony at Asato's hospital bed—a scene that could vie with the best of the classical “three-handkerchief” scenes (*namida chōdai eiga*) for its sense of triumph and pathos. Despite all efforts, however, Asato later succumbs to the cancer.

At the end of the film, the parents walk toward the camera as the mother (Kagawa Kyōko) voices the question—Should we have let her spend her last six months studying and studying? Moments of doubt characterize her role and add a note of realism, echoing back to her characters in *Lower Depths* and *Anzukko*.

*Otoko Wa Tsurai Yo: Torajirō Haru No Yume* (It's Hard to Be a Man: Dream of Spring, 1979, Yamada Yōji, Shōchiku)

This film represents Kagawa Kyōko's turn to play the “Madonna” in one of the “Tora-san” series. Director Yamada Yōji drew on the fact that she had lived in the United States to make her character an English teacher and translator. “This was my first experience having a scenario based around some event in my personal life.” *Dream of Spring* offers themes found in the later *Tora-san Goes to Vienna*—Tora-san as the unsophisticated Japanese who is uncomfortable around non-Japanese environments, as well as the theme of rescuing Japan from what is non-Japanese.

*Dream of Spring* opens with a dream sequence set in San Francisco's Chinatown (complete with opium dens and FBI agents!). Tora-san's brother-in-law Hiroshi, dressed as a ship's captain, and Tora-san, dressed as a sailor, come to the rescue of Tora-san's sister Sakura and take her back to Japan.

As the main story progresses, we see other foreign elements: American tourists who visit the Taishakuden temple, after-school English lessons for Mitsuo (Tora-san's nephew), and a rather down-and-out traveling salesman who, for some rather obscure reason, has come to Japan to peddle a brand of vitamins. Kagawa Kyōko's role (Keiko) provides a link between the Japanese and the foreign. A young widow with a young-adult daughter, Megumi, she speaks a carefully enunciated English and seems comfortable moving between the two cultures. Her Japaneseness is reinforced at the end, however, with the arrival of her suitor, a Japanese ship's captain (harking back to the dream sequence), thus—yet again—squashing Tora-san's hope for a reciprocated romance.

The foreign man (known as Michael Jordan) is a stereotypical picture of a Westerner. A relatively tall man, he hits his head on the wooden beams in the sweet shop owned by Tora-san's uncle and aunt. His feet stick out from the end of the futon. He displays his emotions more overtly than many of the other characters and has less self-discipline than most. He and Tora-san (another wandering peddler) possess a strange affinity in their emotional volatileness. They get into heated arguments that almost become physical

fight. When Michael falls for the tender-hearted Sakura—ignoring the fact that she is a married woman—complications ensue. Also stereotypically, Michael has mistaken the lack of an overt show of affection between Sakura and Hiroshi as an indication of a lack of caring. Kagawa Kyōko's character serves as a cultural guide, explaining to the family differences in American and Japanese communication patterns. She describes how Americans (unlike the Japanese) can say "no" clearly.

With a drunken singing of "Glory, glory hallelujah" at the end of the film, harmony is restored between Tora-san and Michael, between Japan and the U.S. Michael leaves Japan on a friendly note—but what seems most important is that he has returned home (to Arizona and to his loving mother).

Kagawa Kyōko recalls: "Atsumi Kiyoshi was a very memorable person. He was very different from his Tora-san image—actually rather weak physically. The Shōchiku studio was very cold and we were filming in December. The only real warmth was when the stage lights were turned on. As soon as we finished filming a shot, Atsumi Kiyoshi would go sit under the *kotatsu* (table heater). The regular actors in the film were like a family, but Atsumi Kiyoshi helped us newcomers feel welcome." In *Shikibu Monogatari*, directed by Kumai Kei (1990), Kagawa Kyōko first played an older woman role. This was 11 years after her appearance in the Tora-san film. In our interview, the actress bemoaned the lack of complex roles for older women (besides the roles of senile women or caricatured older women in comedies). She would love to perform in films about women like herself who are still healthy in body and mind, and who are more natural, "ordinary people" (*futsū no hito*). Of the few films with significant roles for older women who can "tell their own stories," she mentioned the National Film Board of Canada's *Strangers in Good Company*, the Brazilian film *Central Station* (1998), and Pedro Almodóvar's *All About my Mother* (*Todo Sobre Mi Madre*, 1999).

*Madadayo* (1993, Kurosawa Akira, Daiei)

Although Kagawa Kyōko had been chosen as the wife for the film, the actor to play the husband had not yet been chosen, eventually Matsumura Tatsuo was cast in that role. Kagawa Kyōko was able to visit the younger sister of the professor (Uchida Hyakken) whose life inspired the film, and there she saw photographs of the wife and of their family life.

Although *Madadayo* featured a more laconic pace than *High and Low*, it presented the same kinds of problems with timing and how to react. She described herself as a "shadow" who followed close to the husband. For example, in the scene where she had to cook a meal in the three-mat hut, she had to cut food, prepare it, and serve it, while her only line of dialogue was "He's still a child." Kurosawa only gave her instructions to act naturally, and to not project a sense of extra effort. Although she was on screen a great deal,

she was the only woman within a group of men, and she had very few lines. She worried a great deal about the timing. After the film was completed, when she read in a magazine that Kurosawa said that she had performed naturally, she took it as an indication of some success.

For the “four seasons” montage, Kurosawa added the Vivaldi music at the time of the daily viewing of the rushes. “It had to be this music,” he announced. Although she was instructed to express conjugal love in that scene, the only description in the script were lines like “It’s cold; snow has piled up.” Each segment of that short montage was filmed in its appropriate season.

Working with Kurosawa after a 25-year hiatus was a special pleasure for her. She found the script for *Madadayo* more like that of an Ozu film. This film again showed a common theme in Kagawa Kyōko’s roels—grace despite obstacles. As Donald Richie (1984: 228) wrote of the husband’s role in the film: “*Madadayo* is a refusal of death itself. The teacher in the film is thus like Sanshiro clinging to the post in the middle of the lotus pond nearly fifty years before. Neither are going to give up. They are both going to keep on trying.”

The story of *Madadayo* unfolds slowly, in an almost meandering fashion. Kagawa Kyōko expressed concern about the way many contemporary films encourage viewers to expect only strong stimuli from images on the screen. “There’s a pleasure in the way films can help us imagine what we can’t see with our eyes. If everything is put before our eyes, this power of imagination is lost. The pace of films has changed. It can make your head spin. I want to observe films more slowly.”

### *Shall We Dance?* (1996, Suō Masayuki, Daiei/Nihon Terebi)

Unlike many actors who allow their office staff to make all the arrangements, Kagawa Kyōko prefers to speak personally to the directors. This greatly surprised the young director Suō Masayuki. As in her work with television, she welcomes even these small opportunities as a chance to meet young people in the industry. She joked, however, that this was her only performance as a photographer!

In 1996, in the NHK serialized “t.v. novel” (*terebi shōsetsu*) entitled “Futarikko,” she played a wife who feels dissatisfaction with her husband. In one scene she remains cool while throwing a cup of coffee on him; in another, she cuts up his suits and ties with a scissors. It is fascinating to watch an actress who has tended to play rather noble characters perform with this kind of cooler demeanor.

### *AfterLife* (1999, Wandafuru Raifu, Kore-eda Hirokazu, Terebi Man Union)

Kagawa Kyōko described Kore-eda as young but “*shikkari shite iru*” (dependable, a straight arrow). Even though I was old enough to be his

mother, I still felt that the director and I communicated very clearly... The three days I spent filming were just wonderful." In this film, Kagawa Kyōko plays the wife of one of the deceased who visit a "way-station" after death to choose one memory to accompany them on their journey. She appears in a taped recording of her own "chosen memory," and in a memory of her husband's—both recorded on the same park bench.

Seated on a park bench, we see her talking to her husband about something trivial yet playful—going together to a movie. We know, however, that she had chosen another memory when she had passed through that waystation years earlier. Seated on that same park bench, she had recalled a younger time when she had been there with another man—her fiancé who was heading off to war. In an ironic twist, we learn that the fiancé is the exact interviewer—killed in his youth—seated next to the grey-haired husband.

*Amidadō Dayori* (Koizumi Takashi, 2002, Asumiku Ace Entertainment)

This quiet film, shot in the city of Iiyama in Nagano-prefecture, places human efforts within the magnificent natural landscape of the Iiyama mountains. The original story is by Nagi Keishi, (b. 1951), a doctor in Nagano who has also spent time working in Thailand and Cambodia. In 1988 he won the prestigious Akutagawa Prize for his novel *Diamond Dust*. *Amidadō Dayori* received some sponsorship from the Jōdo Buddhist sect.

The director and screenwriter for this film, Koizumi Takashi, served as an assistant director to Kurosawa and as the director for the script Kurosawa was working on when he died, *Ameagaru*. Kagawa Kyōko (who first met Koizumi on the set of *Madadayo*) comments on how his demeanor never changed as he moved from assistant to director—how he would watch each performance with an intensity, and sense of trust in the actors, that helped give a feeling of calm and mutual trust while filming.

In *Amidadō Dayori*, a woman doctor, Ueda Michiko (played by Higuchi Kanako) and her attentive husband Takao (a novelist with a "writer's block," played by Terao Akira) settle in the countryside in his childhood home.<sup>14</sup> They have much to offer, but they also will learn as much from the residents in their new community.

Kagawa Kyōko plays a role that was added to the original story—that of Yone, the wife of Kōda Sensei (Tamura Takahiro), a man dying of cancer. The husband insists on spending his last days at home, as he quietly tries to put his affairs in order. As the loyal wife, she bravely mirrors his stoicism, yet she cannot help but break down now and then, especially when he gives away his most treasured heirlooms and when he offers her a rather formal expression of gratitude for the years she has cared for him. In contrast to the tendency to place the younger couple (the doctor and her husband) in elegant landscape shots, the older couple are bracketed with more interior shots, such as that of

a single flower in the decorative *tokonoma* alcove in their house. As her husband rises painfully from his *futon* to listen to the *Obon* (summer festival for the dead) from afar, Yone offers him small caring gestures. In the simplest of gestures—opening a screen to let in a view of the turning leaves, turning back the bedding—we sense a closeness between husband and wife that requires few words. “The character I played seems quiet on the surface but—knowing that her husband might die any day—she also felt like she was carrying around a ‘bomb’ everyday. There were probably nights when she couldn’t sleep, but also times of deep insights into life, when she felt resigned to the fact of her husband’s imminent death. I never would have understood these things in my younger days.”

The many non-professional actors who appear on the screen—widowed grandmothers who speak of their lives—add a realistic, often poignant, note to the film. The role of *oumebāsan* (played by veteran actress Kitabayashi Tanie), the elderly woman who cares for the Amida Dō, is played by a woman whose energy, warmth, and sincerity steal every scene in which she appears.

One of the few Japanese films that depict a successful working woman, *Amidadō Dayori* shows how resourceful and sensitive the protagonist has become as a respected doctor of the village. It does, however, offer a nod to more stereotypical notions of femininity at its close, when the doctor, now in her forties, discovers she is pregnant. An earlier flashback to a time when she had lost a baby through a miscarriage reveals her pain at “not having been chosen by a child.” The implication is that life in the countryside has not only cured her tendency toward panic attacks, but also her “lack” as a woman. The countryside has also cured the writer’s block of her husband as he draws from his new experiences—planting rice, digging outhouses for the elderly women—to turn his reflections into a book.

Ultimately, however, this film offers a meditation on death, and on the variety of ways life and voice can be given. In a secondary story, the doctor helps to cure a young woman who has become mute from an illness she suffered several years earlier. After Kōda Sensei dies, Michiko and Takao sit by the river and comment: “He returned quietly, leaving many memories.”

Looking back on her career now, Kagawa Kyōko sometimes wonders, “Was I ever really an actress?” Returning home, she is a housewife with grown children; one reality seems to replace another. She speaks with appreciation, and some lingering sense of wonder, at how her life has unfolded. She has performed in films by almost every major director of the classical period (except Kinoshita Keisuke, although she did later appear in a television version of his film *24 Eyes* [Nijū Shi No Hitomi]).

The day following the interview, we gingerly leafed through a pile of albums of personal photos Kagawa Kyōko has generously donated to the National Film Center. Many of the photos are now sepia-tinged with age. It

was like lifting a curtain onto the backstage world of the Japanese cinema of several decades. While many of the films in which Kagawa Kyōko appeared are available in video or DVD format, we were fortunate to be able to arrange private screenings of some of the more rare films. The more we saw of her work, the more impressed we became by a series of performances that are both understated and powerful.

As I (Ehrlich) walked out from the two-hour interview, it suddenly occurred to me that here—on a crowded street in a fashionable section of Tokyo—among the seemingly placid faces of passersby, there might be remarkable stories that stretched back years, like that of Kagawa Kyōko—the most “un-actress-like” of actresses. Meeting her in the 1980s, and again at the turn of a new millennium, confirms the depth of her performances as Anju, Osan, Anzukko—her movement from the youngest daughter in Ozu’s monumental *Tokyo Story* to the inwardly grieving wife of a dying man in *Amidadō Dayori*. Her performances provide a consistent testimony to the art of the cinema and to the dignity of women as they age. “In *Amidadō Dayori*, there is a scene where the elderly *oumebāsan* talks about how—when she cannot sleep—she listens to the sound of the water flowing, and imagines herself turning into water and flowing along with the river... There are a lot of things that happen in one’s life, unexpected things, but if we don’t oppose that river, it would be wonderful if we could live in such a way that we could just naturally entrust ourselves to that flow.”

The authors would like to thank the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute and the National Film Center of Japan for their assistance with arrangements for this article. Special thanks go to Wachi Yukiko, Tsuneishi Fumiko, Irie Yoshirō, Spence Zaorski, the Fukuda family of Urawa and, of course, to Kagawa Kyōko herself.



Linda Ehrlich and Kagawa Kyoko





Kishi Yoshiko and Kagawa Kyoko

## Endnotes

- 1 Japanese names will be given in traditional Japanese order, with surname first.
- 2 Most of the (translated) direct quotations come from the interview of May 16, 2003.
- 3 Although she had wanted to use her real name as her stage name, she was aware that the *kanji* was difficult to read.
- 4 She herself is a fan of Ingrid Bergman, William Wyler, Vittorio DeSica, René Clement, and she pointed out the important role of films like *Casablanca*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, and *Roman Holiday* in the development of her love of the cinema.
- 5 For more detailed plot synopses of many of these films, note Bock, McDonald, Dessier, *Ozu's Tokyo Story* (Cambridge), Donald Richie, *The Films of Akira Kurosawa* (UC/ Berkeley), among others. These "notes" represent an amalgamation of statements from interviews and articles, as well as from archival film viewings.
- 6 *Meshi* (*A Married Life*, a.k.a. *Repast*, 1951), *Inazuma* (*Lightning*, 1952), *Tsuma* (*Wife*, 1953), *Bangiku* (*Late Chrysanthemums*, 1954), *Ukigumo* (*Drifting Clouds*, 1955), and *Hōrōki* (*A Wanderer's Notebook*, 1962).
- 7 Jacket copy, Tanizaki Junichirō, *A Cat, A Man, and Two Women*. Trans. by Paul McCarthy. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1990: 64. (The Japanese original was published in 1936, first appearing in the literary journal *Kaizo* in January and July of 1936.)

- 8 Mifune and Kagawa made 13 films together, including Mifune's last film *Fukai Kawa* (*Deep River*, 1995), directed by Kumai Kei and based on a novel by Endō Shūsaku.
- 9 The name "anzukko" includes the characters for "apricot" and "child."
- 10 The sequence was actually shot in Hakone.
- 11 The art director modeled this set around the novelist Murō Saisei's actual garden.
- 12 Richie: 140. To ensure that she walked in a handicapped manner, she wore knee braces.
- 13 The film won awards from several education-related organizations, including the Mombushō (Ministry of Education) and the PTA of Japan. The director, Horikawa Hiromichi, had served as an assistant director to Kurosawa.
- 14 Western viewers might be most familiar with this actor from his role in *Yume* (*Akira Kurosawa's Dreams*, 1990).

## References

- Barthes, Roland. 1957. *Mythologies*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.
- Bordwell, David. 1988. *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hasumi, Shigehiko and Sadao Yamane, ed. 1988. *Mikio Naruse*. San Sebastián: Filmoteca Española.
- Kagawa Kyōko. 1993 [1999]. *Himeyuritachi no Inori: Okinawa no Meseji* [The Prayer of the Lily Brigade: The Message of Okinawa]. Tokyo: Asahi Bunko.
- Lopate, Phillip. 1986. "A Taste for Naruse." *Film Quarterly*. Summer: 11-21.
- Miyagawa, Kazuo. 1988. Personal interview with Linda Ehrlich, Tokyo.
- Maeko Yūichi. 2002. "Kagawa Kyōko: Shizen no Nagare no Mama Ni." *Kinema Junpō*. 1365: 134-137.
- Richie, Donald. 1984. *The Films of Akira Kurosawa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Russell, Catherine. 2001. "From Women's Writing to Women's Films in the 1950s: Hayashi Fumiko and Naruse Mikio." *Asian Journal of Communication*. 11: 2.
- Shirai Yoshio. 1996. "Nihon Eiga Meisaku Gekiba: Himeyuri no To Kara Madadayo Made." *Bungei Shunju*. 217 (Autumn): 272-292. (From the series "Nihon Eiga Meisaku Gekijo #38")
- Tessier, Max. 1996. "Entretien avec Kyōko Kagawa." *Positif*. January: 13-18.
- Yomiuri Shimbun*. 1953. "Shinjin Shimei." March 16, Evening Edition.

---

**Linda C. Ehrlich**, associate professor of Japanese, Comparative Literature, and Cinema at Case Western Reserve University, has published articles on

world cinema in *Film Quarterly*, *Cinema Journal*, *Literature/Film Quarterly*, *Film Criticism*, *Cinemaya*, *Journal of Film and Video*, *Ethnomusicology*, and *Journal of Religion and Film*, among others. She has co-edited (with David Desser) *Cinematic Landscapes*, an anthology of articles on the interface between the visual arts and cinemas of China and Japan (University of Texas Press, 1994; 2<sup>nd</sup> editin 2000). Her second book, *An Open Window: The Cinema of Victor Erice*, appeared in the Scarecrow Press Filmmakers' Series (#72) in August 2000. She is currently finishing an anthology of writings entitled *A Particular Slant of Light*.

**Kishi Yoshiko** is a lecturer in Japanese at Case Western Reserve University.