Postcolonial Theory Reconsidered: Discourses of Race, Gender, and Imperialism in the German-Japanese Realm

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures
University of Toronto

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Abstract
This study explores the intersections of race and gender as they manifest in film and print media across a century of transnational flows between Germany and Japan. I argue that German-Japanese relations in the twentieth century invite novel re-readings of existing postcolonial theories, resulting in a productive re-evaluation of inherited terms such as ‘hybridity’ and ‘race’. Each chapter of my dissertation is devoted to a particular strand of the cultural fabric woven between Germany and Japan and its consequences for the broader relationship between East Asia and Europe.

Chapter two focuses on the German-language magazine *East Asia (Ost-Asien)* published by the Japanese Tamai Kisak from 1898-1910 in Berlin, on Kitasato Takehi’s German-language drama *Fumio* (1900), and on the silent film *Bushido* (1926). These works negotiate Japan’s complex situation as simultaneously belonging to an Asian and a European cultural realm in often contradictory ways.

Chapter three pursues an in-depth analysis of the German-Japanese relationship between 1932 and 1945 via such diverse cultural artifacts as the results of a German-Japanese essay contest held in 1944, German newsreels, and German-Japanese filmic co-productions. My research demonstrates how the cultural co-productions between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan downplayed questions of race and gender in an attempt to forge a shared identity as *Soldatenvölker* (soldier people).

In my fourth and final chapter, I analyze the contemporary work of one Japanese filmmaker and two Japanese authors who migrated from Japan to Germany after the Second World War: Marie
Miyayama, Yoko Tawada and Hisako Matsubara. I will demonstrate how tourism, commodity culture, as well as notions of transculturalism and an increasing convergence of ‘East’ and ‘West’ are paramount for shaping the German-Japanese discourse in the late 20th and early 21st century.
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1. Introduction: German-Japanese Exchange and Postcolonial Theory

1.1. The ‘German-Japanese Locale’

In recent decades, creative engagements with questions of cultural alterity and difference have become a central preoccupation within German literary and cultural production, receiving widespread scholarly attention in post-unification Germany. Asian-German Studies has emerged as a research strand in which scholars productively engage with alterity, global interconnections, colonial fantasies, and realities in the German-Asian realm. Within this field, Japan has become one major focal point, with scholars researching the multifaceted inter- and transcultural connections between the archipelago and the German-speaking cultures. This thesis is similarly not an investigation of ‘a German’ or ‘a Japanese’ realm, but rather an exploration of a very specific German-Japanese locale.¹ For this thesis, I analyze the intersections of culture and gender in film and print media across a century of transnational flows between Germany and Japan, specifically as they manifest in the works of Japanese authors, filmmakers, and theorists writing and filming in Germany, in German, and implicitly for a German audience, as well as Japanese filmmakers collaborating with their German counterparts in Japan.

My analytical focus lies on how issues of empire, culture, and gender define these works. More recent scholarship on German colonialism accounts for how discourses of gender, race, and space shaped ‘contact zones’ forged through the encounter between colonizer and colonized (Zantop 1997a, Friedrichsmeyer et al. 1998, Wildenthal 2001, Becker 2004, Conrad 2012, Naranch 2014). This thesis traces how German-Japanese imperial thought mutually informed the two nations’ cultural productions across the twentieth century and to what extent it continues to impact the contemporary German-Japanese cultural space. I therefore present an analysis of one hundred years of cultural co-operation between Germany and Japan across the traditional East-West binary. To fully explore the terms of a shared ideology between Germany and Japan in the twentieth century, and to understand how this ideology shaped German-Japanese cultural productions at various historical junctures, I have built on scholarship that investigates the connection between these two countries from a historical and cultural perspective (Matsuda 2000, Maltarich 2005, Spang 2006, Roberts 2010, Takenaka 2016) while also

¹ Despite focusing on such a locale, I situate my thesis in the field of German Studies since it deals with German-language primary material.

In the following sections, I will give a brief historical overview of the German-Japanese relationship in order to provide context to this study’s primary sources. I will consequently demonstrate that German-Japanese relations in the twentieth century invite novel re-readings of existing postcolonial theories (Said 1993, Bhabha 1994, Young 1995, Hall 1996, Loomba 2005a), resulting in a productive re-evaluation of inherited terms such as ‘hybridity’ and ‘race.’ These terms are vital for an appraisal of German-Japanese imperial thought.

1.1.1. Germany and Japan – A Historical Overview

In order to facilitate the understanding of relevant concepts, terms, and people, it is important to give the historical framework of the German-Japanese relationship. Each of the following chapters will feature additional brief historical references for the relevant periods.

In 2015, the National Museum of Japanese History (Kokuritsu rekishi minzoku hakubutsukan, 国立歴史民俗博物館) hosted an exhibition on the German-Japanese relationship, entitled “150 Years of Friendship between Germany and Japan.”² It was the first exhibition held in Japan on the relationship between the two nations, demonstrating the “strong tie between Japan and Germany in the Meiji period from the late 19th to the early 20th century.”³ The overall tone of the exhibition was positive and celebratory, notwithstanding the fact that Germany and Japan’s relation did not start out as a ‘friendship.’

In 1860, Prussia sent the Eulenburg expedition to Japan with authorization to use military force to establish trade treaties that eventually were disproportionately advantageous for the German state. Prussia and Japan first established diplomatic relations in 1861 with a bilateral treaty resembling the unequal treaties Japan had been forced to sign with other Western nations.⁴ At that time, Japan had

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⁴ For instance, Japan signed unequal treaties with the United States in 1854 and 1858, with Great Britain in 1854 and 1858, and with Russia and France in 1858.
been subject to various Western powers’ imperial ambitions.\(^5\) The German Max von Brandt (1835-1920) was part of the Eulenburg mission and was thereupon appointed Prussia’s ambassador for Japan in 1863. With von Brandt, Prussia had chosen a man who would in the ensuing decades repeatedly try to convince Prussia’s Prince Albert to establish a settler colony on Ezochi (蝦夷地, now commonly known as Hokkaidō),\(^6\) territory north of Japan’s main island Honshū that was at that time not yet fully under Japanese control. Von Brandt argued in favor of a military seizure of the territory and an eradication of both the Japanese and Hokkaidō’s native Ainu. However, while Prussia briefly considered the Tsushima, Ryūkyū and the Gotō islands south of Japan as potential future colonies, it was not interested in the vast islands north of Japan. Nevertheless, von Brandt spent his time in Japan lobbying for a German settler colony on Hokkaidō, lamenting in 1865: “It is unfortunate to see this island [Hokkaidō] in the hands of the Japanese who have proved for five hundred and fifty years that they lack every talent for colonization” (von Brandt in Wippich, 1997, 20).\(^7\)

All Western colonial endeavors with regard to Japan, however, ended in 1868 following the establishment and international recognition of the Japanese Meiji government.\(^8\) Faced with escalating demands from Western nations, “Japan realized that it must confront the European colonial powers […] or risk becoming a colonial backwater governed by a remote European power” (Kleeman 228). Von

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\(^5\) After the battle ships of the American Commodore Perry in 1846 forcefully ‘opened’ Japan to the West, the archipelago had to sign various unequal treaties with Western powers that effectively ended the country’s previous policy of seclusion (commonly known as: sakoku, 鎖国, national isolation). The policy had placed severe restrictions on Japan’s foreign relations, effectively prohibiting Japanese to leave the archipelago and, with the exception of the Dutch, forbidding foreign trade with Japan. These new treaties with the Americans, British, French, Russians and Dutch forced Japan to open its ports to foreigners, gave foreigners the right to be tried under their own law, and saw Japan lose its tariff autonomy, making Japan’s situation increasingly resembling that of China. Japan did not recover its juridical autonomy until 1899 and tariff autonomy was only recovered in 1911 (Ching 18). Before it became fully independent of Western powers, Japan had, together with other Western nations, entered unequal treaties with China in 1896 and had won the war with Russia (1904/5), commonly seen as the first victory of a non-Western nation over a Western power. For additional information on the treaties and the Japanese history, see Schirokauer et al. (2006).

\(^6\) Ezochi, also known as Ezo, Yezo or Yeso, was historically the term for the territories north of Japan’s main island Honshū. In 1869 the largest of these islands changed its name to Hokkaidō.

\(^7\) bedauernswerth, diese Insel [Hokkaidō] in den Händen der Japaner zu sehen, welche seit mehr als fünf hundert und fünfzig Jahren den Beweis geliefert haben, daß ihnen jegliches Colonisations-Talent abgeht

\(^8\) The Meiji Restoration is the term for a series of events and reforms that lead to, among other events, the creation of a centralized state under the Meiji emperor in 1868 and a greater openness of Japan towards the rest of the world. It is generally considered a “revolution from above,” which “prepared the way for the profound changes that, during the next century, were to transform the very countryside of Japan” (Schirokauer et al. 189) in almost all areas of life. The Meiji Restoration saw an unparalleled influx of Western ideas and people into Japan while at the same time Japanese were sent to Europe and the United States to acquire knowledge in the areas of science, economy, politics, the military, and medicine. For more information on the Meiji Restoration, its reasons and consequences, see Schirokauer et al., 2006.
Brandt’s claim that Japan “lacked talent” for colonization was questioned when Japan went on to become the only major non-Western colonial power of the twentieth century and dominated much of the Asian continent for decades. To avoid sharing the destiny of Asian countries such as China or Vietnam, Japan embraced Western technology and science, in what Robert Tierney calls a “self-colonizing act” (22). It is important to keep this triangular relationship between Japan, Asia and the West in mind, because it came to define Japan’s role as an imperial nation.

In the years following the Eulenburg mission, the German States, particularly Prussia, followed a friendly but low key policy with regard to Japan, one that reflected the Germans’ primary focus on European affairs (Spang and Wippich 1). However, despite the Germans’ political restraint, German representatives were numerous among those Westerners who were invited to Japan to further the modernization project of the archipelago. German experts were brought to the country “to establish an authoritarian system and to provide it with an ideological superstructure” (Martin 34). Eventually, Japan modeled its constitution and military system on that of Prussia (Matsuda 214).

By the early 1890s, Germany’s position in Japan’s modernization reforms had peaked (Spang and Wippich 2). Nevertheless, Germany enjoyed a special status within the sphere of Western powers in Meiji Japan among the Japanese elite (Maltarich 38). University professors across disciplines, for example, tended to be Western, specifically German, or Western-trained Japanese (Martin 22-3). Moreover, when the Society for the Promotion of German Science was founded in 1882 in Japan, every official in the Japanese government became an honorary member (Maltarich 38). The German press, aware of the newly emerged mostly one-sided contact between the two nations, called Japan the “Prussia of East Asia,” an assessment of the Japanese attributable to an exaggerated sense of importance on the German side (Matsuda 214).9 The British, resenting their diminished influence, referred to Germany’s prominent position in Japan as the sickness of “German measles” (Martin 34).

Beginning with the First Sino-Japanese War (1894/5) and continuing in the years leading up to World War I, German-Japanese relations started to deteriorate. The turnaround in the relationship was

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9 The image of Japan as ‘Prussia of the East’ is by no means confined to the early 20th century. As late as 2011, Rainer Traub, in an article in the German magazine Der Spiegel on Japan entitled The Prussians of Asia, is at pains to emphasise the German role in Japan’s modernization project. Likewise, in 2014, an article on the website of the news broadcaster N24 similarly and without irony employed the title The Prussians of Asia have become Depressed (Die Preußen Asiens sind Depressiv Geworden) (Schmitt, N24, 08-12-2014).
Germany’s participation in the Triple Intervention of 1895 alongside Russia and France, which resulted in Japan’s loss of territory, previously won in the war. The Sino-Japanese War had ended with the Treaty of Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895, through which Japan gained the Liaodong Peninsula in China. Pressured by the military force of Germany, Russia, and France and unable to resist three European powers simultaneously, Japan had to give up its new territory. Consequently, Russia moved to occupy the Liaodong Peninsula, and Germany established its presence in the Chinese Shandong Province. Japan regarded the Triple Intervention as a major humiliation, which gave rise to new nationalistic movements. Although masterminded by Russia, the intervention marked the end of the friendly relationship between Meiji Japan and Imperial Germany. Many German officials and politicians saw the intervention as a foolish move, and the German public was surprised by the sudden anti-Japan stance of their chancellor since the relationship between Germany and Japan had previously been so good that “Japanese victories [were celebrated] almost like German ones” (Wippich, 2006, 66).

The German-Japanese relationship continued to deteriorate as the First World War saw the two nations on opposing sites. Although Germany had lost much of its political power following its defeat in World War I, in Japan, where proficiency in German and knowledge of Germany remained common among academics, Germany was still considered important in terms of culture (Spang and Wippich 8). The cultural exchange between Japan and Germany remained largely one sided. While the economic boom during World War I enabled Japan to sponsor various cultural events in Germany, especially during the Weimar Republic, only a handful of Germans could even read and write Japanese (8, 10). The Weimar Republic aimed to improve its relations with Tokyo because of Japan’s voice in the League of Nations, which Germany hoped to exploit when re-negotiating the amount of war indemnities (8). However, although Japan had fought on the side of the victors in World War I and had gained German territory in East Asia as well as a seat at the League of Nations as a consequence, it was not accepted as equal power by the other victorious states. Japanese politicians had, for instance, lobbied for a declaration of racial equality in the Versailles Treaty that followed the First World War but they were ultimately unsuccessful due to resistance from the Western powers (Ching 18).

Although Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany formed several pacts in the years between 1936 and 1940, scholars generally agree that “their partnership was without substance” (Roberts, 2010, 1). The two nations were united in their rejection of communism and their aspiration to be the dominating world power but driven apart by Germany’s fixation on the Aryan “master race” and Japan’s desire to expel
Western powers from Asia (1). After 1945, both nations had to come to terms with their role in the Second World War, while also focusing on rebuilding efforts (Cho et al. 2). During the 1950s and 1960s, Japan and West Germany experienced an unprecedented economic boom, leading to a rise in living standards in both nations, “which later elevated them to the status of economic great powers, although they did not attain the equivalent share of political sway” (2).

1.1.2. The German and the Japanese Empires

In the introduction to their essay collection *Transnational Encounters between Germany and Japan*, Joanne Miyang Cho, Lee Roberts and Christian W. Spang point out that “whether by design or mere twist of fate, Germany and Japan have found themselves repeatedly in comparable roles. Commonalities of experience include the creation of two modern nation-states with limited democratic features around 1870, [and] a belated entry into the imperialist struggle for space in the late nineteenth century” (2). Although Germany, when compared to nations such as France, England, or Spain, was a relative ‘latecomer’ to the European scramble for colonial possessions, “between 1884 and 1919, it nonetheless amassed one of the largest empires of the epoch” (Conrad 2012, 36). The German colonial period was relatively short: Germany only began to ‘acquire’ significant territories in Africa and small areas in East Asia and the Pacific from the early 1880s until the late 1890s, and lost them again by the end of the First World War in 1919. Geographically, the German empire was mostly focused on Africa: In 1884, South-West Africa, present-day Namibia, became the first German “protectorate” on the continent, followed by territories in China in 1897 and the South Pacific in 1899 (2012, 36, 54). German colonialism shared characteristics with other European colonial powers: the belief in a “civilizing mission,” economic interests, and attempts to transfer domestic conflicts abroad to the colonies (2012, 3). These tactics were also common in Japanese imperialist thought and should not be regarded as exclusively Western or European.

Japanese fascism and colonialism have been researched extensively within the field of East Asian studies but largely remain a blank space in postcolonial theory in the West, although the Japanese colonial rule spanned seven decades from 1869 to 1945 and its political, economic and cultural aftermaths are still felt today (Cohen 1). Japan’s ‘formal Empire’ included Taiwan, Southern Sakhalin, Korea, parts of China and most islands in the South Seas. By the mid-1940s one in six residents in occupied Seoul were Japanese (157). At some point in its colonial history Japan also dominated Vietnam, the Philippines,
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Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Timor, Singapore and Hong Kong. The Japanese empire was founded upon military conquests, the symbolic deployment of the emperor as a unifying symbol much like the British monarch, the installation of Japanese as common language in the colonies and the promotion of solidarity against the West (Kleeman 229). Overall, the “dominant impulse in Japanese colonialism was to remake the colonies into replicas of a modern Japan” (230).

The only locale where German and Japanese imperial interests intersected in a meaningful way was the German colony of Qingdao in Eastern China. Qingdao, the capital of the Kiaochow territory (膠州 / simplified: 胶州, pinyin: Jiaoshou), situated on the Shandong Peninsula, was part of the German empire between 1898 and 1914. The murder of two German missionaries in 1897 gave Germany the pretext for a military occupation of the Eastern part of the Shandong province and in March 1898, China signed a treaty agreeing to a ninety-nine-year lease of the territory. This lease also gave Germany mining and railway rights (Mühlhahn 130). Although formally only leased, the German administration treated the region as a German colony (Conrad 2012, 58). Kiaochow differed from the other German colonies in that it was independently run by the German navy (Mühlhahn 129). The region was to serve as a “showcase for the cultural, scientific, and technological achievements of the German empire” (Conrad 2012, 58). The Germans invested in a modern port, medical facilities, a modern sewerage system and a telegraph system (2012, 61). With 200 million Reichsmark spent during the duration of the occupation, Kiaochow was the most expensive German colony (Mühlhahn 129). In contrast to other German colonies in Africa, Kiaochow was never intended to be a settler colony, and was only open to Germans with special skills or trade experience (136). In 1913, towards the end of the German occupation, 1,855 Germans lived in Qingdao (134). Following Germany’s defeat in the First World War, its colonial possessions in Asia and the Pacific went to Japan. In section 1.5.2., I will demonstrate how the presence of both Japan and Germany in China highlights certain racial discourses within the complicated German-Japanese relationship.

Japanese colonialism and its aftermath bear resemblance to the German situation. Both nations had, at least in comparison to colonizers such as France or Britain, a relatively short colonial period. The possible reasons for the relative absence of Germany in postcolonial studies have been stated frequently: Germany’s comparatively short colonial phase, the alleged lack of voices by former colonial subjects in German literature and culture, and presumably the predominance of Holocaust studies that may “have occluded Germans’ view of European colonialism and their own complicity as Europeans in it”
Kwon sees similarities in Germany and Japan’s respective 
Vergangenheitsbewältigungen (coming to terms with their past). She states that both nations have “selective memories” in terms of their colonial past, favouring the remembrance of certain events at the expense of others (198). Likewise, Leo Ching claims that whereas Auschwitz has been the focal point of German history, in Japan Hiroshima has been the dominating factor in creating a narrative of post-war Japan that “conceals its role as aggressor in Asia” (33). However, although Germany and Japan did not make coming to terms with their imperial past a priority after 1945, German and Japanese imperialism were paramount in shaping the 20th century, and the history of their empires is comparatively well researched. Yet, both nations remain marginal within the larger postcolonial discourse. In the following section, I will give a brief overview on the state of German and Japanese postcolonial research and its relevance to the German-Japanese realm. I will then discuss the specific terms of German-Japanese postcolonial theory.

Two questions with regard to Germany, Japan, and postcolonial theory inform this chapter: First, how does an inclusion of a non-Western imperial power into postcolonial theory affect concepts such as hybridity, mimicry or race? Second, if “postcolonial literatures and films are a result of [the] interaction between imperial culture and the complex of indigenous cultural practices” (Ashcroft et al. 1), how can postcolonial theory be applied to the common cultural production of two former empires? I will demonstrate that if postcolonial theory is understood as a tool to access cultural productions in societies shaped by colonialism – as colonizer or colonized – both Japan and Germany can be included in its scope and a productive interpretation of German-Japanese cultural productions becomes possible.

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10 Leo Ching cautions against overemphasizing Japan’s unique status as only major non-Western colonizer in the 20th century when he asks: “What are the intellectual and political stakes in comparing empires [...]? What are the enunciative modalities that insist on the difference of Japanese colonial empire from other – that is, white and Western – empires?” (19) It is not my aim to compare German and Japanese colonialism and imperialism, but to expand the field of postcolonial studies so that its concepts can be more accurately applied to German-Japanese cultural productions.
1.2. Germany, Japan, and Postcolonial Theory

1.2.1. Postcolonial Theory and German Studies

Within the field of German Studies, postcolonial theory has emerged as productive, yet contested, area of research. For instance, Monika Albrecht claims that the concept of the ‘postcolonial’ runs the risk of losing its “analytical power when it is used for everything and everyone” (2008, 1). However, I argue that the concept can become deluded not because it is applied too widely but because it is almost exclusively used to describe Western empires and their colonies, while disregarding non-Western colonialism. If the attribute ‘postcolonial’ can be applied to such a multitude of different countries, why is it generally applied to the same regions and cultures, “notably India, East and North Africa, the Caribbean, Palestine, which have undergone colonial domination by either French or British imperialism” (Choi 325)? Likewise, Germany rarely features in scholarly texts on postcolonialism outside the discipline of German studies, despite the interventions of scholars such as Susanne Zantop whose Colonial Fantasies convincingly exposed Germany’s long history not only of colonial endeavors, but, more importantly, of colonial fantasies and preoccupations. Zantop argues that “a colonialist subjectivity emerged in Germany as early as the 1770s [...] [which] grew into a collective obsession by the late 1880s” (1997a, 2).

Despite the misgivings of scholars such as Monika Albrecht, studies of German colonialism and the usage of postcolonial theory in German Studies, as well as research on so-called ‘Migrationsliteratur’ (literature by authors who migrated to Germany) have surged since the 1980s. In her history of postcolonial writing in Germany, Sara Lennox traces the emergence of postcolonial theory and literature in the German realm, demonstrating that “scholars of German literature have been at something of a loss to identify a German-speaking population to which the term [postcolonial] could be applied” (622). Consequently, German scholars frequently attributed the concept ‘postcolonial’ to white German authors engaging with the non-Western world such as the novelists Klaus Kracht or Urs Widmer. In addition, German postcolonial scholarship remains recurrently limited to so-called ‘Fremdheitsforschung’ (research on the ‘other’). Prominent examples are Wielacher et al. Kulturthema Fremdheit (Cultural Topic Alterity, 2000), Uta Schaffers’ Konstruktion der Fremde (Construction of the Foreign, 2006), or Andrea Leskovec’s Fremdheit und Literatur (Alterity and Literature, 2008). Scholars situated within Germany habitually understand postcolonial studies, especially the call for a more inclusive and diverse “canon” and scholarship as “a provocation for German literary scholarship” (Uerlings and Patrut 9).
This limited understanding of the field is exemplified by scholars such as Albrecht who in numerous publications criticizes “the tendency of postcolonial studies to sweepingly assume a constitutive Eurocentrism, universalism, racism, etc. of any Western thinking” (2008, 23, emphasis in the original, translation mine). In her essay “Comparative Literature and Postcolonial Studies Revisited,” she demonstrates that her understanding of postcolonial theory is imperfect when she claims that postcolonial scholarship can be seen as “a mere ‘verification’ of literature’s complicity with imperialist ideology” (2013, 60) which “has led to the prevalent practice of negligent discrimination against the majority which, surprisingly, rarely faces a demand for justification” (2013, 51). Albrecht argues that postcolonial theory is obsessed with Western colonizers and with putting “blame” on Western literary traditions (2013, 55-57). She is right in emphasising that non-Western colonizers have received almost no attention in postcolonial studies. However, the inclusion of a non-Western colonizer in postcolonial theory is not about reallocating ‘blame’ but about understanding the workings of colonialism better.

The ‘disclaimer’ on the dust jacket of Axel Dunker’s monograph *Contrapuntal Readings: Colonial Structures in 19th Century German-Language Literature* (*Kontrapunktische Lektüren: Koloniale Strukturen in der Deutschsprachigen Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts*) demonstrates the same problematic approach to German postcolonial studies:

In subtle readings Axel Dunker exposes the ‘colonial structures’ in the works of some of the most prominent German-language writers […]: Wenzel, Seume, Kleist, Hoffmann, Eichendorff, Stifter, Storm, Keller, Raabe and Fontane are in the focus of this analysis. Although the method of ‘contrapuntal reading’ follows Said, it is not about ideological condemning authors and their texts or to apply the norms of political correctness to them. It’s not about denunciation – great literature is a unique instrument to express deep ambivalent feelings about everything other and colonial. (Dust jacket, *Contrapuntal Readings*)

Sara Lennox, in her appraisal of German postcolonial studies, claims that too often German postcolonialism is preoccupied with “colonial structures” in the works of white German authors without confronting “the possibility that postcolonial literature might be an epistemological project drawing

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Eurocentric paradigms into question” (622). With regard to literary scholarship on Germany and Japan, this means that Japan is often exclusively seen within its relation to Germany and the complex imperial past of the nation as well as the resulting problematic relationship to the West is frequently obscured or neglected.

For instance, in her appraisal of postcolonial writing in Germany, Lennox introduces a range of German writers of colour, among them the German-Japanese author Yoko Tawada (b. 1960). Tawada’s writing, she claims, “is informed by thematic and formal questions central to postcolonial literature” (635). Tawada is therefore an author who utilizes postcolonial paradigms for her texts and who can be accessed within a postcolonial framework. While this is certainly true, a postcolonial reading that remains situated in an ‘East-West,’ ‘Colonizer-Colonized,’ or ‘European-Other’ divide has to remain limited since, as I will demonstrate in the following sections, the German-Japanese relationship cannot be easily grasped with this framework. Lennox touches slightly on this when she prefaces her section on Tawada with the sentence “Whatever Japan’s relationship to colonialism and postcoloniality, Yoko Tawada […] is an author of world-class status” (635). Yet, “whatever the relationship to colonialism and Japan” is, is crucial for a productive reading of German-Japanese authors.

1.2.2. Postcolonial Theory and Japanese Studies

Postcolonial theory has been fundamental in examining the power relations between any given colonial center and its peripheries. However, not only have some of its key concepts such as hybridity or mimicry on occasion been inappropriately applied, I argue that the very concepts themselves have to be critically re-examined in light of the inclusion of a non-Western colonizing power such as Japan. Japanese imperialism is “largely neglected in the major works on postcolonial studies” (Tierney 3). Within East Asian studies, however, various papers and monographs, which have started to appear in the 1990s, have led to a “reexamination of all aspects of Japan’s colonial history” (Kleeman 3). Nevertheless, such studies have not found their way into postcolonialist ‘mainstream,’ but instead appeared under “the obscure label of ‘regional’ studies” (Choi 326). This is all the more striking since Japan “is unmarked as a colonizer in Euro-American, but not in East Asian eyes” (Robertson, 1998, 98). Moreover, according to

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12 Of course this is only one aspect of German postcolonial scholarship and does in no way imply that there is no ground-breaking scholarship in the discipline.
13 For a concise list of studies on Japanese colonialism, see Kleeman (3-4).
Kwon, “[s]tudies of Japan’s modernity still focus primarily on the interaction between Japan and the West, at the expense of consideration of its inter-Asian relations” (196).

In recent years, attempts have been made to broaden the field of postcolonial studies. In *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond* Peter Hulme states: “So one of the fundamental ‘beyond’ suggested by my title is an encouragement to strip off the straitjacket of those accounts and definitions of postcolonial studies that simplify and narrow its range to a handful of theorists and a handful of novelists” (42). While a broadening of the subject matter often goes hand in hand with concerns about the utility of postcolonial studies (cf. Loomba et al. 2005a, 3, Ashcroft et al. 2), the narrow focus on Western colonialism reveals a curious Eurocentrism in postcolonial discourses. *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond*, for example, features a chapter on colonialism, modernity and gender in China and makes passing references to Japan as a colonizer in East Asia. However, postcolonial theory is still defined as the research on Western empires and their non-Western colonies as a closer reading of influential theorists shows. For instance, in his “Preface to the Japanese Edition” of *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, Robert Young states that although Japan is missing from the book, this does not diminish “the point” the monograph wanted to make, namely “to argue against conventional (eurocentric or occidental) ways of always seeing the world, and to offer a series of examples, which could have been extended indefinitely, of seeing issues and problems differently [...]” (2005, 1). However, how can one argue against eurocentrism while continuing to focus on European forms of imperialism? Young continues in his foreword, claiming “Japan remains the least culturally hybridized major industrial economy today and therefore, perhaps, one of the least ‘postcolonial’” (2005, 2). In the following sections, I will demonstrate that Young’s statement with regard to Japanese hybridity could not be further from the truth. The fact that respected scholars like Young exhibits such inaccuracies in their appraisal of Japan and postcolonialism, demonstrates the importance of re-evaluating postcolonial concepts with regard to Japan within the postcolonial ‘mainstream.’

In the following section, I will show how an investigation of the multifaceted relationship between Germany and Japan, two colonizers that have habitually occupied the margins of postcolonial discourses, complicates the field of postcolonial studies by challenging the dyadic model underpinning almost all postcolonial theories.
1.2.3. When and Where was the Postcolonial? – Broadening the Field

In *When was ‘the Postcolonial’? Thinking at the Limit*, Stuart Hall asks: “When was the postcolonial? What should be included and excluded from its frame” (242)? In her discussion of Japanese colonialism in Korea, Kwon also takes up the question of the temporality of postcolonialism within Asia, asking “If the term pertains to a critical impulse that arose in the era of late capitalism along with its counterpart postmodernity, then how do we account for, and does it apply to, myriad decolonial or anticolonial movements that began long before the concept of postcoloniality attained canonicity in academic circles, and that had in fact helped usher in the end of official colonialisms” (204)? These questions, of course, can be expanded to ‘Where was the postcolonial?’ More than three quarters of today’s world are and have been directly influenced by imperialism and colonialism (Tiffin 95). Thus, the attribute ‘postcolonial’ can be applied to a multitude of different countries and literatures that have little to nothing in common. Numerous countries and cultures are consequently grouped together under the term ‘postcolonialism’ (Hall 246). Ella Shohat criticizes the term precisely because it “collapses very different national-racial formations – the United States, Australia, and Canada, on the one hand, and Nigeria, Jamaica, and India, on the other – as equally ‘postcolonial’” (102). For Hall, however, this is not a weakness of the term. He acknowledges that, while not all countries are postcolonial in the same way, this does not mean, “they are not ‘postcolonial’ in any way” (246, emphasis in the original).

Various postcolonial scholars work with a definition of postcolonialism implicitly or explicitly suggesting that the field of postcolonial studies deals with the opposition between the West and its others (Mishra and Hodge 1991, McClintock 1992, Said 1993, Young 2006, Lal 2012). At least since the 19th century the term ‘West’ has been used almost interchangeably with the word Europe; Asia in consequence “was placed in a similar opposition to the West as it had been to Europe” (Sakai 792). The concept ‘West’ conflates very different countries and conditions under a label which reduces their complexity and homogenizes them. Yet, although there is no consensus what ‘the West’ actually denotes, it is an unavoidable concept. Within this study, the meaning of the term will be determined by the historical

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14 How can the difference between imperialism and colonialism be understood? Whereas Loomba defines colonialism as “conquest and control of other people’s lands and goods” (Loomba 2005a, 8), the term imperialism lays stress on social and economic dependencies of the colonized where a “[d]irect colonial rule is not necessary” (11). Imperialism can thereby be defined as political system with an imperial center which governs its peripheries and has an economic system of control and dependency (11). Zantop states “Imperialism thus encompasses both thought and action, colonialism only the latter, the actual taking possession and settling of the land” (9). In the same line, Kim states that imperialism “is not just the spatial expansion of political power. It is the expansion of an idea” (151).
circumstances to which it refers. Unless otherwise specified, the ‘West’ corresponds to Europe and the United States. However, depending on the context, it can also, for example, exclude Germany or parts of Germany (especially in the years between 1932 and 1945 and up to 1989) and include Russia which was regarded as a Western power at the time of the Russo-Japanese War 1904/05.

A differentiation between the West and its colonies underlies most postcolonial theories, but this separation is difficult to sustain once a non-Western colonizer such as Japan is taken into the equation. Postcolonial criticism relies heavily on “paradigmatic symmetries among a set of divides between colonizer vs. colonized, the West vs. non-West, and white vs. non white” (Choi 327). The identification of Europe with ‘colonizer’ is hardly ever questioned in postcolonial theory and at times the term has been used interchangeably with the word ‘West.’ (325) Anne McClintock, for example, claims that postcolonial theory “has sought to challenge the grand march of western historicism” (292, emphasis mine). And Ashcroft, Tiffin and Griffiths define the term as being used in “wide and diverse ways to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms [...]” (169, emphasis mine). This gives the impression that the relationship between colonizer and colonized is always automatically a relationship between Europe or the United States and its others (Choi 325).

Edward Said thinks along the same lines when he writes about colonialism, postcolonialism and the relationship between the West and its others in Culture and Imperialism. He aims to describe “a more general pattern of relationships between the modern metropolitan West and its overseas territories” (xi, emphasis mine). In the introduction to his book he states that he limits his research to Britain, France and the United States. He gives a list of countries that he will not discuss in his book in which non-European empires are absent (Said xxii). Thereby he neglects to engage with “the cultural roots of imperialism beyond the historical specificities of the ‘West’” (Choi 327). For Choi, the absence of non-Western empires throughout Said’s work functions “to legitimize his essentialisation of the West as owning an innate proclivity towards imperialism” (328). With regard to Said, Jennifer Robertson rightly states that such critiques of orientalism “retain an asymmetrical relationship between ‘East’ and ‘West’; ironically, they further privilege Euro-American intellectual and theoretical trends as universal while at the same time obfuscating and trivializing the histories and legacies of non-Western imperialisms” (1998, 98). Kwon critiques the paradoxical position of postcolonial studies as criticizing and perpetuating Eurocentrism: “The provincial Eurocentric impulse undergirding postcolonial studies at large despite its
purported raison d’être of debunking Eurocentrism is at the heart of the paradox of postcolonial discourse which still has not been fully accounted for or understood” (206). In the same line, Ching claims that the absence of the only major non-Western colonizer of the 20th century in postcolonial theory “underscores the West’s persisting obsession with its own authority to constitute itself as a body of knowledge and the author of its own criticism” (emphasis in the original). This absence poses the question whether postcolonial terms and theories are valid for the research on Japan if they were designed for the research on Western empires.

As Tierney formulates it, modern Japan “was the product of a semi-colonial collision between an Asian society and the expanding West” (3). As a result Japan “even in this postcolonial era, still situates itself ambivalently in the West/non-West divide” (Ching 30). In order to fully understand Japanese colonialism, it is important to understand Japan’s difficult relation to other Asian nations and to the West after 1868. Japan’s project of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (大東亜共栄圏, Dai-tō-a Kyōeiken), for instance, unveils the country’s ambivalent position between the West and Asia: Japan’s ideology of a “Greater Asia” was founded on “an insightful analysis of the West’s imperialist exploitation of East Asia” (Kleeman 3) and was used to legitimate the country’s violent takeover of other Asian nations. Thus, Japan positioned itself as liberator of Asian countries from Western colonialism while simultaneously colonizing them anew. Kwon states that Japanese “imperialism in the region was accompanied by its disavowal from the outset,” meaning that the Japanese empire was “formed in the very name of anti-colonialism” (202). Yet, Japan occupied countries such as Vietnam “with the wish not so much to eradicate but to replace the European colonial infrastructure with a new power structure emanating from Tokyo” (Cohen 156). Japan’s paradoxical status as powerful colonizer in Asia and as target of Western imperialism makes its lack of discussion within postcolonial studies even more striking.

Kwon criticizes that postcolonial discourses have habitually been limited to the study of former colonial subjects’ descendants “writing back” in the former imperial languages (especially English and French), “rather than about linking different areas of colonial legacies in productive engagements about materially shared but discursively and historically divided predicaments” (205). This thesis, while also

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15 The idea of a Greater East-Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was only formulated in the 1930s after Japan had already engaged in colonial acts throughout Asia. Based on alleged racial, geographical, cultural, and economic closeness between Japan and other Asian nations, Japan argued for a “Co-Prosperity Sphere” that initially included Japan, Manchukuo (Manchuria), China, the Dutch East Indies, Indochina and by 1941 the Philippines, Malaya, Burma and Thailand. The idea of the sphere served to legitimize Japan’s imperialism by claiming to protect Asian nations from Western colonialism. For more information on the Greater East-Asian Co-Prosperity, see Duus (1996).
participating in the discourse of authors ‘writing back’ in a European language, is situated outside such a hierarchic ‘colonizer’-‘colonized’ divide in favor of researching the interconnections and contact zones\textsuperscript{16} between two (former) imperial powers. At the same time, I am indebted to and participate in the postcolonial research that I criticize. I agree with Kwon when she writes that “focusing on these myriad blind spots [in postcolonial theory] is not to point an accusatory finger outward at others, but to show just how difficult it is for all of us situated in metropolitan centers [...] not to fall prey to dominant assumptions despite ourselves” (206, emphasis in the original).

1.3. Japanese Colonialism, Hybridity, and Mimicry

1.3.1. Hybridity as Analytical Concept

Japanese imperialism articulates a tension between sameness and difference with regard to its colonial subjects and this tension is relevant for a re-evaluation of postcolonial concepts such as hybridity and mimicry. Hybridity is one of the key concepts of postcolonial theory. It is often applied hastily as a way to celebrate and privilege mixture, heterogeneity, and fragmentation. Moslund speaks of a “virtual scramble for nomadism, in-betweenness, creolization, and transcultural border-crossings, culminating in a ‘hype’” (29) in research on colonialism, postcolonialism, and globalization. As hybridity has been almost glorified in recent scholarly works, it has become increasingly universalist and diluted as an analytical concept (Moslund 29). However, when re-evaluated and critically examined, the concept can be used to understand Japanese and German colonialism and imperialism. Amar Acheraïou gives an impressive overview on the historical development of hybridity in his monograph Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism, and Globalization (2011). He contrasts the modern “scramble for hybridity” with the “contempt and hatred for hybrid people” (101) that persisted into the twenty-first century. Acheraïou claims that scholars such as Bhabha undermine issues of race and racism in contemporary discourses on hybridity and thereby neglect the racist past of the term. Yet, despite various shortcomings, Homi

\textsuperscript{16} Mary Louise Pratt defines the term “contact zone” as follows: “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths” (34). Pratt speaks of “contact zones” in part to create a contrasting term to the concept of communities, which frequently underlies linguistic, and literary research, and which often has utopian connotations that obscure heterogeneity (37).
Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, in which he formulated his theories of hybridity, mimicry, ambivalence and resistance, has been one of the most influential texts in postcolonial studies.\(^\text{17}\)

As hybridity is so important, the concept is a good example of how the inclusion of a non-Western colonizer changes the definition of the key concepts in postcolonial theory. Three main points of criticism can be applied to the concept with regard to Japanese and German colonialism and imperialism: the assertion that the colonizer is always white and the colonized non-white, the dyadic structure of the model which includes one colonizer and one colonized, and the understanding that hybridity and mimicry are tools for colonial resistance.

### 1.3.2. The Dyadic Structure of Hybridity

Hybridity is often defined as relying on a dyadic structure between the “Colonialist Self” and the “Colonized Other” (Bhabha 2004, 117). For Young, hybridity “describes a process in which the single voice of colonial authority undermines the operation of colonial power by inscribing and disclosing the trace of the other so that it reveals itself as double-voiced” (1995, 23). This definition is problematic with regard to Japan as there never was one single voice of colonial authority that aimed to exert power over the archipelago. Instead, Japan was influenced by and adapted a multitude of Western ideas and technologies. Between 1868 and 1900, around 2400 foreign experts, among them only 279 Germans, were brought to the country to help Japan’s modernization project. The great majority of these foreigners were British (about 800) and around 400 were French (Maltarich 34).\(^\text{18}\) To use an established definition of hybridity as “a making one of two distinct things, so that it becomes impossible for the eye to detect the hybridity” (Young, 1995, 26) is oversimplifying the concept with regard to Japan as it works under the assumption that categories such as ‘the West’ and ‘Japan’ are relatively clear-cut.

Young defines hybridity at its simplest as a “binate operation” (2006, 158). Japan, however, created not one ‘other’ against which it defined itself but two: Asia and the West. In the 20\(^\text{th}\) century Japan was

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\(^{17}\) Scholars have criticized Bhabha for, among other things, homogenizing colonial experiences and trivializing the actual violence of colonialism, thereby disregarding specific historical circumstances, and for focusing exclusively on male, heterosexual and able-bodied colonial subjects. Despite convincing criticism, however, hybridity has become one of the most widely used key terms in postcolonial studies.

\(^{18}\) Germany’s influence in Japan, particularly in the later Meiji period, should be seen as qualitative, not quantitative as other foreigners, such as the British or French, outnumbered them (Maltarich 34).
influenced by “the strange coexistence of an uncritical identification with the West and an equally uncritical rejection of the West” (Sakai 135). However, the increasing hybridization of Japan through the adoption of foreign ideas in the 19th century went hand in hand with an increased value of what was perceived as unique ‘Japaneseness.’ Far from making one of two distinct things, Japan incorporated a multitude of external influences to redefine what it meant to be Japanese. The state’s adoption of Western technologies and ideas directly influenced its status as colonizer in Asia, thus locking the country into a triangular and not a dyadic relationship with its respective others.

1.3.3. Hybridity as a Tool for Resistance Against Colonialism?

In “Signs Taken for Wonders,” Bhabha defines hybridity as “the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal” (1985, 154). Significantly, hybridity for Bhabha “enables a form of subversion” (1985, 154) and allows “other ‘denied’ knowledges [to] enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority” (1985, 162). Hybridity in this sense is a threat to the colonizer.

This definition of hybridity can be applied to the research on Japanese imperialism insofar that beginning with the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan had to negotiate the adoption of various Western technologies and ideologies in relation to Japanese traditions.19 Japan’s hybridity is not a result from a direct colonial encounter with the West, but it is a form of subversion and a challenge of Western authority. Tierney defines Japanese imperialism as a “hybrid imperialism that was different from, but also mimetic of, Western imperialism” (3-4).20

With regard to Japan’s adoption of Western resources, one can speak of intentional hybridity.21 Intentional hybridity can be defined as “form of ironic double-consciousness, a deliberate ‘collision

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19 The ‘hybridity’ of the Japanese culture prior to the arrival of Western ideas should not be underestimated. Although Japan no longer saw China as a suitable model in the 19th century, its influence on Japanese culture, script and politics cannot be overstated.

20 Tierney points out that the Japanese were not unique in their attempt to mimic other colonial powers. ‘Latecomers’ such as Germany and Russia, for example, looked towards ‘older’ colonizers such as France and Britain, “who in turn followed the precedents of Spain or even ancient Greece or Rome” (21).

21 Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) has been particularly important in shaping the concepts of intentional and organic hybridity. Organic hybridity, for example, occurs in the historical evolution of languages, in the more or less unreflected borrowing of one language from another (Moslund 37).
between different points of view,’ [...] a calculated, provocative, aesthetic challenge” (Moslund 38). For languages, Bakhtin defines intentional hybridity as “no direct mixing of two languages within the boundaries of a single utterance – rather, only one language is actually present in the utterance, but it is rendered in the light of another language” (362, emphasis in the original). Intentional hybrids are internally dialogic meaning that two points of view are not mixed but “set against each other dialogically” (36). Although devised for language systems, Bakhtin’s findings can be applied to Japan’s hybridity. The Japanese hybrid state that resulted from the adoption of Western technologies and ideas was not a simple mix of ‘Japan’ and ‘the West,’ but a rendering of Japanese culture in the light of carefully selected aspects of the West. Intentional hybridity is oppositional. Young claims that “Bakhtin’s intentional hybridity has been transformed by Bhabha into an active movement of challenge and resistance against a dominant cultural power” (1995, 23). Thus, hybridity in this instance can be redefined as less condition than function (Moslund 38). Significantly, even if critically examined by scholars such as Young and Moslund, hybridity is still interpreted as a disruptive force and challenge to colonial authority. However, Japan was arguably only able to exert colonial power because of its hybrid status as a nation ‘between’ the West and Asia.²² Hybridity is at once a defense against the West and an enabler of Japan’s colonial endeavors. By consciously adopting a hybrid character, Japan was “in effect subverting the possibility of subversion” (Robertson, 1998, 93). Mimicry and hybridity are in this case, thus, not merely subversive acts but tools of colonialism. If it can be assumed that Japan itself is a hybrid state between the West and Asia and that this hybridity was used to colonize other nations, hybridity does not have to be a subversive and liberating force. In other words, Bhabha, when defining the concept, did not take into account that the creation of an ‘other’ may also be necessary for the hybrid.

The question of hybridity with regard to Japan’s imperialism is even more complicated when race is drawn into the equation. “Theories of race, and racial classifications were often attempts to deal with the real or imagined ‘hybridisation’ that was a feature of colonial contact everywhere” (Loomba, 2005b, 103). After 1868, Japanese thinkers contrasted notions of racial purity with ideas of racial hybridity. Most researchers have pointed out the importance of the idea of racial homogeneity for Japanese nationalism (Morris-Suzuki 88). In order to strengthen the idea of the kokutai (国体, national body or

²² Japan was not unique in consciously employing hybridity as a tool for colonialism. Acheraïou cites Alexander the Great and Napoleon who “used hybridity mostly as strategic designs for the domination of non-Europeans” (112). According to Acheraïou, Alexander regarded his empire as a multi-racial, hybrid realm in which the elite was involved in building a superior, hybrid civilization (112). For Acheraïou, hybridity has been throughout history an elite preoccupation – a discourse which he sees continued today (112).
entity), racial purity was invoked (88). It was argued that the Japanese were linked by blood to a single imperial family with mythical origins in the age of the gods (88). However, the evocation of racial purity could not adequately support Japan’s colonial ambitions in Asia. As a colonial power “the Japanese state needed ideologies which might appeal to its colonial subjects as well as to the people of the colonizing homeland” (90). The notion of hybridity was utilized to support Japan’s colonialist expansions. The historian Kita Sadakichi (1871-1939), one of the most influential exponents of Japan’s racial hybridity, argued that the Japanese ethnic group was created from “many people of different lineages [who] [...] have intermarried, adopted one another’s customs, merged their languages and eventually forgotten where they came from” (Kita in Morris-Suzuki 91). Thus, the “uniqueness of the Japanese was seen as lying, not in their racial purity, but in their unmatched ability to mold such disparate elements into an organically united society” (91-2). The idea of racial hybridity is tied to Japan’s colonialism project insofar that Japan’s colonial subjects in Korea or Taiwan for instance, were “above all seen as incomplete Japanese” (92, emphasis in the original). To use Kita’s words, they were still in the process of merging and forgetting where they came from but would eventually be absorbed and become Japanese (92).

Forced name changes in its Korean colony are one example of how Japan tried to transform its colonial subjects into Japanese. From 1937 onwards until its defeat in World War II, Japan followed a policy of dōka (同化, assimilation) of which “the imperialization of subject peoples’ is usually understood as the final stage of Japanese assimilation” (Ching 4).

The short book Kokutai no hongi (Principles of the National Entity) published in 1937 by the Ministry of Education illustrates how Japan used its alleged hybridity as a justification for its colonial expansion. It is one of the few attempts by Japanese officials to compile a general statement of late-30s nationalist ideology (Morris-Suzuki 95). The Principles reinforce the notion of Japanese uniqueness and superiority but never do so in terms of a biological understanding of race (95). Instead, Japanese “global superiority rests on their ‘unselfish’ ability to assimilate foreign influences” (95). Thus, Japan becomes “the still center into which cultural difference is continuously absorbed, consumed, and transformed into cultural

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23 In his monograph on Japanese imperialism in Taiwan, Ching defines dōka as follows: “As a colonial discourse, dōka emerged in the 1920s as a philosophy and policy that differentiated Japanese colonialism from Western colonial practices in the context of mounting tension among the imperialist powers” (107). Dōka emphasizes cultural integration of the colonized subject to “conceal the fundamental social and political inequality between the colonizer and the colonized” (107). In the context of Taiwan, that meant that the Taiwanese were encouraged to speak Japanese, to adopt Japanese customs, and to revere the emperor. In short, they were supposed to become Japanese, without ever attaining full equality, political representation or economic advancement (104). In Ching’s words, dōka “creates ‘discrimination’ [...] by which the colonized are simultaneously constructed as subjects of the Japanese nation and as object of exploitation by Japanese colonialism” (106).
homogeneity” (95). By accepting their status as hybrid nation and by “strategically assuming a protean or hybrid character itself, the Japanese nation neutralized the anxiety about hybridity that can accompany colonialism” (Robertson, 1998, 93).

Japan’s alleged history of ‘peaceful racial and cultural hybridity’ was used to advocate its colonialist mission in Asia. Thus, instead of destabilizing the colonialist’s power, as scholars such as Bhabha or Young claim, racial and cultural hybridity was utilized to strengthen Japan’s colonial authority. In that way, Japanese colonial policy stood in stark contrast to the German empire “whose objective, in general, was to perpetuate hierarchical differences, supporting colonial power by essentializing alterity and thus treating differences between peoples and cultures as unchanging” (Conrad 2012, 108). German colonialism followed, at least in theory, a policy of clear-cut cultural differences between colonizers and colonized. It did not aim to transform its colonial subjects into Germans and it discouraged Germans to ‘go native.’

Thus, Japan’s complex status as both Westernized and Asian nation is vital for understanding Japanese imperial thought. Japanese imperialism was, “a parasite that grew in the spaces between the binaries of ‘Europe’ and ‘Asia,’ ‘victimizer’ and ‘victim,’ ‘coloured’ and ‘empire’” (Ōguma in Tierney 20). The country’s complex position ‘between’ the West and Asia as well as its continually changing relationship with Germany make it crucial that postcolonial theory should be adapted in order for it to be applied to German-Japanese cultural productions. In this section, I have shown how hybridity had become an important cornerstone of Japanese imperial thought and simultaneously a way to defend Japan against Western imperial endeavors.

1.4. Triangulated Colonial Relations

Japan’s contradictory embrace and rejection of Western ideologies and technologies came to define its relationship to the West as one not easily summated with a dyadic colonizer-colonized structure. Instead, the triangulated structure proposed by Susanne Zantop and Katrin Sieg can be adapted to reflect the continuously shifting relations between the West, Japan’s colonies, Germany, and Japan.

Zantop utilizes a triangular structure to illustrate the German colonialist imagination’s dependency on an absent third party. This structure enabled German thinkers to set themselves in opposition to other
Western colonizers such as the Spanish or British, and to align themselves with the colonized (Zantop, 1997b, 194, 195). Citing two very different works – Herder’s *Letters for the Promotion of Humanity* (*Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität, 1793-97*)24 and the film *Ohm Krüger* (1941)25 – Zantop convincingly demonstrates that there is a long tradition of casting Germans as morally superior to other Western colonizers, as “innocent” (194), as outsiders and as “victims, in the same league as Africans and Native Americans” (195). Likewise, Japan portrayed itself as a victim of Western imperialism in order to justify its colonial expansions. The refusal of Western powers to include a clause on racial equality in the Treaty of Versailles, combined with the prohibition of Chinese and Japanese immigration to the US in the 1920s, “fueled a strong sense of Japanese victimization and formed a recurring theme in the rhetoric of Japan’s interwar pan-Asianism” (Morris-Suzuki 92).

Thus, Japanese and German imperial thought exhibits a triangular structure with the West (exemplified by colonizers such as Britain or France) as an implicit third party. Instead of a dyadic structure that arguably formulated the relationship between most Western colonizers and their colonized, Japanese colonialism “was always produced in relation to, and, indeed, refracted through Western colonialism” (Tierney 21). The relationship between the West and Japan within this structure is not static. On the one hand, Japan identified with Western powers, held them up as models and claimed to do “civilizing work” in their colonies. On the other hand, Japan tried to set itself apart from the West by invoking a “rhetoric of sameness” (21) with regard to the people that they colonized arguing that it was closer to their colonial subjects than the Western powers were. By the 1940s, Japan was claiming that its colonialism liberated other Asian nations from the West on the basis of an alleged “racial brotherhood” (21).

The writings of the historian and journalist Tokutomi Sohō (1863-1957), for instance, illustrate Japan’s attitude towards the West and Asia. Initially strongly influenced by Western liberal ideas, he later advocated for the expansion of Japan’s imperial state and became increasingly anti-Western. Tokutomi was arrested as class-A war criminal after the Pacific War and was consequently purged from public life

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24 Zantop cites Herder’s critique of Spanish, British, and Dutch colonialism, which Herder calls “crimes against humanity” (Zantop, 1997b, 194), while emphasizing the innocence of the Germans. In Letter 115, Herder calls the Germans the “poor youth, the weak child” who, in their innocence resemble the colonized and enslaved (194).

25 *Ohm Krüger* (dir. Hans Steinhoff) was an anti-British propaganda film set during the Boer War. According to Zantop, Steinhoff “creates a complicated set of overlapping configurations that positions Germans as moral judge and avenger in one” (1997b, 194). The film “generates in its viewers a total identification with the plight of the Boers, who, in their rustic blond patriarchal probity, resemble any generic Germans of *Blut und Boden* Heimat films” (196, emphasis in the original).
(DeBary et al. 799-800). Initially Tokutomi espoused the West as model for Japan’s progress (803). However, he subsequently translated Japan’s alleged superiority over other Asian nations into a call for a ‘civilizing mission’ and a defense against the West: “The countries of the Far East falling prey to the great powers of Europe is something that our nation will not stand for. [...] We have a duty to radiate the light of civilization beyond our shores and bring the benefits of civilization to our neighbors” (DeBary et al. 805). Tokutomi saw Japan’s “destiny to become the Light of Greater East Asia” and to “expel Anglo-Saxon influence from East Asia with our [Japan’s] strength” (809).

Did Germany belong to ‘the West’ that Japan perceived as threatening to its plans in East Asia? The fact that Germany had lost most of its colonies in Asia and the Pacific to Japan after the First World War as well as its preoccupation with European matters, indicate that Germany was no real danger to Japan’s expansion plans in East Asia. In fact, in 1918 the later prime minister of Japan Konoe Fumimaro (1891-1945) opened up an opposition between Japan and Germany, and colonizers such as Britain and France:

As the colonial history of England and France attests, they long ago occupied the less civilized regions of the world, made them into colonies, and had no scruples about monopolizing them for their own profit. Therefore not only Germany but all late-developing countries were in the position of having no land to seize and being unable to find any room for expansion. This state of affairs contravenes the principle of equal opportunity for all humanity, jeopardizes all nations’ equal right to survival, and is a gross violation of justice and humanity. (Konoe in DeBary 617)

Konoe’s statement explicitly sets Germany apart from other Western colonizers. He also uses a Western understanding of development and progress when he calls Germany and Japan “late-developers.” Konoe, thus, regarded Germany and Japan as two latecomers whose exclusion from Western imperialism was not only unjust but also a threat to global stability. Many Japanese of his time shared his views. They saw Japan as late but newly emerged world power that still faced Western discrimination (DeBary 617). Likewise, Germany in the late 19th and early 20th century was acutely aware of its opposition to European powers such as Britain or France. As Zantop states: “Antagonism and rivalry with the more developed colonizing powers France and England produced a sense of Germany as the underdog, the late-comer, in need of outdoing its peers” (1997b, 192-3). A strong sense of entitlement combined with resentment against Western powers such as France or Britain can be seen as common foundation of German and Japanese imperialist thought.
Zantop’s triangular structure clarifies Japan and Germany’s complex relationship. In 1937, for example, Germany and Japan co-produced the film *The Daughter of the Samurai (Die Tochter des Samurai)* by Arnold Fanck and Mansaku Itami. The focus of the film at the beginning lies on the relationship between Germany and Japan, with the West as implicit third party. However, it shifts towards the last third to center on Japan and its colonial ambitions in China, with Germany as a largely invisible, but implied third agent. Japan and Germany are simultaneously set against both the West and the colonies in Asia. Furthermore, chapter four will investigate selected novels by the contemporary German-Japanese author Yoko Tawada who publishes both in German and Japanese. In Tawada’s novel *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux (Schwager in Bordeaux, 2004)*, for instance, the triangle consists of Japan, Germany and Europe – most significantly France – and Europe’s colonies in Africa. Japan and Germany are positioned as Western nations with a fraught relationship to Europe’s former colonies. Significantly, Japan’s colonial history is absent from this novel.

Applying the triangular model to the analysis of Tawada’s novel and Fanck and Itami’s films illustrates that current postcolonial theories with their focus on dyadic colonizer-colonized structures cannot sufficiently grasp German-Japanese cultural productions from the 19th century onwards. Although Asia is absent in Zantop’s text, this triangulated structure can thus be adapted to understand the relationship between Germany and Japan. Germany and Japan’s respective positions in these triangular structures changed over the course of time. However, both with regard to Japan’s relation to its colonies, and with regard to Germany’s relation to Japan, the West functioned as implied third party.

1.5. German-Japanese Postcolonial Theory and Race

1.5.1. The Racial Classification of the Japanese

In the 19th century there was a heated debate in Japan on whether the Japanese belonged to the white race. Although some Japanese thinkers rejected the classification of Japanese as “coloured” – the

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26 Morris-Suzuki states that the Japanese word *jinshu* (人種) was widely accepted as equivalent to the English word ‘race,’ but after about 1890 the term *minzoku* (民族) became increasingly popular with Japanese scholars. *Minzoku*, Morris-Suzuki claims, is closer to the German word *Volk*. It can, but does not have to refer to a physically related group of people and be used to refer to people united by a common language or culture (87).

27 Discussions of race and Japan predate the Meiji Restoration. As early as 1690, the German naturalist Engelbert Kämpfer, for instance, argued that the Japanese must have originated in Babylon and could not be related to the
historian and economist Taguchi Ukichi (1855-1905), for example, argued that the Japanese were an Aryan race (Ōguma 144); by the late nineteenth century, Japan had to accept the Japanese position as that of a “coloured race” \(^2\) and consequently the status of an inferior one in the Western discursive system (Tierney 18). Even if the Japanese did not saw themselves as belonging to the “coloured races,” they “learned the Western codes of racial color by their direct experience of the West” (19). \(^3\)

Taguchi’s theory of the Japanese as an Aryan race enjoyed the greatest public response among the contemporary race theories (Ōguma 144). In his *Nippon Jinshuron (On the Japanese Race)* published in 1895 after the Sino-Japanese war, he rejected the idea that the Japanese belonged to the same ‘yellow’ race as the Chinese on the basis of their different languages as well as the alleged intellectual superiority of the Japanese (145). While a speech in which he elaborated on his idea that the Japanese were an Aryan race ended “amidst a storm of applause” (145), critical voices were quick to point out that Taguchi’s insistence on the Japanese being Aryans or Caucasians locked them in an ideological system that equated white with being superior (147). Taguchi’s views were partially shared in the West after the Russo-Japanese War where racial theorists more readily accepted that the Japanese were Caucasians because in that way they could maintain “a belief in Caucasian superiority” (149). Many of Taguchi’s contemporaries were skeptical of theories that claimed that the Japanese were in fact a white race. Nevertheless, Taguchi’s theories have to be understood as a defensive response to the notion of the ‘yellow peril’ that was increasingly invoked by Western nations, especially after Japan’s victories against China and Russia in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894/5) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904/5). \(^4\)

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Chinese. The discourse still exists today as books are published in Japan that argue for Babylon as origin of the Japanese people (Ōguma 151).

\(^2\) In the usage of the term “coloured” I follow Tierney who uses it “not in a biological sense to mean a darker shade of skin but rather to refer to a discursive system in which the West stood for ‘white, civilized and colonizer’ and the East was ‘coloured, barbaric and colonized’” (18).

\(^3\) In this context, Tierney cites Natsume Sōseki’s experience in turn-of-the-century London. Upon seeing his reflection in a window, Natsume remarks: “Since I arrived here, I realized for the first time that we are yellow” (quoted in Tierney 19).

\(^4\) Although the term ‘yellow peril’ was not coined by Kaiser Wilhelm II, he was an advocate for the concept in the West (Iikura 80). Around the time of the Triple Intervention in 1895, the notion of the ‘yellow peril’ began to be promoted by the German Kaiser who was encouraged to use this term by Max von Brandt (83). In a later suppressed interview with the *New York Times*, Wilhelm II claimed he saw the war between Japan and Russia as “the first racial war between the ‘white’ and ‘yellow’ nations” (quoted in Iikura 91). He further stated that: “The danger to us is not Japan, but Japan at the head of a consolidated Asia” and that to prevent “Japan from swallowing China” was the “duty” of the “white man” (91-2). Japan kept a relatively low profile on the “yellow peril” hysteria” (90) of the Kaiser until the breakout of World War I.
In the Taishō Period (1912-1926) the idea of Japanese as Caucasians began to lose its appeal partly due to the development of anthropological and historical studies, but “mainly [because of] the confidence that the Japanese had regained, which meant that they were no longer as interested as before in the idea of a Caucasian origin” (Ōguma 149). In terms of race, Germany and Japan’s relationship underwent various changes. From the early 20th century onwards, German thinkers did not unconditionally classify Japan as belonging to the ‘coloured races.’ In a world that was ordered and hierarchized according to a classification of races and which gave the white race a superior status, the Japanese’s debated racial status is significant. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate how racial discussions, particularly the concept of the ‘yellow peril’ were central in shaping the German-Japanese relationship at the turn of the 20th century. When classified as a ‘non-white nation,’ Japan could never hope to be accepted as true equal by Western nations. In addition, Japan’s shift towards a discourse of a ‘racial brotherhood’ in Asia reflects the nation’s changed attitude towards the West as well as its rise to a powerful colonizer.

With regard to race, Japan was locked in a triangular relationship between its own colonies and the West. Japan’s proclamation of a cultural and racial affinity with its colonial subjects that served as basis for its colonial project should be regarded as “an aspect of specific colonial discourses that emerged within, and in response to, an already racialized world divided between the ‘whites’ and the rest” (Ching 26), or, in other words, ‘the West and the rest,’ since ‘the West’ was codified as white.

At the turn of the 19th century various theories of race competed with one another in Europe and Japan. While in practice a variety of views on race developed, Conrad identifies two main stands of theoretical thought with regard to the relationship between race, biology and culture – both of which were influential for Japan and Germany’s colonial policies: The first, the conviction that races could change, was based on older traditions of cultural philosophy (2012, 105-6). This idea was closely aligned with education and the belief that “inferior” people could become emancipated in the course of time (2012, 106). The second theory was much more influenced by biology and assumed that races were unchangeable. It “formed the basis for repressive demographic measures and ‘biopolitical interventions’” (106). These theories of race influenced not only German and Japanese colonial politics, but also their respective relation to one another. Thus, the changing triangular structure that defines German-Japanese relations can be illustrated through the concept of race.
1.5.2. Qingdao as Contact Zone of the German and the Japanese Empire

Colonialism during the 19th and 20th century required explicit hierarchies and “was founded on a politics of difference” (Conrad 2012, 105) based on race. This politics of difference frequently manifested itself in the creation of segregated living spheres in the colonies. Racial segregation was a feature of all colonial systems, but it was a particular preoccupation of German colonialism, which resulted in legal prohibitions of intermarriage that were unique to the German colonial empire (4). Germany’s colony in China, the harbor city Qingdao, by far the biggest city in the German empire, for example, had zones in the inner part of the city that were exclusively designated for whites. The native Chinese were forbidden to enter these spaces and had to live on the fringes effectively leading to two segregated societies with two different legal codes (106). The German laws in Qingdao regulated physical space, time and visibility: there were clear rules on where, how and when Chinese inhabitants were allowed to move through the Chinese part of the city (Conrad 2012, 106). Qingdao was divided into segregated zones for racial and cultural reasons. For Germans to share a living space amongst people from different races was seen as disadvantageous to the “colonial work.” The special borders were directed against “the interior and the exterior Chinese other” (Steinmetz 444) meaning that the Germans should be physically segregated from the Chinese as well as being “spared [...] any unpleasant confrontation with Chinese culture” (443).

That the complex relationship between Japan and Germany sometimes transcended race can be seen in Qingdao and other German colonies. With regard to Qingdao, the Japanese presence confronted the German colonizers with a challenge. Around 1900, German racial theorists regarded the Japanese and the Chinese as parts of the ‘yellow race’ and the discourse of the ‘yellow peril,’ while mostly focusing on China, made no real difference between the Japanese and the Chinese (Klein 316). Politically, however, at least since Japan defeated Russia in 1895 it became disadvantageous to treat the Japanese like the Chinese because Japan was quickly assuming the status of a world power (316). Moreover, even prior to the First World War, Japan’s trade relations in Kiautschou had been more important and pronounced than Germany’s (316). In November 1900, the Kaiser declared the Japanese to be juristically on par with Germans (317). In addition, in German New Guinea, Japanese citizens were exempt from Germany’s

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31 A good example for this is colonial Shanghai, whose division into segments for Chinese, Japanese and Westerners gave rise to tensions between the colonizing powers. In literature, Yokomitsu Riichi’s novel *Shanghai* (1932) “framed the question of Japan’s ambivalent position within Asia – at one belonging to the region and yet also identified with Western colonial powers” (Lippit 87).
legal system for “natives” because they “were seen as members of a ‘civilized’ nation and defined, in 1900, as ‘non-coloured’” (Conrad 2012, 107).

However, German racist ideologists disagreed as to which race the Japanese belong. The Japanese were treated differently from other Asians in the German colonies. For instance, in Qingdao they were able to live in the part of town that was reserved for Westerners (Steinmetz 450). Yet, Klein cites a passage from the 1911 document *The Penal Jurisdiction of the Natives in the German Colonies (Die Straftgerichtsbarkeit über die Eingebohrenen in den Deutschen Kolonien)* that explicitly states that Japan belonged to the European powers, despite their race: “Although the Japanese belong from an European point of view to a coloured ‘tribe,’ they naturally have to be excluded [from laws applying to non-whites], being a nation that has assumed its place at the side of the European powers” (Karlowa in Klein 316).  

The political equality that was given to the Japanese by the German colonial authority directly influenced the German-Japanese relations within the city. The Japanese were better accepted in German colonial circles than the Chinese. German-Japanese marriages, for instance, were announced in the official gazette of the government and the local press, while German-Chinese were not (Klein 317). However, children of such marriages were seen as “lost for the German national cause” (Jacobson in Klein 317) regardless of whether they were German-Japanese or German-Chinese.

Why were the Japanese treated differently from the Chinese in Germany’s colony? A possible answer can be found in the realm of culture, more specifically in Japan’s Meiji Restoration and its adoption of Western ideas and technologies. Japan’s increased economic and political importance combined with Germany’s self-proclaimed influence in political, educational and scientific areas in Japan might have made it easier for Germans to accept Japan as more or less equal (317). Thus, Japan’s “self-colonizing” acts made their entry into the realm of Western powers possible. Moreover, the Japanese themselves saw their role in Kiautschou as that of colonizers with long-term settlement plans (317) and eventually they would supplant the Germans as colonizers on Chinese territories.

Therefore, the relationship between Germany and Japan with regard to race was inconsistent. Depending on the actual geopolitical circumstances, the Japanese were seen as belonging to ‘the white race,’ as more or less equal to the ‘white races’ and as accomplice to Germany’s colonial project or as

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32 Obwohl die Japaner doch auch einem farbigen ‘Stamm,’ vom Europäerstandpunkt aus betrachtet, angehören, mußte man selbstverständlich diese ausnehmen als eine Nation, die den europäischen Großmächten zur Seite getreten ist.
being part of the ‘yellow peril’ and as danger to European imperialist plans in Asia. In the next chapter, I will give a more in-depth discussion of the ‘yellow peril’ trope and its relevance for the German-Japanese cultural realm. I will demonstrate that questions of race and culture were vital for the discussion of the German-Japanese relationship around the turn of the 19th century.

1.5.3. The Question of “Coloured Imperialism” – Japan, Race, and Mimicry

In contrast to many other colonizers, Japan’s colonial empire was regionally restricted to geographically close countries. Thus, whereas the colonized subjects of Britain or France were racially differentiated from their colonizers, this was not the case with Japan. “Japan’s most important colonies, Taiwan and Korea, were populated with inhabitants who were racially akin to the Japanese and with whom the Japanese shared a common cultural heritage” (Ching 24). Japan’s position as ‘coloured colonizer’ shaped its relationship to its colonial subjects insofar that even as it colonized various countries in Asia, Japan would present itself as a liberator from Western imperialism (20). The discourse of racial and cultural kinship, expressed in slogans such as ‘dō bun dō shu’ (same script, same race), “was incorporated into the overall colonial discourse of assimilation and imperialization” (26) in order to on the one hand legitimize Japanese colonial expansion and on the other to set it apart from Western colonialism.33

How does Japan’s status as ‘coloured colonizer’ affect postcolonial concepts such as mimicry? Instead of fully identifying with the white colonizer, for instance, “Japan as empire is closer to that of the colonial mimic” (Tierney 18). For Bhabha the “question of the ambivalence of mimicry as a problematic of colonial subjection” results from the “encounter between the white presence and its black semblance” (2004, 129, emphasis mine). In “Of Mimicry and Men” he states that the mimic is “almost the same but not white” (2004, 130). Throughout his influential text, Bhabha exclusively identifies the colonizer as white (cf. 2004, 128, 129, 131) thereby emphasizing the dualistic construct of white colonizer vs. non-white colonized. Ania Loomba, in her insightful analysis of the connection between racist and colonial thought (2005b, 91-106), convincingly demonstrates how “perceived or constructed racial differences were transformed into very real inequalities by colonialist and/or racist regimes and ideologies” (2005, 106). She analyses how class and race are intertwined to the extent that in early modern Europe

33 Although Japanese imperialists stressed the racial and cultural affinity between the Japanese colonizer and their colonized, it is important to note that Japan colonized people and regions that were culturally very different from the Japanese state (Tierney 10).
members of the lower and poorer classes were “routinely perceived as foreign and black” (2005, 113). However, with regard to colonialism, Loomba does not go beyond the framework that identifies colonizers as white and does not take non-white colonizers into account (2005b, 99, 106).

For Bhabha, colonial mimicry is “the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (2004, 122, emphasis in the original). Mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; it is the representation of a difference that “is a process of disavowal” (122). This ambivalence can be seen with Japanese colonialism: Japan’s colonial subjects were encouraged to gradually ‘become Japanese’ through assimilation and mimicry. However, “contradicting this rhetoric of assimilation, they were never accorded the economic and political rights granted to Japanese subjects” (Tierney 14). The mimic is at one resemblance and menace. The menace of mimicry lies in its double vision; it discloses the ambivalence of colonial discourse and disrupts its authority (Bhabha 2004, 126). For Bhabha mimicry, just like hybridity, poses a profound threat to colonial power (2004, 123). However, Tierney points out that notions of colonizer as “original” and colonized as “mimic” or “copy” can hardly be applied to Japanese colonialism because Japanese imperialism itself is mimic (14). He suggests complementing Bhabha’s theory of mimicry with the notion of “imperial mimicry – the mimicry by one imperial power of another” (16). What Bhabha’s theory of mimicry does not seem to be taking into account is the conscious mimicry of the West by a non-Western country as means of ‘progress.’ Japan’s imperial mimicry shaped the public discourse with which they justified their colonial expansions (16).

Japan’s imperialism was consequently marked by a sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the West and by a simultaneous feeling of superiority towards other Asian nations. Tierney cites Natsume Sōseki’s lecture “The Civilization of Modern-day Japan” (1911) which he contrasts with Sōseki’s writings that accompanied his visits to Manchuria and Korea as an example of such a contradiction. In his lecture, Sōseki laments Japan’s Westernization which he sees as “taking orders from the external force [the West] that was pushing us around at will” (Sōseki 273). This process of cultural self-colonization led the Japanese to “dressing up in borrowed clothing, putting up a false front” (278). For Sōseki, mimicking the West and aspiring to be Western could be interpreted as a sign of inferiority: “One Japanese may make fun of another for not knowing the proper way to hold a knife or fork, but such smug behavior only proves that the Westerners are stronger than we are. If we were the stronger, it would be a simple matter for us to take the lead and make them imitate us” (279, emphasis mine). Thus, instead of being a
“profound and disturbing” influence on the “authority of colonial discourse” (Bhabha 2004, 123), the mimicry of the colonized is not a sign of resistance but of weakness. At the same time it is an expression of power on the side of the colonizer, not the colonized. Sōseki realizes that only the stronger party could force mimicry upon another group: “Sadly enough, we have no choice in that matter. And when two unequal partners socialize, they do so according to the customs of the stronger” (279). The mimicry of Western culture had, according to Sōseki, not only ridiculed the Japanese but also led to no equality between the West and Japan: “All we can do is mechanically memorize Western manners – manners which, on us, look ridiculous” and “Just look at how we socialize with Westerners – always according to their rules, never ours [...]” (279, emphasis in the original). Yet, this adaption of Western culture is, according to Sōseki, necessary: “unless we continue to be pushed along for years to come – perhaps forever – Japan will not be able to survive as Japan” (273). This last statement is particularly interesting. In order for Japan to continue to exist “as Japan,” the country has to modernize and adopt external role models. However, this transformation into a semi-western state does not fundamentally threaten Japan. Instead, Sōseki believes, not adopting Western technologies and knowledge would endanger the Japanese state because of the looming threat of Western imperialism. Analogous to hybridity, mimicry has become a defense tool against Western colonialism and simultaneously an instrument to further colonization projects.

Bhabha sees mimicry as external desire of a colonizer “for a reformed, recognizable Other” (2004, 122) but Japan had internalized that desire to reform to utilize mimicry for their own means. As Sōseki demonstrates, this left the Japanese with ambivalent feelings. Moreover, Sōseki’s expressed ambivalence towards the West “stands in marked contrast to the sense of ontological priority and psychological groundedness that Bhabha finds in Western colonial writings” (Tierney 17). When visiting Japanese outposts in Manchuria, the Chinese seemed to Sōseki inhuman like “angry wasps” and left him with an “impression of dirt” (17). Thus, Sōseki appropriated the European gaze that he felt scrutinized Japan, applying it to other Asian nations (17). Japanese colonial administrators, propagandists and scholars utilized Western colonial discourses to justify their rule over their Asian neighbors (17). This simultaneous sense of superiority and inferiority that “form such an unstable, contradictory mix, was not a psychological peculiarity of Sōseki; it can be found, in a thousand guises, in the works of many other writers” (17).
1.6.  Gender and the German-Japanese Space

The racial classification of the Japanese is only one discourse that shaped the German-Japanese realm in the 19th and 20th century. Gender emerges as a second discourse through which German-Japanese cultural productions can be understood. Both discourses are closely intertwined. In his discussion of the geisha discourse in the West, Thomas Pekar cites a range of German-language sources from the 19th century, which portrayed Japanese women as “less Asian” compared to Japanese men or at least made a pronounced difference between Japanese men and women (2003a, 280). For example, the German merchant A. H. Exner wrote in his *Japan: Sketches of Land and People under Special Consideration of Commercial Relations (Japan: Skizzen von Land und Leuten mit Besonderer Berücksichtigung Kommerzieller Verhältnisse, 1891)* “feminine Japan [...] is less ugly than the masculine” (quoted in Pekar 2003a, 280). Pekar quotes the traveller Craemer who wrote in 1900: “The [Japanese men] have friendly faces and their politeness is exuberant, but the Asian race [Asiatischer Typus] that sticks to them, especially their brown-sallow skin that is much more pronounced in them [the men] compared to the female sex, is not to European taste” (Pekar 2003a, 280).

More important for the Western depiction of Japan than the racial classification of Japanese women, however, was the general equation of femininity with the ‘Orient’. Pekar cites the historian Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815-1887), who in his book *The Right of the Mother (Das Mutterrecht, 1861)*, identified an early, first stage of culture as “earthly-natural” and “connected to the maternal-female” which he codified as a time when “the life of the people [Völkerleben] had not yet been alienated from the harmony of nature” (Bachofen in Pekar 2003a, 274-5). The opposite of this female, maternal principle was modern progress (2003a, 275). According to Bachofen, occidental cultures had reached such a modern, progressive civilization stage, whereas the cultures of Asia and Africa remained static on this earlier, feminine, “natural” civilizational stage (2003a, 275). The Orient thereby came to be codified as female. For Bachofen, this translates into a call for an Occidental civilizational mission and “liberation” of the Orient from their pre-modern civilizational stage (2003a, 276).

In the introduction to their edited collection *Gendered Encounters between Germany and Asia*, Cho and McGetchin state: “colonizers routinely employed gendered language and concepts to contrast a male colonizer with a feminized colonial subject” (5). Likewise, in her essay on female representations of alterity in the colonial discourse, Claudia Gronemann points out that “a recurring image, indeed a topos of all colonial histories, is the imagining of the ‘foreign’ as female (i.e. the sexualisation of cultural
difference)” (149, emphasis in the original). Within this discourse, the foreign woman symbolized the territory that was to be “discovered” or conquered. Particularly since the European Enlightenment, the female body was associated with nature, “which for the conquerors in their civilizational mission is the ‘foreign’ per se” (149, emphasis in the original). In that way, an opposition between ‘civilized’ forces that were marked as masculine and European and the ‘other’ was opened up (149). The ‘other’ is inscribed as positive, in the sense of being a symbol of an unspoiled, more natural past, and conversely as negative, as embodiment of depravity and sinfulness (150). For Gronemann, “the codification of gender aims at the symbolic constitution of hierarchical bodily images in legitimation of colonial interests” (150, emphasis in the original).

Although I have demonstrated that the German-Japanese relationship does not fit the dyadic structure of colonizer and colonized, feminized representations of Japan did influence the Germans’ perception of the archipelago. In the German-Japanese realm, the Japanese woman, often exemplified through the motif of the geisha, became such a sexualized ‘other’. According to Pekar, until the last decade of the 19th century, Japan was overall codified as feminine in Western thought (2003a, 276). The stereotype of a submissive, beautiful and enthralling Japanese woman, prevalent in the West and popularized in countless plays, is invariably tied to questions of power, representation and empire. Morris-Suzuki points out that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, depictions of ‘female Japan’ found their expression in the image of young and unmarried women (112). “Japan’s feminine persona was therefore captured in repeated imagery of littleness and fragility, but at the same time it was also seen as having a timeless quality: In the words of Lafcadio Hearn, ‘the charm of Japanese ‘women’ is the charm of a vanished world’” (112). This image of the Japanese woman, often symbolized by the geisha motif, was popularized in Europe through an increasing fascination with “things Japanese” (Kawaguchi 4). When department stores and consumer goods spread throughout the West in the second half of the nineteenth century, Japanese and Japanese-style goods also became more affordable to the general public (4). Together with the dissemination of Japanese ukiyo-e,34 which often depicted the pleasure quarters of Japan, as well as with Western plays and operas such as the musical comedy The Geisha (1896), the image of the Japanese woman as beautiful, kimono-clad geisha became increasingly common in Europe (4). Overall, the Western gaze on Japanese women was condescending and highly

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34 Pekar points to the depiction of the pleasure quarters and courtesans in Japanese woodblock prints (ukiyo-e) with their explicit erotic motifs as one of the most important factors in influencing depictions of Japanese femininity in the West (2003a, 277). The pictures by ukiyo-e artist Kitagawa Utamaro (1753 (?) – 1806), for instance, of highly stylized, beautiful Japanese women fascinated Europeans (2003a, 277).
sexualized. Some Western observers praised the grace and beauty of Japanese women, as well as their alleged willingness to please; others saw them as “too foreign” to be really beautiful, or only extended their “praise” to very young or upper-class women (Pekar 2003a, 285-7).  

However, the German-Japanese relationship is more complex than the binate system that equates femininity with the colonized and masculinity with the colonizer. ‘Masculine Japan,’ exemplified through the nation’s military strength, played a significant role in the Germans’ perception of the archipelago throughout the twentieth century. In the following chapters, I will demonstrate that images of ‘the Japanese woman’ are paramount for an appraisal of the German-Japanese realm. Through depictions of Japanese women, Westerners expressed their orientalising and patronizing perception of Japan, whereas Japanese writers and artists either actively pushed back against demeaning gendered stereotypes, or utilized them for their own gain. Thus, ‘the Japanese woman’ emerges as a contested trope within the German-Japanese realm through which a variety of discourses can be understood. ‘Masculine Japan,’ finding expression through the bushido discourse and through the increased perception of Japan’s military power following the Russo-Japanese War, was alternately perceived as threatening or as role model for Germany.

1.7. Overview of the Following Chapters

How is the re-evaluation of postcolonial concepts relevant for research on German-Japanese films, novels and other cultural products? To date, the works of German-Japanese authors and filmmakers is frequently accessed through postcolonial theory that is based on the dyadic structure of Western colonizer and non-Western colonized. Thus, they run the risk of being fixed within cultural stereotypes:

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35 In contrast to Western men who depicted Japan in highly sexualized terms, Western women often dealt with the topic of Japanese women’s emancipation in their Japanese novels and accounts (Pekar 2003a, 321). For example, the German author Caroline Wilhelmine Emma Brauns (1836-1905), who had spent several years in Japan, published fairy tales and novels about Japan in which she aimed to introduce aspects of the Japanese culture to her Western audience (2003a, 324). According to Pekar, Braun’s novels are significant because they are relatively free from stereotypes and their gaze on the Japanese woman is not sexualized. Rather, Braun saw in Japanese women companions for the fight for equality (2003a, 326). However, Braun conceives the emancipation of Japanese women as resulting from an intensification of Western influence (2003a, 326). Likewise, Katharina Zitelmann in her novel An Adopted Child. Story of a Japanese Man (Ein Adoptivkind. Die Geschichte eines Japaners, 1916), contrasts the “emancipated” German woman positively with the alleged suppressed Japanese woman (2003a, 330). Overall, German female authors upheld an alleged Western superiority with regard to Japan in general, and to Japanese women specifically (2003a, 332).
the Japanese figures in the works are then foremost seen as ‘victims’ of European colonial fantasies rather than as members of a country with its own colonial legacy. Not only is this historically inaccurate, German-Japanese films and novels are also much more complex. A rethinking of postcolonial theory in the light of German and Japanese colonialism will bring a more productive reading to these cultural productions.

The works that I analyze in this thesis are multifaceted and diverse. They range from a Japanese Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang) drama, to a Nationalist Socialist propaganda film, to postmodern literary reflections on language and alterity. Each chapter of this study is devoted to a particular strand of the cultural fabric woven between Germany and Japan and its attendant consequences for the broader relationship between East Asia and Europe. Chapter one focuses on the German-language magazine *East Asia* (Ost-Asien) published by the Japanese Tamai Kisak from 1898-1910 in Berlin. [Fig. 1] Outside the discipline of Japanese Studies little attention has been devoted to studying the sizable Japanese community, mainly consisting of students and diplomats, that lived in Berlin around 1900 and their cultural impact on the German capital. *East Asia* understood itself as a platform for a dialogue between the Japanese intelligentsia in Europe and in Japan and as such, it offers contemporary scholars a unique glimpse into Asian migrants in fin-de-siècle Germany. My research on *East Asia* will be complemented by my analysis of Kitasato Takeshi’s German-language dramas, particularly his play *Fumio* (1900), and by the analysis of the film *Bushido* (1926). *Bushido*, a German-Japanese co-production, was filmed on location in Japan with a joint German-Japanese crew. In contrast to these works which implicitly or explicitly argued for a shared German-Japanese culture, the performances by Japanese theatre groups in fin-de-siècle Germany constructed Japan as essentially ‘other,’ ‘exotic’ locale, as a site for wish fulfillment that was in line with Germans’ preconceptions of the archipelago. Thus, there was no coherent discourse with regard to Japan’s position vis-à-vis the West. Instead, these works negotiate Japan’s complex situation as simultaneously belonging to an Asian and a European cultural realm in often contradictory ways.

The same discourses of culture, gender, race, and imperialism that influenced German-Japanese cultural productions around the turn of the 19th century continue to impact the works in my second chapter. Chapter two pursues an in-depth analysis of the German-Japanese relationship between 1932 and 1945 via such diverse cultural artifacts as the results of a German-Japanese essay contest held in 1944, German newsreels, and German-Japanese filmic co-productions. I specifically focus on two 1937 films,
The Daughter of the Samurai (Die Tochter des Samurai) and The New Earth (Atarashiki Tsuchi), by respectively Arnold Fanck and Itami Mansaku, which resulted from the attempt to shoot a film in Japan with German and Japanese actors and crew. Intended to appeal to both German and Japanese viewers, irreconcilable differences on the set resulted in the production of two different versions of the film for their respective national audiences. My research demonstrates how the cultural co-productions between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan downplayed questions of race and gender in an attempt to forge a shared identity as Kulturvölker (nations of culture).

In my third and final chapter, I analyze the contemporary work of one Japanese filmmaker and two Japanese authors who migrated from Japan to Germany after the Second World War: Marie Miyayama, Yoko Tawada and Hisako Matsubara. I examine to what extent ideas and ideologies that emerged in the early and mid-20th century remain relevant for contemporary German-Japanese cultural productions in the context of globalization. My research shows that, although authors such as Tawada productively engage with German and European colonialism, questions of Japanese imperialism remain repressed in their works, thus ultimately reproducing the discourse that exclusively attributes Western nations the status of colonizers. I will demonstrate that tourism, commodity culture, as well as an increasing convergence of ‘East’ and ‘West’ have all been central in shaping the German-Japanese discourse in the late 20th and early 21st century.

There is little that unites the writers, filmmakers, and thinkers in this thesis beyond their decision to produce a work in German that implicitly or explicitly deals with German-Japanese questions of culture and alterity. Some of them, for instance Arnold Fanck, Itami Mansaku, or Yoko Tawada, are comparatively well researched. However, little to no scholarship exists on Tamai Kisak, or the silent film Bushido. Kitasato Takeshi, Hisako Matsubara and Marie Miyayama have – to my knowledge – not been subject to any major research. Yet, the difference between these filmmakers, writers, publicists and authors is what comprises the strength of this work. A plurality of voices participated in the discourse on gender and race in the German-Japanese context; the writers and filmmakers in this thesis contradict and affirm each other, they perpetuate similar tropes or reject them. However, a focus on culture, as a way to establish sameness or difference, unites these diverse sources in this thesis.

In the scope of this thesis, I focus on cultural productions that emerged within the German-Japanese realm. In my definition of culture I follow Said who describes culture as “all those practices, like the arts
of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure” (xii). The Japanese theatre troupes that toured Europe at the beginning of the 20th century are a fitting example for this definition of culture. Culture in the context of this work also has a second meaning, also defined by Said. In this case “culture is a sort of theater where various political and ideological causes engage one another,” in other words, a “battleground” “associated, often aggressively, with the nation or the state, [a way to differentiate] ‘us’ from ‘them’” (xii). What can be learned from the research of plays, novels, films, and magazines? What discourses emerge throughout one hundred years of German-Japanese cultural exchange, and how has culture shaped and reflected imperial thought? In the following chapters, I will demonstrate how Japanese writers, filmmakers and thinkers appropriated culture to negotiate their views on Japanese and European policy and imperialism.
2. Germany and Japan around the Fin-de-Siècle and in the Interwar Years

2.1. Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century, Japan entered the world stage as a nation distinct from traditional perceptions of both Asia and Europe. Belonging to neither, or both, young Japanese intellectuals struggled with the vastly changing geopolitical relevance of their country. Japanese thinkers and writers like Mori Ōgai (1862–1922),36 Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) or Nagai Kafū (1879–1959) joined their counterparts all over Asia such as Hồ Chí Minh (1890–1969) in Vietnam or Liang Qichao (1873–1929) in China in attempting to define their nations’ position vis-a-vis the West and Asia. On the other side of the globe, Germany, too, was anxious to assert its status as world power. What discourses defined the relationship between Germany and Japan, two vastly different nations facing very similar challenges, at the end of the 19th century?

Although Takenaka Tōru’s research demonstrates that recent scholarship on Germany and Japan has frequently overestimated the German influence on Japan (22), it is true that the Meiji administration (1868–1912) based many aspects of their new government, such as the constitution and legal system, on a German model. Consequently, Wippich in his research on German-Japanese exchange deems the 1880s the “Golden Decade” in the two nations’ relationship (2006, 61). However, beginning with the Sino-Japanese War (1894/5), German-Japanese relations started to deteriorate. The turnaround in the relationship was Germany’s participation in the Triple Intervention of 1895 alongside Russia and France, which resulted in the loss of Japan’s territory, previously won in the war. The incident “completely

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36 No discussion of Japanese writers in Germany at the end of the 19th century would be complete without at least referencing the physician, translator and writer Mori Ōgai, one of the most notable members of the Japanese community in Berlin who immortalized fin-de-siècle Germany for a Japanese audience in his three German Novellas and his German diary (Doitsu Nikki, 1937, posthumous). His three novellas were: Maihime (舞姫, The Dancing Girl, 1880), Utokata no Ki (うたかたの記, A Sad Tale, 1890) and Fumizukai (文づかひ, The Courier, 1891). A translation of his famous novella The Dancing Girl appeared in Tamai’s magazine East Asia, so Germans with a particular interest in Japan most likely knew the story. The Japanese army sent Mori to Germany to study public health. He resided in Leipzig, Dresden, Munich and Berlin from 1884 until 1888, was a vocal proponent of Japanese culture and wrote various articles in which he attacked what he saw as the West’s patronizing depictions of Japan. Although a translator of German literature and possessing a high command of German, he chose classical and modern Japanese as well as Sinitic Japanese (kanbun, 漢文) as his literary writing languages. Ōgai’s knowledge of European literature and thought was immense, and his influence on Japanese literature and literary criticism cannot be overstated. His essays, diaries and observations on Germany and its relationship to Japan provide a valuable reference point to the other works in this chapter. For longer biographical sketches of Mori Ōgai, see Schamoni (1987).
changed the Japanese perception of Germany” (iikura 82). Japanese thinkers saw the ‘yellow peril’ as a major factor leading to the Triple Intervention and the Western hysteria surrounding the idea led, according to Yumiko Iida, to a heightened “consciousness of race as a central political issue among the Japanese” (Iida 415).

At that time, a small but vocal group of Japanese writers in Germany, most prominently among them Tamai Kisak (1866-1906) and Kitasato Takeshi (1870-) saw it as their mission to rectify German stereotypes about Japan. They differed from well-known thinkers such as Ōgai or Sōseki in that they wrote in German and explicitly for a German audience. Their decision to produce their works in a European language was a tool in their attempt to establish Japan as equal to the West. In addition to the works by Tamai and Kitasato, two other Japanese writers published non-fiction in German at that time: Daiji Ichikawa (The Culture of Japan, Die Kultur Japans, 1907) and H. Sasaki (Moral Education in Japan, Die Moralerziehung in Japan, 1926). I will use Ichikawa’s work, in which he discussed the Japanese culture relative to the West, as reference point to Tamai and Kitasato in this chapter.

This chapter will set Kitasato and Tamai’s German-language publications and a filmic co-production by the Japanese filmmaker Kako Zanmu (1869–1938) with the German director and adventurer H.K. Heiland (1876-1932) in relation to the then-current prevalent discourses on Germany and Japan. Today these authors, filmmakers, and their works are largely forgotten. Their books and magazines are out of print and their films acquire dust in archives. As a so far overlooked aspect of German literature and culture, these works provide a unique and novel insight into the German discourse on Japan as generated by the Japanese in late 19th and early 20th century Germany. As such, they shed light on the

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37 Tamai Kisaku (玉井 喜作) omitted the ‘u’ of this first name from his German publications and will therefore be referred to as Tamai Kisak in this chapter.

38 From his non-literary writings, it appears that Kitasato Takeshi was a linguist, studied Languages, Aesthetics, and Philosophy at several German universities and received his doctorate from the University Leipzig.

39 German was, of course, not the only Western language that Japanese intellectuals used for their works. The most prominent Japanese author publishing in another language besides Japanese is most likely Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913) whose English-language works The Ideals of the East (1903), The Awakening of Japan (1904) and most prominently The Book of Tea (1906) provided a wealth of information on Japan for Western audiences.

40 Ichikawa was also a frequent contributor to Tamai’s magazine East Asia.

41 In the foreword to The Culture of Japan, Ichikawa explicitly states that he wrote that book for a European audience so that they would gain a better understanding of Japan (foreword).

42 According to Lee Roberts, Sasaki connected Japanese literature and education to nationalism. Sasaki claimed that when reading about their own national history, Japanese children would develop a feeling for their homeland (Heimatgefühl). Japan had adopted Western educational systems and Western thought but, according to Sasaki, had modified it according to the Japanese spirit (Roberts 2016, 84).
image of Japan that Japanese intellectuals wanted to transport to the West. Tamai and Kitasato’s works thus stand in direct contrast to literature written about Japan by German authors. Works such as Hermann Bahr’s *The Yellow Nightingale* (*Die Gelbe Nachtigall*, 1907), Franz Woas’ *The Japanese Woman* (*Die Japanerin*, 1908) or Woas’ *The Truth about the Japanese* (*Die Wahrheit über die Japaner*, 1908) propagated and reinforced racial and cultural stereotypes about Japan without including the voices or perspectives of the Japanese themselves. For the German audience, Tamai, Kako, and Kitasato’s works, therefore, presented a unique opportunity to experience Japan on paper and film without having to rely on possibly distorted reports and narratives by fellow Germans.

The following questions inform the analysis of the primary material in this chapter: Where did the Japanese writers position their country vis-a-vis Europe and the rest of Asia, and what image of Japan did they want to establish? How did the works of Tamai and Kitasato, implicitly or explicitly, support a Japanese imperialist agenda? Finally, how does Kako and Heiland’s film reconcile the tension of constructing Japan as imaginary colonial space while simultaneously connecting Germans and Japanese through the concept of chivalry? I will not analyse the diverse sources in this chapter in depth; rather, I will lay bare the underlying discourse on culture and imperialism that runs through all these works.

This chapter is divided into two parts, both examining a different period and genre. Part one has at its core the print materials of Tamai and Kitasato, as well as the German reception of two Japanese theatre groups. It primarily deals with the impact of the Russo-Japanese War (1904/5) and the looming First World War on the representation of imperialism, race, and gender within the German-Japanese context. The second part of this chapter will be devoted to filmic co-operations between Germany and Japan. I will analyse two silent films, *Bushido - The Iron Law* (*Bushido - Das Eiserne Gesetz*, 1926), filmed in Japan, and *The White Geisha* (*Die Weiße Geisha*, 1926) shot in Germany, Denmark, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and Japan.43 Whereas Tamai and Kitasato aimed to refute stereotypical conceptions of Japan, Kako and Heiland’s film reinforces them to a certain extent. A common focus on race and cultural representation unites the varied sources in this chapter. They participate in a discourse in which claims of a superior culture were a justification for imperial ambitions.

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43 *The White Geisha*, which was filmed at the same time as *Bushido* and features primarily the same cast and possibly the same crew, is the only work in this chapter not produced by a Japanese writer or filmmaker. I will therefore only analyze it in reference to *Bushido*, since both films work through the same themes of desire, race, and cultural alterity.
This chapter, the first comprehensive analysis of German-language literature and film by Japanese artists around 1900, will demonstrate how German-Japanese cultural productions reflected Japan as a contested space distinct from both Asia and Europe. Outside the field of Japanese Studies, the sizable Japanese community that resided in Germany at the turn of the 20th century has received little to no attention in current scholarship. The discussion of the works in this chapter is, therefore, a necessary and overdue addition to scholarship on Japan’s representation in fin-de-siècle Germany, which either tends to privilege German voices or focuses on Japanese thinkers and writers working in their native language who therefore did not directly address a German audience.

All authors and filmmakers in this chapter are men. For female thinkers in Japan, such as Fukuda Hideko (1865-1927), who were writing about Japan’s changed geopolitical status in the world and the role of women in the nation state, a prolonged stay in the West, arguably a prerequisite to work and write in another language, would have been almost unattainable except in the official function of diplomat’s wives. This chapter will demonstrate that the concept of ‘the Japanese woman’ was crucial to the representation of Japan in Western consciousness. The discourse surrounding ‘the Japanese woman’ is, at least in Germany, a discourse produced without the voices of Japanese women themselves. However, the few women who did make it to Europe, such as the actress and geisha Sada Yacco, enthralled both the German and Japanese press and the articles and reviews that discussed them offer intriguing insights both into the Germans’ perception of Japan and, also, the Japanese response.

44 For examples on scholarship from the field of Japanese Studies in Germany, see Kracht, Lewin and Müller (1984), Hartmann (2003), Manke (2004), Morikawa (2007), and Maeda (2012).
45 That is not to say that no Japanese woman came to the West for the purpose of education. At least two female doctors came to Germany to further their education in the field of medicine: Takahashi Mizuko (1852-1913) and Urata Tada (1873-1936). Takahashi moved to Germany in 1890 after already becoming a medical practitioner in Japan. In Berlin, she lived with Marie von Lagerström, who owned a guesthouse for Japanese students and who appeared to have been extremely revered and well-liked within the Japanese community. East Asia, for instance, printed several articles on her that called von Lagerström “Aunt Japan.” Through von Lagerström’s help and through prominent Japanese support, Takahashi was eventually able to attend classes at the Berlin University (Ishihara 85). Urata came to Marburg in 1903 with the goal to study for her doctorate (94). In 1905, she became the first woman to receive a medical doctorate in Marburg (98). Both Takahashi and Urata practiced medicine upon their return to Japan. According to Aeka Ishihara, the lives of these women are just in the process of being “rediscovered” (99). Thus, it is possible that there were more female Japanese students in Germany around the turn of the century. However, in Germany, they appear not to have made any impact beyond their fields. To my knowledge, East Asia, for instance, appears not to have printed any of their writings or any article on them. Thus, at least in Germany they did not significantly influence the discourse surrounding ‘the Japanese woman.’
2.1.1. Japan in German Literature – A Brief Overview

The late 19th and early 20th century saw an unprecedented interest in and appreciation of Japanese art, especially *ukiyo-e*, fashion, furniture, and culture in Germany. *Japonisme*, the influence of Japanese culture on Western art, arrived in Germany via France and impacted literature, the fine arts, and particularly theatre. Several Japanese inventions such as the revolving stage taken from Kabuki, used first with great success in Max Reinhardt’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1905) at the *Neues Theater* in Berlin, or the flower way (*Hanamichi*, 花道), a long runway that leads from the stage into the audience, were introduced to Germany at that time (Schuster 50). In her discussion of East Asian influences in Germany, Ingrid Schuster also points out that Japanese performances, especially the art of actress Sada Yacco, influenced pantomimes and dance in *fin-de-siècle* Germany (57-60). Sada Yacco’s shows, particularly her “art of dying” and its effect on the portrayal of Japanese bodies in Germany will be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

According to Schuster, a renewed interest in Japan following the Russo-Japanese War (1904/5) led to the translation and performance of several Noh, Kyōgen and Kabuki plays in Germany (61). Already in 1900, Karl Florenz had published his translation of *Terakoya* (*Die Dorfschule, The Temple School*), a play performed in Cologne in 1907 to tepid responses (62). These translated Japanese plays could not compete with plays written about Japan (61). William Schwenck Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885), Sidney Jones’ *The Geisha* (1896), Pierre Lotis’ novel *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887), and Luigi Illica, Giuseppe Giacosa and Giacomo Puccini’s *Madama Butterfly* (1904) influenced the European image of Japan significantly by employing and reinforcing tropes such as that of the demure but sexualized geisha as well as Japan as exotic and picturesque locale. Following the success of the English, French and Italian stories, German writers tried their hand at narratives connected to Japan. Hermann Bahr’s *The Yellow Nightingale* (*Die Gelbe Nachtigall*, 1907), Franz Woas’ *The Japanese Woman*

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46 Set in Japan, *The Mikado* is a thinly veiled criticism of the British political landscape and is thus more about Britain than Japan. It was staged over 9000 times in London in its first three years alone and came to be the most performed play of its time (Pekar 2003a, 83).
47 *Madame Chrysanthème*, one of the key texts concerning the shaping of Japan’s perception in the West, tells the story of a naval officer who is briefly married to a geisha in Nagasaki.
(Die Japanerin, 1908) or Bernhard Kellermann’s A Stroll in Japan (Ein Spaziergang in Japan, 1910) are early German examples.\(^\text{48}\)

In his analysis of perceptions of Japan in German literature, Schepers points to several reoccurring tropes, such as that of “the geisha” or “the divine Mt. Fuji.“ He demonstrates that the German depiction of Japan changed from the almost matter-of-fact descriptions of merchants’ travelogues to portrayals of Japan as an erotically charged, exotic and almost mystic space in the course of the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century (101-102). By far the most powerful image of Japan in the West was that of the Japanese woman. Franz Woas’ description of Japanese women in his travelogue The Truth about the Japanese (1908), for instance, combines several misconceptions in an account so commonplace; it can serve as a stand-in for Western stereotypes about Japanese women in general:

What lovely creatures – these Japanese women! Like Butterflies. At first glance, they capture the foreigners. How taunting are their strange, colourful dresses! And how modest they are! Full of humility and grace. Loveliness personified. But if you look closer, and if you search for their gaze, you realize that in truth they have nothing to say. Their faces, not even really beautiful for the European taste, are in any case just graceful masks. […] Here every feeling is numbed and carefully calculated. Once the allure of the novelty is over, we have to admit ashamedly that this graceful creature is nothing but art and deceit […]. (35)\(^\text{49}\)

Woas cites almost all the prevalent stereotypes about Japanese women of his time in a short paragraph: he contrasts their animal-like beauty, gaudy colours and delicate gracefulness with the dehumanizing images of butterflies\(^\text{50}\) and empty masks. Yoko Kawaguchi demonstrates how travelogues and ‘studies’ on Japan portrayed Japanese society as governed, indeed almost stifled, by rules and conventions that made it impossible, in Western eyes, to distinguish between the inner thoughts and feelings of an

\(^{48}\) The Yellow Nightingale centers on a Western woman cross-dressing as Japanese actress to achieve fame in the theatre world. A Stroll in Japan is Kellermann’s account of the archipelago written after a year in Japan and focuses mostly on the country’s pleasure districts and culture, which he contrasts positively with the West.


\(^{50}\) Butterflies as symbols of love and femininity in Asia predate Western associations. For instance, in one of China’s four seminal folk tales, Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, or Butterfly Lovers, two lovers, unable to be together in life, unite after their death as butterflies. A full English translation of this text can be found in Wilt L. Idema, The Butterfly Lovers: The Legend of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, Four Versions (2010).
individual and her or his outward appearance (47). Especially women were regarded in this context as mindless marionettes, following social conventions, more object than actual living beings (48). Woas thus utilizes the well-established trope of the Japanese as deceitful and deliberate, to suppress every Japanese woman under the label ‘alluring but hollow.’

Western consciousness frequently conflated Japanese women with geisha. In the first chapter of her monograph Butterfly’s Sisters, Kawaguchi demonstrates how geisha became overtly sexualized in Western male fantasies and how they came to signify Japanese women in general: After 1639, the Dutch were the only Westerners permitted to maintain a trading presence in Japan, confined to the small trading post Dejima, an island off Nagasaki. The only women allowed on Dejima, thus the only Japanese women that these men ever met, were specially licensed sex workers. After the opening of Japan to the West, non-licensed sex workers remained off-limits to Western men. Several travellers and traders’ accounts of the pleasure quarters for foreigners seldom distinguished between geisha, musume (the word for daughter or young girl, and in the foreign community often a term to describe women engaging in sex work), entertainers or tea house attendants. Together with accounts that described the purported eagerness of Japanese women to please and their alleged liberality in sexual matters, these misconceptions and misunderstandings contributed to the image of ‘the Japanese woman’ as sex object (Kawaguchi 12-66).

Kawaguchi traces the history of geisha in Japan and the perception of these women in the West. She points out that in the West geisha came to signify the “epitome of ideal womanhood: on the one hand a selfless daughter or sister ready to sacrifice herself for the sake of her impoverished family and, on the other, a woman conditioned specifically to be pleasing to men. In this regard, Western observers saw the geisha not so much as an exceptional sort of Japanese woman but as typical, or even exemplary” (5). In fact, geisha such as Sada Yacco were highly skilled and professional dancers, singers, and masters of instruments, undergoing rigorous and disciplined training. Ichikawa explicitly comments on these

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51 The trope of Japanese women as marionettes and dolls was prevalent at that time. In section 2.4.1.1, I will demonstrate that the image of Japanese women as “dolls” and “mask-like marionettes” featured prominently in the reviews of the Japanese theatre troupes.

52 Pekar cites a wide range of sources by Western men, among those Madama Butterfly and Madame Chrysanthème to illustrate how they construct the Japanese woman as obedient and pleasing object, often conflated with the geisha, while also showing the inconsumerability of a love affair between ‘East’ and ‘West’ (2003a, 301-306). However, he also cites a book by a female author, Winifred Babcock’s A Japanese Nightingale (1901), as an example of a Western novel that opposes such a discourse. Babcock wrote under the pseudonym Watanna Onoto. In The Japanese Nightingale an American man travels to Japan where he falls in love with a mixed-race Japanese woman. After various trials and tribulations, the two are united in a happy marriage (2003a, 306-308).
European misconceptions in his *The Culture of Japan*, one of the few instances in which Japanese writers in Germany aimed to rectify Western stereotypes of Japanese women: “and often the Japanese woman knows very well what she wants, despite her outward abjection, despite her smile and the gentleness that so easily lets the European think that they are superficial creatures or some kind of colourful butterflies” (135). Western writers appear not to have noticed Ichikawa’s refute since most stories set in Japan at that time, for instance, *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887), feature a geisha in accordance with the above mentioned stereotypes. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that Kako and Heiland to a certain extent participated in a discourse that portrayed Japanese women as sexualized, and yet dependent and child-like, whereas the depiction of Japanese women in Kitasato’s work refutes these stereotypes.

Various Western stories and dramas set in Japan followed the same pattern: a Western man falls in love with a self-sacrificing geisha and breaks her heart when leaving her, which often led to the suicide of the woman. The Japanese physician and writer Mori Ōgai subverted this trope in his well-known novella *The Dancing Girl* (*Maihime*, 舞姫, 1890). *The Dancing Girl* tells the story of Toyotarō Ōta, a Japanese exchange student in Berlin who falls in love with the poor dancing girl Elis. Ōta rescues Elis from the threat of sexual exploitation by her employer at the theatre. They begin a love affair, at times even co-habiting. In a reversal of the student-teacher relationship in which Japan is the apprentice of Germany, the upper-class Ōta educates Elis by teaching her how to properly write and read German. Eventually, Ōta, who attempted to free himself from the influence of his Japanese friends and by extension from the Japanese state, is convinced by a friend to leave his lover and return to Japan to take up his role in the nation building process. Elis, at this time pregnant, loses her mind upon hearing Ōta’s plan to abandon her. Ōta makes provisions for his unborn child and leaves Elis, closer to death than to life, in Berlin (2010, 53).

Note the parallels in the plot between *The Dancing Girl* and other Western stories such as *Madama Butterfly*. The fact that Elis is a dancing girl, working in dubious circumstances, approximates the Western conception of geishas as entertainers and sex workers. In an attempt to ‘write back’ against stereotypical representations of Japan, Mori ‘turns the table’ on Western writers. In this case, the Japanese man leaves his German lover behind to contribute to the modernization project of his nation. The conflict between Germany and Japan is therefore carried out on the bodies of women.

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53 Und meist weiß die japanische Frau sehr gut, was sie will, trotz ihrer äußeren Demut, trotz ihres Lächelns und der Zärtlichkeit, die die Europäer so leicht dazu veranlasst, sie für oberflächliche Wesen und für eine Art von bunten Schmetterlingen zu halten.

54 *The Dancing Girl* is semi-autobiographical. In real life, Ōgai’s German lover followed him uninvited to Japan, determined to seek a living there and to stay with him. His family eventually convinced her to leave so as not to endanger Ōgai’s career prospects. This act of self-determination and strength does not make it into the novella (Hill 370).
be they German or Japanese, as their death and their disappearance are plot devices through which each nation establishes their dominance.

Naturally, ‘the Japanese woman’ was not the only prevalent trope in the discussion of Japan at that time. Many Japanese characters were generally depicted as crude stereotypes in German dramas and novels, such as for instance Dr. Kokoro, a character in Bahr’s comedy *The Master* (*Der Meister*, 1904) who Bahr described as “small, demure and monkey-like” (Pekar 2003a, 84). However, Japan, seen through a highly romanticized lens, was also often portrayed as a country superior to the West. Kellermann, for example, stresses the harmonious culture of Japan which he perceived to be much closer to nature when compared to the European culture, whereas Hans Anna Haunhorst described Japan in his book *The Smile of Japan* (*Das Lächeln Japans*, 1923-24) as “the land of smiles, of aestheticism, of morality, and of tranquility in contrast to the materialistic West” (Haunhorst in Schepers, 110).

How did the Japanese intellectuals, particularly those with German knowledge residing in Germany, react to these depictions of their country? Mori Ōgai, for instance, writes in his diary that he attended a talk on Japan by the German geologist Edmund Naumann (1854-1927), who had spent some time in Japan. In his diary, Mori quotes Naumann’s talk as follows: “If you look at the current situation in Japan, which is in a process of modernization, you realize that the Europeans are far superior in their civilization to the Japanese. And do not believe that the Japanese themselves try to create an atmosphere of progress. This has been forced upon them from outside” (1992, 114). Mori writes of his anger at these words and his despair when he realizes that other Germans in the audience take Naumann’s viewpoint as fact (1992, 115). During dinner on the same evening, Naumann claimed that women have no soul in the Buddhist faith and that he would never convert to Buddhism. Hearing this, Mori could not be silent any longer and, according to his diary, gets up and gives a short speech, explaining what Buddhism is, that women have a soul, and that “in terms of admiration for womankind, Buddhism has not to hide behind Christianity” (1992, 116).55 This short anecdote from Mori’s diary is exemplary for several discourses that will resurface throughout this chapter: At the turn of the 20th century, several German ‘experts’ on Japan compared the Japanese culture unfavourably to Europe and assigned a student status to the archipelago. At the same time, Japanese intellectuals confidently pushed back against demeaning and racist stereotypes. Women and their treatment emerged as a sign of modernity or lack thereof with the alleged ‘backwardness’ of Japanese attitudes towards women as a

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55 Mori and Naumann continued to debate these topics in well-published argument in the German paper *Allgemeine Zeitung* throughout 1826 and 1827 (Küppers 99).
sign of Japan’s questionable status as modern nation. Moreover, the question of religion as signifier of modernity and progress, with Buddhism representing backwardness, was debated by Germans and Japanese alike. In the following sections, I will demonstrate that while some writers attempted to stylize Japan as a Christian nation, thereby claiming Japan’s progress as Western product, others confidently asserted the equality of Buddhism and Christianity, and in extension of Germany and Japan.

The Japanese community in Germany consisted of highly educated members of the upper class with excellent connections both in Japan and in Europe and had little in common with the depictions of Japan as land of dainty geisha and exotic beauty. Around 1900 Tamai’s magazine East Asia functioned as an unofficial ‘mouthpiece’ of this Japanese community, printing submissions from Japanese residing in Germany, announcing new arrivals from Japan and introducing prominent members of the ‘Japanese colony.’ The analysis of some of the magazine’s articles provides a valuable starting point for an evaluation of Japanese thought in fin-de-siècle Germany.

2.1.2. Tamai Kisak and East Asia — Two Novelties in Germany

Around 1900 an estimated 150 Japanese, most of them high-ranking officials or exchange students, lived in Berlin with approximately another 100 men and women spread throughout Germany (East Asia, 1902, V, 397). The socioeconomic status of the members of this small but very well connected, self-proclaimed ‘Japanese colony’ differed from most other groups of migrants in Germany at that time who often had a working class background, came from Eastern Europe and settled more or less permanently on German territory (Conrad, 2008, 48). In contrast, the Japanese government sent fully funded students for a limited time with a clear objective: to acquire as much understanding of the technology and science of Germany as possible and to bring this knowledge back to further the state’s modernization project. Among the students were men who would become influential figures in Japan, especially in the fields of medicine, law, and politics. According to the advertisements and articles in East Asia, Berlin was the center of the Japanese community in Germany with several Japanese restaurants and boarding houses,

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56 I have examined East Asia at the Japan Foundation in Tokyo and the State Library in Berlin. I could not access the magazine from the years 1900, 1904, 1909 and 1910. Therefore, all my observations in this chapter are restricted to the available years 1898, 1899, 1901-1903, and 1905-1908.

57 This latter group of immigrants is exemplified by the 500,000 so-called Ruhrpolen (Ruhr Poles) who settled in Germany around the turn of the century, or the 360,000 seasonal workers from Polish parts of Russia and Austria who worked in the German empire before World War I (Conrad, 2008, 52).

58 For a full list of Japanese students in Germany, including discipline, dates and brief CV, see Hartmann (2003).
the Yamato Club that provided a meeting place for Japanese, and the Japanese-German Society Wa Doku Kai. Japanese students were the second largest group of foreigners at the Berlin University after Russians in 1887 (Hartmann 5). Most Japanese in Berlin were men in their thirties and forties, members of the samurai or upper class and customarily stayed no longer than one or two years. A special officer who had the authority to send them home if they behaved inappropriately watched them carefully (17).

The adventurer and author Tamai Kisak represents a notable exception from the students of law and medicine, the high dignitaries and their families who otherwise comprised the vast majority of Japanese migrants in Germany. From 1894 until his death in 1906, Tamai lived in Germany, where he published the German-language magazine East Asia (Ost-Asien, 1898-1910) as well as the travelogue Caravan Travels in Siberia (Karawanenreise in Sibirien, 1898). Tamai’s command over the German language was outstanding even while he was still a student in Japan, where he was rumored to surpass his teachers’ language skills (Kawamura 165). Already in 1888, he became a lecturer of German at the Agricultural School in Sapporo, Hokkaidō. Only a few years later, in 1892, he left his wife and three children behind and traveled via Korea, Vladivostok and Siberia to Berlin (Kawamura 165). No other party appears to have financed his two-year journey since Tamai had to stop twice for several months to pick up manual work. Stints in prison, sickness, and robberies interrupted his travels (167). In Berlin, where it appears Tamai wanted to settle permanently, he initially worked in a tea shop and studied law while writing articles about Germany, Japan, and Japanese politics for a few select papers, among them Asahi Shinbun in Osaka. Tamai appears to have been well connected and liked within and outside the ‘Japanese colony’

59 Takenaka cautions against attributing too much significance to these figures as measure of the German-Japanese relationship. While it is true that majority of the officially financed foreign Japanese students between 1875-1914 resided in Germany (632 students compared to 330 students in Britain, the second most popular destination), the vast majority of privately sponsored students preferred the United States over Germany. According to Takenaka, in 1907 alone, around 3,000 Japanese students went to the United States. Thus, while Germany was the preferred destination for the elite, the “ordinary people” (25) were much more drawn to the United States. The German physician Erwin Bälzl lamented in this context that “the Japanese, as if it were a superstition, blindly believed anything the Americans said” (Bälz in Takenaka 25).

60 For a longer biographical sketch of Tamai, see Kawamura in: Brückenbauer. Pioniere des japanisch-deutschen Austausches (164-173).

61 Tamai wrote his book in German and Russian, and it was only translated into Japanese in 1963. The Kölnische Zeitung first published the travelogue. It features an account of Tamai’s journey from Shimoseki via Korea to Vladivostok and eventually Moscow as well as an appendix in which Tamai recounts the story of other Japanese travellers who crossed the globe one hundred years before him.

62 His wife and children later followed him to Berlin where at least one of Tamai’s daughters was born, and one died.
in Berlin. In 1898, four years after his initial arrival in Berlin, he founded *East Asia. Monthly Periodical for Trade, Industry, Politics, Science, Art* (*Ost-Asien. Monatszeitschrift für Handel, Industrie, Politik, Wissenschaft, Kunst*). The magazine would survive Tamai and run under Oikawa Shigenobu until 1910. *East Asia* functioned as a platform for the exchange between intellectual Japanese in Europe and abroad. Contributors to the magazine were preoccupied with Japan’s changing geopolitical status in the world and drew parallels between Germany and Japan’s historical development. As such, it offers a unique perspective on Asian migrants at the turn of the 20th century in Germany.

Every issue of *East Asia* had a run of 5,000 copies of roughly 50 pages each, a self-proclaimed readership of 50,000 in Japan and Germany, and featured articles on German and East Asian policy and trade, on Japanese customs and history. In addition, *East Asia* printed translations of Japanese and Korean fairy tales and stories, reported on cultural events such as the Kawakami’s theatrical engagements in Germany and even featured brief articles on fashion and cosmetic surgery. From 1904 onwards, writers for the journal were preoccupied with reports about the Russo-Japanese War. The language of the magazine was almost exclusively German with very few articles in English and none in Japanese. Every issue featured several pages of often-bilingual German-Japanese advertisements for print matter, machinery, accommodations for Japanese, or clothes. [Fig. 2] The overwhelming majority of contributors came from Japan and Germany and a few writers were Chinese. The intended audience appeared to be Germans and German-speaking Asians. Several articles sought to rectify German prejudices towards Japan and were targeted towards a German readership whereas other articles, such as an invitation for the Japanese New Year’s festival open only to Japanese, were clearly intended for a Japanese audience. The magazine featured several prominent contributors, among them the translator

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63 For instance, over 300 people attended his funeral in Berlin (Kawamura 165). Articles printed in *East Asia* demonstrate that Tamai was in professional contact with a broad range of important German and Japanese figures. Moreover, the obituary of his daughter Aki (1889-1905) makes note of the many friends and supporters of the Tamai family in Berlin and of hundreds of Japanese and Germans attending her funeral (VII, 8, 312).

64 Oikawa (1883-?) studied Law from 1904 until 1907 in Berlin before becoming the editor of *East Asia* (Hartmann 18).

65 Contributors to *East Asia* often wrote under pseudonyms and were frequently identified by their nationality (for instance as “a German contributor”), or by abbreviations.

66 See the introduction chapter for a brief overview of the development of the German-Japanese alliance, demonstrating how, after initial co-operation, the relationship between the two nations deteriorated in the years leading up to and following the First World War.

67 In contrast to the German Colonial Papers, among them *The Colonial German* (*Der Kolonialdeutsche*) which featured advertisements for beauty and household products explicitly geared towards a female readership, *East Asia*’s advertisements for clothes and machinery were tailored to male readers. The magazine therefore most likely targeted a male audience.
Alexander von Siebold (1846-1911), the statesman Gotō Shinpei (1857-1929), and the writer Iwaya Sazanami (1870-1933). According to Kawamura’s short biographical sketch of Tamai, frequent German misconceptions about Japan motivated Tamai to publish *East Asia* (167). The foreword of the first issue outlines the concrete objective of the magazine: the “fosterage of a lively and dense flow of trade between Japan and Germany” (1898, I). Tamai wanted to create a dynamic exchange of ideas and goods between East Asia and Europe in general and between Germany and Japan, in particular. He explained the focus on the whole of East Asia, in contrast to only on Japan, as follows: “Although there are differences between the peoples and countries of Asia, they are all united by a common culture, just like the states and nations of Europe.” Instead of making Germany and Japan the sole focus of his magazine, an approach which would have been complicated by the tension in the two nations’ official relationship following the Triple Intervention in 1895, Tamai instead assumed two distinct cultural spheres, ‘Europe’ and ‘East Asia,’ as basis for his magazine. Tamai and the other contributors to *East Asia* did not question the existence of ‘a European’ and ‘an East Asian’ culture but were more interested in Japan and Germany’s relative positions within these spheres.

*East Asia* printed a plurality of voices and viewpoints so that it is impossible to define ‘the perspective’ of the magazine. As a document detailing the confidence but also on occasion the sense of inferiority that the Japanese elite in Germany experienced, *East Asia* is of the utmost importance. Several articles in Tamai’s magazine are an explicit pushback against the stereotypes and attributions that Japanese

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68 Siebold was a regular contributor. His articles argued for a continued German engagement with Japan on a political and cultural level (f.e. XI 1908, 19; VIII, 1898, 412). *East Asia* made no note of by whom, where and when Gotō and Iwaya’s contributions were translated, what kind of relationship they had with Tamai or how they came to the contributors to the magazine.

69 “Thus, I hope that ‘East Asia’ will launch happily and will help to create a very lively exchange of goods and thoughts between Europe and Asia and especially between Germany and Japan” (1898, I). (So möge denn „Ost-Asien“ zu glücklicher Fahrt vom Stapel laufen und zwischen Europa und Ostasien im Allgemeinen und Deutschland und Japan im Besonderen einen regen Tauschverkehr von sachlichen und geistigen Gütern vermitteln helfen)

70 Mögen auch zwischen den einzelnen Ländern und Völkern Ost-Asiens nicht wenige und auch nicht geringe Unterschiede bieten, so besitzen alle zusammen doch eine ähnliche gemeinsame Einheit der Kultur, wie die Staaten und Nationen Europas in ihrer Gesamtheit.

71 Almost all articles in *East Asia* on Asian countries focused on China, Japan, and Korea. Thus, these three nations made up the geographical region East Asia within the context of the magazine.

72 The magazine provides no information on its editorial process. We do not know if contributions were commissioned, what and if contributors were paid, and if this plurality of voices was a deliberate choice or a necessity. At least some of the contributions, however, must have sent to Tamai on the initiative of the writer. Schwade, in his collection of letters from the Brandenstein family, included one letter of Tamai in which he thanks Helene von Ulm zu Erbach for sending him her article and agreed to publish it (116).
faced in Germany. The contributors of the magazine took up the opportunity to influence the perception of Japan in Europe, they ‘wrote back’ against racism and demeaning stereotypes, while often also participating in racism against other Asian nations themselves. The opinions expressed in *East Asia* are not representative for the general outlook among the Japanese or German public. Contributors to the magazine were either, in the case of the German writers, Japanophiles, or members of a highly educated elite subgroup in Japan. However, many contributors’ thoughts such as the preference of culture over physical markers of race as a way to classify different nations, as well as the idea of Japan as superior to the rest of Asia, can also be found in many other cultural contributions by Japanese writers at that time. As a distinctly ‘Japanese-German’ voice, the magazine offers a valuable addition to the research on the German-Japanese relationship.

2.2. “We therefore ask the Question: Is there a Yellow Peril?” – Race and Culture in the Articles of *East Asia*

This section will demonstrate how the increasing tensions between Germany and Japan, the rise of the ‘yellow peril’ trope, and the ‘Qingdao question’ influenced the German-Japanese discourse on race and imperialism in *East Asia*. I have demonstrated that Western visitors to Japan, such as Kellermann, often admired the culture and civilization of the archipelago. Yet, barely thirty years after the opening of Japan to the West, the German Emperor heralded Japan as a dangerous threat to European stability. How did Japan, often together with China, come to be labeled as embodiment of the ‘yellow peril’? The following section will briefly trace the often contested and ambiguous racial status of the Japanese in Western thought to demonstrate how Japan changed from an essentially ‘harmless yet civilized’ nation into the dangerous menace of the ‘yellow peril,’ how German-speaking Japanese intellectuals reacted to this discourse, and how it influenced their writings.

The categorization of the Japanese as a race within Western thought is important because race in this context is invariably tied to questions of culture and civilization. Japanese thinkers wanted Japan’s status in the world to depend on the ‘superior’ Japanese culture, not on Japan’s racial classification. This had clear implications for questions of imperialism.
German thinkers, for instance, saw a ‘superior’ culture as a justification for imperialism. In the 1880s, for example, the theologian and colonial thinker Friedrich Fabri (1824-1891) claimed that a “nation with so monumental a culture as Germany’s had both a right and a responsibility to participate in the mission of civilizing the globe” (Klotz 139). In 1916, a poster campaign by Louis Oppenheimer featured portraits of German thinkers such as Goethe or Kant as well as statistics on literacy rates and educational spending as a direct response to British and French claims that the Germans were not ‘civilized enough’ to be colonizers (139). [Fig. 3] Since Western imperial thinkers frequently utilized the claim of a ‘superior’ culture to justify imperial endeavors, the racial and cultural classification of the Japanese was paramount in deciding whether Japan belonged to the category of the ‘colonizer’ or the ‘colonized’ in Western consciousness.

The discourse on the race of the Japanese in the 19th and early 20th century was not homogeneous or coherent, partly due to a multitude of different voices that participated in it: scholars, both Western and Japanese, travellers, politicians, and self-made ‘experts’ on Japan weighed in on the issue. The following section, therefore, does not attempt to give a conclusive and complete account of the many, often simultaneous and contradictory discourses on race and culture at that time, but merely provides an outline of the German-Japanese context in general and East Asia in particular.

2.2.1. Historical Background of the ‘Yellow Peril’

I will commence with a brief overview of the history of the ‘yellow peril’ trope and the racialization of the Japanese before tracing the discussion of race in East Asia. The concept of the ‘yellow peril’ came into prominence around the 1890s when it spread throughout Europe, advocated by the German Emperor Wilhelm II. Wilhelm expressed his perception of Asia by commissioning a painting after his own

\[74\] Likewise, discussions of race predate European imperialism in East Asia. In his discussion of global debates on race and ethnicity, Ian Law writes that “from antiquity China’s pre-modern elite developed the notion of colour-consciousness and a black-white dualism, with white complexion being identified as beautiful and highly valued and dark complexions as negatively valued” (8). In the case of Japan, he cites the racial discourse surrounding the Burakumin as an example of race discussions that predate Western classifications of race (9). The Burakumin people were classified as outcasts in the Tokugawa Period (1603-1867), were placed at the lowest social order, and faced severe institutional discrimination. They typically engaged in professions connected to death such as undertaker, butcher, or executioner. Law states that for centuries some discourses have attributed a foreign racial origin to the Burakumin (9). This is not to compare this discourse to Western classifications of race, but to demonstrate that racial debates predate Western imperialist thinking in Japan.
design entitled *People of Europe, Protect Your Most Holy Goods* (*Völker Europas, Wahrt Eure Heiligsten Güter*, 1895). [Fig. 4] The so-called “Knackfuss painting,” commissioned in the year of the Triple Intervention, allegorizes European nations as women in armor, among them Germany, Russia, France and England. The archangel Michael\(^7\) cautions them against a Buddha in the sky, symbol of the ‘yellow peril’ and a threat to Europe. Underlying the ‘yellow peril’ trope was the fear of “hordes of the barbarous yellow race invading from the East, assaulting the Europeans and looting the wealth of the continent” (Iikura 80), an anxiety harking back to the Mongolian invasion of Europe in the 13\(^{th}\) century. The Boxer Rebellion in China (1900), during which several Europeans were killed, and which was perceived as a violent anti-foreigner uprising in the West, reinforced and exacerbated this fear. By the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904/5), the concept had gained traction in Europe. Japan’s victory in the war was a major turning point not only for the Japanese people but also for the whole of Asia. For the first time in modern history, an Asian nation had won a war against a ‘white nation,’ leading Japan to be perceived as “the most threatening challenger to the white-dominant international order” (Iida 417). For many Asian thinkers, Japan’s victory overturned the racial justification of the alleged European superiority (417).\(^7\)\(^6\) Parallel to the many Japanese students going to Europe and the United States, unprecedented numbers of international students, particularly from China and Vietnam, now came to Tokyo to study the modernization of the Japanese state (Thornber 28).

### 2.2.2. Background – The Racial Classification of the Japanese around 1900

How did Japan come to be labeled as representative of the ‘yellow peril’? The idea of the Japanese as belonging to the ‘yellow race’ was relatively new and still contested in the 19\(^{th}\) and early 20\(^{th}\) century. The concept of the ‘yellow race,’ which occupied an intermediate position between the white and the black races in the European hierarchy of the races, came into prominence in the latter half of the 18\(^{th}\) century. Broadly speaking the concept defined members of the ‘yellow race’ as “stagnant and impassive,\(^7\)\(^5\) In the New Testament, the archangel Michael led the angels in the fight against the devil. Thus, the allegorized European states in the ‘Knackfuss-painting’ can be read as stand-in for Christianity, the angels, or essentially ‘good’ forces, with the Buddha in the sky representing the opposite.\(^7\)\(^6\) The conflict between Japan, a nation that increasingly regarded itself as representative of Asia and as challenger of the “implicitly white hegemonic world order” (Iida 420), encompassing Europe, and the United States escalated at the Paris Conference in 1919 when Japan’s proposal to include a clause on racial equality in the Covenant of the League of Nations was rejected.
at times sinister and threatening.” Often, however “they were simply deemed the embodiment of mediocrity” (Kowner, 2014, 3).

After Commodore Perry ended Japan’s almost total seclusion after 1853, a wealth of new information on the country was suddenly available to Western audiences. Japan defied many common stereotypes about other races that the Western travellers, merchants and diplomats harbored: the Japanese and their culture could not easily be defined as ‘inferior’ or ‘uncivilized.’ Travellers often “felt as if they were in a ‘toyland' country, inhabited by artistic people, and decorated with beautiful, easily accessible women” (Kowner, 2000, 104). Thus, early travellers and ‘specialists’ depicted Japan in mostly positive, if condescending terms. The rapid modernization of the country and its refined culture among other things, led, at least in the Western public consciousness, to the separation of the Japanese from other Asian nations and to the bestowal of the status of “honorary whites” (2000, 125).

No particular concept or perception dominated the discourse on the racial classification of the Japanese for much of the 19th century. Rotem Kowner points to the importance of culture for racial categorizations: as long as the West saw Japanese as politically unthreatening but culturally ‘developed,’ their racial status was only depicted in vague terms, and they were at times classified as belonging to “the white race” (2000, 105). In German New Guinea, for instance, Germany's legal system for “natives” exempted Japanese citizens because they “were seen as members of a ‘civilized' nation and defined, in 1900, as ‘non-coloured’” (Conrad 107). However, after Japan asserted its status as military power following the First Sino-Japanese War (1894/1895) and particularly after the Russo-Japanese War (1904/1905), Western observers started to classify the Japanese as an inferior race and dangerous “other” (Kowner, 2000, 105). Thus, within three decades around the turn of the century, the Japanese were transformed from “white” to “yellow” in Western writings and thought (2000, 106).

In reaction to the humiliation of the ‘yellow peril’ attribution, Mori Ōgai coined the term “white peril” (hakka, 白禍) as a concept which justified the resistance of all non-Westerners against Western colonial oppression (Iida 416). Various Japanese thinkers took up the term, among them Odera Kenkichi (1878-1949) who wrote in his Theory of Pan-Asianism (Dai Ajia shugi ron, 大亜細亜主義論, 1916): “To speak of the White Peril and to advocate Pan-Asianism cannot touch the malicious propagation by Europeans and Americans of the Yellow Peril and their calls for a white alliance. While the former is defensive, passive, and pacifist, the latter is offensive, aggressive and imperialistic” (Odera in Iida 421). However, Japan’s

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77 For a much more detailed account of how and why the Japanese came to be seen as members of the ‘yellow race,’ see Kowner’s extensive monograph From White to Yellow (2014).
position within the system of ‘white’ or ‘yellow’ peril was not straightforward. The art historian and scholar Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913), most known for his English-language work *The Book of Tea* (1906), wrote in his *The Awakening of Japan* (*Nihon no Kakusei*, 1904): “Since the Japanese have been more eager to identify themselves with Western civilization than the Asian one, our Asian neighbors perceive us as converts – or, as the embodiment of the white peril itself” (Okakura in Iida 416). Thus, culture played a critical role in defining who belonged to the ‘white’ or ‘yellow’ race. An analysis of the print material by Tamai and his contributors demonstrates that the Japanese writers were acutely aware of Japan’s paradoxical position within a system that was divided along the lines of a ‘yellow’ and a ‘white’ race. Consequently, they stressed that culture was the ultimate marker against which they wanted Japan to be judged.

### 2.2.3. *East Asia* and the Discussions of Japan and Race

German and Japanese writers fervently discussed the question of the ‘yellow peril’ in *East Asia*, which they inextricably tied to issues of culture and civilisation. In fact, none of the contributors to the magazine claimed that the Japanese were ‘honorary whites’ but implicitly or explicitly agreed with the labeling of the Japanese as members of the ‘yellow race.’ For them, the status of Japan as ‘culture nation’ (*Kulturnation*) was more important than the racial categorization of the Japanese. For most contributors, Japan’s superiority stemmed from its adoption of Western culture and technology and was not intrinsically Japanese. Thus, the racists’ assumptions of a superior West remained intact since Japan was only viewed as more advanced than its neighbors because of its transformation into a Western country through Western assistance.  

Three primary discourses emerge in *East Asia* concerning the race and culture of the Japanese: First, the Japanese were regarded as belonging to the ‘yellow races’. Second, in terms of culture, the contributors perceived Japan as Western or European and as student of Europe. Third, the contributors contrasted

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78 Mori Ōgai in his *German Diary* observes on his very first day in Germany that his Japanese countrymen had internalized the alleged superiority of Western culture and strove to emulate it. After being rebuked by a Japanese doctor for bowing too deeply, he remarks: “Later on I learned that in Europe the educated young people were taught by a dance instructor how to get up and sit down, how to bow or kneel, and that even the Japanese who had lived here for a while thought the unpracticed behavior of their countrymen ridiculous and unbearable” (7, translation mine). A similar observation with regard to Japanese making fun of each other for their non-adherence to Western customs is made by Sōseki in his lecture “The Civilization of Modern-day Japan” (1911).
Japan with Russia and China to demonstrate the ‘westernness’ of the archipelago and the absurdity of the ‘yellow peril’ trope. Thus, although a wide range of contributors, both Japanese and German did not question that Japan was a representative of the ‘yellow race,’ for them this did not imply that Japan belonged to the ‘uncivilized nations.’

In his contribution, “The Yellow Peril” (“Die Gelbe Gefahr”), Dr. Daiji Ichikawa wrote in 1905 under the impressions of the final days in the Russo-Japanese War: “Japan does not hate the white race but has nothing but great respect for it and gratitude because Japan has to thank its teacher Europe for the Western civilization” (1905, VIII, 64-5). Ichikawa’s iteration of the trope of Japan as successful student of the West anchors the nation firmly within Asia while applying a special ‘more civilized’ status to it. Thus, according to Ichikawa, although the Japanese do belong to the ‘yellow race,’ they should not be equated with, for example China, a nation still at an early stage of its “cultural development” (Kulturentwicklung). In contrast, Japan, albeit through the grace of Europe, is already part of the “Western civilisation” (65). The author does not question the existence of the ‘yellow’ and the ‘white’ race or the alleged, one-sided and unequal student-teacher relationship between Germany and Japan. Ichikawa speaks primarily of China as belonging to the discourse of the ‘yellow peril.’ Thus, although the Japanese might be members of the ‘yellow race,’ they are not, in his view, part of the ‘yellow peril’ (64-66).

Various writers for East Asia expressed the sentiment that Japan was merely a student of the West, albeit a successful one. The German contributor Walter Rothbart makes the same point in “The Yellow Peril and the Danger of the Slavs” (“Die Gelbe Gefahr und die Slavengefahr,” 1905, VIII): “In the art of war the Japanese are students of Meckel [Jacob Meckel (1842-1906), a Prussian general and military advisor to Japan]. He taught them everything. Just because they are now defeating the mighty Russian giant, it does not mean that the students will surpass their teacher Germany” (206). Japan is here explicitly framed as a product of Prussian culture and as such, always will be inferior to its teacher.

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80 East Asia regarded the Japanese as members of the yellow race which becomes apparent in the publications of statistics detailing how many “members of the yellow race” lived in Russia in 1907, which counts Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese.

81 In der Kriegskunst sind die Japaner die Schüler Meckels. Er hat sie alles gelehrt. Wenn sie jetzt den mächtigen russischen Koloss überwinden, so braucht damit noch lange nicht gesagt sein, dass die Schüler nun auch ihre Lehrer, Deutschland, übertreffen müssen.
Furthermore, an unnamed German\(^{82}\) contributor writes in his article on Japan, Russia and Korea: “The Japanese people not only proved to the European world through their assimilation of European knowledge that they are capable, they also proved that an Asian nation is able to form and defend a modern state” (“Japan and Russia in Korea,” 1907, II, 56). Japan, by the grace of the European powers, is, according to the writer, the only “fixed [not weak] point” in Asia (56). Its ‘Europeanness’ makes Japan a strong nation within Asia without endangering Europe. Once again, with regard to culture, geography, and race, Europe and East Asia are two distinct, essentially unrelated spheres with Japan in an intermediary position. Although Japan is ‘superior’ in the “Asian Sphere,” it is no threat for Europe.

Likewise, Dr. O. Loew, who had lived in Japan from 1893-1897, wrote in his “A German Verdict on Japan” (“Ein Deutsches Urteil über Japan”) that Japan is the only country in Asia that can be deemed a nation. As such, the Japanese are the only non-Aryan race which is equal to and, in part, superior to Europe (V, 1902, 208).\(^{83}\) In his assessment of Japanese culture and economy, Loew praises Japanese politeness, sensitivity and stoicism. An unnamed German contributor explicitly counted Japan as belonging to ‘the European culture’ in his article “A Pledge of Peace” (“Eine Bürgschaft des Friedens”). Writing under the impression of the Boxer Rebellion, the contributor praises Japan’s role in “stabilizing” East Asia and keeping China in check: “The whole of Europe owes [Japan] its gratitude. The palm of triumph belongs to this youngest member of our culture” (III, 1900, 168, emphasis mine). He continues: “Japan, as carrier of the European culture, will become the guardian of peace in the Far East [...] But we in Europe can be happy to have a faithful and proven friend and a secure pledge of peace in this state governed by strength, might and wisdom, a bulwark of culture” (168, emphasis mine).\(^{84}\) One way of asserting the superiority of Japan was through stressing the links between the archipelago and Europe by defining them both as ‘culturally advanced’ and by reiterating that Japan was a successful emulator of the West.

Overall, both German and Japanese contributors perceived Japan’s alleged status as student of the West as primarily positive for in that way Japan was able to participate in Western power. In his article “The Manchurian Question” (“Die Mandschurische Frage”), the Japanese contributor Jurokui\(^{85}\) emphasises

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\(^{82}\) If the nationality of the writers was not clear for the reader through their name, or in case of anonymous contributions, *East Asia* identified the writer’s nationality with a short statement at the end of the article.

\(^{83}\) Loew writes: “In the last 30 years the Japanese achieved more in the area of science that Spain and Portugal in the last two centuries.”

\(^{84}\) Japan wird also als Träger europäischer Kultur zu einem Schützer des Friedens im fernen Osten. [...] Wir aber in Europa können uns freuen, in diesem von Stärke, Macht und Weisheit regiertem Staate ein Bollwerk der Kultur, einen treuen, wohlerprobten Freund Europa’s [sic] und eine sichere Bürgschaft des Friedens zu besitzen.

\(^{85}\) Jurokui (従六位) is most likely a pseudonym as this term is used to denote the junior sixth rank at the Japanese court.
that Japan’s modernity is attributable to German influence: “Japan is [...] more similar to the Germans than to other states: the Japanese military is organized after the German model and the laws reproduce German ones. The relationship between Japan and Germany was at its best until the peace treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 and Germany was beloved by all” (III, 1900, 56). Jurokui advocates a German-Japanese alliance against Russia as a way to repair the German-Japanese relationship after the Triple Intervention and to ensure Japan’s and not Russia’s influence in Manchuria. Japan, in his opinion, is no longer inferior to its “German teacher”: “We want to say it openly. It is not nice that the brave Germany is afraid of Russia, while the small Japan is ready for a war at any time” (56).

The contributors to *East Asia* connected Germany and Japan through culture by, for example, favourably comparing German and Japanese theatre (1900, 408) and stressing the Christian character of Japan (1905, VIII, 68-70). Conversely, they set both nations in opposition to Russia and China. Thus, in this context the divide between Europe and its “others” is determined no longer by race or even geography but by culture, meaning literature, laws, and moral codes. Various articles in *East Asia* espouse Russia as threat to Germany and Japan. Denouncing the concept of the ‘yellow peril’ as explicitly Russian propaganda tool, for instance, Ichikawa in his article “The Yellow Peril” claims that the real threat to Europe’s stability is neither Japan, nor China but Russia (1905, VIII, 64). If Japan would emerge as the victorious power in Asia, Ichikawa claims, it would honour Europe’s political and economic ties to Asia, something that was highly doubtful should Russia win the war (65). In his article “The Yellow Peril and the Peril of the Slavs,” Rothbart quotes the historian Albrecht Wirth’s comparison between Russia and Japan in which he states that Japan has no reason to feel inferior to the “culturally varnished” Russia (1905, VIII, 205). Furthermore, Japan’s impending victory over Russia is, according to Rothbart, no indication of a danger to Europe. Instead, in a statement most likely alluding to Eastern European immigrants, Germany should fear Russia because the Slavs are a flood threatening to deluge Europe (206). The praise of Japan was a tool to discredit Russia – at that time perceived as the larger threat to Germany because of a military pact with France, the Dual Alliance of 1894.

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86 Den deutschen Verhältnissen ähneln die japanischen mehr als denen anderer Staaten: Das japanische Heer ist nach deutschem Muster organisiert und die Gesetze sind den deutschen nachgebildet. Die Beziehungen Japans zu Deutschland waren bis zum Friedensschlusse von Shimonoseki im Jahre 1895 die denkbar besten, und Deutschland wurde allgemein geliebt.

87 Wir wollen offen sagen: schön ist es nicht, dass das tapfere Deutschland Furcht vor Russland hat, während das kleine Japan jederzeit zum Kriege gegen die Russen bereit ist.

88 Both articles were published in July 1905, two months before the Russo-Japanese War ended.
In this vein, the German contributor M. opens his article on the ‘yellow peril’ question (1905, VIII, 68-70) by stating that the majority of Germans naturally side with the Japanese with regard to the Russo-Japanese war because Japan is “the agent of freedom and tolerance, the agent of intelligence, and especially the agent of the law” (68). Russia, he claims only stylized itself as a Christian nation on the surface. Their icons hide the fact that in “spirit” [Wesen] Russia cannot be called a Christian country at all, whereas Japan, according to M., “is in its acts a much more Christian state than Russia” (68). M. ‘proves’ his point by comparing Japan and Russia’s education system, freedom of religion and military strategy, each time clearly favouring Japan. In short, M. claims that Japan is superior to Russia, based solely on culture and not on racial categorizations. Again, this superiority is not intrinsically Japanese but stems from Japan’s “Western orientation.”

German and Japanese contributors emphasized Japan’s superiority over Russia, and contrasted the archipelago with China. At the beginning of the 19th century, Western observers had attempted to distance the Chinese from the Japanese. In the light of China’s decline, exacerbated by internal problems such as famine and rebellions, and external factors like the Opium Wars (1839 - 1860), and Japan’s rise to the world stage, the West regarded the Japanese much more favourably (Kowner 2000, 114). Although racial ‘scientists’ classified both as belonging to the “mongoloid race,” the epitome of which were the Chinese, many thinkers strove to underscore the difference between Chinese and Japanese (2000, 116). Writers for East Asia frequently discussed the question whether China and Japan belonged to one race and culture. In a longer essay entitled “Japanese and Chinese. An Ethnographic-Political Study” (“Japaner und Chinesen. Eine Ethnografisch-Politische Studie”, 1900, III, 538-541) the Japanese contributor Narutaki sets out to rectify the assumption that Japan and China “belong together” on the basis of their race, language and culture. He sees in this conflation of China and Japan one reason for attributing the ‘yellow peril’ trope to Japan (538). In the course of his article Narutaki disparages the idea that there is a linguistic, racial or cultural affinity between Japan and China by giving detailed accounts of the Japanese language and history (539-541). He concludes that there has never been a friendship between China and Japan and that it is unlikely that a militarized or “awoken” China would overrun Europe (540). Narutaki, therefore, attempts to refute a core claim of the ‘yellow peril’ trope. Instead, he claims, a militarized China would attack Japan to take revenge on the archipelago for destroying the culture of East Asia by emulating the West (540). He ends his article by restating firmly

89 Die Vertreter der Freiheit und Toleranz, die Vertreter der Intelligenz, und insbesondere aber auch die Vertreter des Rechts.
90 [...] so handelt Japan weit eher als ein christlicher Staat als Russland.
that Japan and China have nothing in common and that Japan is on the side of the “culture nations” (541). Employing a similar rhetoric to Western proponents of a Japanese ‘yellow peril,’ Narutaki speaks of the danger of Chinese migrant workers in Germany: “Like a human locust plague the poor and working Chinese will invade further and further. They will squelch their competitors through their unassuming and tough natures until the last free German worker desperately exchanges his liquor bottle for an opium pipe and the last Berlin washer woman hangs herself on her clothesline!” (10). 91

Five years earlier, in April 1900, the German contributor M. also wrote about the ‘yellow race’ with respect to Russia and China. The writer warns of the increasing presence of Chinese laborers in Russia and the problems this creates for Russian workers. He explicitly categorizes the Chinese as belonging to the ‘yellow race’ but makes no mentioning of Japan. 92 Relying heavily on the historian Albrecht Wirth, Walter Rothbart discusses the ‘yellow peril’ in his article “The Yellow Peril and the Peril of the Slav.” According to Wirth, Rothbart writes, one has to distinguish between “yellow and yellow”: the Chinese are not the same people as the Korean, Tibetans or Japanese just because they all belong to the same race, a theory the author supports by asserting that their languages have nothing in common (205).

Almost all contributors to *East Asia* writing about the issue of race and culture were either Germans or Japanese. One exception is the prominent Chinese scholar, Liang Qichao (1873-1929), identified in the magazine as Liang-Chi-Chao, who discussed China’s future and outlook. 93 For him, the yellow and white races are the only ones who can create culture, in contrast to the “red, black and yellow-brown races” (1901, 353). The ‘yellow race,’ however, “can do everything the white race can do” (354). Liang Qichao cites Japan as a positive example for a successful “culture creating” member of the “yellow race” and connects the Japanese success to China: “The proof is that Japan has learned everything good from

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91 Wie eine Heuschreckenplage werden die Chinesen darbend arbeitend immer weiter dringen. Jede Arbeitskonkurrenz werden sie durch ihre absolute anspruchslose und zähe Natur vernichten, bis der letzte freie deutsche Arbeiter aus Verzweiflung seine Schnapsflasche mit der Opiumpfeife vertauscht und die letzte Berliner Wäscherin sich an ihrer Wäscheleine erhängt!

92 Conrad demonstrates that German politicians and press vigorously debated the question of hiring Chinese agricultural workers to offset the shortage of farm hands in Prussia. On the one hand, the Chinese were characterized as “diligent and precise workers,” on the other hand, fears of the “yellow peril,” of an essentially foreign culture, as well as economic concerns, dominated the discourse (see: Conrad, 2006, 168-228). The discussion of Chinese labor, culture, and race in *East Asia*, therefore, has to be located within the context of a larger debate in Germany at that time.

93 *East Asia* does not mention who translated Liang Qichao’s articles into German for the magazine or how he became a contributor. “Liang was arguably the most influential Chinese intellectual of the first decade of the twentieth century” (Willcock 818). As a propagandist and publicist, he had a vast influence on Chinese thought. Between 1898 and 1905, he was exiled in Japan, which arguably influenced his reform campaign as his “follow Japan” and “learn from Japan” slogans attest (818). For more information on how his experiences in Japan were formative for Liang’s thought, see Willcock (1995).
Europe in the last 40 years and can do everything now. The Japanese, however, stem to a great degree from our China and what they can do, why naturally, we can do it easily” (354). The capacity to learn and modernize is, therefore, according to Liang Qichao, something that will enable China to elevate its status in the world in the same way as Japan did. Europe remains the ultimate model to emulate.

Thus, none of the contributors to *East Asia* questioned the ‘yellow’ and ‘white’ race as clearly identifiable and separate entities or Japan’s position within that system. This mindset converged with Japanese thinkers in Japan who, as I have demonstrated in my introductory chapter, by the end of the 19th century had been forced to accept Japan’s position as ‘coloured race’ within the Eurocentric classification of races. However, all contributors rejected that this meant that the Japanese were culturally inferior. Rather, in their view, race cannot be seen as the primary indicator of a nation’s ‘civilized’ status. Especially when compared to Russia, a ‘white nation,’ the writers regarded Japan much more favorably. Likewise, many contributors stressed that, although Japan and China both belonged to the ‘yellow race,’ the two nations were not equal. Therefore, both the German and the Japanese contributors to *East Asia* implicitly or explicitly perpetuated a hierarchical system of nations, ascribing superiority to the West as long as Japan could participate in this superiority by stylizing itself as a Western country. Likewise, by stressing German influences on Japan, German contributors participated in the Japanese ‘success story’ that took by surprise and confounded the international community following the First Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars.

2.2.4. Discussion of Gender in *East Asia*

Although contributors to *East Asia* covered an extensive range of topics, from racial classification to geopolitical relations between Japan, Russia, China, and Europe, all authors, German and Japanese, remained silent on one subject: gender. This omission is even more surprising because, as I have shown in the introductory chapter, the feminization of Japan, its equalization with the picturesque and with the geisha, was a common trope in the 19th century and 20th century utilized to justify Western dominance over the archipelago. Why is gender such a blind spot in *East Asia*?

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94 Der beste Beweis dafür ist, dass Japan seit 40 Jahren alles Gute von Europa gelernt hat und jetzt alles ebenso fertig bringt. Die Japaner stammen jedoch zu einem grossen [sic] Teil aus unserem China, und was die Japanese leisten, können wir natürlich erst recht leisten.
In her discussion of gender and the formation of the Japanese nation state, Morris-Suzuki states that although Japanese thinkers such as Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), Hiratsuka Raichō (1886-1971) and Yamakawa Itsue (1894-1964) spoke to questions of gender and public reform, “public formulations of national identity, however, rather rarely addressed the images of gender implicit in ideas of nationhood” (110). At the same time, the policies of the Meiji Government reinforced the connection between masculinity, national power, and modernity (112). For instance, between 1890 and 1922 women were not permitted to attend political meetings or to take part in any political activity (111). In addition, the government encouraged men to adopt the Western custom of cutting their hair short for practical reasons while banning short hair for women (112) and it consciously attempted to remove women from traditionally female industries such as silk production, measures designed to associate femininity with the home and masculinity with the realm of the public (113). It is possible that contributors to the magazine *East Asia* did not see a connection between gender, Japan’s role in the world, and the formation of the Japanese state. Perhaps the writers purposefully avoided alluding to Japanese women because they wanted to focus on Japan as a modern nation state, which the Japanese government increasingly branded as masculine. It is also possible that the overwhelmingly male contributors to the magazine simply had no interest in questions of gender.\(^95\)

In any case, the omission of gender discussions in *East Asia* proved to be a dangerous blind spot. I will demonstrate in the later sections on Japanese theatre and film in Germany that it was precisely the stereotypes of the demure and sexualized Japanese women that came to dominate much of the discourse on and perception of Japan in Germany.

2.3. Who has the ‘Right’ to Asia?

2.3.1. Culture and Civilization

In summary, contributors to *East Asia* conceded that Japan had to credit Europe for many aspects of its modernization if that meant they could portray Japan as a ‘superior Western nation.’ However, the fact that the Japanese contributors were aware of their alleged status as students of the West did not mean that they were willing to accept Western control and colonisation of East Asia. Instead, the writers saw

\(^95\) Two female contributors to *East Asia* were Olga von Brandenstein who wrote an appeal for donations to be made to the Japanese Red Cross, and Helene Freifrau von Ulm zu Erbach. Zu Erbach wrote an article on Japanese lap dogs in 1902 (V, 123-124).
in the alleged ‘cultural superiority’ of their nation a justification for Japan’s imperial ambitions in East Asia while stressing that Japan did not pose a danger to Europe.

The contributor M. thought a Japanese victory against Russia in the Russo-Japanese War was a possibility. In that event, any Western intervention would amount to a “bitter insult” (70) so he cautions against German interference in Japanese affairs: “’You reap what you sow!’ Such a sowing of wind [the intervention in Japanese affairs] by the ‘powers’ would result in a ‘yellow peril’ because if we Europeans claim ‘a spot in the sun,’ the Japanese people have this right also and it would be a screaming injustice to deny them this right [...].”\textsuperscript{96} M. advocates for East Asia as a sphere of Japanese influence and defended Japan’s ‘claim’ to colonial possessions.

Towards the end of his article on the ‘yellow peril,’ Ichikawa explicitly mentions the connection between the “yellow peril” trope and European imperialism: “One would assume that a stronger China might be able to stop the invasion [of Asia] by foreign powers and could therefore secure the peace in East Asia for a while. This cannot be called the ‘yellow peril’” (66).\textsuperscript{97} According to Ichikawa, Asian self-defence against Western powers’ colonial and imperial ambitions is no danger to Europe. In his article on China and Japan, Narutaki, warns against a Western involvement in East Asia (III, 1900, 541). Although Japan and China have no affinity for each other, he claims, Japan cannot be indifferent to Western involvement in China as this would destabilize the region; something neither Japan nor Europe could want (541). According to Narutaki, Japan’s intervention in Western politics in Asia thus serves not only Japan’s interests but ultimately also the interest of Europe by stabilizing the region (541). For Japan, the answer to European imperialism in Asia was Japanese imperialism.

In his book \textit{The Culture of Japan} (1907), Ichikawa writes on the connection between imperialism and race. He concedes that Japan does not provide enough living space for its people so that they will have to settle in Manchuria and Korea and eventually further away in the United States and Australia. If this settlement policy is threatening, then Ichikawa concedes, the Western nations could call this a “yellow peril” (58). However, if Japan’s “colonialism,” a word that Ichikawa uses in this context, is the

\textsuperscript{96} ‘Wer Wind säet, wird Sturm ernten!’ Auf eine solche Windsaat durch ‚die Mächte’ würde allerdings eine ‚gelbe Gefahr’ entstehen, denn wenn wir Europäer einen ‚Platz an der Sonne’ beanspruchen, so hat auch ein Volk wie die Japaner ein solches Recht, und es ihm vorenthalten zu wollen, wäre ein schreiendes Unrecht [...]. The ‘spot in the sun’ is an allusion to the 1897 speech by the undersecretary of state Bernhard von Bülow who coined the phrase with regard to Germany’s colonial ambitions in Africa and Asia.

\textsuperscript{97} Man kann vielleicht annehmen, das seine eventuelle Machtentfaltung Chinas einigermassen [sic] der Invasion fremder Länder Trotz bieten und verhindern kann, und dadurch der Friede in Ostatien für eine verhältnismässig [sic] lange Zeit gesichert werden kann. Das kann nicht ‚gelbe Gefahr’ genannt werden.
embodiment of the “yellow peril,” then it is only right to speak of a “white peril” because “judging by the history of the white people’s colonialism and their culture and power, they are much more dangerous than the yellow race” (58). Japan is therefore “endangered, rather than a danger” (58).

Liang Qichao argued that the West’s colonial endeavors precisely proved that they were not ‘culture nations.’ After citing various examples, from Germany’s occupation of Kiautschou, the building of railways in China by Russia, England and France, and the racist immigration guidelines against Chinese in North America, he states: “such a treatment is the highest degree of cruelty of these so-called culture nations” (301). Liang goes on to cite colonialism as proof, not of European superiority but of the superiority of the ‘yellow race’: Europeans, he claims, do not have the strength or the workforce to successfully colonize remote regions in the Americans without millions of workers from East Asia, particularly from China (356). Thus, he follows: “The red race will disappear, the black and yellow-brown races are very lazy and can’t feed themselves because they are unable to stand deprivation and to work hard. [...] The most efficient race, the white race, is after all unable to cultivate lands. Who alone can cultivate the land and make the whole earth beautiful? Only the yellow race” (356). Thus, even when attempting to ‘write back’ against Western imperialists’ notions of race and culture, the Chinese and Japanese contributors to East Asia could not disentangle themselves from a racist system, which attributed superiority to Europe.

In summary, the contributors saw East Asia as rightful space for Japanese imperial endeavors based on the race, location, and culture of the archipelago. A small announcement in East Asia speaks to this attempt at a ‘civilizing mission’ concerning the rest of Asia, particularly China. The ad reads as follows:

For the elevation of the Chinese mind [geistige Hebung] Japanese scholars have created an institute to translate European and Japanese books into Chinese. They are asking the Japanese government for support and the Chinese government for special protection and aim to establish their own printing company in Shanghai. The surely very contemporary enterprise is called Jenrin-Yakushokan (from jen=good, rin=neighbour, yaku=translate, sho=book and kan=institute).

(VII, 1898, 509, emphasis in the original)

98 Eine solche Behandlung ist der höchste Grad der Grausamkeit dieser sogenannten Kulturstaaten Europas (301).
100 Zur geistigen Hebung Chinas haben japanische Gelehrte eine Anstalt für Übersetzung europäischer und japanischer Bücher ins Chinesische begründet. Sie wollen die japanische Regierung um Beihilfe und die Chinesische Regierung um besonderen Schutz ersuchen und in Shanghai eine eigene Druckerei einrichten. Das gewiss sehr
The short advertisement summarizes much of the Japanese attitude towards both China and Europe. Japan sees itself as having a clear educational mandate for which it draws on both Japanese and European thinkers, thereby placing Europe and Japan in the realm of ‘civilized’ cultures. In his discussion of culture and imperialism in the English and French context Edward Said states: “Both [imperialism and colonialism] are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination” (9, emphasis in the original). At the turn of the century Japan found itself in the paradoxical position of framing their colonial endeavors in Asia as educational mandate while at the same time Western nations portrayed Japan at best as student of the West and at worst as menacing ‘other.’ My later discussion of Japanese theatre in Germany will highlight this discourse’s widespread implications for the German-Japanese relationship.

2.3.2. Qingdao: Culture and Imperialism

Since Germany did not have any major interests in East Asia and was therefore not directly threatened by Japan’s claim to the region, the only space where Japanese and German interests intersected in a meaningful way was the German colony Qingdao on the east coast of China. In the introductory chapter, I have demonstrated that juristically and socially the Japanese in Qingdao were treated as equals to the Germans, partly due to their large commercial presence in the German colony. Qingdao thus emerges as a compelling space within the German-Japanese context. If Japan was regarded as ‘civilized’ or ‘European’ with respect to its culture and Asia was its rightful sphere of influence, should Japan then not be the ‘rightful’ colonizer – within a Japanese world view – of Qingdao? How did the Japanese contributors to East Asia answer this question? And how did their answer contrast with the German perspective?

Qingdao frequently featured in East Asia: a special section was dedicated to news from the colony, containing economic and social updates. In a longer article, a German contributor, identified as O.E., took stock of ten years colonial rule in Qingdao in his article “Kiautschau, Ten Years under German Flag.”

zeitgemässe [sic] Unternehmen heisst Jenrin-Yakushokan (von jen=gut, rin=Nachbar, yaku=Übersetzen, sho=Buch und kann=Anstalt.) The Japanese word for good neighbor is zenrin (善隣), not jenrin. Most likely this is a printing mistake. Thank you to Professor Sakaki for pointing this out.

101 Conrad points out that although Qingdao was officially a trading colony, “the German share in trade through Qingdao was only 8 percent” (2012, 62).
Politically, he concedes, Qingdao has brought no advantages for Germany, as it did not aid Germany in its quest to become a world power (253). Culturally and economically, however, Qingdao is a success. O.E. writes that “the Chinese have found exceptional trust in the power of our culture” (253). He cites German-built schools, railway tracks and a chamber of commerce as examples for the ‘superior power’ of the German culture from which, in his view, the Chinese profit. He is convinced that the political success will follow the cultural one (254). In addition, East Asia cited a speech by the German Chancellor von Bülow who claimed in 1908 that Germany had “economic and cultural” goals for China (XI, 1908, 19) and argued that Germany’s engagement in China secures the peace following the Boxer Rebellion. In the same speech, von Bülow demands reparations from China for the murders of Westerners in China during the rebellion in which significantly he includes Japanese victims. Moreover, an unnamed German contributor in East Asia speaks of the “promising works of culture” (vielversprechende Kulturarbeit) and the “high degree of development” that the German occupation of Qingdao will achieve (1900, I, 408). Significantly, all these achievements and hopes were still in the future. Even the most well-meaning contributors could not deny that at this time Qingdao was in no sense of the word a ‘success’ for Germany.

In contrast, East Asia quoted an article by a Japanese traveller from the Japanese paper Yomiuri Shinbun in which Germany’s “aptitude” to transform its Chinese colony after an European model is questioned: “More than a year has passed since the Germans occupied Kiautschau, but so far nothing has changed […] Judging from its current state, there is no hope for Kiautschau [under German rule]” (XI, 1898). If a superior culture was one of the main justifications for imperialism and Japan had ‘attained’ such a status, does it follow that Japan had a ‘right’ to Qingdao? The contributor Narutaki in East Asia certainly thought so. In his article “The Future Political Development in East Asia” (“Die Zukünftige Politische Entwicklung Ostasiens”), he claims that China has the potential to be as developed as Japan. European powers should not underestimate the Middle Kingdom in the way they had underestimated Japan which they had labeled as “childish imitators of European role models” (327). For Narutaki, China can only be reformed if “it can rest on successful, not too far away, role models and Japan would be the best leader

102 Die Chinesen haben ausserordentliches [sic] Vertrauen zu unserer Kulturkraft gewonnen.
103 Von Bülow states: “Apart from the murders of the German legate, special atonement is demanded for the murder of the Japanese chancellor” (18). (Ausser für den Mord am deutschen Gesandten wird besondere Sühne auch für die Ermordung des Kanzlers der japanischen Gesandtschaft verlangt.)
104 Seit der Besetzung von Kiautschau durch die Deutschen ist nun schon ein Jahr verflossen, aber noch ist nichts von grossen Veränderungen zu bemerken […] Nach dem heutigen Zustande bietet Kiautschau wenig Hoffnung für seine Zukunft.
Japan's geographic position within Asia and its ‘ideological position’ in Europe made the country, in Narutaki’s opinion, the perfect candidate for such a role. Yet, Narutaki is aware that it is precisely Japan’s position ‘between’ Asia and the West that would make Japanese influence in China difficult because Japan had participated in the abatement of the Boxer Rebellion alongside other Western nations and was regarded in China as “traitor of East Asian interests” (327). However, he is convinced that China and Japan’s shared interests in East Asia make them suitable allies and that Japan will be able to create “a culture state after the European model” (328, emphasis mine) in China.

Japanese fantasies of possessing German colonies in Asia and the Pacific were soon fulfilled. Following the First World War, Germany lost all its colonial possessions to the victorious nations because officially, Germany was not deemed civilized enough to remain a colonizing nation (Klotz 141). Article 22 of the League of Nations reinforces the ‘civilizing’ aspect of colonialism:

To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the war ceased to be under the sovereignty of States which formerly governed them and which are unable to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization. (in Klotz 141)

Japan, on the side of the victors in World War I and a member of the League of Nations, was clearly deemed such a civilized nation. Thus, towards the beginning of the 20th century, civilization emerges as a defining force with regard to whether Japan had the ‘justification’ to be an imperial power. In Said’s words “culture is a sort of theater where various political and ideological causes engage one another” (xiii). We have seen that in the case of Japan and Germany culture was the very foundation on which they build their empires. Without claims to a superior culture and an educational mandate, there is no justification of Japanese imperialism. Likewise, the victors of World War I used the alleged absence a ‘superior’ culture to strip Germany of its colonies. The prerogative to deem a nation as ‘cultured enough’ to become or remain a colonizer and thus an actor on the world stage, remained within Europe. Japan could only stylize itself as possessing a European culture. The Western opposition to Japan’s proposed racial equality clause to the Treaty of Versailles demonstrated that Japan was far from gaining truly equal status.

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105 wenn es sich auf erfolgreiche, nicht ganz zu entfernt liegende Vorbilder stützt, und da wäre Japan wohl am geeignetsten als Führer und Lehrer einzutreten

106 ein Kulturstaat nach europäischem Vorbilde
2.4. Japanese Theatre in Turn-of-the-Century-Germany

What, then, is this ‘superior culture’ of Japan? How did it manifest itself, particularly in the German context? In order to answer this question, I now turn to theatre as space where discourses of culture, race, and civilization within the German-Japanese realm intersected. Contributors to *East Asia* regularly wrote about multiple aspects of Japanese culture, ranging from translations of Japanese literature to explanations of festivals and customs. No other cultural events, however, received as much attention as Japanese theatre performances. It is likely that contributors saw theatre, with its reliance on visual display and spectacle, as an apt medium not only for disseminating Japanese culture in the West but also for drawing attention to and rectifying Western stereotypes about Japan. *East Asia* frequently reported on two touring Japanese theatre groups, the Kawakami Troupe and the Hanako Troupe, the plays of the Japanese playwright Kitasato Takeshi, as well as Western depictions of Japan on stage. In the following discussion of Japanese theatre in *fin-de-siècle* Germany, I will highlight how Kitasato’s dramas constructed Japan as a ‘civilized’ nation on par with the West, while the Japanese theatre troupes instead reinforced the stereotype of Japan as an erotic, exotic and decidedly ‘un-European’ place. Both discourses highlight Japan’s paradoxical status as at once a familiar, yet strange locale in Western consciousness at the turn of the 19th century.

2.4.1. The Kawakami and Hanako Troupes in Germany

Between 1899 and 1902 the Japanese Kawakami Troupe, consisting of fourteen men and four women toured Europe and the United States\(^\text{107}\) with their *sōshi*-plays.\(^\text{108}\) The star of the troupe was Sada Yacco

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\(^{107}\) The Kawakami Troupe started their tour in California before performing on the West and East coast, including five months in Boston and New York. They then toured Britain, France and Belgium. Their second tour in 1901 took them to Russia, Italy and Germany. In the United States, their tour included cities with large Japanese populations, who, however, according to Kano, only made up a small proportion of their audience (Kano 86). Moreover, Sada Yacco recounts the hostility of the Japanese consul in Chicago who refused to help the Troupe when they could not get their luggage because of the language barrier (86). Initially, the actors were subject to the distain and ridicule of both Japanese and Americans (86).

\(^{108}\) Today, *sōshi*-Theatre is commonly referred to as *Shinpa* (New School). *Shinpa* developed as a hybrid form between Western theatre and a traditional Japanese style. It is a "transitional" theatre "whose rationale for existence was the rejection of 'old' values" (Banham 565). Kawakami Otojirō was among the first to stage *Shinpa* plays, often inspired by patriotic events such as the Russo-Japanese War as a way to establish a theatre form fit for the modern nation state. *Shinpa* theatre is characterized by shortened performance hours, the abolition of
(1871-1946), a trained geisha. Kano cites a wide range of scholars who claim that Sada Yacco did not actually intend to act when the Troupe departed for the United States but that Western audience expectations compelled her to go on stage. She quotes Sada Yacco’s response after unexpectedly seeing her face on promotional material upon arrival in the United States:

I [Sada Yacco] argued that it was a big mistake that I had not come as a performer, that it was Kawakami [her husband] who would perform, and that the play would be Sino-Japanese War (Nisshin sensō). But I was told, ‘No that just won’t do, Americans don’t know the difference between Japan and China – they think it’s the same country. If you perform a play like that, nobody will come and see it. And you’ve got to have an actress. You’ve got to have a woman.’ So there was nothing I could do; I had to become a performer and act. (85)

If Sada Yacco’s words are to be believed, the Japanese woman as performer and the Western demand for her emerge as focal points through which the German-Western relationship can be assessed. For example, when the French government invited a group of dancing girls from Japan to participate in the World Fair of 1889, the Japanese government refused to permit their travel abroad despite reassurances that the girls would receive tights to cover exposed skin, would be escorted and driven to the stage from their residence in the countryside and would not participate in any banquets, in an effort to minimize the potential for “scandal” (Kano 93). According to Ayako Kano, the “very idea of Japanese women performing under Western eyes raised the hackles of those men who would equate guarding Japanese women’s chastity with protecting Japanese national sovereignty” (93).

Thus, the engagement of the Kawakami Troupe in the West, particularly the performances of their female members, stands in the context of orientalising depictions of Japan and the Japanese pushback against those. The representation of the archipelago on stage was crucial for the formation of a theatre teahouses and the return of women to the stage (women had been forbidden to perform kabuki since 1629). (Although women were not allowed to act, female theatre troupes did exist in Japan, see Kawaguchi for more detail, 189.) Shinpa started to decline in the 1920s (565). Although sōshi-plays appear revolutionary in their form and content, Kawaguchi points out that Kawakami wanted to illustrate traditional Japanese values, exemplified by the Bushido code, in his plays for a Western audience (173).

109 also Sadayacco (貞奴, the name is a combination of her personal name and the name that she adopted as a professional geisha), more commonly known in Europe as Sadda Yacco, Sada Yakko or Sada Yacco. Sada Yacco was trained as geisha, had mastered music and dance and had extensive connections to the Kabuki scene (Kawaguchi 164). Martin Banham claims that it was for her that the Japanese law forbidding women to act on the stage was revoked (565) but Kawaguchi states that as early as 1877 actresses were allowed to perform in a theatre in Tokyo (189). Sada Yacco’s talent and beauty were foregrounded in reviews and promotional material of the Kawakami-troupe. East Asia featured several large photographs of her, both in kimono and costume. The fact that Sada Yacco was not a professional actress in Japan was never widely publicized in the West (165). For a longer biographical sketch of Sada Yacco, see Kawaguchi (165-168).
European image of Japan. What was the role of the Kawakami Troupe in this discourse, specifically in a German context?

For three months the Kawakami Troupe gave performances in more than ten German cities, including Berlin, Hannover, Bremen, Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, München, Frankfurt a.M., and Stuttgart. In Leipzig and Dresden, every performance was sold out (East Asia, XI, 1899, 493). Two of the troupe’s members, Kawakami Otojirō (1864-1911) and Sada Yacco, quickly became European theatre stars, and their performances were artistic and financial successes (Pantzer 125). Sada Yacco was so famous in the West at that time that both the US president McKinley and the Prince of Wales invited her to perform (Sawada 16). According to Gabriele Brandstetter, her greatest success was her role as geisha in the play The Geisha and the Knight, a combination of two traditional Japanese plays (250).110

To demonstrate the ‘authenticity’ of the troupe, local organizers labeled the performers “Original Japanese” (Originaljapaner) (Pantzer 124), notwithstanding the fact that the troupe performances could not be regarded as “original Japanese” in the sense that they did not conform to traditional Japanese theatre.111 Kawakami’s objective was to reform the Japanese theatre after a Western, especially a French, model (Brandstetter 249). He thereby created a hybrid theatre, incorporating Western and Japanese influences. For his performances in Europe, Kawakami mostly used traditional Japanese plays as his basis, which he then adapted for Western tastes (249). The troupe performed their plays, which often had an explicitly political character, in Japanese but made concessions for their European audience by reducing the spoken word to a minimum (East Asia X, 1899, 395). Although the allure of the Japanese theatre troupe arguably lay in their ‘exotic foreignness,’ Kawakami accommodated his European viewers in several ways: he took out all Japanese music, which European spectators often perceived has ‘horrible,’ and adapted the dance and fight performances for Western tastes: Sada Yacco’s much-

110 In this play, which actually features no geisha but, rather an oiran, a courtesan, Sada Yacco performed the role of the courtesan Katsuragi who is jilted by her lover for his fiancé. Katsuragi follows the pair to a temple where she dances in front of the priests and then murders the fiancé. In the play’s final act, Sada Yacco changes into the costume of a demonic madwoman before battering her rival to death with a bell hammer (Kawaguchi 162). She consequently dies of a broken heart, or in Kawaguchi’s words “from the sheer violence of her emotions” (161), giving Sada Yacco the opportunity to display her ‘art of dying’. Kawaguchi points to the difference between this play and Madama Butterfly. Both Katsuragi and Butterfly are rejected by their lovers, but whereas Butterfly commits suicide, “Katsuragi allows the blind impulses of rage and jealousy to turn her into a perpetrator of brutal acts” (162).

111 In the same line, Kawakami was heralded as “Japan’s most distinguished actor” in Western press, but Kawaguchi points out that this could not be further from the truth. In fact, some countrymen regarded him as charlatan, or at best as an innovator, in any case an outsider in Japan (164).
admired act of dying, for instance, became more prolonged the longer the troupe toured (Schuster 58). Minimizing the spoken word went hand in hand with the inclusion of as many dance scenes as possible to the point where the pantomimic dance performances became the main attraction (Brandstetter 249).\footnote{\textsuperscript{112}}

Kawakami not only Westernized Japanese plays, he also ‘Japanized’ western works, creating, for instance, a Japanese hybrid version of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* that transformed Shylock into a Japanese fisherman (250).\footnote{\textsuperscript{113}} Western reviewers noted the concessions Kawakami made for his audiences but interpreted them as traits general to Japanese theatre. In his review of Sada Yacco’s performance, the French journalist and dramaturg Henri Fouquier, for instance, explained to his readers that “the Japanese theatre” lacked plot and eloquent language and that Japanese actors conveyed emotions primarily via the body (Kawaguchi 174). Members of the audience with very little or no exposure to Japanese culture mostly regarded Sada Yacco’s performances as non-Westernized expressions of Japanese theatre (Brandstetter 253). For some Western observers, the Kawakami Troupe, merely one example of Japanese theatre, thus came to represent all Japanese theatre.

The Kawakami Troupe was not the only Japanese theatre group touring Europe at that time. In their direct competition stood the Hanako Troupe, starring the geisha Hanako.\footnote{\textsuperscript{114}} Hanako toured much of Europe and North America from 1901 until 1905. The American Loie Fuller (1862-1928) managed both Troupes.

\textsuperscript{112} Indeed, the first representations of Japanese culture by Japanese abroad were nonverbal through so-called Japanese Villages (*Nihonjin Mura*). In 1866, the first set of visas issued by the Japanese government was given to two acrobatic troupes, set to perform in America and England respectively. In 1885, the first Japanese Village opened in London, showing Sumo, Kabuki, and dance performances as well as craft making workshops (Kano 92). Two years later, similar villages opened in the United States. Yano Fumi, a Japanese who visited such a village, found the whole project “deplorable” as it put Japanese on the same level as “Hottentots, or inhabitants of Madagascar or Sudan” (quoted in Kano 92). These non-verbal representations of Japan are an expression of European superiority since they reduced Japanese culture to a Western ‘plaything’. Japanese observers clearly objected to them, seeing Japan as superior to them.

\textsuperscript{113} According to Kano, the troupe did not have the time to translate or understand the original text. When they performed in Boston, they imitated the performances of two British actors which they had just seen and “mouthed gibberish to suit the action” (106).

\textsuperscript{114} Hanako (花子, lit. flower child) is a stage name. Her real name was Ōta Hisa (1868-1945). Like Sada Yacco, she was famous for her death scenes in the West. Ōta also was a trained geisha, but moved in lower social circles compared to Sada Yacco. Hanako was 34 years old and in a desperate financial situation when she left for Europe as part of a “Japanese culture and arts show” at the Copenhagen Zoo. She stayed behind in Europe when her compatriots returned to Japan and was consequently engaged to perform in Germany in a play entitled *Bushido*, which was such a success that they took it on tour to Istanbul. Hanako continued to act in Europe and did not return to Japan permanently until 1921. Unlike Sada Yacco, she never performed in Japan. For a full biographical sketch of Hanako, including details on many of her performances in Europe, see Sawada Suketaro, *Little Hanako* (1984) and Kawaguchi (188-210).
Sada Yacco and Hanako became the focal point of press reviews and other accompanying publications. In the following section, I will demonstrate that, despite being a Japanese-European hybrid, Kawakami’s plays in general and the two actresses Sada Yacco and Hanako in particular were widely perceived as ‘authentic’ and embodiment of ‘traditional Japan.’ They reinforced the stereotypes of Japan as an exotic, unknowable and alluring locale, already prevalent in numerous German travelogues, dramas, and stories about the archipelago. Through a discussion of reviews in *East Asia* and in German papers of that time as well as other contemporary observations, I will highlight how the bodies of the two women became the central focus for the – usually male – writers and reviewers. I will demonstrate how the Western press de-humanized these actresses through their frequent equations with dolls and animals and how they bore contradictory discourses: belonging to the past and to the future of theatre, portrayed as both demure and passionate, and as natural and artificial.

### 2.4.1.1. Performance and the ‘Exotic’ Body

Given the focus on the body and the visual in theatre and the fact that the vast majority of the German audience could not understand spoken Japanese, it comes as no surprise that then-contemporary reviewers customarily remarked on the physical aspects of Sada Yacco’s performance and her appearance. Her acting style impressed German writers and artists (Schuster 59). Literary critic Julius Hart, for instance, wrote in the German paper *The Day* (*Der Tag*, 1901) that Sada Yacco’s body “was so eloquent […], she had no need for a poet to give her any lines” (Kawaguchi 187). According to Kano, Sada Yacco “acted like the perfect embodiment of exotic and feminine Japan under the Orientalizing gaze of her audience” (89).

Hanako, too, was the subject of various articles and observations and is described in very similar terms to those applied to Sada Yacco. The writer René Schickele (1883-1940), for instance, wrote about her “loveliness” (liebenswürdig) and “flower-like” (blumenhaft) quality (Schickele 291) during Hanako’s death scenes in which she dies “quivering and with the hoarse rattle of a large bird” (291). Hanako’s smallness (she is rumored to have been 4’5” [134 cm] tall) earned her the nickname “the Japanese Doll” in the Western press (Brandstetter 255). [Fig. 5]

According to Brandstetter, who analyzed the public perception of Japanese performers in Germany across a broad range of then-contemporary print and press materials, the majority of German papers
and reviews classified the Japanese dancers and their performances as “natural” and “authentic” (248). A German reviewer in one of the most prolific German theatre magazines *Stage and World* (*Bühne und Welt*), for instance, reflected on Sada Yacco's “natural style”: “this is a Naturalism that can only come from the people (Volk), that by all its refinement, has not lost its primitiveness and its close contact with nature; that lives with the flowers and the beasts and imitates the flowers and the beasts” (quoted in Pantzer 124). Sada Yacco’s performance was thereby positioned in the realm of the “non-civilized.” Henry Fouquier’s review of Sada Yacco’s performance in *Le Theatre* firmly places the troupe in the past: “The Japan, which Madame Sada Yacco has brought us, happily is not modern Japan … [but] is a Japan somewhat of the past, exquisitely out of date, a Japan still feudal, simple and violent” (quoted in Kawaguchi, 174). Fouquier apparently preferred pre-modern Japan as a dangerous, yet more alluring place. For him, Sada Yacco's routine, despite being modern in the sense of being an example of a decidedly contemporary theatre form, is a prime example of old Japan. Likewise, the French poet Judith Gautier wrote after seeing Sada Yacco perform: “Yacco brings to us […] that feudal Japan which we have not known and which is no more” (quoted in Downer 179). Thus, at least some members of Sada Yacco’s audience were aware that what they saw was a highly stylized version of a fictionalized past, one that had little in common with the modern nation state.

Furthermore, a range of observers made a de-humanizing connection between the Japanese performers and animals. Sarah Bernhardt famously called the Japanese actors of the Kawakami Troupe a “pack of monkeys” (Kawaguchi 175). The literary critic Arthur Symons wrote in 1903 that it was difficult not to laugh at “some cat-like or ape-like trick of these painted puppets… swathed like barbaric idols, in splendid robes without grace” (quoted in Kawaguchi 175). In a review of her American tour, the *Des Moines Register* pronounced Hanako and her troupe: “monkeys in a cage” and their faces resembling “faces on oriental fans, vases and screens” (Sawada 67). The *Atlanta Journal* claimed Hanako’s performance “sounde[d] like the inarticulate gibbering of apes” (66). At the time of Sada Yacco’s tour through France rumors circulated that she had wept when called a “pretty little animal” by a French comedienne. Fouquier, however, saw this as a compliment, not an insult since in his eyes “Japanese art was an art of exquisite naturalism” (174).

115 Das ist ein Naturalismus, wie er nur aus dem Volke hervorgehen kann, das bei allem Raffinement noch nicht seine Primitivität und die enge Fühlung mit der Natur verloren hat, das noch mit den Blumen und Bestien lebt und den Blumen und Bestien nachempfindet.
116 In her book on Sada Yacco, Downer quotes a range of Western reviews that cannot be given their due here on account of space restrictions. Many compare Yacco to animals and plants and are further examples of the points made above (see: Downer 134, 142, 166, 170, 180, 199).
Although reviewers deemed the troupe's men and women animal-like, they further dehumanized the women by connecting them to lifeless objects, masks and dolls, a trope, which, I have shown, was already well-established in the West. A reviewer in the Berlin Local Gazette (Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger), then a paper with one of the highest circulation rates in Germany, describes Sada Yacco's performance in the Japanese Merchant of Venice as follows: “What Grace, what exquisite movements in a quiet dance, how wild and beautiful when the bacchian dance begins ... Every part of her body is full of grace, every limb full of life, every movement the most beautiful plastic” (quoted in: East Asia X, 1899, 449-450). Another correspondent for the liberal Vossische Paper (Vossische Zeitung) compares Sada Yacco to Galathée, the statue of the Pygmalion myth that is given life by the Goddess Venus and describes the actress as “a wooden doll, which dances ... with puppet-like movements of eternal grace. This flotiation that is achieved after an oriental fashion more through the arms and upper body than through the legs, appears to not need the earth as support [...]” (450). In his discussion of The Geisha and the Knight, the reviewer for the London Times wrote that the players appear as “grotesque mechanical toys. None of their movements resemble ours, their faces seem bizarre masks” (quoted in Kawaguchi 167, emphasis in the original). Sada Yacco's stage makeup further alienated Western audiences. When first performing in the United States, Sada Yacco reportedly styled herself in the way of an onnagata, a male actor playing female roles in Kabuki, with a thick white facial base, eyebrows concealed by white paint and drawn again higher on the forehead (Kawaguchi 181). According to Kawaguchi, the audience thought she looked like a corpse (181). Although Sada Yacco consequently used less makeup and smiled during her dances – which was frowned upon in Japan – Western observers continued to remark on the mask-like quality of her face (181).

In the reviews, Sada Yacco becomes the symbol of ‘the Japanese woman,’ exemplified by her “flower-like” connection to nature (Brandstetter 251). Racist comparisons with animals and plants notwithstanding, her appearance was also frequently praised because it affirmed stereotypes about Japanese women previously articulated by Western writers such as Loti and Hearn: her gracefulness, her

117 Welche Grazie, welche herrlichen Bewegungen im ruhigen Tanze, wie wild und schön, wenn der bacchische Taumel beginnt ... Jeder Teil des Körpers voller Grazie, jedes Glied voller Leben, jede Bewegung von schönster Plastik.
118 eine Holzpuppe, die ... mit puppenhafter Bewegung von unendlicher Grazie einen Tanz ausführt. Dieses Schweben, das nach orientalischer Art viel mehr durch die Arme und den Oberkörper als durch sichtbare Beinbewegungen erreicht wird, scheint die Erde kaum noch als Halt zu gebrauchen [...]
119 Masks feature prominently both in ancient Western theatre and in Japanese Noh theatre where masks are used to portray elders, young men, women and demons. Audiences and reviewers occasionally regarded Sada Yacco’s mask-like face positively, but more often it seemed to highlight the unknowable in the Japanese character.
diminutive figure, her picturesque beauty and her ‘doll-like’ features. Reviewers compared these ‘positive’ features with Sada Yacco’s “terrible,” “dragon-like” performances in her death scenes and in the sequence of the brutal murder of a love rival at the end of *The Geisha and the Knight*. The journalist and playwright Lady Colin Campbell contrasted Sada Yacco’s performance in the last act with the rest of the play: “[the] mask-like impassivity of expression has gone, and the lovely doll is now indeed alive, an outraged and passionate woman [...] If such a scene were to be attempted by a European actress, it would be ridiculous; acted by this little Japanese doll, it grips you as a most extraordinary revelation of primeval passion” (quoted in Kawaguchi 175). Kawaguchi, in her extensive discussion of the geisha motive in the West, points out that Western audiences were most likely unaware of the long tradition in Japanese storytelling that recognized “the dark savagery of human emotions – the anguish of the human soul goaded by the barbs of thwarted desire and driven by blind rage” (163).\(^\text{120}\) The unleashed and lethal passion of Sada Yacco’s character Katsuragi in this play stands in sharp contrast to the meek and demure Butterfly-women who inhabited Western stories, stage dramas, and travelogues about Japan. Thus, Sada Yacco’s performances curiously affirmed and subverted Western categorizations of Japan.

Western reviewers praised both Sada Yacco and Hanako for the physical aspects of their performances. Their bodies were regarded as an expression of a foreign connection to nature, lost in the West but symbolized in the “flowerlike” and at the same time “shocking” quality of the performers’ art. Sada Yacco notably reaffirmed and contradicted the trope of Japanese women as picturesque dolls. On the one hand, her art appeared to have conformed to the audience’s expectations with regard to Japanese women as unknowable, alluring and animal-like creatures. Conversely, her final scene in *The Geisha and the Knight* in which she rages passionately on stage could not have been further from the stereotype of the diminutive, unfeeling Japanese woman. Yet, according to Kano, overall Sada Yacco “was a potent reminder of how Japan was perceived by the West: exotic, delicate, quaint, and backward – definitely not modern and certainly not equal to the West in power” (95). The plays in which she acted were not traditionally refined enough to help establish Kabuki as a representative of Japanese national theatre in the West, nor were they modern enough, with the abundance of wild samurai, sword fights and beautiful geisha, to truly represent modern Japanese theatre, fit for a modern nation state (95).

\(^\text{120}\) As an example for such a dark figure, Kawaguchi cites the character Rokujō no Miyasundokoro from Murasaki Shikibu’s *The Tale of Genji* (1008), a seminal work of Japanese literature and widely regarded as the world’s first novel. Rokujō no Miyasundokoro’s spirit leaves her body when she sleeps and kills the wife of her former lover, Genji. After her own death, her spirit continues to torment the women in Genji’s life (163).
2.4.1.2.  *East Asia and the Japanese Theatre Troupes*

According to an article in the *New Prussian Paper (Neue Preussische Zeitung)*, the Central Theatre in Berlin where the Kawakami Troupe performed for the first time, was filled with members of the ‘Japanese colony’ as well as with German artists, students, scholars and celebrities (Pantzer 131). In the following weeks, the Japanese Society invited the troupe to perform privately in front of 300 select men and women and also to participate in their Christmas celebrations (131).

During their sojourn in Europe, *East Asia* reported on the success of the Kawakami Troupe, citing full theatres and enthusiastic audiences, among them ambassadors, and high-ranking military personnel (X, 1899, 447). The magazine occasionally printed pictures of members of the Japanese “colony” in Berlin and the articles about the Japanese theatre groups were usually accompanied by photographs of members of the troupe. The women, among them Sada Yacco featured most frequently, were always shown either in kimono or in costume whereas the men were in costume or in Western clothes. The magazine reported extensively about the Kawakami Troupe’s engagement in Germany, their performances and especially their reception by the German press. In contrast to the German reviewers, contributors to *East Asia* did not focus overtly on the physical aspects of the female performers but rather on the Germans’ perception of Japan through the plays and on the ‘authenticity’ of the performances.

Tamai writes in an article on the Kawakami troupe that German reviewers had mislabelled the performances as “pantomimes” because they did not understand that the Japanese performers reduced the spoken word to make their plays appealing to a Western audience (IX, 1898, 395).¹²¹ In his long review of the Kawakami troupe, Tamai focuses on stylistic aspects of Kawakami’s *sōshi* plays and gives a very detailed summary of the content of the two plays that were performed in Berlin (395-397). Tamai leaves no doubt that the Kawakami-troupe’s engagement is not “Japanese theatre.” He writes: “For the Japanese theatre world it is very sad that the Kawakami’s performances are generally perceived as Japanese acting by the foreigners” (395).¹²² In his eyes, Kawakami’s plays, which were written by a Japanese playwright, performed by Japanese actors in Japanese and set in Japan, did not qualify as

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¹²¹ According to Kawaguchi, the misconception that most or all Japanese theatre is pantomime was commonplace in the West, reinforced by, among others, John L. Stoddard’s lectures on Japan (1905) and Marcelle A. Hincks’ monograph on Japanese dance in 1910 (179).

¹²² Für die japanische Theaterwelt ist es sehr bedauerlich, dass die Vorstellungen Kawakamis von den Fremden im allgemeinen [sic] als japanische Schauspielkunst angesehen werden.
“Japanese theatre” as they did not adhere to traditional formal aspects of Japanese theatre. Instead, the troupe attempted to fulfil the expectations of their Western audiences although, according to Tamai, the audience’s knowledge of “customs, conventions and languages of foreign countries is lacking” (395). Yet, Tamai is hopeful that in time “real Japanese theatre” will be played on European stages as more Japanese actors perform in Europe. Tamai’s insistence that the Troupes’ performances were not “real” Japanese theatre also signaled his preference for clearly distinguishing between ‘the European’ and ‘the Japanese culture.’

Other Japanese critics joined Tamai in his assessment. In their monograph on Kawakami Otojirō, Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie cite several contemporary and later Japanese critics dissatisfied with Kawakami’s portrayal of Japan which they perceived and inauthentic and a “national disgrace” (494-5).

In 1909, Sato Koroku wrote in the journal Kabuki: “I wish they would show real Japanese dramas in a genuinely Japanese way. I am confused by such a drama as ‘A Geisha Girl and a Warrior’ played by Sada Yacco” (quoted in: Sawada 16). Likewise, Mori Ōgai registered his bewilderment at Sada Yacco and Hanako’s success: “I am amazed at Sada Yacco’s celebrity in Europe, [...] Hanako, inferior to Sada Yacco, [...] even Hanako is applauded for her vigorous expression” (quoted in Sawada: 16).

In a review of the Hanako Troupe’s engagement in Berlin, Tamai labels their performance “European-Japanese” (East Asia, 1907, 385). While conceding that the troupe had learned to play to the taste of their foreign viewers, Tamai also critiques the way Japanese theatre has been adopted for a European audience:

To make the foreigners, who cannot understand Japanese, follow the plot, it is necessary to speak as little as possible. Body movements and facial expressions etc. have to replace speech. [...] It is also impossible to stage a Japanese play in only 30 minutes and to play a real Japanese role, even in a short scene. [...] The Japanese theatre is totally different. [...] Even if Japanese actors want to give a real Japanese performance, they are forced to adapt themselves to the foreign taste so that the audience likes them. That is where you cannot see a real Japanese play abroad even if the actors are Japanese. (385)

123 doch sind ihre Kenntnisse von Sitten, Gebräuchen und Sprachen der fremden Länder nur mangelhaft
124 Um den Fremden, denen die japanische Sprache unverständlich ist, den Gang der Handlung verständlich zu machen, muss möglichst wenig gesprochen werden und das Sprechen müssen Körperbewegungen, Mienenspiel usw. ersetzen. [...] Auch ist es unmöglich, ein echt japanisches Schauspiel in nur 30 Minuten zu bieten, und eine echt japanische Rolle zu spielen, wenn auch nur in einem kurzen Akt. [...] Das japanische Theater ist ganz anders. [...] Wenngleich japanische Schauspieler ein echt japanisches Stück spielen möchten, so sind sie doch gezwungen, sich dem europäischen Geschmacke anzupassen und zu verändern, damit die Zuschauer daran Gefallen finden. So
According to Tamai, the geisha Hanako shared his frustration at the “watered-down” version of a Japanese theatre: “it is her ardent wish to at least once be able to play a real Japanese role during her month-long tenure in Berlin” (385, emphasis mine). For Tamai, it is the style, slowly spoken words and performances that last several hours, and not the content, that make a play a ‘real Japanese play.’ He also uses his review to explain aspects of the Japanese culture to his German audience and to point out some inaccuracies in the performances such as the hairstyle of the male performers, for instance, which was from a different period than the women’s costumes. He also explains the difference between hara-kiri and jigai. The actress Hanako had repeatedly been asked to perform hara-kiri on stage. Perhaps Western audiences expected a woman to commit hara-kiri after seeing Cio-Cio-san killing herself in this way in Madama Butterfly. Tamai clarifies that as a woman she cannot perform hara-kiri but would instead have to commit suicide by stabbing herself in the throat, commonly known as jigai (385).

East Asia reprinted various German reviews and observations about the Japanese theatre troupes that were at least partially condescending and orientalising in tone, but the magazine did not comment on these articles or attempted to rectify the trope of the women as inanimate objects or animals. If most German audience members regarded these performances, and by extension the work of all Japanese theatre troupes, as symbol of Japanese culture and art, would the depiction of the troupes in the German press not be vital for the formation of a discourse on Japan? Did Tamai assume that his readership, Japanese and Japanophiles, did not need such corrections? This is unlikely, since various other articles in East Asia revised German stereotypes on Japan. Why then did East Asia not rectify the racist reviews of the Japanese actresses? In addition, why did a magazine that, as I have demonstrated previously, aimed to present Japan as modern, Western state, print pictures of Sada Yacco and Hanako exclusively in costume and kimono, when photographs and drawings of both women in Western dress existed? [Fig. 6]

The question of agency is important in this context. Although Japanese reviewers such as Tamai lamented the “watered-down” version of Japan presented to Western audiences and German critics raved in orientalising articles riddled with stereotypes, the Japanese actors and their promoters deliberately chose the image of Japan as exotic and alluring place. At the beginning of their career in the

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wird man aus diesem Grunde kein echt japanisches Theaterspiel im Auslande sehen können, auch wenn die Schauspieler Japaner sind.

125 Es ist ihr sehniächsther Wunsch, einmal wenigstens, während ihres einmonatlichen Aufenthaltes in Berlin, eine echt japanische Rolle spielen zu können.

126 **Jigai** (自害) is the Japanese term for suicide.
West, the Kawakami troupe was in a desperate financial situation, without a home, money or possessions beside the clothes that they wore (Downer 110). In Sada Yacco’s words they were “so poor we had to beg for food” (Sada Yacco in Downer 111). She recounts an anecdote of a battle scene performance during which the actors were supposed to stand up after being thrown to the ground. However, because none of the troupe’s members had eaten in days, they were too weak to stand and the curtain had to be drawn on them (Sada Yacco in Kano 87).

As their artistic career failed to take off, they soon realized that Western audiences were not interested in Japanese theatre. In his account of his life in the West, Kawakami wrote: “For foreigners we have to have beautiful costumes and some exotic, extraordinary event. This means it has to be a period piece with dance. And we must show this within a very short span of time. This is Foreigner’s Taste. Unless we do it like this they won’t come and see Japanese plays” (Kawakami in Downer 132). To rise from impoverished actors begging for a chance to perform to the celebrated stars of Europe, dining with English Princes and the Russian Tsar, they had to play to the audiences’ taste. Sada Yacco understood this when she said that they had been “so foolish as to appear to an American audience with one of our classical dramas […] Immediately we found out that we must play a love play […] It was a queer mixture of Japanese plays, but it appealed to the American mind with love, and delighted with our gorgeous costumes” (Sada Yacco in Downer 132). In his article on the Kawakami Troupe’s European tours, Miller claims that Sada Yacco and Kawakami “were aggressive and shrewd promoters who took every available opportunity to satisfy their audiences’ demands for a vision of Japan that conformed to orientalist expectations” (225). Loie Fuller, who marketed the troupe in France, convinced Kawakami to include a hara-kiri scene in every play to fill the theatres (226). These scenes so enthralled the audience in Paris that, according to Downer, they “leapt to their feet, cheering till the rafters rang. Men threw their hats in the air, women their handkerchiefs” (176). Such was the success that in the following performances Sada Yacco, too, committed seppuku and in “the end nearly every character in every play committed hara-kiri” (177). Kawakami’s strategy of hybridizing Japanese theatre thus paid off. The German and European press were enthusiastic in their praise of the troupe, especially of Sada Yacco’s performances and her talent for dying on stage (Pantzer 124).
Kano cites an interview that Sada Yacco gave in Paris in 1900, printed in an English pamphlet for the World Fair as example of her ability to play to her audience’s expectations. In the interview, Sada Yacco speaks about love in Japan and the difference between Japanese and Western girls, finishing her declaration with “Ah! to me, my friend, love in Japan is very noble, sublime and sacred” (Sada Yacco in Kano 89). The Japanese actress had conducted the interview in a black kimono, speaking, according to the interviewer in “a caressing voice” with a “childish melancholy face lighten[ed] up with a smile” (89). Kano claims, that “one can almost see the actress demurely fluttering her eyelids,” adhering to the presumed expectations of her Western audience (89). In this interview Sada Yacco is seen through the eyes of a Western interviewer who thereby creates the Japanese woman a stereotype. The extent of her own complicity in the creation of such a ‘Japanese woman’ remains unknown.

Thus, if Western critics such as Arthur Symons found the performances of the Kawakami Troupe laughable, the Japanese actors certainly were in on the joke. They expertly used the misconceptions and stereotypes of Japan abroad and reaffirmed them for their own purposes. Racist comparisons with animals and masks notwithstanding, the Kawakami Troupe, and especially Sada Yacco, took the West by storm once they played into the expectations of their American and European audiences. Artists such as Picasso, Klee, Debussy, and Rodin praised and sketched her, and “Yacco dresses” and perfume were marketed in France (90). Conversely, Yacco “appropriated the costume, posture, and manners of the West when she returned to Japan in 1901” (90) with the newspaper Chūō Shinbun remarking that the actress looked like a Parisian lady, not only in dress but also because “even the colour of her skin seems to have become milky white with a pearl pink blush. And with her double eyelids on her bell-shaped eyes, she might indeed be mistaken as a Western lady [seiyō fujin]” (quoted in: Kano 91). Sada Yacco, thus, appeared to have been able to effortlessly embody ‘the exotic’ and to adjust her performance to her audience, be they Western or Japanese.

Tamai’s dissatisfaction with the troupes might stem from their self-orientalising accommodation of the Western audiences. Yet, he nonetheless reproduced the same discourse in East Asia by printing images of the actresses in kimono and costume and by unquestioningly reprinting exoticist reviews from the German press. The Kawakami and Hanako Troupes are just the earliest examples of Japanese artists

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127 The interview might have been conducted through an interpreter, or in French. In addition, the extent of possible editorial modifications is not known. Kano concedes that it is possible that the words might have been entirely fabricated (89).
128 Sada Yacco might have worn a Tomesode (留袖), the formal kimono for married women, of which black kimono is the most formal variant.
using Western stereotypes of Japan for their own gain – something of which other members in the Japanese community disapproved. In Japan, the Kawakami’s were regarded with ambivalence. Kano claims that “Japanese men of culture and influence [...] considered it shameful for the entire nation to have their theatre represented in this manner” (92). Japanese officials and thinkers did not want their nation to be represented by actors and geishas, which they deemed little better than sex workers and beggars (92).

2.4.2. The German-language Plays of Kitasato Takeshi

By refusing to present Japan in his plays as ‘exotic other,’ the Japanese playwright Kitasato Takeshi took the opposite approach to the afore-mentioned Japanese theatre troupes. Perhaps motivated by what he perceived as a ‘watered down’ version of Japanese culture, Kitasato began writing his own German-language plays, none of them identifiable as German plays by their title: Namah Amitabha (1899), Fumio (1900), and Sakura Sogo (1901). All plays are set in Japan and exclusively feature Japanese characters. I will demonstrate that the intention of his German plays was to portray Japan on its own terms as Europe’s peer.

The following analysis will focus on Fumio, which, if the discussions of the production in East Asia are any indicator, appears to have been the only play by Kitasato that was actually staged.129 Many of the themes discussed in Fumio can also be found in Kitasato’s other plays which I will use as reference points. Two themes are central to Kitasato’s German-language oeuvre: Buddhism and filial obedience.

Fumio stands in the tradition of German Sturm und Drang (storm and stress) dramas in depicting a young hero struggling against conventions, as exemplified by his family, and who eventually comes to a tragic end. In the following section, I will demonstrate how Kitasato presented Japan as modern state without erasing the nation’s past and traditions.

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129 In an appraisal of Namah Amitabha, a German reviewer for East Asia remarks that the play has not been performed (VIII, 1898, 318). Likewise a review of Sakura Sogo does not mention any performances (IX, 1898, 350). Fumio, however, was performed in January 1900 in Berlin (III, 1900, 408).
The print version of *Fumio* carries the subheading “written in the German language.” [Fig. 7] A short epigraph states the objective of the play and ostensibly speaks to the author’s frustration with the representation of Japan in plays written by Europeans and by the Japanese theatre troupes: “I have purposefully given the description of the scenery and costumes in great detail so that the reader gets a better understanding of Japan than the one he receives through the so-called Japanese plays that were hitherto shown in Europe.”

Thus, throughout the play, Kitasato included exceptionally detailed descriptions of the landscape, rooms, and dresses of his characters and even added a sketch of a Japanese room in the print version. [Fig. 8] At times, for instance in the first scene of the first act, these descriptions exceed the actual dialogue of the scene. If his German-language plays had the objective to transport a particular image of Japan to the West, how did Kitasato portray Japan in his works?

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130 Die Beschreibung der Scenerie und der Kostüme habe ich absichtlich genau gegeben, damit der Leser eine richtigere Vorstellung von Japan bekommt, als durch die bis jetzt in Europa aufgeführten, sogenannten japanischen Stücke.

131 An example for such a landscape description is Fumio's speech on Kyoto: "Yes, the natural landscape here is wonderful! [...] In spring it is beautiful in the Higashi mountains, especially on Arashi-Yama. The nightingales sing their spring songs in the white cherry blossoms through which the green of the pine trees shimmers. And when we see the rafts silently floating on the clear-blue waters of the Oigawa River, poets and painters thrown away their tools upon beholding this heavenly landscape" (10). (Ja, die Natur ist hier wunderbar! [...] Im Frühling ist es herrlich im Higashi-Gebirge, ganz besonders auf Arashi-Yama. Die Nachtigallen singen ihre Frühlingslieder in den weissen Kirschblütenwolken, aus denen das tiefe Grün der Kiefern hie und da hervortritt. Und wenn wir auf der klarblauen Fluth des Oigawaflosses das Floss geräuschlos dahingleiten sehen, dann werden vor dieser himmlischen Landschaft Maler und Dichter machtlos Pinsel und Federn fort.) Fumio continues to describe Kyoto in the other three seasons. Kitasato attempts to give his German audience a vivid and definite picture of his homeland while avoiding overly exotic terms and descriptions.

132 The following is an example of Kitasato’s extensive descriptions. Kitasato gives an account of his main character Fumio in the first act: "Fumio, in a silken black coat with light lining and three family crests of the size of coins in the middle of the back, one more directly below the narrow collar and two additional ones on the two wide sleeves, half silk and striped dress, lightly striped pants and black socks, sits at a table on which lie Japanese and European books. In the middle of the room is a low, round table, on it a square basin in which a charcoal fire is burning." (Fumio, in schwarzseidenem hellgefüttertem Überwurf mit drei thalergrossen Familienwappen in der Mitte des Rückens, eins direkt unter dem schmalen Kragen und je eins an den beiden weiten Ärmeln, halbseidenem gestreiftem Oberkleide, hellgestreiften Hosen und schwarzen Socken, sitzt am Tische, auf dem japanische und europäische Bücher liegen. In der Mitte des Zimmers steht ein etwas niedriger runder Tisch, darauf ein vierkichtiges Becken, worin ein Holzfeuer brennt.) Kitasato describes here in detail the traditional, formal clothes of Japanese men worn for special days: a coat-like haori and hakama, skirt-like pants. It is New Year and Fumio has dressed up for the occasion.
Kitasato’s play focuses on Fumio, a young man in Kyoto, and his struggle to reconcile several opposing poles: filial obedience versus romantic love, Christianity versus Buddhism, integrity versus convenience, and tradition versus modernity. The play is set in then-contemporary Japan. Fumio, a student at a Protestant School, lives in Mrs. Shima’s boarding house in Kyoto, having been sent there by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Katai, who live far away under the evil influence of Fumio’s great-uncle Oyabu. Oyabu’s own son, Yasoki, is a Christian priest and later leaves the church to become a merchant.

The play opens on New Year’s Day in Kyoto. Fumio receives a visit from Yasoki who attempts to persuade him to convert to Christianity as a means of furthering his financial success. When Fumio, a convinced Buddhist, refuses, Yasoki accuses him of being ungrateful to his parents who apparently wish for a conversion despite being Shintoists themselves. The two men argue about the merits of Christianity, Shintoism, and Buddhism respectively after which Yasoki leaves. Mrs. Shima enters and in the ensuing conversation, the audience learns that Fumio’s relationship to his parents is troubled because his great-uncle Oyabu influences his parents against him.

The second act is set a year later. Fumio has found a real home in the house of Mrs. Shima, has fallen in love with her daughter Tomiko, and has found his calling as poet. The scene opens with Tomiko confronting Fumio about his family. Although they are engaged, Fumio’s father forbids the marriage because they did not ask his consent. Mrs. Shima has become seriously ill because of her worries over Fumio, just as Fumio receives the news that his own mother is also sick. He has to decide whether he will go to see his mother or remain with the sick Mrs. Shima. The second act closes with Fumio’s decision to travel home.

The third act is set at the home of Fumio’s birth family. Oyabu and his son argue with Fumio’s mother about Fumio, whom they unfairly portray as a disobedient and irreverent son. While the mother defends Fumio, his father, Minoru, is incapable of speaking out against Oyabu. When Fumio arrives, a dramatic confrontation takes place between him and Oyabu during which it is revealed that the true reason for Fumio’s summoning was not the merely fabricated illness of his mother, but rather, his planned marriage to Tomiko. Minoru forbids Fumio to return to Kyoto. After a later argument with his parents during which Fumio speaks passionately of his own desires for individuality, Fumio and his

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133 Since Kitasato does not give the kanji for Fumio, it is not clear what the exact meaning of the name is, but one possible meaning is ‘scholarly/literary man,’ which fits the description of the character.

134 Sakaki points out that the name ‘Yasoki’ is highly artificial. One possible meaning could be ‘Jesus Tree,’ from the Japanese term ‘yaso’ (‘Jesus, Christ,’ 耶蘇, やそ) and ‘ki’ (木, tree). Another possibility is ‘Jesus Spirit’ (気, ki, ‘spirit, mind, heart’). (personal communication)
mother converse alone. Reminding Fumio of his samurai heritage and giving him the family heirloom sword, his mother confesses that Oyabu had tried to rape her and that her husband did not defend her. Fumio vows revenge but does obey his father when he sends him away for six months to find a new wife.

When the fourth act opens, the six months have passed and Fumio has just fled to Tomiko in Kyoto. Tomiko threatens to leave him if he does not break free from his family. Fumio, however, is unable to liberate himself from the influence of his great-uncle and father. They part in disagreement. Yasoki arrives to bring Fumio back to his parents and the two have a final argument about Christianity and Buddhism. When Yasoki insults Buddhism and the Japanese culture, Fumio is enraged and refuses to return with him. Oyabu arrives at the scene and an argument follows during which Fumio is finally able to free himself from his great-uncle and to avenge his mother. He kills his great-uncle with the family's samurai sword. With his last breath, Oyabu takes out a pistol and shoots Fumio. Both men die and the play ends.

2.4.2.2. Fumio and the ‘New,’ ‘Old’ Japan

Kitasato wrote Fumio explicitly for a German audience and with the objective to make them understand Japanese culture. Throughout the play, he subtly explains certain aspects of Japan such as the origin of the filial obedience tradition. His image of Japan is twofold: on the one hand, he presents Japan as a nation strictly regulated by codes of filial obedience and rigid family structures. His play therefore stands in the tradition of showing Japan as morally on par with the West, as a non-Christian nation that, according to European values, is nevertheless ‘developed’ and ‘civilized’ with regard to its moral code. The same representation of Japan can be found in the contributions of East Asia and in Nitobe Inazō’s book Bushido – The Soul of Japan, to be discussed in section 2.5.4. Conversely, Kitasato ‘humanizes’ these strict moral codes, and by extent Japan, by conceiving a title character who struggles with the pressure applied by his society and his family. Instead of depicting the Japanese man as stoic, one-dimensional and essentially dehumanized, Kitasato’s Fumio is a deeply flawed and contradictory character in the tradition of a Werther or Hamlet, overcome by conflicting emotions, unable to act

135 In the second act, for instance, when Fumio’s father demands loyalty from his son, he remarks in an aside: “As children we read the books of Confucius in which it is said that we have to obey our parents because everything we have, our body and its smallest parts, comes from them” (39). (Wir haben als Kinder die Bücher von Konfuzius gelesen, in denen es heisst dass wir den Eltern gehorsam sein sollen; denn Alles, was wir besitzen, unser Leib bis in seine kleinsten Theile, stammt von ihnen.)
decisively and, ultimately, facing a tragic end. As such, he provides an easy point of identification for the audience. Although Kitasato’s play is set in Japan and deals with the specific problems of a Japanese family, the central conflict between individual desire and societal demands are universal.

From the outset, Kitasato sets up the character Fumio as an example of a more traditional Japan. When the audience first encounters him, he is dressed in traditional Japanese clothes whereas his cousin Yasoki, who pays him a New Year’s visit, wears a “European black coat” (8). The two men discuss religion. When Fumio asserts that he is a Buddhist, Yasoki laughs: “What? Buddhist? Ha! Ha! Ha! An idolater! – Be a little more reasonable! You, a young man in the new Japan, you have known the European sciences and yet that is what you say?” (15, emphasis mine) Yasoki cannot envision a place for Buddhism in Westernized Japan but he concedes that Shintoism might still be practiced as ancestor worship.

In the scope of this study, I cannot discuss the complicated relationship between Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity in Meiji Japan in detail. It is worth mentioning, however, that in early Meiji Japan, especially in the 1860s and 1870s, Buddhism was persecuted and deemed “foreign by the nascent Shinto nationalism and [was seen] as antiquated by the advocates of rapid modernization” (Harding 189). At the same time, Christianity appealed to some Japanese as a signifier of modernity and Westernization so that “many of these adherents thought that Christianity was a necessary component of Western progress” (192). Yasoki is the personification of such an attitude towards both religions.

In the final scene, Fumio and Yasoki meet again and repeat their argument about the merits of Buddhism versus Christianity. During their previous discussion, Fumio had dismissed Yasoki’s attack on Buddhism with a laconic “whatever” (meinetwegen) but in the last scene, Fumio is finally able to articulate his beliefs and desires:

Was? Buddhist? – Ha! Ha! Ha! Also Götzendiener! – Seien Sie doch ein wenig vernünftiger! Sie, ein junger Mann im neuen Japan, Sie haben die europäischen Wissenschaften kennen gelernt, und trotzdem so etwas?

Buddhism is a recurrent theme in Kitasato’s writings. In his short drama Namah Amityabha, he tells the story of the peasant woman Otome who encounters the Buddhist monk Unsui on his pilgrimage. Unsui and Otome start a conversation and the audience realizes that many years ago they had been lovers. Because their families had disapproved of their love, they had decided to commit suicide by jumping into a river in order to be together in the afterlife. Both survive but do not know about the survival of the other. When they meet again as peasant woman and monk, they initially do not recognize each other. Instead, Otome tells the story of her life, interspersed with musings on Buddhist philosophy. In the last scene, Otome has told her story, Unsui recognizes her and reveals his identity. Knowing that they can never be together, Otome runs to a river and kills herself. The play ends with Unsui casting of his Buddhist insignias and running away screaming Otome’s name. Kitasato uses his play to meditate on the meaning of filial obedience and Buddhist teachings, thereby introducing both concepts to his German audience. Like Fumio, Namah Amityabha has extensive stage directions. According to a German reviewer in East Asia who hailed the short play as a “diamond” in which “the Japanese spirit speaks from every line,” the German public remained largely unaware of Kitasato’s publication (VIII, 1898, 318).
I depend on Buddha, you on Christ! Let us see who will achieve more. My soul finds peace in Buddhism; my life finds strength. Nobody can take away my free will anymore – not even my parents have the right to that, much less you! – Why do you hinder me? If I become a merchant or a Christian priest – that is my own affair. [...] You understand nothing about Buddhism. (76)

When Yasoki maintains that Christianity is superior to Buddhism, Fumio asserts: “If you say Buddha or Jesus – it’s the same thing after all if you believe truly and lead an irreproachable life. [...] Is there a difference between the trees that grow on the soil of a Buddhist and those that grow on the soil of a Christian?” (78) Their argument escalates when Yasoki calls Buddhism the “religion of a totally outdated culture” (78) and only the arrival of Fumio’s great-uncle Oyabu prevents an escalation of the argument.

This key scene is significant for three reasons. First, Fumio is finally able to articulate his desires and to stand up for himself. He draws the strength to do this from his religion. Second, Fumio puts Buddhism on the same level as Christianity, stating that people should be judged not by their belief but rather by their deeds. Only five years prior to the publication of Fumio, Hermann Knackfuss had used the image of a Buddha in the sky to personify everything that is threatening about Asia in his painting People of Europe, Protect your most Holy Goods. In his drama, Kitasato not only makes his title hero a Buddhist, he also lets him argue that both Buddhism and Christianity are on par. In the discussion of articles in East Asia, I have demonstrated that contributors aligned Christianity with “civilized culture,” with one author asserting that Japan “is in its acts a much more Christian state than Russia” (1905, VIII, 68). Writers for East Asia conceded that Japan was equal to the West but only as long as such equality was measured in European terms. Instead of stylizing Japan as Christian nation as a way to assert its equality to the West, Kitasato confidently states that Buddhism and Christianity are equal and that the adherence to a Buddhist faith is commensurable with civilisation. This can also be seen as a direct response to the Knackfuss painting.

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139 Ob man Buddha oder Christus sagt, ist im Grunde ganz gleich, wenn man nur an ihn fest glaubt und ein vorwurfsfreies Leben führt. [...] Besteht denn ein Unterschied zwischen den Bäumen, die auf dem Boden des Buddhisten wachsen, und dem des Christen?

140 Religion einer ganz veralteten Cultur
Third, and most importantly, Kitasato breaks down an East-West dichotomy that equals West with modernity, Christianity and individualism and the East with tradition, Buddhism and conformity. Fumio can assert his individuality without renouncing his traditions. At the time of *Fumio’s* publication, according to Morris-Suzuki, men in Japan were “seen as the dynamic face of the nation – the creative, though sometimes disruptive, agents of progress” (135). Fumio certainly is one of these modern, Western-educated men. However, Kitasato demonstrates that modernity and change do not automatically equate the dismissal of every tradition. Kitasato makes it explicit that the Japanese do not have to reject their traditions and beliefs as a way to participate in Western modernity. In *Fumio* Kitasato conceived a protagonist who can strive for individual freedom and self-fulfillment without completely discarding his heritage. In letting *Fumio’s* quest for individual freedom and tradition fail, however, Kitasato also points out to the danger of this pursuit.

In a final confrontation with his father, Fumio claims: “Every person has different interests, innate inclinations – their own character, an unchangeable mettle. Without this, man cannot exist. [...] Even my uncle cannot force me to act against my nature” (58). Yet, despite his passionate argument, Fumio follows his father and uncle’s orders to seek a new wife, still unwilling to abandon a tradition that, in his view, commands absolute filial obedience. In the final act, Fumio draws strength from his belief in his individual freedom and his traditions to face and eventually kill his uncle: “Your power over me is over! You still believe that you can treat me like a fool – You want to debase me to become a will-less machine that works day and night for you [...] Here, the sword of my ancestors that my mother gave me so that I wield it as a free man in my free hand! [He kills his uncle] Have you now seen my strength?” (80–1)

Thus, Fumio ultimately frees himself by avenging his mother and killing his uncle, thereby fulfilling the demands of his mother. Whereas he kills his uncle with a samurai sword, symbol of a traditional Japan, his uncle shoots him with a pistol, exemplifying modernity. Fumio’s last word is “mother” (81) pointing towards his continued connection to this part of his family. Fumio’s liberation is therefore not a total rejection of filial obedience and Japanese tradition. The Japan that Kitasato presents to the German audience can best be described as a ‘new, old Japan’ in the sense that the playwright attempted to

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141 Jeder Mensch hat andere Interessen, angeborene Neigungen – eigenen Charakter, eine unabänderliche Naturanlage. Ohne diese kann ein Mann nicht bestehen. [...] Auch Onkel kann nichts verlangen, was wider die Natur ist.
142 Eure Macht über mich ist zu Ende! Ihr glaubt mich noch immer wie einen Narren behandeln zu können – Ihr wollt mich zur willenlosen Maschine herabwürdigen, die Tag und Nacht bloss [sic] nach eurem Wunsche arbeitet! [...] Hier, das Schwert meiner Ahnen, das die Mutter mir gegeben hat, auf das ich’s führe als freier Mann in freier Hand [...] Hast Du nun meine Kraft erkannt?
demonstrate the effects of modernity on his compatriots as well as their attempts to preserve conventions. In depicting Fumio as a deeply flawed and conflicted figure at the junction of modernity and tradition, Kitasato is neither subscribing to alleged Western superiority, nor falling into orientalist clichés.

2.4.2.3. Fumio and Modern Women

In his foreword to *Fumio*, Kitasato explicitly states that his play aims to rectify the image of Japan perpetuated through the hitherto staged “Japanese plays” in Germany. With regard to the portrayal of women, *Fumio* certainly differs from the other depictions of Japanese women on German stages. The play features three main female characters: Fumio’s lover Tomiko, her mother Mrs. Shima, and Fumio's mother Mrs. Katai. Although they exist only within their relation to the title hero, Kitasato nevertheless portrays them as strong characters since all three women are outspoken and not afraid to criticize what they see as outdated traditions.

Tomiko, especially, differs widely from the trope of the sexualized and demure Japanese woman so prevalent in the West at that time. Tomiko is first introduced in the sixth scene of the first act. Kitasato describes her look and clothes in detail: a blue dress, white socks, a belt decorated with Chrysanthemums, long black hair in a ponytail and a shuttle racket in hand (24). Overall, Tomiko is a pretty, lively and very young girl, almost still a child, exemplified by the prints on her dress: flowers, rabbits and turtles (24). Tomiko enters the house after playing shuttle outside. She is energetic, spirited and carefree. In this scene, she engages in a lively exchange with Fumio, daring him to enjoy the beautiful weather outside. They appear are not to be lovers at this point, since she still addresses him in formal German – in contrast to later scenes where she employs the familiar “du.” Tomiko’s happy liveliness contrasts sharply with Fumio’s brooding and hesitant character.

Tomiko is modern, spirited and willing to speak out in situations where Fumio is otherwise powerless. For instance, at the beginning of the play, he is unable to attack his cousin Yasoki for his hypocritical conversion to Christianity. It is through Tomiko, not through Fumio, that Kitasato formulates his societal critique when she proclaims to Fumio:
Yes, yes, Yasoki! – Who first could not finish his studies in Tokyo because of his loose lifestyle and then as the prim son of an honourable man took the last chance and... became a protestant assistant preacher – Haha! To cheat the world with his hypocrisy. [...] Am I not right? Ha, and how long did it take him, the holy man who just stood there by the altar preaching, to take off his priesthood and, just because his father saw it as more profitable, becomes a merchant? What a farce. Who knows what he will be tomorrow just because his father wants it. (Pauses) Well, – then go, bow down in front of your uncle and work as merchant or manservant, whatever he orders. Great prospects. (31)

In the last act, Tomoki confronts Fumio about his toxic relationship with his family. She intends to be harsh with him as a way to bring him to break his family ties:

Yes, yes, your parents! You always have to do everything for them – and what do you do for my mother? – Nothing! – If she lives or dies, you don’t care [...] If your parents would order it, you would find another wife. – If I loved you now, I’d be the laughing stock of every child. [...] I wish you all the best but we will only meet again when you are finally a free man. (70-1)

Tomiko is candid and articulate. There is nothing exotic or sexualized about her. Just as Tomiko attempts to help Fumio on his way to self-realization, his mother Mrs. Katai is the driving force behind Fumio’s eventual liberation from his uncle. It is she who reminds Fumio of his samurai heritage and who motivates him to face his uncle by telling him of Oyabu’s assault on her (62-3). Moreover, of all characters in the play, she is the only one, with the exception of Fumio in the last scene, who is willing to stand up to Oyabu. After Oyabu openly advises Fumio’s father to leave his wife because she loves Fumio too much, she angrily proclaims:

Enough, my Lord! This goes too far, to treat a woman like this who lived with her husband for more than 20 years. Why should a mother not love her son? Ha! So, (to Katai [her husband]) just that you know it, I will move away from you – with my children. I gave birth to them so you must

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143 Ja, ja, Yasoki! – der zuerst als Student in Tokio wegen seines lockeren Lebenswandels sein Studium nicht beenden konnte und als braver Sohn seines würdigen Herrn Papa’s den letzten Ausweg einschlug und ... protestantischer Hülfsprediger wurde – Haha! Um die Welt durch seine Scheinheiligkeit zu betrügen. [...] Hab’ ich vielleicht nicht recht? Ha, und wie lange dauerte es dann, dass der heilige Gottesmann, der eben noch am Altare predigte, seine Priesterwürde auszog und sodann, nur weil es seinem Vater rentabler schien, hinter dem Kaufmannstische Platz nahm? – Welch’ ein Possenspiel! – Und wer weiss, was er morgen werden wird, nur weil es sein Herr Papa wünscht. (Pause.) Nun, - geh’ doch hin, beuge dich vor deinem Onkel, und arbeite als Ladenbursche oder als Hausknecht, wie er befiehlt wird. Nette Aussichten!

144 Ja, ja, Deine Eltern! Die sind es immer, um derentwillen Du Alles thun musst, - Und was thust du um meiner Mutter Willen? – Gar nichts! – Ob sie stirbt oder nicht, es ist Dir gleichgültig [...] ]Wenn es deine Eltern befehlen, musst du auch eine andere Frau nehmen. – Würde ich jetzt noch an dir hängen, so müsste mich ja jedes Kind auslachen! [...] Ich wünsche dir viel Glück für deine Zukunft, aber wir werden uns erst wiedersehen, wenn Du endlich ein freier Mann geworden bist.
consider them all bad. – Just do how your brave uncle does. [...] My children will go with me to my home. And if we have to beg, we will never return to your roof. (47-8)145

The scene continues with various relatives trying to calm Mrs. Katai but she remains unwavering. In fact, only Fumio’s return to his family moves her to stay with her husband. Just like Tomiko, Mrs. Katai is outspoken and articulate. Her bravery in standing up against the powerful Oyabu is sharply contrasted with the cowardice of her husband and the hesitancy of Fumio. Throughout the play, women are speaking for Fumio in several instances. In the third act, Fumio’s mother asks him about his quest for self-fulfillment: “Can’t you do it – without the help of women? – You are silent. I am a woman but I would behave differently if I were you. [...] Be a man!” (61-2)146 Fumio’s quest for liberation thus also becomes a quest for his masculinity. Throughout the play, several characters accused him of unmanliness and of being too reliant on women. In the last scene, Fumio proclaims that he has finally become a free man by consolidating two Japanese cultural traits: his samurai spirit and the dogma of filial obedience.

The ‘Japan’ that Kitasato depicts in his play is certainly different from the image of the archipelago that the Japanese theatre groups perpetuated. There is no question that Kitasato’s Japan is his contemporary Japan. Many of the characters, among them Fumio’s cousin Yasoki and Fumio’s lover Tomiko wear modern, Western dresses. Seductive geisha, dashing samurai or dramatic seppuku are not part of Fumio’s world. Yet, Kitasato does not erase traditional Japan from his play either, instead revealing in nuanced ways how traditions and customs shape modern Japanese men and women.

2.4.2.4. Kitasato’s Plays, East Asia and the German Press147

German reviewers of Kitasato’s works were without exception positive in their appraisal of the plays. Following the play’s performance in January 1901 in the Luisen Theatre (Luisentheater) in Berlin, East

146 Kannst du das nicht thun – ohne Hilfe der Frauen? – Du schweigst! – Ich bin eine Frau aber ich würde anders handeln, wenn ich an deiner Stelle wäre. [...] Sei ein Mann!
147 All reviews in East Asia appear to be based on the text, not the performances of the plays.
Asia reprinted a review from the Hamburgischen Correspondenten. After claiming that plays written by Japanese in German have to excite particular interest, because of the role Germany played in the Japanese modernization process, the reviewer of the Correspondent compares Kitasato’s play to plays written about Japan by Germans:

> We cannot judge this play by the standards of our art: born from a very different religious and political world it mainly has to be seen as evidence of this foreign worldview and way of life. It is not one of these fashionable so-called Japanese plays with origins in Europe that only aim for the exotic allure of the costumes without even portraying them correctly. (1900, 408)

The reviewer draws parallels to Schiller and Goethe’s *Sturm und Drang* dramas in his appraisal of Kitasato’s play as both Fumio and the heroes of Sturm and Drang are suffocated by convention and overt sensibility (409). Given the status of Goethe and Schiller within the German literary canon, this is high praise. Another reviewer, identified as P.B., starts his discussion of *Fumio* by asserting that Japan is indeed now a part of the European culture (452). Although, he claims, the European influence on Japan has been discussed extensively in the last thirty years, the question whether Japan also influenced German culture has rarely been addressed. For the reviewer, the effect of Japanese aesthetics on art nouveau and Sada Yakko’s inspiration on the theatre scene are examples of such an influence (452).

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148 In his review of the written version of *Fumio* in East Asia, P.B. alludes to the cast’s ethnicity. After mentioning that Sada Yacco might perform again in Europe, he states: “In two weeks, Berlin will be able to see, if not Japanese actors, then at least a modern play by a modern Japanese” (1900, 453). (Inzwischen wird Berlin bereits nach zwei Wochen in der Lage sein, wenn auch nicht Japanische Schauspieler, so doch ein modernes Schauspiel eines modernen Japaners […] zu sehen.”) This brief statement points to the cast of *Fumio* being white.

149 Wir dürfen es natürlich nicht nach Maßstäben unserer Kunst beurteilen: aus einer ganz anderen religiösen und politischen Welt geboren, muss es vorwiegend als Zeugnis dieser anderen Weltanschauung und Lebensführung unsere Aufmerksamkeit herausfordern. Handelt es sich doch nicht um eines jener neuerdings in Mode gekommenen sogenannten japanischen Stücke europäischen Ursprungs, die es nur auf die Wirkung des exotischen Kostüms abgesehen haben, diese aber nicht einmal echt wiedergeben.

150 P.B. writes: “The influence of Japanese fine art on European art is well-known, especially on the secessionist areas. The Munich ‘art nouveau’ style, which has not only been popularized in the arts, but also in the art industry, has never denied its Japanese roots. [...] It would be easy to give more examples of how Japanese art has influenced European arts. Just one more thing has to be mentioned: the Japanese influence has recently extended to an area where one might not have expected it: the theatre. [...] Everybody who saw the performance of the small, graceful Japanese woman [Sada Yacco] spoke enthusiastically of it and actresses like Sarah Bernhard, Réjane, and other Paris stars said without envy that they learned a lot from Sada Yacco” (452). (Bekannt ist der Einfluss der japanischen Malerei auf die europäische Malerie und speziell die sezessionistische Richtung. Der Münchener ‘Jugenstil,’ der nicht bloss in der Kunst, sondern auch im Kunstgewerbe der jüngsten Zeit so weite Verbreitung gefunden hat, verleugnet seine japanische Herkunft nicht. [...] Die Beispiele dafür, dass japanische Kultur auf die europäische eingewirkt hat, könnten leicht vermehrt werden. Hier sei nur noch darauf hingewiesen, dass japanischer Einfluss sich auch noch jüngst auf einem Gebiete geltend gemacht hat, wo man ihn vielleicht am wenigsten erwartet hätte: auf dem Theater. [...]Enthusiastisch lauteten die Berichte alle, welche das Spiel der kleinen graziösen Japanerin [Sada Yacco] gesehen haben, und Schauspielerinnen wie Sarah Bernhard, Réjane und andere Pariser Sterne erkannten neidlos an, von Sada Yacco noch viel gelernt zu haben.)
P.B. claims that Fumio will follow this tradition, for the play's treatment of Buddhism will most likely inspire a newfound interest in the religion in Germany (1900, 453).

August Gotthard discussed Sakura Sogo, an earlier drama by Kitasato, in his East Asia review:

With ‘Sakura Sogo,’ Dr. Kitasato has finally reached the outstanding peak of the German Mount Parnassus. I emphasise the ‘German Mount Parnassus’ because this new book is so well written and the German language is so superbly handled that we have to count Kitasato amongst Us, even more so because it is a work from Japan on the peak of humanity [...] and he created a drama [...] which touches our heart so powerfully as if it were from our own history. (82)

For Gotthard, this Japanese play brings a much-needed renewal to European stages. Through the universal humanity expressed in Sakura Sogo, he claims, differences between races and cultures disappear: “I don’t have to discuss this book from an explicit German standpoint. For the German reader it is as German as it is Japanese for the Japanese reader, if it is translated into English or French, it will become English or French because it is universally comprehensible” (1902, 83). According to Gotthard, this universality, however, only holds true with regard to the culture nations (Kulturvölker) (83).

Analogous to this, another German reviewer in East Asia remarked on the universality of the play: “Almost marveling I felt that [...] the soul of this work is our [the German’s] soul” (83). Thus, at least

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151 The main character in Kitasato’s play is based on Sakura Sōgo (1605–53). According to popular legend, peasants in what is today Chiba prefecture in Japan were driven into famine by the taxes that their local ruler imposed on them. Sōgo decided to directly petition the Shogun, a crime punishable by death. It is believed that Sōgo was executed with members of his family. He has been immortalized in various stories and plays (Brandon and Leiter 222). Kitasato included a preface in the printed edition, in which he gives some biographical dates on Sōgo. Kitasato’s play follows a traditional five-act structure. It begins with a scene in two impoverished farmers are driven to suicide by their desperate poverty. Their son, Kofiti, vows revenge and becomes an unofficial leader of the farmers’ revolt. Sōgo first appears in the third act. Confronted with the desperate farmers, he agrees to take on their cause with the government, fully aware of the consequences. When the last act opens, Sōgo has been executed. The government officials, while forced to execute Sōgo for his transgression of the law, express their gratitude to him for showing them the desperate state of the farmers and commission a temple on the site of the execution. Kitasato humanizes his characters through long stretches of dialogue in which they express their feelings, their internal conflicts, and their motivations.

152 Mit ‘Sakura Sogo’ hat Dr. Kitasato nun endgültig einen hervorragenden Platz auf dem deutschen Parnass errungen. Ich betone, ‘auf dem deutschen Parnass,’ denn dies neue Buch ist so aussergewöhnlich gut geschrieben und die deutsche Sprache so vorzüglich gehandhabt, dass wir Kitasato zu den Unseren unbedingt rechnen müssen, umso mehr, da er sich in diesem Werk aus dem Japanischen auf den Gipfel reiner Menschlichkeit erhebt und (…) ein Drama geschaffen hat, das [...] unser Herz so machtvoll ergreift, als sei es ein Drama aus unserer eigenen Geschichte.


154 Beinahe staunend habe ich empfunden, wie [...] der Seeleninhalt des Werks unserem Seeleninhalt entspricht.
the reviewers in *East Asia* hailed Kitasato’s plays as an innovative, yet familiar, addition to the German theatre world. The play served as further proof of Japan’s rightful belonging to so-called ‘culture nations,’ thereby implicitly justifying Japan’s status as empire in Asia. This might not have been Kitasato’s intention. However, by advocating for Japan’s equality to Western nations and through avoiding stereotypical and reducing depictions of an ‘exotic Japan,’ *Fumio* demonstrated that Japan was indeed on par with Western nations.

2.5. *Bushido – The Iron Law*\(^{155}\)

2.5.1. Weimar Cinema and the Culture of Coloniality

Beginning as early as 1880s, Germany came under the grip of a “colonial obsession” (Zantop 1997a, 2). The “fantasy of the colonial” did not diminish with the loss of the real colonies following World War I. In *Weimar Colonialism*, Krobb and Martin illustrate that although Germany had lost all its colonies following the Treaty of Versailles, the “culture of coloniality” remained active in the Weimar Republic and found expression in countless print materials about the former colonies, in lively discussions on the return of the colonies and in colonial films and literature (27). Moreover, “the culture of Weimar Germany remaine[d], in many ways, integrated into the binary concept of a world divided into [...] Europe/North America and the exotic Other” (28). This division was in accordance with a keen interest in pseudo-scientific and scholarly engagement with this ‘other’ from a Eurocentric perspective to produce knowledge about ‘foreign’ and ‘exotic’ spaces (28). The population’s curiosity for the ‘exotic’ was evident through the rise of certain genres such as the ‘exotic’ film and dance, travelling circuses and ethnographic exhibitions (29).\(^{156}\)

More than 170 German exotic films revolving around journeys to faraway lands were made in the Weimar Republic, including various (pseudo-) documentaries and adventure films (Ashkenazi 74). These films, featuring ‘exotic’ locales and ‘foreign’ people, were rooted in a tradition that advocated the

\(^{155}\) The interpretation of this film rests on the copy that is available at the Biblioteca Renzo Renzi, Cineteca di Bologna. This version is 85 minutes long. The last act is missing from this version.

\(^{156}\) For more information on so-called ‘Völkerschauen,’ ethnographic exhibitions of non-European people in Imperial Germany, see Bruckner (2003). John Phillip Short gives an extensive account of German imperialism and its connection to mass culture in his monograph *Magic Lantern Empire* (2012). Eric Ames’ monograph *Carl Hagenbeck’s Empire of Entertainments* (2009) focuses on Hagenbeck’s fundamental role in shaping colonial popular culture in the German empire. For more information on ethnographic museums in Imperial Germany and their connection to city building processes within the context of a newly created German state, see Penny (2002).
supremacy of the West, a belief going back to prewar adventure and travel novels as well as to ethnological ‘shows’ and museums in Imperial Germany (75). Reviewers and promoters of adventure films often obscured the specific locale of these films in their press material in favour of a general ‘oriental’ setting. Rather than depicting a particular foreign country, Weimar adventure films used the ‘exotic’ to evoke a “sense of otherness, of unfamiliarity, of a place ruled by entirely foreign powers and laws” (76).

In his analysis of popular Weimar fiction films, Christian Rogowski points out that entertainment films set in ‘exotic’ locales created an “imaginary space [promising] fulfillment of fantasies of power and eroticism” (228). These films then presented an alternative locale in which colonial fantasies could be lived out, or, in Rogowski’s words, they constitute a “surrogate colony” (228). By explicitly evoking racist stereotypes such as the “sly Chinese,” the “mythical Indian” or the “demure Japanese,” and by unquestioningly assuming the superiority of white leadership, Weimar exotic popular cinema, Rogowski claims, pursued an implicit colonial agenda (228).

H.K. Heiland and Valdemar Andersen’s film *The White Geisha* (*Die Weiße Geisha*, 1926) is a prime example of such an exotic adventure film. The filmmakers shot on location in Germany, Sri Lanka, Macau, Hong Kong and Japan to tell the story of the German engineer Berg (Carl W. Tetting) who travels through Colonial Asia to Japan to acquire a mine for his prospective father-in-law Wanger in order to prove himself worthy of Wanger’s daughter Lisa. The mine is rumored to hold treasures. Wanger’s business rival Storm sends his English associate Williams to steal Berg’s mining map. In Colombo, Berg encounters the mysterious and destitute German woman Eva (Loo Holl) who is on her way to Japan to seek a living there. Berg and Eva take a liking to each other but when Williams convinces Berg that Eva is selling herself to Chinese men, he rejects her. Eva, hurt and desperately in need of money, agrees to Williams’ plan for her to pose as geisha in Japan to steal the secret mining map from Berg. After masquerading as a geisha, Eva realizes that her feelings for Berg are too strong to allow her to deceive him and instead reveals her true self. Together, Berg and Eva outsmart Williams who is subsequently killed in a mining accident. Eva convinces the owner of the mine to sell his mine to Berg, enabling him to return successfully to Europe. Although in love with Eva, he remains true to his word to marry Lisa. When he sees Lisa in the arms of another man, however, he is free to marry Eva. The film ends with the couple driving off along a tree-lined lane into their future together.

Heiland and Andersen exploit the exotic locales of East and South East Asia to tell their mediocre adventure story. Asia, specifically the colonial cities of Colombo, Macau, Hong Kong and the Japanese
city Kyoto and their inhabitants, are nothing more than props in this love story between the two white protagonists, Eva and Berg. With one minor exception, only white actors have speaking parts; the Asian characters are exclusively servants, crooks, or co-conspirators with dubious allegiances. Although the film includes some scenes of local customs in Kyoto, the audience does not receive any meaningful insight into these foreign cultures. Instead, The White Geisha affirms the stereotype of Asia as unknowable, dangerous, depraved and exotic locale in which the white man reigns supreme over faceless masses of natives. Several scenes show Berg and other German and English characters manhandling and manipulating hapless or sly natives. Whereas the scenes in Germany are set in a stately bourgeois and respectable home, most scenes in Asia feature bars and casinos, underscoring the debauchery and dangers of life in the colonies.

The filmmakers utilized the exotic allure of the geisha motif to promote their film. Postcards that accompanied the film’s marketing focus heavily on the image of the white geisha despite the fact that she appears in very few scenes and only towards the last third of the film. To trick Berg, Eva has disguised herself by donning a kimono, and thick makeup. Berg spots her in a crowd during the Gion Festival in Kyoto and follows her to a geisha house where she dances for him in the company of four other Japanese women. Throughout her scenes as geisha, Loo Holl’s face remains mask-like and devoid of any emotions, echoing well-established tropes with regard to Japanese women. In contrast, as Eva, Holl’s facial expression is lively and animated. Eventually, Berg confesses that he only finds the geisha attractive because she reminds him of Eva. Eva, now convinced of Berg’s love, decides to help him in his attempt to foil Williams’ plan to buy the mine. Subsequent scenes show her in Western clothes climbing the mast of a ship, rescuing the unconscious Berg from certain death and finally securing the mine for Berg. Eva’s independence, wit, daring personality, and fearlessness contrasts sharply with her static and almost death-like persona as geisha. As ‘Eva,’ she is the driving force behind Berg’s success; as geisha, she is nothing more than a beautiful ornament. The film is a prime example of Weimar cinema’s prevalent tropes with regard to Asia: it advocates the supremacy of white Europeans while underscoring the sexual allure and danger of the Asian continent. However, Berg’s fascination with Asia, exemplified through the geisha, remains shallow; ultimately, he only loves Eva, not her Japanese alter ego. The rejection of the Japanese woman in favor of a white woman is a motif which can also be found in Madama Butterfly and in Heiland’s other Japanese film Bushido.

157 The language of the film is exclusively German.
During the Weimar Republic, German audiences could see a variety of films set in Asia, among them *Harakiri: A Geisha’s Tragedy* (*Harakiri: Die Tragödie einer Geisha*, 1913) by Harry Piel, Fritz Lang’s *Harakiri* (alternative title: *Madame Butterfly*, 1919), which echoes the plot of *Madame Butterfly*, Joe May’s *The Indian Tomb I and II* (*Das Indische Grabmal I und II*, 1921), H.K. Heiland’s *The Japanese Mask I and II* (*Die Japanische Maske I und II*, 1922, 1923), and Franz Osten and Himansu Rai’s *Prem Sanyas* (*The Light of Asia, Die Leuchte Asiens*, 1925). The majority of the films set in Asia, such as Lang’s *Harakiri*, which featured Lil Dagover as Japanese woman O-Take-San or *The Indian Tomb*’s Erna Morena as Indian Princess, employed white actors in yellowface to depict Asian characters. Notable exceptions to this practice are the Indian-German coproduction *Prem Sanyas*, which hired Indian actors, shot in what is now Pakistan, and *Bushido*, a German-Japanese coproduction shot in Japan with Japanese actors.\(^{158}\) The decision to use Japanese actors arguably speaks to a wish for authenticity. Did this wish translate into a more ‘realistic’ image of Japan, free from colonial and exotic stereotypes? How did the employment of Japanese actors and writers in *Bushido* affect the depiction of Japan in the film? We cannot reconstruct whether the actors had any input in the actual filming process, but according to Iris Haukamp, Japanese writers were most likely employed in devising the script (2016, 6). I will demonstrate in this section that this Japanese-German coproduction depicts Japan as contradictory space, equal to Europe in terms of moral codes, while at the same time remaining locked into a feudal past.

Exotic films in Weimar Germany, according to Rogowski, “confirmed to German audiences what they already knew” (225). What did the Germans know about Japan in the 1920s? In his discussion of interwar newsreels, Ricky W. Law demonstrates that Japan, despite the trope of the ‘yellow peril,’ and the fact that the nation had fought alongside the allies in World War I, was overall presented as an exotic, beautiful and exciting locale (19). The display of Japanese festivals and customs in these newsreels fell in line with pre-existing German stereotypes of Japan as “land of ageless tradition and arcane beliefs” (20).\(^{159}\) Japan was predominantly shown as aesthetic and alluring nation, something already frequently expressed in dramas and travelogues of the 19\(^{th}\) and early 20\(^{th}\) century. Yet, politically, economically, culturally, and militarily 1920s Japan bore little resemblance to those nostalgic and patronising depictions. Does Rogowski’s statement that films only displayed what audiences already knew hold true with regard to *Bushido*? Since *Bushido* is not the exclusive product of a German

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\(^{158}\) While no white actors perform Japanese roles in *Bushido*, Eva (Loo Holl), one of the main characters, is made up to appear like a Japanese woman for significant parts of the film. I will discuss this in further detail in 2.5.4.4.

\(^{159}\) The next chapter will demonstrate how these images eventually changed towards the beginning of the 1930s to increasingly depict Japan as militarized nation.
filmmaker, but rather a co-operation between a Japanese and a German director, does it participate in or subvert exoticist stereotypes? In the following section, I will demonstrate that Bushido articulates a tension between representing Japan as colonial fantasy, on the one hand, and the construction of a ‘kinship’ between Japan and the West via the concept of ‘bushido,’ on the other.

2.5.2. Bushido – Production Details and Background

Kako and Heiland filmed Bushido – The Iron Law (Bushido – Das Eiserne Gesetz, 1926) at a time when Japan's modernization project had already contributed to various military victories, and to the acquisition of several colonies in East Asia. Conversely, the country faced Western backlash through, for instance, anti-Japanese legislature in the United States. Haukamp, in her discussion of Japanese filmic co-productions, sums up the interconnection between the political and cinema in Japan at that time: “The quest for recognition by the outside world was coupled with issues of power: the power to represent Japan and Japanese cinema – truthfully and successfully – on international screens and markets. Power was also implied in the question of which ‘Japan’ was represented in such a work” (2016, 2). Thus, two decades after the performances of Kitasato's plays and the publication of the last East Asia issue, the same questions of representation and agency remained relevant for Japanese artists producing art for an international audience.

Bushido was the first German-Japanese filmic coproduction ever made. The German-Nordic Film Union (Deutsch-Nordische Film-Union) distributed it in the West and the Toa Production in Japan. According to Haukamp, a writer from the production company Toa possibly authored the script, although some sources attribute the script to Heiland (2016, 6). The film was considered lost, but found in 2004 at the Gosfilmfond in Russia and consequently restored. The original version appears to have been 2,235m long whereas the restored version is 1,706m. Accordingly, some plot holes cannot currently be reconstructed. Bushido seems to have been divided into a five-act structure, each with an accompanying intertitle, but only the intertitle for the fourth act remains in the reconstructed version. The silent film features German-language intertitles and in Japan was most likely accompanied by the narration of a benshi (弁士), a professional cinematic storyteller. The intertitles announce the setting of the scene,

160 Such as, for example, the 'Asian Exclusion Act' or 'Immigration Act' which banned immigration from East Asia to the United States in 1924.
introduce new characters and feature ink drawings of Japanese landscapes and people that loosely correspond to the following scenes. The language is German but the font is Japanese in style and reminiscent of ‘Bonsai’ or ‘Shanghai’ fonts. [Fig. 9]

Rumors in contemporary Japanese newspapers set the production costs at between 100,000 and 300,000 yen. Filming took place across five months, with interruptions, from October 1924 to February 1925 (Tomita 76-77). Bushido passed the Japanese censorship on May 26, 1926 and was subsequently shown in Japan on June 1st. The German Paper for the Educated Circles in Western Berlin (Blatt der Gebildeten Kreise im Westlichen Berlin) reported on Bushido on May 6, 1927 by commenting on the great success of the film in Japan and on its impending opening in Germany so the film must have premiered in Germany about a year after its initial screening in Japan. According to Mika Tomita, no German crew or cast was involved in the production beyond Heiland and two of the main actors, Carl W. Tetting and Loo Holl, although Weniger claims in his Great Lexicon of German Film Personas that the German cameraman Otto Tober shot the film (Vol. 7, 689).

According to the Japanese papers of that time, the objective of the film was to “make Bushido and the loyalty of the Japanese known to the world” (Osaka Asahi Shinbun, Kyoto furoku in Tomita 77) and to “present the Japanese landscape and Bushido in an appropriate way” (Kyoto Hibi Shinbun, in Tomita 77). The film frequently carried the attributes “made for export” or “made for foreign lands” (77) so that, according to Tomita, it was “perceived in Japan as a Japanese propaganda film planned for the Occidental market” (77, translation mine). It can therefore be assumed that the film was made, if not explicitly for a German audience, for Western viewers as intended audience.

When Heiland introduced the film in Germany, he did not mention his co-operation with Kako, instead reinforcing the essential ‘otherness’ of Japanese films and culture by stating that Japanese films are “impossible for Western people” and that Bushido, directed by a German, “shows Japan through European spectacles” (Heiland in Haukamp 2016, 6). Members of the Japanese film industry themselves utilized these “European spectacles,” namely the name value of foreign participants and their “expertise in Western representational traditions” to present Japan through films in the West (Haukamp 2016, 20-21). Film export was linked to “the assertion of power in a newly developing world order” (2016, 21) by taking control of the representation of Japan and by making Japan into a film-exporting nation on par with the West (2016, 21). Thus, according to Haukamp, attempts “to export films that would be industrially successful and transport an accurate national image led to the compromise to ‘show Japan through European spectacles’” (2016, 21).
How ‘thick’ are these ‘spectacles’ with regard to Bushido? What concessions did the Japanese participants make pertaining to the representation of Japan to transport a desired image of their nation to the West? In the following sections, I will demonstrate that efforts to display Japan as equal to Europe can be observed throughout Bushido but that the ‘European spectacles’ arguably lead to a marked bias towards the European characters in the narrative.

2.5.3. Bushido – Plot

The film opens with a shot of a hand writing ‘Bushido’ in Kanji (武士道) from the right to the left with a large ink brush. It is followed by the German title and the subheading “A film from the land of the rising sun.” The plot is set in Japan, presumably before the Edo Period (1600-1868) and features four protagonists: the samurai Ryunosuke (Ushio Akashi), his lover and “Court Geisha” (Hofgeisha) Shinzuoke (Tsuyako Okajima), the Spanish officer Manuel Frontera (Carl W. Tetting) and a Western woman Eva (Loo Holl). The first scene is set at the court of the Daimyo Yorimoto, a feudal lord in pre-modern Japan. When a Western ship arrives at his shore, Yorimoto invites the officer on board, Manuel, to his castle where he honours him with a celebration and a performance by the court geisha Shinzuoke. The celebrations subsequently move to the garden where Ryunosuke is ordered to demonstrate the samurai’s superior archery skills. When attempting to shoot a bird, however, Ryunosuke fails and is in disgrace. Manuel claims that bows are clumsy weapons and in the next scene impresses the court and the Daimyo by killing the bird with a handgun. Shamed by his failure, Ryunosuke asks for the permission to commit seppuku but after Manuel intervenes, he is given an opportunity to reclaim his honour in a different way: the Daimyo orders him to build a weapon equal to Manuel’s gun. Following these events, Shinzuoke and Ryunosuke show Manuel the beauty of Japan in several scenes by visiting, among other places, Nara and Mt. Fuji. Shinzuoke and Manuel become increasingly intimate, exciting the jealousy of

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161 The order of the individual scenes might have varied in the original version.
162 Ein Film aus dem Lande der aufgehenden Sonne.
163 The costumes and sets, such as the elaborate kimonos, suggest an Edo Period (1603-1868) setting. However, the topic of the film, the introduction of Western firearms to Japan, points to the time around 1543 as setting as this was the time when European firearms were first brought to Japan. It might therefore be set during the Sengoku Period (1467 – c. 1603) but is mostly ahistorical concerning settings and props.
164 Loo Holl portrays the female main role in Bushido and The White Geisha. Both films appear to have been shot on the same journey to Asia. It is not known why Heiland decided to give both protagonists the same name.
Ryunosuke. The act ends with Shinzuoke imploring Manuel to give her the secret of the firearms in exchange for her virginity, an offer that he declines.

The next day Manuel is out at the beach fishing when he sees a young, Western woman, Eva, washed to the shore. He rescues her, but unwittingly enters the territory of the Daimyo Nishida, an enemy to Manuel's host Yorimoto. Nishida captures both Manuel and Eva. He has heard of the gun and orders Manuel to give him the secret of the weapon. Manuel refuses and is imprisoned. In the next scene Eva, who is now wearing a kimono,\textsuperscript{165} makeup and hairstyle reminiscent of a geisha, is treated to a Noh performance during which Nishida tries to touch her repeatedly. She can escape and flees to the next town where she hides in a brothel but is soon recaptured. In the meantime, Ryunosuke unsuccessfully tries to recreate the gunpowder. When Shinzuoke tells him about Manuel’s capture, he rescues him to reclaim his honor. Together Manuel and Ryunosuke lead an army of Samurai to Nishida’s castle to free Eva. Manual stages an attack on the castle with various explosive devices. At this point, the fragment that forms the basis of this chapter ends.

According to Tomita, who must have accessed a more complete version, Manuel avoids Eva after he frees her from Nishida because he doubts her virginity. (78) Ryunosuke, together with the owner of the brothel to which Eva had fled, are able to convince him of Eva’s innocence. The film ends with a wedding between Eva and Manuel and with their departure to the West.

Overt themes of colonialism are absent in the film. As such, \textit{Bushido} is not strictly part of the body of Weimar colonial films. However, it is part of a discourse in which depictions of ‘foreign cultures’ are often an expression of the supremacy of the West, which implicitly or explicitly was used as justification for Western imperialism. In the following sections, I will demonstrate that the film depicts Japan and the West as superficially equal while also in part portraying the Western characters as superior. By showing Japan in an essentially positive way, Germany could arguably lessen the shame of losing it colonial possession in Asia and the Pacific to the archipelago.

\textsuperscript{165} In contrast, Manuel wears Western clothes, dark pants, white shirt and occasionally a bicorn, throughout the film.
2.5.4. Japan and Germany – Brothers in Spirit?

Weimar films set in ‘exotic’ locations, be it Asia or Africa, often implicitly or explicitly advocated for the superiority of the West. In The White Geisha, for instance, Western characters are complex, heroic and honourable whereas the Asian figures are portrayed as natural servants, as devious and at best as indolent. However, German superiority towards Japan could not have been sustained unconditionally since Germany lost its colony in Shandong and its protectorates in the Pacific to the archipelago following the First World War. 1924, the year Bushido was filmed, saw Japan in better international standing than Germany: Japan had taken its place among the victors of World War I and also had a seat in the League of Nations whereas Germany’s 1924 petition for membership to the League was denied. Did this political situation affect the portrayal of Japan in Bushido?

Kako and Heiland avoid commenting explicitly on the current German-Japanese relationship in their film. Manuel, for instance, is Spanish and Eva’s nationality is not specified. Neither character is defined exclusively through their nationality, but rather, by skin colour. If Japanese characters refer to them, they call them the “white officer” or, in the case of Eva, the “white lover.” Eva and Manuel are thus representatives of an unspecified “West.” Their origins are not important as long as they fulfill their role within an ‘us-them’ or ‘East-West’ dichotomy. Therefore, although the film draws a clear but more general divide between Japan and ‘the West,’ it is not a divide between Germany and Japan in particular. One reason why the filmmakers might have been hesitant to open up a direct opposition between Germany and Japan could be that, according to Spang and Wippich, Germany hoped to use Japan’s voice in the League of Nations when re-negotiating the amount of war indemnities (8). Moreover, the filmmakers set Bushido in Japan’s pre-modern age, thus avoiding any reference to the modernized nation state, and continuously show Japan as a pre-modern place caught between refined culture and archaic customs. This is possibly done to boost the ‘exotic allure’ of the film.

The film features several setups and scenes that evoke the image of Japan as a mystical and exotic place. The filmmakers appear to have included as many ‘typical and traditional Japanese’ cultural items, customs and sets as possible. This results in the inclusion of several scenes – such as the Noh performance in Nishida’s castle or the ‘sightseeing sequences’ – which feel out of place within the narrative’s framework and were clearly included solely for a Western audience. For instance, a scene in which Manuel and two unnamed samurai visit the Daibutsu in Kamakura, the second largest statue of
Buddha in Japan, features a long, close-up shot of the image of Buddha, focusing on the head of the massive statue, which is surrounded by a halo. In contrast to the Japanese characters in this scene, Manuel appears to make a point of not bowing to the statue, instead towering over the praying Japanese men and women next to him. Yet the primary antagonism of the film is not between Manuel and the Japanese characters but between two Japanese fractions: that of Nishida and Yorimoto, the two feudal lords in whose rivalry Manuel and Eva are caught up.

2.5.4.1. Bushido – The Soul of Germany and Japan?

How does the film establish a kinship between Manuel and Yorimoto’s fraction and in what way do these characters differ from the antagonist Nishida? The eponymous concept of bushido (武士道, literally ‘the way of the warrior’) connects Manuel to Yorimoto and Ryunosuke. According to Pekar, who discusses the concept in the context of National Socialism, the “founder” of the western bushido discourse was Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933), who published the English-language book Bushido: The Soul of Japan in 1899 (German translation: Bushido: Die Seele Japans, 1901). Nitobe, a renowned writer and diplomat, later became Under-Secretary-General of the League of Nations. His idealization of bushido parallels Renato Rosaldo’s concept of ‘imperial nostalgia,’ a colonizer’s yearning for a “traditional” culture that he helped to destroy, or, in Rosaldo’s words “people mourn[ing] the passing of what they themselves have transformed” (108). In other words, Nitobe “‘discovered’ and codified [bushido] at the moment when the samurai were disappearing due to the modernization of Japan” (Pekar 2003b, 116). Thus, bushido is a concept belonging to a vanished and idealized past and it is no coincidence that the film Bushido is also set in Japan’s past. In addition, a highly romanticized view of feudal virtues of chivalry through a dissemination of the bushido concept fits well into the Zeitgeist of Weimar Germany. The trauma of the First World War led to nostalgia for medieval codes of conduct and chivalry, exemplified in publications such as Paul Ludwig Landsberg’s The Medieval World and Us (Die Mittelalterliche Welt und Wir, 1926), in which the author advocated for the medieval ordo creationis, the belief in a God-given, stable world order, as a way to deal with the uncertainties of the modern world (See and Zernack 121). Japan’s feudal past depicted in Bushido thus becomes the projection screen for a broad range of desires: Japan is presented as exotic, alluring far-away locale and as a space unspoiled by modernity.

166 Nitobe, a Christian, had studied in America and earned his doctor’s degree in agriculture in Germany. He was therefore familiar with European and American culture and thought.
In Nitobe’s book and in Kako and Heiland’s film the concept of bushido served a concrete purpose: that of representing Japan as a state with moral and ethical rules equal to the West. Nitobe defines bushido as follows: “the code of moral principles which the knights were required or instructed to observe” (4-5). He begins his book asserting his own credibility claiming that while other writers have written about Japan in the English language, among them Lafcadio Hearn or Mrs. Fraser, they are “at best solicitors or attorneys” whereas he is a “personal defendant” (xiii). His choice of words clarifies his position: he sees Japan under attack from Western sources who deny the nation its superior culture and moral code. Throughout his book, Nitobe refers to Western sources such as the Bible, thinkers like Plato or Shakespeare, and examples from the European world of chivalry in order to explain the concept of bushido to his Western readers and to establish a commonality between Japanese and Western thought. After introducing the sources of bushido as well as its ethical system, Nitobe’s slim volume is separated into various chapters each detailing a virtue of the concept (politeness, honor, loyalty, etc.), the cultural significance of suicide, the sword, and women for bushido. Nitobe ends his treaty by questioning the future of bushido. I will not discuss Nitobe’s work in greater detail. For the purpose of analysing the film Bushido, it is important to note that for Nitobe, the concept of bushido was an apt way to establish Japan as nation equal to the West, a thought that is echoed in Heiland and Kako’s film.

Throughout his book, Nitobe frequently claims that the cultures of Japan and Europe are similar (22, 113, 169) and that it is the spirit of chivalry, or bushido, which unites them despite assertions by Western scholars that there never has been anything similar to the European concept of chivalry in Japan (1-4). Through bushido he explains aspects of Japan that might otherwise alienate Western observers such as the alleged impassivity of the Japanese’s faces (note Woas’ comparison of Japanese women’s faces to masks in this context). Nitobe explicates that this self-restraint, the concealment of emotions is not an expression of “the perverseness of oriental minds” (108) but merely a way of coping with emotions and tribulations. According to him, it is not that the Japanese feel nothing as the European accuses but that their “very excitability and sensitiveness [...] made it a necessity to recognize and enforce constant self-repression” (110). Throughout his book, Nitobe frequently ‘explains’ such aspects of the Japanese culture and mindset, while staying firmly anchored in European thought and in a Western perspective.

For my discussion, the most relevant section of Nitobe’s book is titled “Is Bushido still alive?” Here, he debates Japan’s position vis-à-vis the West. According to Nitobe, not only is the spirit of bushido the
guiding principle of the “new,” modernized Japan, the latter cannot be separated from the Japan of the past (171-173). The modernized Japan of the 20th century is not the mere product of Westernization as Western observers would claim it to be (174). Instead, Japan’s modernization is inherently a product of the Japanese national character, which is expressed through the concept of bushido. Nitobe offers the Sino-Japanese war as example: while it is said that Japan was victorious in this war because of its modernized educational system and weapons, Nitobe calls these claims “less than half-truths” (188). Instead, he asserts that Japan’s victory was due to a combination of modern technology and the spirit of bushido, which dwells in every modern Japanese citizen as it did in their ancestors (188-189). In other words, Nitobe speaks of a successful hybridization of Western technology and Eastern thought in Japan.

Japanese and German thinkers shared Nitobe’s views. In his book *The Culture of Japan*, Ichikawa follows a very similar train of thought: “the culture of young Japan [Jungjapan] is not just an imitation of the West, but the product of the Japanese and the Western civilization” (11). For Ichikawa, the martial culture of Japan has been Europeanized, but the spiritual culture remained virtually unchanged (11). In addition, learning from Europe to the extent Japan did, can only be achieved if the learner is talented and educated. Japan’s reproduction of Western science and thought is therefore a credit to the nation (13). Of Japan’s modernization, the translator Alexander von Siebold furthermore wrote in his article “The Secret Behind the Japanese Success” (“Das Geheimnis des Japanischen Erfolges”) published in *East Asia*, that Japan’s ascent to a world power is attributable not only to the imitation and education of European powers, but also to the Japanese spirit, its “inner mission” (XI, 1908, 19).167

Thus, bushido emerges as an apt way to connect Europe and Japan as ‘brothers in spirit’ united by a common code of chivalry and equal with regard to their morality while simultaneously diminishing the role of the West in the ‘successful modernization’ of Japan. More than twenty years before Kako and Heiland’s film, therefore, bushido was already established as a concept that could create commonality and thereby bridge the cultural divide between Europe and Japan.

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167 In Siebold’s words: “This is the secret of the Japanese success; it is a rare combination of a patriotic readiness for self-sacrifice and a strong will, together with an enlightened intelligence, which is not the product of the works of a modern culture [Produkt moderner Kulturarbeit] but stems from the transmission of their own, old culture” (XI, 1908, 19).
2.5.4.2. A Question of Class?

How is this commonality expressed in the film? Manuel and Ryunosuke, and by extension the other honourable samurai in the film, belong to the same class, the military, and share the same values: bravery, rectitude, and loyalty – all virtues that, according to Nitobe, define bushido. For instance, both Manuel and Yorimoto’s honourable samurai protect women from rape. They show bravery when storming Nishida’s castle and noble motifs govern their actions. By linking Manuel and Ryunosuke through a shared culture and class, Kako and Heiland thus dismiss biological markers of race such as skin colour as primary indicator of either difference or familiarity. In the film, this leads to marked differences between members of different classes. In doing so, Kako and Heiland participate in a discourse that, at least since the 19th century, distinguished between two different classes in Japan, which, in turn, were regarded as two distinct ethnicities.

According to Kowner, racial ‘scholars’ focusing on Japan towards the late 19th century distinguished between an upper and a lower class, which they retrace to different ethnic origins (2000, 121-122). The German geographer Johann Rein (1835-1918), for instance, wrote in his highly regarded account of the geography and history of Japan, Japan nach Reisen und Studien (Japan, Travels and Researches, Two Volumes, 1881–86) that members of the Japanese upper class exhibited features akin to Europeans. Their “regularity of feature are so great and so discrepant from the prevailing Mongolian type, that we imagine we are in the presence of a well-formed European” (Rein in Kowner 118). In fact, the distinction between two classes of Japanese, one being more “white” and thus more European than the other, was made by a variety of “scholars” and observers such as the physician Engelbert Kaempfer (The History of Japan, 1727), the naturalist Carl Peter Thunberg (Travels in Europe, Africa, Asia, 1795), or the anthropologist James Prichard (Researches into the Physical History of Mankind, 1851) (Kowner, 2000, 121-122). The German physician Erwin Bälz distinguished three “types” of Japanese, each tied to a different ethnic origin and a different class. The “fine type” (“feine Typus”) was associated with the upper classes and bore, according to Bälz, relations to the Europeans (123). According to Kowner, Bälz’ portrayal of the Japanese proved popular with his Western audience because his emphasis of the positive, European features of some Japanese provided an explanation for Japan’s modernization (124). Without questioning the inherent superiority of white Europeans, therefore, Japan could be classified as at least partially ‘civilized.’
Kako and Heiland’s film echoes the same sentiments; the ‘upper class,’ exemplified by members of the court and especially by Ryunosuke, is equal to Manuel. Their stories take up equal screen time, their body languages mirror each other and their actions are guided, for the most part, by honourable motifs. However, with regard to the ‘lower class,’ Manuel is clearly depicted as superior. When Manuel shares a scene with Japanese characters that do not belong to the samurai or upper class, he is in the center of the frame, easily dominating all the figures around him.

The scene which introduces Eva to the audience for the first time exemplifies this. Eva, a castaway, is found on a beach, not far from where Manuel is fishing. She is surrounded by Japanese fishermen and women, all unable to decide what to do with the foreigner. Manuel arrives at the scene, easily parts the crowd and takes Eva into his arms. The Japanese, crouching and almost child-like in their helplessness, look on but are unwilling or unable to help. Manuel’s Chinese servant exhibits similar demure and submissive body language. The servant, identifiable as Chinese by his queue hairstyle and his changshan dress, first appears when Ryunosuke enters Manuel’s ship to invite him to the court and acts as an interpreter between the Spanish and the Japanese men. His body language expresses extreme abjection towards both parties. He is smaller than both Manuel and Ryunosuke and, whereas the meeting between the two military men is clearly one of equals, he is depicted as inferior. Ryunosuke and Manuel, for instance, shake hands, whereas the servant merely looks on. Moreover, when the Western ship first arrives at the harbor in Japan, the Chinese servants on the ship want to open fire on the people on land but are held back by the European officers. Clearly, they are unable to fully grasp their situation whereas the officers appear to immediately connect with their Japanese counterparts. Later scenes do not show any Chinese characters.

Likewise, scenes that feature ordinary Japanese foot soldiers depict them as faceless, threatening masses, overcrowding the screen in confused formations. Nishida, the foil against which Yorimoto, Ryunosuke and Manuel assert their chirality, is linked to the lower classes by his body language. Like the fishermen on the shore, he is crouching and never shown standing upright. Moreover, he gets drunk on sake and harasses his prisoner Eva – drinking and assault are depicted as unworthy of a samurai in later scenes. The connection between Europe and Japan as ‘brothers in spirit’ therefore only holds true with regard to Japan’s upper class (if that upper class lives up to their own principles and moral codes), thereby undermining the idea that Japan and Europe are indeed equal within the system of an ‘East-West dichotomy.’
2.5.4.3. Desire and Chivalry

By placing such a pronounced emphasis on bushido, a concept primarily occupied with codes and regulations for men and with a ‘correct’ masculinity, and by including frequent scenes of soldiers and battles, *Bushido* codifies Japan as masculine warrior state relegating women to the margins. In her discussion of Japan's nation-state formation, Morris-Suzuki points out that in the late 19th and early 20th century, Western observers had two distinct images of Japan: female Japan, represented by young, submissive and erotically charged women was perceived as overwhelmingly positive whereas masculine representations of the archipelago, its modernism and military, were seen as threatening (111-2). *Bushido* presented its European audience with a possibility to identify themselves positively with Japan’s militarism. A militarized Japan is no longer threatening; instead it is precisely its masculine tradition of bushido that connects the two cultural spheres in the East and West.

Whereas the filmmakers link Ryunosuke and Manuel via the concept of chivalry, a decidedly masculine concept defining primarily the behavior and moral codes of men; the film’s female characters serve as a narrative disruption that also facilitates the reaffirmation of the ‘bushido-connection’.168 A similar motif can be found in Kitasato’s *Fumio* where the attempted rape of Fumio’s mother propels the protagonist to reconnect with his samurai heritage and to liberate himself from the evil influence of his uncle. Likewise, the threat of sexual violence to the female characters highlights the chivalry of the male protagonists in *Bushido*.

*Bushido* features two female title roles: the court geisha Shinzuoke and the castaway Eva. At least in the fragment that forms the basis of this chapter, the two women do not share a scene; it is possible that they meet in the final scene of the wedding between Eva and Manuel, but even if they do, their storylines appear not to significantly converge at any other point in the film. Both women have the same function within the narrative: they serve to highlight the chivalry of Ryunosuke and especially of Manuel. Kako and Heiland achieve this by setting up Shinzuoke and Eva as objects of desire and as damsels in distress; their rescue from sexual threat establishes Ryunosuke and Manuel as heroes of the narrative. The men who threaten Eva and Shinzuoke are consequently the negative foil to Ryunosuke and Manuel.

168 In his discussion the meaning of bushido for women, Nitobe emphasizes the value of chastity which, for a samurai woman, is “held above life itself” (142), self-denial and domesticity (138-157). However, Shinzuoke as geisha and Eva as Western woman do not belong to the class of the samurai.
Shinzuoke serves an additional function: because both Ryunosuke and Manuel desire her, she propels much of the film’s conflict.

2.5.4.4. Japanese Women as ‘Playthings’

The trope of the woman of colour as sexualized object was widespread in colonial films of the Weimar period. In his discussion of the portrayal of black women in Weimar colonial films, Christian Rogowski recounts a scene in *Alone in the Jungle/Revenge of the African Woman* (*Allein im Urwald/Die Rache der Afrikanerin*, 1922, dir. John Hagenbeck): The African cook Ngumba is attracted to the white engineer Gyldenhall and offers herself to him. Gyldenhall, however, rejects her increasingly “desperate erotic advances” (224). For Rogowski this scene represents a “classic version of the ‘colonial romance’ […] which presents the African woman as hyper-sexualized, irrational creature, whereas it shows her white master as matured and poised, seeking to maintain racial and sexual boundaries” (224). Likewise, Kawaguchi points out that in Western narratives, Japanese women were depicted as eager to please and sexually liberal (12-66). This familiar trope can be found in *Bushido* and in *The White Geisha*, albeit in a modified way. In *The White Geisha* the German engineer Berg is fascinated by a geisha that he encounters in Kyoto, echoing the well-known trope of the geisha as object of desire. However, he only desires her because she reminds him of Eva and he can only truly love the white woman. Within the narrative of *The White Geisha*, the Japanese woman is never actually desired by the white men, which echoes Woas’ appraisal of Japanese women as fundamentally unappealing once one had overcome one’s initial desire.

Likewise, Manuel initially desires Shinzuoke but ultimately, his desire remains shallow. As mentioned previously, the film introduces Shinzuoke as court geisha and fiancé of Ryunosuke. The intertitle explains that she only works at the court to be close to Ryunosuke, thus establishing the strength of their love and her devotion. The audience initially experiences her through the eyes of Manuel as the camera takes his point of view during her dance performance at the feast that Yorimoto gives in honor of Manuel. Shinzuoke wears her hair in the *taregami* style in one long braid at the back and with two slimmer braids in the front and is dressed elaborately. She is performing a fan dance, flanked by two additional geisha. The scene features frequent cuts between Shinzuoke’s dance and close-ups of Manuel’s excited face. Manuel, in his arousal, spills his sake. When the camera returns to Shinzuoke, the
additional geisha are gone and she performs alone in a lengthy sequence. [Fig. 10] Thus, the first scene sets her up as an object of desire. Not only does the trope of the geisha invoke various exotic and erotic stereotypes about Japanese women for the German audience, Manuel’s excitement upon seeing her, reinforces the portrayal of Shinzuoke as sexualized object. Towards the end of the dance, the camera cuts to Ryunosuke who appears to look disapprovingly at Manuel’s excitement. Shinzuoke’s body is therefore set up as something that the two men will contest.

Following these scenes, Shinzuoke takes Manuel on a tour around the area. An intertitle with the script “Japanese Playthings” (Japanisches Spielzeug) and a picture of a woman precedes these sequences. [Fig. 11] This image and the immediate cut to Shinzuoke demonstrate that the plaything is in fact Shinzuoke, thereby further objectifying her. During the sightseeing sequences, Shinzuoke and Manuel are physically close, at one point even holding hands and touching each other. Eventually the audience sees them as silhouettes against the backdrop of Mt. Fuji. Ryunosuke has followed them unseen, the camera assumes his point of view and maintains a distance from the couple as he jealously watches them; their heads are very close now and they hold each other tightly. His angry face shows that he is under the impression that Shinzuoke betrays him and that he cannot hear what Shinzuoke says to Manuel. Her words are communicated to the audience via intertitle: a plea to Manuel to help her fiancé in obtaining the secret of the gunpowder.¹⁶⁹ In contrast to the African cook Ngumba in Hagenbeck’s film, Shinzuoke’s proximity to Manuel does not result from sexual desire on her part but is instead a calculated measure to achieve help for her fiancé. Her artfulness and the use of her sexual powers echo Woas’ lamentation about the calculating character of Japanese women.

Ryunosuke, unable to contain his jealousy, breaks them apart and confronts Manuel. A short altercation follows during which Manuel first attempts to grab Shinzuoke and eventually wanders off. Ryunosuke pushes his fiancé to the ground and follows. He starts a fight with Manuel during which they repeatedly slap each other in the face. Finally, in a mirror of the previous scene, which underscores Manuel’s superiority, Manuel pushes Ryunosuke to the ground and leaves.

Following this scene, Shinzuoke visits Manuel on his ship, intend on pleading again on Ryunosuke’s behalf. Shinzuoke and Manuel are alone in the ship’s small cabin; Shinzuoke curiously eyes an arrangement of firearms on the cabin’s wall, betraying the real reason for her visit. Manuel sits down very close to her and serves her tea. Shots of Shinzuoke’s face in distress are intercut with close-ups of

¹⁶⁹ “Help Ryunosuke to fulfill the wish of the Daymio.” (Hilf Ryunosuke den Wunsch den Daymio zu erfüllen.)
Manuel, looking kindly at her. Shinzuoke falls to her knees and offers herself to Manuel if he helps Ryunosuke.\(^{170}\) Several longer shots of Manuel show him in deep thought. He detaches himself from Shinzuoke, who had put her head in his lap and wept, and walks around the cabin. He eventually and with kindness sends her away. Given his desire for her in earlier scenes, Manuel's rejection can be seen as an additional sign of his chivalry.

Yet, despite the fact that Shinzuoke is clearly objectified as “Japanese plaything,” her role also goes beyond that of an artful, sexualized geisha. Her feelings for Ryunosuke are sincere and throughout the film, she attempts to help him in his efforts to recreate Manuel's gun. She also has more lines than any other character in \textit{Bushido}. Thus, despite embodying certain aspects of the geisha trope, Shinzuoke also goes beyond these stereotypes to a certain extent.

In addition to Shinzuoke, the film sets up Eva as an object of desire for both Manuel and the evil feudal lord Nishida. Eva and Manuel seem a natural fit. After they are captured by Nishida, they sit very close together, with Eva’s head resting on Manuel’s shoulder. [Fig. 12] Despite having only met a couple of minutes ago, a strong attraction and sense of kinship begins to grow between them. By contrast, Eva’s body language indicates that she will never voluntarily submit to Nishida’s desire for her as she repeatedly pushes him away and looks at him in disgust. [Fig. 13] Therefore, the film keeps the racial boundaries between Japanese and Western couples intact. Despite advocating for a kinship between Europe and Japan and although the women are desired by men of the respective other races, the film makes it clear that true love and companionship can only be found within one’s own race.

\subsection{2.5.4.5. Damsels in Distress}

The rejection of Shinzuoke’s desperate advances is not the only instance in which Manuel’s chivalry is highlighted through his interaction with the female characters on screen. After she is introduced to the audience and established as source of conflict between Manuel and Ryunosuke, Manuel rescues Shinzuoke from being raped by two drunken samurai. The scenes emphasize that it is not enough to belong to the class of the samurai; one also has to live by its principles.

\(^{170}\) “Take me but help Ryunosuke.” (Nimm mich hin aber hilf Ryunosuke.)
The scene takes place in a teahouse, close to the temple visited by Manuel and two of Yorimoto’s unnamed samurai. A female attendant in the teahouse serves sake to two men, identifiable as samurai by their swords and haircuts. Very drunk, they begin assaulting the distressed girl. The scene cuts to Manuel and the other two samurai drinking tea together close by. The set-up mirrors the shot of the two men and the female servant: the two samurai are on the left and right, Manuel and the servant respectively in the center of the screen. The congenial and friendly atmosphere of Manuel’s scene stands in sharp contrast to the distress and sexual violence exhibited in the teahouse shots. In the next scene, the two men leave the teahouse, almost too drunk to walk, and encounter Shinzuoke who is innocently feeding deer nearby. The two men attack her but she is able to escape and eventually reaches Manuel, who takes her into his arms to protect her. A fight between the drunken men and Manuel’s companions breaks out, whereas Manuel stays with Shinzuoke. Eventually, Manuel fights one of the men, one arm still around Shinzuoke when a third man, possibly Ryunosuke, arrives to break up the fight. These scenes are particularly relevant as they establish Manuel and his Japanese companions as equally chivalrous. On the surface, the men are therefore portrayed as equal. However, the scene also expresses superiority on Manuel’s part. Whereas his companions struggle to fight the two men, he can fight them with one arm still wrapped around Shinzuoke. This is done quite subtly; the shot in which Manuel fights lasts no more than a few seconds.

In the next scene, the two men are to commit seppuku to restore their honor. The seppuku scene is more than three minutes long and draws particular attention to the ritual. The convicted men sit in a circle of other samurai while Yorimoto reads out the verdict. The camera cuts to a prolonged close-up of the first condemned samurai, his face is calm and his movements controlled. Manuel stands in the background between trees, almost as if watching the ritual in secret. His face betrays shock and disgust; after witnessing one suicide, he prevents the other by pleading for the man’s life. The scenes with the two drunken samurai serve to highlight the rigidity of the bushido-code in Japan. The European audience could not only witness the stylized performance of the ritual suicide, but they were also given an understanding of the firm moral code of Japan’s higher classes. At the same time, Manuel’s successful intervention to prevent the second suicide sets him above these rigid rules.

Shinzuoke is not the only female character threatened by sexual violence. While Eva is a prisoner in Nishida’s castle, she has to fight off her captor several times. Whereas Manuel and his companions had rescued a destitute Shinzuoke, Eva is able to defend herself to a certain extent, although her final rescue

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171 The condition of the footage makes it difficult to definitely identify the samurai as Ryunosuke in this scene.
most likely still depends on Manuel and Ryunosuke. Wolfgang Struck has demonstrated in his monograph *The Conquest of Fantasy (Die Eroberung der Phantasie)* that the endangered white woman in Asia was a well-established trope by the time Heiland and Kako shot *Bushido*. Films such as *Shanghai Express* (1931), *Mistress of the World. The Girlfriend of the Yellow Man (Die Herrin der Welt. Die Freundin des Gelben Mannes, 1919)* or *The Secret of Bombay (Das Geheimnis von Bombay, 1921)* feature a white woman in Asia who, for a variety of reasons, finds herself in a situation where her chastity is threatened by one or several Asian men, thereby depicting the colonies as a perilous place for women (230). Additionally, in the introduction to their highly informative volume *Yellow Peril. An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear*, John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats trace how the discourse of the yellow peril is irrevocably tied to the threat to “the virtue of white womanhood” (12). They demonstrate that in various depictions of Japanese and Chinese men, such as the image of Asian men on covers of *Master Detective* novels or Kaiser Wilhelm’s aforementioned Knackfuss painting, the threat of East Asian men is sexualized and the yellow peril is shown to also be a threat to white women’s virtue (12). Scenes in which Asian men threaten a white woman therefore serve two purposes: they depict these foreign lands as dangerous locale and provide an outlet for Western fear of a masculine, read militarized, Asia. In *Bushido* the sexual violence always remains a threat and is never fulfilled. In addition, positive Japanese characters such as Ryunosuke and Yorimoto as well as the harsh punishment of the offending samurai highlight that Japan is a country ruled by law and codes of morality, even if these laws are different from those in Europe and appear cruel and archaic.

For a significant part of the film, Eva is wearing the dress and makeup of a Japanese upper-class woman. Kawaguchi has demonstrated that a white woman mimicking a Japanese woman, most often a geisha, through makeup and clothes is a long established trope in Western literature and film, as exemplified by Western women taking on the roles of O Mimosa San and Roli-Poli in the play *The Geisha* (1896), O Hana San in *The Mousume* (1911) and, of course, Cio-Cio-san in *Madama Butterfly* (272). She argues that

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172 The fragment on which this interpretation is based does not include the scene of Eva’s rescue from Nishida’s castle. It is possible that she manages to escape a second time in the turmoil of Manuel and Ryunosuke’s attack but it is more likely that Manuel rescues her since he is the hero of the film.

173 Conversely, Sada Yacco took on the role of a British woman in Masuda Tarôkaja’s comedy *Dumb Travel (Oshi Ryôkô, 1908)*. The plot revolves around two Japanese men, one a lovable fool, the other a cosmopolitan, traveling to Europe from Japan. When they arrive in England, they watch a play about army officers from Britain, the United States, Japan, Germany, and France. Sada Yacco portrayed the English actress Rose who in turned played a Japanese officer in the play within the play. Significantly, the scenes in London are staged entirely in English. According to Kano, the manuscript shows the pronunciation in katakana and the translation in parenthesis. In order to portray Rose as a Japanese naval officer, Sada Yacco underwent extensive training to learn how to behave like a Western women acting like a man (Kano 104). At this point in time, Japanese actors portraying Westerners
Western women enjoyed identifying with these Japanese roles partly because of a “sense of detachment – from the position of being (or believing oneself to be) unaffected by those cultural shackles of female servility with which women in non-western countries are commonly believed to be fettered” (273). In *The White Geisha*, for instance, Eva effortlessly puts on and discards the costume of a geisha to achieve her personal goals.

In contrast to white women voluntarily donning a kimono and a wig, Eva in *Bushido* does not impersonate a Japanese woman. Indeed, it appears that her capturer Nishida forces her to change her clothes. Although made up to look like a Japanese woman, Eva markedly differs in her behavior from the other female lead Shinzuoke, thereby reinforcing the trope of the Japanese woman as devoted and self-sacrificing companion and the Western woman generally more forceful and self-demined. Manuel finds Eva on the beach in a dark, low-cut dress with exposed arms. However, as a captive of Nishida, Eva wears a dark-patterned kimono, a light obi, and dark lipstick, her hair is brushed back and pinned closely to her head. To entertain her, Nishida puts on a Noh performance. Eva kneels on the ground, hands in her lap, her face is proud and impassive; she sits upright and her movements are controlled; she faces the performance. Eva mimics a stereotypical representation of a Japanese woman by keeping her face unmoved and her body rigid.

In contrast, Nishida next to her crouches and therefore appears to be much smaller than she is. His smallness is a stereotype frequently cited in German literature, among others in Bahr’s play *The Master* (1904) or on Woas’ *The Truth about the Japanese* (1908). He looks excitedly at his captive and on several occasions tries to touch her. Eva spurns his advances easily with a gesture. Her body remains unmoved whereas Nishida appears increasingly nervous and displeased. In the course of the scene, Nishida gets drunk on sake while Eva watches him covertly. The close-up of the two characters is frequently intercut with longer shots of the Noh performance. Finally, Nishida falls asleep and Eva uses her chance to run away.

A comparison between this scene and the scene that depicts Shinzuoke and the two drunken samurai who pursue her demonstrates the difference between the women. Shinzuoke, and the unnamed tea house servant, show clear signs of distress when being attacked by the men. Both attempt to remove was still relatively uncommon. According to Kano, the play highlighted the modernity of Japanese citizens able to laugh at the “lovable fool” and his confusion when faced with Western manners and traditions (105). Note, in this context, Natsume Sōseki’s lamentation about Japanese making fun of each other for their lacking Westernization in *The Civilization of Modern-day Japan* (1911).
themselves from the situation and the attack on Shinzuoke is particularly violent and threatening since at one point the men start to remove her clothes. Her scene is defined by movement and speed and stands in contrast to the stereotype of the passive, sexually available Japanese woman. In contrast, Eva’s scene is defined by stasis. Eva moves very little and, although threatened, appears to be in control of the situation. It is easy for her to ward off Nishida and she can facilitate her own escape, at least temporarily. Whereas throughout the film Shinzuoke relies on either Manuel or Ryunosuke for protection and guidance, Eva, to some degree, is more independent and in control. However, this agency is taken away towards the end of the film. After she has been recaptured, Eva is shown crouching on the floor. Nishida, very close to her, appears much taller than she is. He puts his arms around her but Eva manages to push him away. Nishida pushes her to the ground and stands over her. In this moment, an explosion, caused by Manuel, distracts him and Eva attempts to flee again.

Yet, if the filmmakers wanted to express a difference between Eva and Shinzuoke, and by extension between Western and Japanese women, why did they decide to dress Loo Holl in a kimono throughout much of the film? Most likely Eva’s costume choice was made to boost the ‘exotic appeal’ of the film, since Bushido was directed at a Western audience, just as it was the case with Loo Holl’s character, Eva, in The White Geisha.

2.5.5. Conclusion

Although Kako and Heiland attempted to portray Manuel and the Japanese samurai as kindred spirits, the film expresses a bias towards the European officer Manuel. Manuel easily dominates every shot he is in; he towers over the Japanese characters and, in the fight scene with Ryunosuke, is portrayed as physically stronger. It is also his knowledge of weaponry and the relative ease with which he is able to rescue Shinzuoke that mark him as superior to the Japanese. In addition, Bushido features several shots in which the Japanese characters appear more like props or like an extension of the Japanese landscape. When Yorimoto shows his gardens to Manuel, for instance, the camera pans out to depict an arching Japanese bridge. On both sides of the bridge are samurai in matching white and black linen clothes that

174 A similar emphasis on stasis can be found in Lo Holl’s geisha portrait in The White Geisha. When cross-dressing as geisha in this film, Eva’s movement are controlled, almost static and subdued, whereas when not mimicking a geisha, she is active and determined. Similarly in Bushido, Eva appears to confirm Western stereotypes of Japanese women as mask- and doll-like. Thus, when Western women performed ‘Japaneseness,’ they exaggerated the alleged passive and static character ascribed to Japanese femininity.
repeat the pattern of the bridge's style. Manuel in his black suit or naval uniform in the middle of the bridge clearly stands out. Yet, *Bushido* is not merely a story of Western superiority. Instead, it simultaneously advocates for the uniqueness of Japan, by focusing on specific Japanese cultural items such as the geisha, Noh theatre or samurai, while claiming a cultural affinity between Japan and Europe through their shared values of chivalry. Compared to other films of that period set in Japan, *Bushido* features noble Japanese characters that go beyond the stereotypes of the sly and devious Japanese man and the sexualized and demure Japanese woman. In contrast to other colonial films during the Weimar Republic, the image of Asia in *Bushido* is more nuanced. In 1924, the year the film was shot, Japan becoming a European colony was out of the question. Kako and Heiland therefore depict Japan as largely equal to Europe. In fact, the extreme abjection of the Chinese characters in their film, arguably points towards Japan and Europe’s joint imperial endeavours in China.

Only thirteen years later, in 1937, Germany and Japan would realize a second filmic co-production, *The Daughter of the Samurai*. By the 1930s, Japan had fully attained the status of an imperial power in Asia. More explicitly than *Bushido*, *The Daughter of the Samurai* deals with the question of Japanese imperialism in China. Thus, the discourse begun by Kako and Heiland’s film, the linking of Japan and Europe via the militarized bushido code, came to full fruition in Nazi Germany.

### 2.6. Chapter Conclusion: German-Japanese Cultural Productions – Tools for Imperialism?

Despite the wide variety of source material in this chapter, ranging from theatre productions to films and magazines, certain discourses emerge in all these cultural productions. Japan materialises as a contested space, exotic and foreign locale on the one hand, equal to any Western nation on the other. Both Germans and Japanese perpetuated these discourses. The Kawakami and Hanako Troupe utilized the exoticist stereotypes of Japan for their own financial gain, cleverly playing with their European audience’s expectations. By contrast, Kitasato’s plays presented the Japanese nation as on par with the West, refusing to gratify the audience’s predictable demand for beautiful geisha and dashing samurai. It is telling that Kawakami and Hanako have received much more attention compared to Kitasato, with
countless magazines eagerly reporting on their performances, while most of Kitasato’s plays never even saw a stage.\(^{175}\)

In their depiction of Japan, the theatre groups ‘proved’ to their Western audiences the inherent ‘otherness’ of the archipelago. They had no interest in demonstrating that Japan was part of a European culture since only their sensationalized depiction of Japan managed to fill the theatres. Likewise, the producers of *Bushido* employed the tropes of seductive geisha and dashing samurai to make their film alluring to Western audiences. Conversely, many of the above discussed German and Japanese writers, thinkers, filmmakers and artists argued for Japan to be on par with the West according to Western standards of civilisation and culture. They never questioned assumptions about the existence of ‘the European,’ ‘the East Asian’ and ‘the Japanese’ culture, all of which they perceived as clearly definable entities. Many contributors to *East Asia* argued that Japan was equal to Europe on the basis of its successful adoption of Western culture and technology, while other writers such as Nitobe Inazō as well as the crew behind *Bushido* regarded Japan as equal to the West because they were ‘brothers in spirit’. Thus, as long as Japan could participate in Western power by emphasising its own Westernness, it also perpetuated a discourse that ascribed superiority to ‘the European’ culture. Kitasato is perhaps the only writer in this chapter who did not argue for Japan’s equality on that basis of its ‘Europeaness’ but instead on the grounds that both cultures, represented by Buddhism and Christianity respectively, are inherently worthy.

The overemphasis of Japan as ‘culture nation’ equal to Europe served a particular function: in Western thought, claims of a ‘superior culture’ and of a civilizing mission were used to justify colonial endeavours. Representation matters. In his foreword to *Culture and Imperialism* Said sums up the connection between representation in cultural artefacts and imperialism: “What are striking in these discourses are the rhetorical figures one keeps encountering in their [the Europeans’] description of ‘the mysterious East’ [...], the notion about bringing civilization to primitive or barbaric peoples [...]; ‘they’ were not like ‘us,’ and for that reason deserved to be ruled” (xi). Japanese thinkers then strove to prove that Japan was indeed like Europe. This not only meant freedom from the threat of colonization but also the right to colonize. As I have demonstrated in the discussion of articles in *East Asia* as well as in the

\(^{175}\) This discourse continues today. Whereas I could find no secondary literature on Kitasato, Hanako and the Kawakami Troupe are well researched. The title of these books, such as *Madame Sadako. The Geisha who Seduced the West*, *Sirens of the Western Shore*, *Little Hanako*, or *Enter a Samurai*, often echo the sensationalist tones of the then-contemporary reviews.
introductory chapter, many Japanese politician and thinkers considered Asia as Japan’s rightful sphere of influence.

Within the discussion of Japanese culture and its relationship to the West, Japanese women habitually came to exemplify traditional Japan and everything that was unfamiliar and exotic about the archipelago. Indeed, when Japanese thinkers and writers wanted to talk about Japan as equal to the West, they mostly remained silent on the topics of women and gender. Conversely, the Japanese theatre troupes placed women at the center of their performances and promotional material. At the turn of the 20th century, the bodies of Japanese women were contested spaces, threatened by sexual violence, compared to animals and objects, or exploited in sensationalized performances on stage. Through the exploitation of women, their disappearance, and their silence, Western and Japanese men contested the status of Japan as Westernized nation. However, the Japanese women in this chapter were not exclusively silenced victims of the male gaze and desire. The actresses Hanako and Sada Yacco cleverly utilized stereotypes and misconceptions to build their wealth, career, and fame. Overall, however, Japanese women in the German realm remained voiceless.

The different cultural artefacts that I have discussed in this chapter offer evidence of Japan’s contradictory rejection and embrace of Western ideologies. Japan – simultaneously European and non-European, Western and inherently ‘other’ saw itself as rightful leader in Asia – exemplified by the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, precisely on the basis of an alleged European-Asian hybrid identity. The next chapter will demonstrate how the National Socialists adopted these discourses, developed some further, abandoned others and added their own. In the 1930s and 1940s, culture continued to be the prime source for evaluating Japan. I will highlight how some discourses, such that of Japan as land of aestheticism, cherry blossoms and geisha continued to be prevalent in Nazi Germany, while Japans militarization was no longer threatening but, in fact, desirable. Indeed, for some thinkers Japan ‘graduated’ from student of Germany to a role model of how to harmonize a militaristic modernity with the regressive values of a seemingly unspoiled past.
3. Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in the 1930s and 1940s

3.1. Introduction

In November 1938, two years after the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact that tightened German-Japanese political relations, Germany and Japan agreed on a culture pact aiming to improve the two nations’ co-operation in the areas of science, art, music, literature, youth engagement, sport and film to “strengthen the bonds of friendship and trust that already happily unite the two countries” (Ostwald 78-9). As a result, several cultural exchanges were conducted between the two countries. In 1937, for example, Japanese youth visited Germany and one year later boys and girls from the Hitler Youth and the League of German Girls (*Bund deutscher Mädel*) engaged with Japanese youth in sports and community activities during a three-month exchange in Japan. Other areas of exchange included a 1944 essay contest by the German-Japanese Society which will be discussed later in this chapter in the context of a shared German-Japanese identity as Soldier People (*Soldatenvölker*).

In light of such a multifaceted interchange of ideas and people, was there ever a space for a cultural exchange between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan that went beyond shallow representations of the other nation? Michael Baskett in his research on Japanese film and the culture of Fascism points out that “fundamental ethnic differences and outright racism [...] question the very possibility for meaningful cultural exchange between Imperial Japan and its Axis allies” (2009, 212). However, the interactions between the three Axis powers, he claims, were also more than empty gestures, for they emphasised the common need among the three countries to recognize and validate each other’s national sovereignty (2009, 213). Although, according to Baskett, the cultural collaborations between Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan never achieved a cross-cultural ‘fascist identity,’ the three nations co-operated with each other through far-reaching official and unofficial interactions on almost all levels (2009, 213). Yet, political co-operation beyond the realm of cultural diplomacy between

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176 The Anti-Comintern Pact was an anti-communist pact concluded between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in 1936 in which both nations agreed on “benevolent neutrality” in the event of a conflict with the Soviet Union. Germany also agreed to recognize Manchuria. Manchuria and the German-Japanese alliance against Communism feature in Fanck and Itami’s film. It is possible that the negotiations for the Anti-Comintern Pact influenced the screenplay.

177 *die Bande der Freundschaft und des gegenseitigen Vertrauens, die beide Länder bereits in glücklicher Weise verbinden, [...] immer weiter zu befestigen.*

178 A short film documenting the exchange can be accessed at the *National Museum of Japanese History* in Chiba, Japan.
Germany and Japan remained almost non-existent. The German-Japanese alliance was by-and-large a performance (Maltarich 244). Both Germany and Japan, for instance, added secret amendments to all their agreements, which “were often contradictory to the expressed content and which left each one free to act against the other’s vital interest” (Martin 191). Thus, despite their numerous claims to unity, “ideological difficulties inherent in the alliance [...] demanded that the nations maintain their distance” (Maltarich 233-5).

The effort to forge links between the German and the Japanese culture nonetheless continued until almost the end of the Second World War. Even in 1944-45, for instance, The German-Japanese Society (Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft, DJG) in Berlin organized various events to promote a cross-cultural understanding between the two nations. Among these events was an essay contest for which Germans were asked to write about Germany and Japan. The submitted essays employ a variety of myths and a mutual symbolic imaginary that supposedly linked the two nations through a shared identity as Soldatenvölker. Divisive issues of race were pushed to the background in favour of imageries of a shared culture of heroic and moral virtues, a strategy that was employed in various other cross-cultural productions.

My analysis of these essays and various other cultural items draws attention to these attempts at creating a cross-cultural fascist German-Japanese identity, which emphasised a shared culture between the two nations, while repressing questions of race. Already in 1933/4, for instance, in a lecture to the DJG, Fritz Härtl states: “The worth of a race is determined less by physical characteristics (e.g., color) as by cultural and ethical achievements” (Härtl in Maltarich 165). This statement is all the more surprising given the National Socialists’ fixation on the ‘physical makers’ of race, but as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, it stands in a tradition among German Japanophiles to emphasise cultural achievements over race in the appraisal of Japan. The National Socialist fixation on racial purity and hierarchy made it imperative to downplay race questions to ensure successful cross-cultural collaborations with Japan.\(^{179}\) I will demonstrate how tropes such as that of soil and space (Blut und Boden) instead became paramount to achieving a shared German-Japanese culture.

\(^{179}\) Paul Ostwald, for instance, mentions race only twice in his over 150-page book Germany and Japan. The Friendship of Two Peoples (Deutschland und Japan. Eine Freundschaft zweier Völker) – once in the foreword, once in the afterword. He remarks on the friendship between the German and the Japanese people as even more exceptional when one considers that they belong to different races: “a real friendship between two people that has to be valued even higher because it is about two people from a different race and culture.” ([eine wirkliche] Völkerfreundschaft, die umso höher eingeschätzt werden muß, als es sich um Völker handelt, die einer
Although the German public’s interest in Japan often remained superficial, it appears to have been relatively widespread. Maltarich claims that even Germans not particularly interested in Japan would be exposed to the archipelago in their daily lives through museum exhibitions, newspaper articles and school curriculums testifying to the importance that Nazi Germany attributed to the display of its alliance with Japan (12). Japan was also present in the numerous German-authored novels published in Nazi Germany that dealt with the archipelago, among them Friedrich Maria Fellmann’s *Inji. Novel from the Japan of Today* (*Inji. Roman aus Japans Gegenwart*, 1942), Arthur Ernst Grix’ *Takayama Fights for his Happiness* (*Takayama Ringt um sein Glück*, 1942), Herbert Tjadens’ *Yoko and the Philosophers. Novellas from Japan* (*Yoko und die Philosophen. Novellen aus Japan*, 1942) and Rolf Italiaander’s *Banzai! Stories of Japanese Heroes from Ancient and Present Times* (*Banzai! Japanische Heldengeschichten aus Alter und Neuer Zeit*, 1942). Several novels were also authored by women such as Ilse Jordan’s *Far Away Blossoming Earth* (*Ferne Blühende Erde*, 1939), Maria Piper’s *Kamakura’s Breaking Waves* (*Brandung in Kamakura*, 1935) and the Japanese scholar Suzan von Wittek’s *Melody from Japan* (*Melodie aus Japan*, 1942). Among these authors, most of whom remain obscure today, at least Tjadens appears to have lived in Japan for some time. At the same time, Japanese authors such as Kobayashi Yoshio (*Wanimaru. Südseefahrt Japanischer Pfadfinder, Wanimaru. Southsea Voyage of Japanese Path Finders*, 1937) also published in the German language about Japan. Moreover, there appear to have been several theatrical groups and individuals from Japan that travelled to Germany after the National Socialists took power, among them the conductor Count Konoye, who toured Germany in 1938 and 1939, and the *Takarazuka Revue*, an all-female musical theater troupe founded in 1913 and still active today. Furthermore, although not widely known even in their own time, a number of Japanese documentaries about Japan circulated in Nazi Germany, including *The Field* (*Der Acker*, 1939), *The Hitler Youth Go to
Japan (Japanfahrt der Hitlerjugend, 1938) or The Wild Eagles of Japan (Nippons Wilde Adler, 1942), and imported Japanese feature films like Dawn (Morgenröte, 1939), The New Asia (Das Neue Asien, 1940), Ine and Her Horse (Ine und ihr Pferd, 1941) as well as a German-Japanese feature film The Holy Goal (Kokumin no chikai, Das Heilige Ziel, 1938).183

In this chapter, I will primarily focus on two German-Japanese co-productions: Arnold Fanck’s The Daughter of the Samurai (Die Tochter des Samurai) and Mansaku Itami’s The New Earth (Atarashiki Tsuchi, 「新しい土」, both 1937).184 Through discussing the temporal and spatial interconnections of gender, race, hybridity and family, I will demonstrate how Fanck’s fascists ideology, expressed in the plot and the aesthetics of his film, were contested by Itami and yet how both filmmakers advocated for an explicit imperial agenda. My discussion of gender will focus on the two female stars Ruth Eweler and Hara Setsuko. Whereas Eweler’s Gerda has to fulfill the contradicting role of simultaneously representing the West and Nazi Germany, I argue that Hara’s Mitsuko serves as vehicle of desire and wish fulfilment in Fanck’s film and as a way to push back against Fanck’s depiction of Japan in Itami’s work. I will furthermore analyse the importance of hybridity with regard to Japan’s imperial ambitions and I will demonstrate how all discourses in the film are inextricably linked to the concept of blood and soil. Although Fanck (1889-1974) and Itami’s (1900-1946) co-productions foreground a love triangle between a Japanese man, his German companion, and his Japanese fiancée, I maintain that disputes over imperialist claims, space and gender dwell at the very core of the two films. Fanck attempted to connect Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan by emphasising culture while downplaying race. Although he claimed to capture the “Japanese soul perfectly” (Fanck 339), this chapter demonstrates that his film ultimately reveals more about Germany than about Japan. By contrast, Itami endeavored to push back against the orientalist gaze of his colleague Fanck and attempted to cast Japan as an equal partner of the West in his film. Thus, these films are much more than German-Japanese co-productions; they are also the site of a power struggle between Nazi Germany’s depiction of Japan and Japan’s struggle to assert its own self-image.

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183 The Holy Goal had a Japanese director, Hiromasa Nomura, and with the exception of the actor Sepp Rist as the Olympic coach Peter, a wholly Japanese crew. Arnold Fanck’s camera-man Richard Angst shot the film. Yamada Kōsaku (as Kosçak Yamada) was responsible for the score. He had already worked on The Daughter of the Samurai and The New Earth and the scores are strikingly similar. The film is bilingual. Whenever Peter is on screen, German is spoken. However, when only Japanese characters feature in a scene, Japanese is the language of the film. The film has German subtitles. The Holy Goal was completed in 1939 but only shown in 1942.

184 Itami’s film had no German title and the English title appeared to be used over the Japanese.
3.1.1. The German-Japanese Cinematic Space in the 1930s

Already before the Anti-Comintern Pact was ratified in 1936, the Axis Powers were interested in proving that their alliance was based on real solidarity instead of mere geopolitical convenience. Germany, Japan, and Italy recognized film as an apt medium to prove, display and strengthen their political and cultural ties (Baskett, 2009, 213). Their respective film cultures displayed common thematic preoccupations, including an obsession with discourses of racial purity, imperialist expansions and a belief in the power of the medium film to sway the masses (2009, 213). Axis film cultures were linked by the colonial film genre which propagated the belief that certain nations were destined to rule over others. In this context, Japanese distributors released Italian colonial films on the domestic market (2009, 221). “The process of naturalizing the expansion into and seizure of foreign lands was essential to the imperial project. Japanese film distributors marketed the common experience of empire building as a trope of modernity to which most urban Japanese could relate” (2009, 221-2). Both Fanck’s and Itami’s films participated in this discourse by foregrounding Japan’s new role in the world as defender against communism and as engaged in national expansion abroad. While these films were “meant to publicize Japan’s ‘New Asia’ [The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere] to the world at a time when few outside the Axis formally recognized it,” ultimately they failed to pioneer an international market or launch a new genre of Japanese export films (2009, 219).

Although film productions of the Axis powers were, according to Baskett, never of lasting artistic value and seldom received critical acclaim in their own time, beginning in the 1930s, the Axis nations “showed an almost absolute faith in the ideological power of film” (2009, 213).185 In the early 1930s, Japan and Germany were the largest film producers and consumers in the world, overshadowed only by the United States (Bieber 355). For instance, in 1930 round 300 million viewers saw 146 feature length films in over 500 cinemas in Germany. In comparison, Japan had more than 200 million viewers annually, produced around 600 feature films, and had around 1330 large scale cinemas (355-56). Germany began to export films to Japan in the 1920s. At that time, German films became more popular following a Japanese surge in anti-American sentiment. In 1928, for instance, 19 German films were exhibited in Japan, including Arnold Fanck’s *Der Heilige Berg* (1926).

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185 I will not focus on the German-Italian and the Italian-Japanese cultural space in this work. For an overview on the transnational connections between all three nations in the area of film, see Baskett, *The Attractive Empire*. 
On the administrative level, the Japanese government consulted French, British, Italian and in particular German film legislation, when forging Japan's first Film Law in 1939, which placed almost every aspect of film under the scrutiny of the Japanese government (Baskett, 2009, 213). Japanese policy makers were particularly concerned with the impact of filmic depictions of foreign cultures on the Japanese population, especially women and children, and with possibly distorted interpretations of Japan in foreign film, which could damage “the national dignity of the Japanese empire” (2009, 214). In addition, Japanese films were exported as a means to strengthen the nation’s profile abroad, although with limited success (Baskett, 2008, 120-122). In this context Fanck was recruited to shoot a Japanese film expressly for the international market, under the conviction that, at least according to Fanck, the Japanese film “was incomprehensible abroad” (Fanck 346).

3.1.2. The Daughter of the Samurai/ The New Earth

3.1.2.1. Plot

Fanck’s film appears to be partially based on the English-language semi-autobiography The Daughter of the Samurai (1927) by Sugimoto Etsu Inagaki (1874-1950), of which a German translation by Richard Küas appeared in 1935 under the title Eine Tochter der Samurai. Multiple plot parallels between the novel and Fanck’s film suggest that he knew the novel although he does not credit it as a source.

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186 The Japanese film law was much broader in scope than its German complement, the Lichtspielgesetz: it implemented strict rules for the import and export of films as well as for pre- and post-production and it made the registration of all film industry related personnel compulsory (Baskett, 2008, 215). All film personnel were subjected to exams as a requisite for their license in which they were evaluated in five categories: knowledge of Japanese, and national history, level of “national common sense (kokumin jōshiki)”, knowledge of film, and personality (2008, 215). Baskett claims that the Japanese Film Law imported the anti-Semitic rhetoric and the idea of a ‘Jewish Problem’ from the Lichtspielgesetz. He states that “this rhetoric, in combination with the examination system component of the Japanese Film law, clearly functioned as a useful mechanism by which the government could - and did – effectively exclude undesirable elements from the film industry” (2008, 215). Moreover, anti-Anglo-American ‘film blocs’ were created that banned or censored films that were seen as offensive to the Axis powers.

187 My interpretation of Itami’s film is based on the copy I accessed at the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute in Tokyo. Due to the fragility of the material, I could only see the film once.

188 Unless otherwise noted, plot points and characters cited here appear in both versions.

189 A revised Japanese version was published in 1943.

190 The following themes and tropes can be found in Sugimoto and Fanck’s work: A daughter of a samurai family has been raised in anticipation of a marriage to a Japanese man who studies abroad and whom she barely knows.
The Daughter of the Samurai and The New Earth juxtapose a love triangle between a Japanese man, Teruo, his fiancée Mitsuko and the German woman Gerda with Japan’s expansion plans in Asia and the country’s increasing modernization. The plot sets in when Teruo returns to Japan after several years studying natural sciences and agriculture in Germany, financially supported by his wealthy adopted father, the samurai Yamato Iwao whose daughter, Mitsuko, he is supposed to marry. Teruo had been adopted into the Yamato family to ensure that the family name would continue through marriage to his adopted sister Mitsuko. He is accompanied by the German woman Gerda, a journalist who is working on a story about Teruo. The film crucially only alludes to their relationship. However, Teruo’s reluctance to tell Gerda about his fiancée, his long gazes on her and his open flirting make it clear that Teruo plans to break off his engagement with Mitsuko to be with Gerda. In keeping with Fanck’s objective to depict the characters in his film as archetypes, Gerda represents the West and the turn towards modernity, whereas Mitsuko stands for the East and exemplifies traditional values such as filial obedience, in particular, and Japanese cultural practices in general. Teruo remains strongly tied to the Japanese state and family by feelings of obligation, but continues to vacillate in his choice between the two women and what they represent in the context of urban Tokyo. When he returns to his birth family, humble farmers in the countryside, he sees their poverty and dependence on the Japanese soil. Teruo

The protagonist of Sugimoto’s semi-autobiography takes a night train to Tokyo, just like Mitsuko, and sees her fiancé off when he takes the ship overseas. There is even an episode in which paper strips are thrown unto the ship, a scene that can be found in both Itami and Fanck’s version. The description of the character of Japanese women is also similar. Sugimoto writes “Japanese women are like volcanos” (202), an idea that is also expressed in Fanck’s film but not in Itami’s version.

In Japan, the household name and the continuation of the family name were in the late 19th and early 20th century more important than blood relations. Thus, the adoption of heirs who would take on the family name was a common practice (Morris-Suzuki 114). When Teruo tells Gerda of this custom and explains that the blood and name of a family have to continue, she remarks: “A beautiful tradition. This will be of particular interest at home.” (Schöne Sitte. Das wird gerade bei uns interessieren.) She thus touches on Nazi Germany’s preoccupation with notions of blood and heredity, thereby implicitly alluding to a shared belief in the importance of blood and family between Germany and Japan.

This is further emphasized by Fanck’s decision to divide the films into two parts, respectively headed ‘Westwind’ (West Wind) and ‘Ostwind’ (East Wind). The first part ‘Westwind,’ centers on Gerda and Teruo’s relationship whereas the second part, titled ‘Ostwind,’ focuses on Mitsuko. Teruo’s development in the film thus represents a turn from West towards the East. In the ‘Westwind’ section of the film Gerda and Teruo share most of their scenes on screen. Initially they are mostly shown standing side by side. As the narrative progresses, Gerda and Teruo are usually sitting (maybe because Eweler was taller than Kosugi), with a table between them as physical barrier. In their last shared scene, they are shown on the left and right side of the screen respectively, separated by a large globe.

Teruo’s birth family consists of his parents and two younger sisters: Hideko works in a factory in Tokyo and is portrayed as cheerful modern girl, while a young sister, born after Teruo’s departure to the West, lives with her parents in the countryside. Teruo is the only son. Although his family is impoverished, they are part of an old samurai family, as indicated by shots of samurai swords in their home. Teruo’s adoptive family, consisting of Mitsuko and her father Iwao, likewise descends from an old line of samurais. They remain wealthy.
realizes that in order for the Japanese people to survive, they will have to find new soil to farm and new spaces to grow. In the meantime, Mitsuko, devastated by the fact that Teruo appears to have chosen Gerda over her, attempts to throw herself into a volcano. Teruo rescues her and realizes that Mitsuko is the right woman for him. Gerda returns to Germany and Teruo and Mitsuko reconcile. The last scene shows them married and with a young child farming in Manchuria, China, while a Japanese soldier watches over them.

3.1.2.2. Production Background

*The Daughter of the Samurai* was filmed during the negotiation of the German-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact, a political process in which one of Fanck’s German producers actively participated (Hansen 5). In 1936, the husband and wife-team, the producers Kawakita Nagamasa (1903-1981) and Kawakita Kashiko (1908-1993) invited the German filmmaker Arnold Fanck and his cameraman Richard Angst to Tokyo to begin the production of *The Daughter of the Samurai*. Fanck belonged to the Freiburger Kameraschule and had previously achieved success through a series of mountain films, or Bergfilme, an oeuvre familiar to the Kawakitatas and their targeted audience (1997, 34).

In Japan, Fanck selected Itami Mansaku to co-script his film based on the director’s work in the period-film genre (Baskett, 2009, 226) and a screening of his film *Chūji Uridasu* (*Chūji in His Heyday* or *Chūji Makes a Name for Himself*) (High 160). Itami, an “enormous literary talent as well as a master of psychological portrayal in cinema” (159), took a satiric approach to the genre of period films. Although his earlier films are lost, it appears he had already formulated a subversive and witty critique of authority and samurai codes in them (Jacoby 88) that effectively criticized precisely the kind of government ideologies Fanck sought to proliferate in his German-Japanese project. Not surprisingly,

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194 Kawakita Nagamasa, president of Towa Film and a major distributor of Western films in Japan, was one of the most vocal advocates for raising Japanese films to an international standard and thus opening new international markets. He and Kawakita Kashiko were two of the few Japanese with a practical working knowledge of the European film industry and they had extensive connections to the German film industry, which they used to help Japan break into the international market (Baskett, 2008, 120).

195 Fanck had hoped to realize a second German-Japanese co-production, a film on Genghis Kahn. Set in direct competition to Russian films such as *Panzerkreuzer Potemik* (1925) and without taking into account budget considerations, Fanck had hoped to shoot in Manchuria to narrate a film about how the bravery of Japanese samurai and the combined armies of Germany and Poland had stopped central Asian warriors from ‘overrunning Europe.’ The project had to be canceled after Fanck had already signed the contract, on account of protests by the Chinese central government and eventually also the constraint s of the Second World War (Fanck 349-351).
Fanck and Itami proved to be highly mismatched, with the latter “determined to prevent the film from becoming either an Orientalist travelogue or outright Nazi propaganda” (Baskett, 2009, 226). Itami poured “unveiled scorn on the worst excesses of the protofascists Spiritist faction in Japanese film” (High 159). He turned down Kawakita and Fanck’s proposal for a co-production three times and it remains unclear why he eventually agreed to work on *The Daughter of the Samurai*.\(^{196}\) Itami only agreed to become part of the project on the condition that he could participate in the script’s revision. He wrote his own version, which revolved around Japanese children, but Fanck dismissed this in favour of a clear Proto-Fascist message (161). Increasingly irreconcilable differences between the two filmmakers eventually lead to the production of two versions of the film, both shot by cameraman Richard Angst: a German version directed by Fanck, and an international version edited, and in parts re-shot, by Itami.\(^{197}\) Both filmmakers used the same actors and largely the same sets. According to Angst, after Fanck finished for the day, Itami shot from 7pm to midnight, leading to exhaustion among cast and crew (161). The shooting took six months to complete. Even after the split, Itami maintained his distance from the project, sometimes not appearing on set for days (162).

Both films are bilingual. In Fanck’s version, if a German character is present, German is used, otherwise Japanese is spoken. Likewise, in Itami’s film Japanese is spoken whenever there are only Japanese characters on screen, otherwise the language of the film is English, most likely to boost international appeal. Although conceived as sound-film, it was otherwise filmed according to the directives of a silent film, with a clear narrative, a focus on gestures and facial expressions, and minimal dialogue, so that German and Japanese audiences alike could understand it without the aid of subtitles, which do not appear to have been included (Bieber 359). It is likely that a *benshi*, a live performance narrator, accompanied the Japanese screenings.

Although Fanck and Itami shared the same actors, Itami cut a few roles from his version, including those of Mitsuko’s German teacher and Teruo’s older birth sister. He did not add any new characters. Teruo was played by Kosugi Isamu (1904-1983), already a very popular and established actor in Japan, who

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\(^{196}\) Itami himself refused to comment on *The New Earth* in interviews. Critics such as Kitagawa Fuyuhiko variously assumed that he wanted to sabotage the propagandistic film by producing a bad film, or that he agreed to Fanck’s proposal because he wanted to make a Japanese film that would be shown abroad, or that he was forced to commit to the project by his studio (Hansen 55).

\(^{197}\) According to Fanck, two versions were planned from the very beginning, an unlikely claim that cannot be verified (341).
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came into prominence through his roles in left-wing ‘tendency films’ in the 1920s and 30s.\(^{198}\) By contrast, Hara Setsuko (1920-2015) as Mitsuko was still comparatively unknown, but would go on to become one of the biggest stars in the Japanese cinema. Gerda Storm was played by Ruth Eweler (1913-1947), a relatively unknown new actress. Fanck brought his own technical staff from Germany to Japan, including two of the three principal cameramen of both films: Richard Angst and Walter Riml. Ueda Isamu joined them as third cameraman in Japan (Hansen 51). The costumes, sets and music were the responsibility of a Japanese crew.

Both films should be seen as standalone works. Itami credits Fanck as director alongside his own name in the opening titles of The New Earth, but Fanck does not allude to Itami in his final version of the film. Itami’s film can be understood as a response to what he perceived as an orientalist representation of his nation. His work is part of a struggle for agency in the portrayal of Japan and stands in the longer tradition of authors such as the playwright Kitasato Takeshi who, as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, felt compelled to formulate an artistic response to stereotypical depictions of Japan.\(^{199}\) Itami’s work differs in several key aspects from Fanck’s film: any evidence of Nazi Germany, for instance, is absent and Gerda is most likely supposed to be American, not German.\(^{200}\) The swastika flag which featured prominently in several scenes in Fanck’s film is replaced by American and other international flags in Itami’s version. One of the most profound changes, however, lies in the figure of Mitsuko. Her relationship to Teruo is much more believable and pronounced and overall her character is much better defined and more plausible in Itami’s version. In the course of this chapter I will demonstrate that Mitsuko is the character through whom both directors express their representation of Japan. The themes of colonialism, imperialism and one’s duty to the homeland, while being executed slightly differently, run through both Fanck and Itami’s films.

\(^{198}\) Tendency films took their name from the fact that they “sought to encourage, or fight against a given social tendency” (Anderson and Richie 64). Tendency films are realistic in tone, have a contemporary setting and deal with specific economic or social issues (67).

\(^{199}\) According to Hansen, several Japanese sources such as Nippon Eiga (4/1937) or Kinejun (1.3.1937:13) speak of a lead text in the opening credits of Itami’s film, in which Itami asks the audience to excuse the weakness of the film because it is only the depiction of Japan as a dream of a foreigner (55). However, I have not encountered such a lead text in the version of the film that was available in the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute in Tokyo. Instead, the version that I viewed had a lead text briefly summarizing the film’s plot.

\(^{200}\) Gerda is most likely American since she is juxtaposed with American flags in the background when introduced to the audience. Her precise nationality does not matter in Itami’s film since Itami did not attempt to create a link between Japan and a specific other nation.
The most obvious difference between Fanck and Itami’s films involves the title. Fanck’s *The Daughter of the Samurai* lays its focus on Mitsuko, thereby putting her in the center of the narrative. This was also echoed in the marketing of the film for German audiences, which exploited the ‘exotic’ allure of the main actress Setsuko Hara in promotional materials. In the 1940s, the film was re-released in Germany with the title *The Love of Mitsu* (*Die Liebe der Mitsu*), further emphasising the love story of the film. Itami’s title *Atarashiki Tsuchi*, however, translates as *The New Earth*. In a 1936 interview with Japan’s largest film journal *Eiga no Tomo* (*Cinema Companion*), the producer Kawakita explained that the title referred to more than just Manchuria, it referenced a new chapter in Japan’s film industry: “We have named this film *The New Earth*, and it certainly is new earth both for ourselves and for the Japanese film industry. We pray that this new earth will be fertile soil that gives rise to many different forms of plants and will eventually bear magnificent fruit” (Kawakita in Baskett 2009, 225). Thus, the plan of the Kawakitas was that the films would pioneer new cross-cultural collaborations and ultimately raise Japan’s profile in the world. Consequently, high hopes were attached to the project.

According to Baskett, Fanck wanted to make a film that satisfied Western audiences – a desire that was consistent with Kawakita’s own wish to produce a new type of export film in Japan that would be suitable for international distribution (225). Fanck claimed his film would be the first to “capture the true essence” (Fanck 348) of Japan, but it quickly became apparent that Fanck’s ‘true Japan’ more closely resembled an idealized Japan of the past than the modern state the country had become.

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201 The change of titles among Axis films was a common practice in Japan. Japanese film distributors created titles for imported Axis films through which the concept of colonial expansion could be universalized, naturalized and eventually popularized (Baskett, 2008, 222). For instance, the Japanese title for the Italian film *Luciano Serra Pilota*, a film about fascist Italian pilots fighting a colonial war in Africa, was *Sora Yukaba* (*Should We Go to the Skies*), a reference to the popular war song *Umi Yukaba* (*Should We Go to the Sea*), which aesthetically linked Italian fascism and the Japanese martial spirit and thereby provided audiences in Japan with a readily understandable metaphor (2008, 222).

202 An alternative title was *Brave Little Mitsuko* (*Tapfere Kleine Mitsuko*). After being subjected to heavy censorship, the film was re-released in 1958 with the orientalizing title *Cherry Blossoms, Geishas and Volcanoes* (*Kirschblüten, Geishas und Vulkane*) which suppressed the soil and space motive in favor of well-known Japanese clichés – notwithstanding that the film does not feature any geisha (Bieber 378).

203 In the version available for viewing at the Kawakita Memorial Film Institute, the title of the film is *The New Earth*. The film does not provide the corollary Japanese title in the opening credits.

204 Fanck was careless when it came to the continuity of his film, which indicates that his primary concern was to depict an ‘idealized’ Japan. For instance, he shot night scenes in Osaka that were intended to depict in Tokyo, blatantly disregarding that fact that Japanese audiences would be able to recognize that this was Tokyo, and using geographically well-known and recognizable areas of Japan actually located hundreds of kilometers apart presented as contiguous landscapes in the same location or region. Itami largely avoided this in his version. Fanck also made some factual errors that his Japanese audience would have noticed. Teruo and Gerda, for instance, arrive in Tokyo from Germany by ship, when in reality, they would have had to arrive in Yokohama and in fact do
Kawakita financed the film with 800,000 Yen (around 1.6 million Reichsmark), ten times the cost of an ordinary Japanese feature film (Bieber 360). Germany did not co-finance it. The film premiered in the biggest cinema in Tokyo, with 4500 seats – twice the size of the Berlin Ufa Palace – with members of the royal family and the diplomatic corps in attendance (364). Instead of Fanck’s film, however, Itami’s was shown; the German version premiered a week later in Japan with greater success, resulting in its exhibition in the larger Japanese cinemas in the following weeks (365). In Germany, where Itami’s version appears to not have been shown, Fanck’s film premiered in March 1937 and subsequently circulated widely with great commercial success. Nonetheless, the films failed to forge a new genre of German-Japanese co-productions, nor did they pioneer a new international market for Japanese export films.

3.2. Nature, Soil, and Imperialism

3.2.1. Nature, the Individual, and the Nation – German-Japanese Bergfilme

In this section I will demonstrate how Fanck linked the Japanese natural landscape and national character. Fanck used the concept of blood and soil and the act of climbing a mountain to consolidate Teruo’s position between the West and Japan. To that end, he employed tropes from the mountain film genre. Fanck’s extensive use of landscape shots, coupled with his focus on rural Japan, cherry blossoms and Mt. Fuji, aligns with how the National Socialists conceived Japan as image in the broadest sense. Maltarich claims the latter “treated the ‘Japan’ passed down by the western tradition as a collection of images. Lecture tours that used pictures of Japan combined with ideologically loaded texts provided a model for the depiction of Japan during National Socialist rule as a whole” (128). Fanck’s film opens on an aerial shot of a model of Japan, including the Korean peninsula. The rugged coast, volcanoes and sea are shown in quick succession, establishing the main topographical motifs of the film. The scene so in Itami’s version. These seemingly minor errors in continuity demonstrate that Fanck made his film for a German audience under the assumption they would not notice them.

205 A possible reason for this could lie in the outbreak of World War II, which made such large-scale cross-cultural productions impossible.

206 Fanck’s preoccupation with exterior shots of the natural beauty of the archipelago contrasted with his off-hand representation of metropolitan Japan, in particular Tokyo and Osaka. This is in line with the National Socialists’ preference for the countryside over the city. Fanck himself described Tokyo as “desolate” and “one of the ugliest cities” (Fanck 331).
culminates in a shot of Mount Fuji [0:01:55]. Fanck introduces one of his leitmotifs in the very first shot: the Japanese landscape, particularly the mountains.

The motif of the mountain had already gained popularity in 19th century Germany through a series of Alpine *Heimat* novels by Ludwig Ganghofer (1855-1920) (von Moltke 42-43). Ganghofer’s novels were repeatedly made into films between the 1920s and the 1940s and were important for the aesthetics of the so-called *Heimat- and Bergfilme*: impressive nature shots took precedence over plot and character development; the spatial limitation of the mountain terrain and the threat of the Alpine regions for climbers and inhabitants defined this genre (43-44). Moreover, Christian Rapp in his discussion of German mountain films, demonstrates that already in the 19th century German and Austrian imaginary the mountain became “a territory uncoupled from time and civilisation in which a fragmented individual can restore his mind and body” (8). I will demonstrate in this section that the mountain in Fanck’s film serves as such a consolatory space.

According to Rentschler, commentators on German cinema such as Siegfried Kracauer saw the *Bergfilm*, a genre that was widespread in Weimar cinema, as harbinger of fascists ideologies because these films “glorify submission to inexorable destiny and elemental might, anticipating fascist surrender to irrationalism, destiny and brute force” (91). Kracauer regards the mountain film as an “exclusively German” genre (Kracauer 110), whose allure derives from the representation of nature on screen. Overall, mountain films were interfused with “a kind of heroic idealism and an enthusiasm for nature that echoed that of the landscape paintings of the German Romantics” (111). In *Fascinating Fascism*, Susan Sontag’s criticism of the German filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl’s attempt to distance herself from her connections to National Socialism, Sontag discusses the link between mountain films and fascist ideology: “Mountain climbing in Fanck’s film was a visually irresistible metaphor for unlimited aspiration toward the high mystic goal, both beautiful and terrifying, which as later to become concrete in the Führer-worship” (76). As an explicitly German genre, disseminating German values, the mountain film

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207 In contrast to Fanck’s footage of a tumultuous sea, Itami’s introduction to Japan features a shot of calm waters and a sunrise. Thus, Itami’s beginning is much less dramatic than Fanck’s. Although still foregrounding the Japanese landscape, Itami does not depict the land as threatened and in turmoil.

208 Despite its aesthetic links to fascism, Rentschler point out that mountain films were popular with both the Left and the Right during the Weimar Republic, “indicating common needs and shared desires that crossed party lines” (96). The “numerous temporal markers” that Rentschler sees as often overlooked modern tendencies in mountain films, such as tourist resorts, weather stations, hotels and airplanes, however, are missing in *The Daughter of the Samurai*’s mountain scenes. In his German-Japanese production, Fanck presents the mountains as an explicitly wild, premodern, and dangerous place.
enabled Fanck to render the Asian archipelago more accessible to German audiences by utilizing an already familiar and established framework for his ‘Japanese story.’

Although it is missing from most of the discussions of Fanck’s mountain film oeuvre (see Rentschler, Rapp, von Moltke), *The Daughter of the Samurai* – with its extensive landscape shots and the significance it attributes to mountainous terrain – also belongs to the genre of the *Bergfilm*. Fanck, a pioneer of this genre, primarily shot mountain films before directing *The Daughter of the Samurai*. His oeuvre inevitably influenced his Japanese film. Next to the three main characters, Teruo, Mitsuko and Gerda, the natural world arguably comprises a fourth protagonist. Through images of nature, Fanck draws connections between a particular national character and the landscape, but also conjures an aestheticized, idealized image of Japan. The last third of the film involves extensive footage shot on a volcano. Mitsuko and Teruo each, in turn, climb a volcano that is close to eruption: Mitsuko to commit suicide, Teruo to save her. The scenes, accompanied by dramatic music and frequent shots of both protagonists as tiny figures overshadowed by the mountainous backdrop, closely resemble the genre of the mountain film.

According to Rapp, in mountain films, the mountain is a space which can only be accessed after a “social decoupling” (9). Teruo and Mitsuko stand outside the Japanese society when scaling the volcano: Teruo through his rejection of his place within the nation and Mitsuko through her plan to commit suicide. At the close of the mountain climbing scene, both have redeemed themselves and are able to take up their roles within the Japanese society. In his study of *Heimatfilme*, von Moltke devoted a section to mountain films which he defines as a subset of the genre. For him nature in mountain films “calls on heroic masculinities [...] to settle individual conflicts by confronting the mountain” (49). Mountain films frequently culminate in acts of heroism and self-sacrifice, often by a confused male adolescent adolescent...

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209 For instance, the initial scene, comprised entirely of landscape shots, is more than a minute long (0:53–2:05) and an almost two-minute long scene which introduces the culture evening consists exclusively of cherry blossom shots (39:39–41:18). When Teruo returns to his birth family, his journey is intercut with footage of Mt. Fuji and of rice farmers (50:53 – 52:05). In addition, the scene in which Teruo rescues Mitsuko from the volcano consists almost entirely of volcanic nature shots and its more than 15 minutes long (1:20:08 – 1:37:52).

210 This idealization of Japan is also evidence in the complete absence of military conflict or of scenes of war and rebellion – despite Fanck’s direct experience of the upheaval and social tumult in Japan during stay there. In his memories, for instance, he writes of having experienced a ‘revolution’ on his second day in Tokyo, possibly alluding to the Army Mutiny of February 1936.

211 According to Fanck, most shots of the active volcano are from Mount Asama (345); shots of the non-active volcano were captured by Angst on Mount Aso (346).

212 This stands in contrast to the Heimatfilms, where nature serves as “the backdrop for social conflicts and the restauration of community” (von Moltke 49).
protagonist (Rentschler 93). Fanck emphasises the hardship of the Teruo’s rescue mission through frequent shots of Teruo’s burned feet and his pained face. This emphasis on agony falls, according to Sontag, in line with fascist aesthetics which are defined by “a preoccupation with situations of control, submissive behavior, extravagant effort, and the endurance of pain” (91). Yet, although Teruo faces a range of obstacles before reaching Mitsuko – he must swim across a lake [1:21:50-1:24:25] and scale rugged peaks, while his clothes and hair become increasingly burned and dishevelled – Mitsuko appears to scale the volcano almost without problems. Her kimono, hair and skin remain impeccable. Fanck emphasises Teruo’s suffering, and by extent his redemption, in these scenes whereas Mitsuko’s image as highly stylized woman remains intact. Teruo’s redemption through suffering carries strong religious overtones.

Von Moltke’s observations on the sublime in Fanck’s Storms over the Mont Blanc (Stürme über dem Mont Blanc, 1930), which he sees as prototype of the mountain film, also hold true with regard to the Daughter of the Samurai. In both films Fanck relies on romantic iconography that lends a sublime atmosphere to the nature shots: emphasis on diagonals, stark contrasts in colour between fore- and background, and the representation of human figures as tiny compared to the scenery (46). In The Daughter of the Samurai Fanck infuses his mountain climbing scenes with Buddhist and Christian imaginary: when Mitsuko stands at the edge of the volcano, for instance, Fanck superimposes the image of a Buddhist statue over shots of clouds and smoke [1:32:42]. The statue appears almost as a natural extension of the similarly-shaped mountain and the clouds, thereby connecting nature and the sublime. Fanck renders the peak of the mountain a sacred space, removed from ordinary life, a heterotopia offering the perfect backdrop for the drama of Mitsuko’s suicide attempt. After Teruo reaches Mitsuko, Fanck abandons his Buddhist icon in favor of a Christian image: similar to a Pietà, Teruo cradles the unconscious Mitsuko in his arms after her rescue [1:37:23]. In giving up his individualistic desires and in suffering through Mitsuko’s rescue, Teruo has made the ultimate sacrifice and can now be harmoniously united with his family and his nation. If, as Sontag claims “Nazi films are epic of achieved community, in which everyday reality is transcended through ecstatic self-control and submission” (87), The Daughter of the Samurai can be regarded as an exemplary Nazi film in this respect.

Even when the volcano and the mountains are not directly present in a scene, they continue to shape the behaviors of his protagonists: Gerda is scared of the volcano’s rumbling, Teruo invokes the Japanese volcanoes as exemplary of the national character of his countrymen, and Mitsuko’s German teacher describes his student as volcano-like, an assertion that will be further discussed in section 3.4.1.
Mitsuko’s alignment with the volcano fits well within the framework of mountain films which rendered “exterior nature and female bodies as spaces of exploration and sanctuary, mountains and women representing unpredictable and autonomous natural forces” (Rentschler 107). In the course of this chapter I will demonstrate that Mitsuko is linked to the Japanese landscape and especially to the volcano, throughout Fanck’s film. Teruo’s final ascent thus has a double meaning: by scaling the mountain, he has to show his connection to and domination of both the volcano and of his future bride. Thus, Fanck represents the Japanese soil as almost divine, with long landscape shots accompanied by solemn music throughout his film. In contrast to Fanck’s aesthetically pleasing representations of the archipelago, which foregrounded Mt Fuji and cherry blossoms, Itami throughout his film instead depicted farmers toiling under duress but nonetheless closely connected to the earth – hereby emphasizing the sustaining importance of soil for Japanese farmers struggling with poverty at that time (Baskett, 2009, 227).²¹³

Although Fanck’s film did not pioneer a new genre of German-Japanese co-productions, a second German-Japanese film was made around the same time that also made extensive use of the mountain theme: Hiromasa Nomura’s The Holy Goal (Das Heilige Ziel, Kokumin no Chikai).²¹⁴ Here, as in Fanck’s film, nature is the fourth protagonist besides the figure of a German ski coach and his two Japanese protégées. However, in contrast to the German director, Nomura abstained from showing idealized and aesthetic depictions of Japan. Instead of Mount Fuji and cherry blossoms, the audience is confronted with the stark mountain terrain of winter Hokkaidō. The Holy Goal features striking mountain vistas,

²¹³ In the Japanese left-wing ‘tendency film’ of the late 1920 and 1930s, this was a familiar topic, expressing itself in Uchida Tomu’s Earth (1939), a film about the difficult lives of Meiji-farmers, as well as in Toyoda Shirō’s Ōhinata-mura (1940) about the mass immigration of a Japanese agriculture colony to Manchuria (Baskett, 2008, 227). The New Earth was not the first film in which Itami used the farming motif to make a political statement. In Chūji Uridasu (1935), a film now lost, Itami formulated a critique of social injustice and totalitarianism by telling the story of a farmer who falls victim to government tyranny (Jacoby 122). Likewise, the return home to the countryside from the city was a motif Itami used in his 1937 Kokyo (Hometown), a film that depicts the return of a woman from Tokyo to her rural birthplace to work as a teacher (122).

²¹⁴ Richard Angst shot and co-wrote The Holy Goal. The film follows two Japanese ski jumpers, the friends Akira and Takeo, and their German coach Peter as they prepare for the 1940s Olympics in the mountains of Hokkaidō. Two family tragedies back in Tokyo, the death of Takeo’s mother and the injury of Akira’s lover Natsuko, threaten their training. Akira decides to run away from the training to visit his lover in the Tokyo hospital. She tells him to return to his training as it is his duty to represent Japan at the Olympics. Akira returns to Hokkaidō where his coach Peter expels him from the training as punishment for running away. After nearly dying in an avalanche, he is forgiven and allowed to resume his training. The film ends with the two ski jumpers and their German trainer leaving for the Olympics. In representing Japan at the Olympics, Takeo and Akira have to put their individual desires aside to serve their country. In this context, sport becomes a thinly-veiled analogy to military service and sacrifice.
breathtaking camera drives through masses of snow and impressive shots of natural catastrophes. Frequently the protagonists are shown on a tiny scale compared to the mountains, remaining essentially one-dimensional. It is arguably Hokkaidō’s natural beauty that leaves the strongest impression on the audience. Thus, although employing different imaginaries, both films exhibit the same fascination with the Japanese landscape. In both films, the scaling of mountains metonymizes the overcoming of the ego in order to better serve the nation. Through facing and eventually mastering the harsh beauty of the Hokkaidō Mountains, the Japanese protagonists of The Holy Goal are able to consolidate their individualistic desires with their service to the nation. Likewise, in the next section I will demonstrate that for Fanck’s character, Teruo, reconnecting with nature is inextricably tied with rejoining the nation as well as with the ideology of blood and soil.

3.2.1. Teruo’s Return to a Volk ohne Raum

According to David Welch, among the few key themes Nazi propaganda intended to be disseminated via the medium of film, were the ideologies of Blut und Boden (blood and soil) and Volk ohne Raum (people without space), two themes crucial to National Socialist’ ideology throughout the Third Reich (81). Through these concepts, the National Socialists aimed to elevate peasant virtues, the sacredness of German soil, and Nordic history and mythology in order to prove that the artificial boundaries created by the Treaty of Versailles could not limit the living space of the Volk. Thus, while the ideologues of the blood and soil trope were preoccupied with the future, a future where the German Volk could live in its rightful space, the concept was actually rooted in an imagined past of Germanic tradition and myth (81). The conviction that the German people did not have enough space to live and grow served as one of the cornerstones of National Socialist ideology. Hans Grimm (1875-1959) already popularized the concept in his novel People without Space (Volk ohne Raum, 1926), which follows the protagonist Cornelius Friebott on his quest to find new living space (Lebensraum) for the German people overseas, particularly in Africa.

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215 The ideology of blood and soil was one of the few concepts in National Socialism that “displayed any sort of consistency” (Welch 84). Welch identifies two underlying precepts: first to bring the nation to an awareness of its alleged ethnic and political unity and to establish its need for new living spaces. Second, the concept was used to prepare them for the necessity of future invasions and annexations as justification for the liberation of oppressed ethnic Germans outside Germany (84-5). A testament of the importance of the concept are the multiple films that were produced at that time which made use of the blood and soil ideology, among them: Phantom Rider (Schimmelreiter, 1934), I for You – You for Me (Ich für Dich – Du für Mich, 1934), An Enemy of the People (Ein Volksfeind, 1937), The Journey to Tilsit (Die Reise nach Tilsit, 1939) and Sacrifice (Opfergang, 1944) (85-6).
Grimm’s novel gained popularity in the years following its first publication, selling over 300,000 copies by 1935 (Baranowski 152). Film was considered an especially apt medium for this message, not only because of its mass appeal, but first and foremost, because “it dealt in visual images, the most powerful and persuasive of all illustrations” (Welch 81). Thus, Fanck’s film relies heavily on stylized and grandiose shots of nature evoking the idea of a mythical past unspoiled by modernity.

While the Volk-ohne-Raum trope is generally understood as a typically German, Japanese thinkers also took it up. Following a devastating famine in 1934, a solution to the problem of feeding Japanese farmers was proposed by the right-wing, radical army officer Hashimoto Kingorō (1880-1957) who rationalized Japan’s expansion into Manchuria:

> There are only three ways left to Japan to escape from the pressure of its surplus population... emigration, greater access to world markets, and expansion of territory. The first door, emigration, has been barred to us by the anti-Japanese immigration politics of other countries. The second door, to world markets, is being pushed shut by tariff barriers and the abrogation of commercial treaties. [...] It is quite natural that Japan should rush upon the last remaining door. (Hashimoto in Hane 117)

The Nazis’ preoccupation with the concepts of Blut und Boden and Volk ohne Raum were also central to Nazi Germany’s portrayal of Japan. According to Maltarich “the geography of Japan served to literally ground Nazi ideology as reflected in Japan” (131). The Nazis’ emphasis on the formative role of soil and ground, as well as of landscape and climate in the development of a people was combined with their valorization of country living over urban culture, influenced their depiction of Japan, thereby also promoting Nazi ideology (132). Japan’s geography provided an explanation for that country’s aggressive expansion policy (132). Japan in this case “served as a separate demonstration of German principles present in a distant and yet similarly powerful and authentic land” (138). In this context, Ostwald, for instance, imputes a common history to Germany and Japan following their departure from the League of Nations in 1933: “The next years brought these nations, these people without space, politically closer in their shared fight for their right to live against England” (107). Thus, the people without space trope not only brought Japan and Germany closer together, it also set these two countries in opposition to other nations such as England or France. Ostwald quotes the Japanese ambassador Mushakōji in 1935: “With regard to economic structures there are two types of countries in the world: One category has extensive territories with rich resources and the other has not. Germany and Japan belong to the second

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216 Die nächsten Jahre sollten dann beide Nationen als Völker ohne Raum und in ihrem gemeinsamen Kampf um ihr Lebensrecht gegen England in immer engere politische Führung bringen.
One often speaks of ‘people without space’. This is true with regard to these last named countries” (Mushakōji in Ostwald 141-2). Thus, it is fitting that Fanck chose the motive of soil and space to connect Germany and Japan in his film.

The idea that a people’s living space could shape their character and behavior, is found in both German and Japanese thought and also finds expression in Grimm’s novel, where one character claims: “Is it right that a German child is born into such constrictions [the relatively small size of Germany in relation to its population] that it can’t do anything else but become quarrelsome? That if it was born with qualities of bravery, it has to walk the path of evil out of necessity?” (Grimm 1241). In 1936 Stoye commented in his book, Japan. Danger or Role Model? (Japan. Gefahr oder Vorbild?) on the connection between the Japanese soil and the Japanese character. The ability to live in a land that is shaken frequently by natural catastrophes, he claims, sets the Japanese apart from mainland neighbors such as China and is the reason for their superiority (Stoye in Maltarich 137). Fanck clearly references these ideas when Teruo explains the Japanese character to Gerda. In the first German sentences of the film, Teruo links the braveness of the Japanese people to earthquakes and other natural disasters. He clearly regards the harshness of the natural environment and the elements, the scarcity of living space, and loyalty to one’s country as the most important elements of Japanese culture.

Various characters throughout Fanck’s film express the concern that, although Japanese soil is good, it is not enough to feed the Volk. When talking to Gerda about Japan’s imperial ambitions for Manchuria,
Teruo justifies Japanese expansion in agricultural terms, claiming that there is fertile soil in Manchuria but no will and no knowledge to farm it [0:31:00]. Likewise, at the end of the film, after Teruo and Mitsuko have reconciled, Teruo's birth father tells them that there is not enough space in Japan for its people and that the Japanese soil cannot feed the Volk. Long sequences of farmers working with old-fashioned tools are intercut during this statement [0:31:06-0:31:12]. On a visual level, frequent intercuts of landscape shots and, particularly in Itami's film of farmers and fields, emphasize the importance of soil for both films.

The preoccupation with soil and by extension with an imperial agenda is made into a masculine fixation engendered in the narrative and the symbolic names of the characters. For the Japanese audience, the importance of soil is established through the names of the male characters. In her insightful analysis of Fanck's film, Hansen devoted a chapter to the symbolic names of The Daughter of the Samurai (Hansen 30-40). She demonstrated that all main characters are named according to their function in the film. Due to the nature of the Japanese language, the meaning of a name could not always be determined through sound but was instead publicized through written material such as commercials or newspaper articles. The importance of earth and soil for the film is emphasized through the fact that the names of all male characters are connected to the earth. Teruo's full name, Kanda Teruo consists of the following characters: 神田輝雄. 輝雄, Teruo, means ‘shining,’ ‘glorious’ or ‘brilliant man’; 神田, Kanda, 221 Fanck could not speak Japanese and could therefore not have created the names. It is not known who was responsible for naming the characters. However, Fanck claims that Kawakita Kashiko worked with him on the final version of the script (339). It is possible that she influenced the choice of names.

222 A lot of Japanese words are homophones and they can have different meanings despite having the same pronunciation. A simple example is the word hashi which can mean either bridge or chopsticks. Just from hearing the word in isolation it is not possible to know what it means. However, the kanji of both words are different. Hashi as in bridge is written 橋, hashi meaning chopsticks is 筷. Thus, seeing the word written, the meaning becomes clear. ‘Teruo’ for instance can be written as follows: 輝夫, 照夫, 照雄. Only by seeing which characters were chosen in the written material to represent the name, the audience could access the full meaning of it.

223 Female characters are not linked with the soil and space trope. Mitsuko is written as 光子, 子 (ko) is the character for child, or young woman and a common character in female names, whereas 光 (hikari) means light. Mitsuko is thus literally the ‘child of light’. Fanck might have chosen this name because German audiences were most likely already familiar with it and connected it to Japan. Mitsuko (1874-1941), the Countess of Coudenhove-Kalergi, was a well-known Japanese woman married to an Austrian diplomat as well as the name of a 1911 perfume. Just like the male characters in the film, Gerda, too, has a speaking name. Her surname is Sturm (storm). The storm is a recurrent motive in Fanck’s film. Moreover, Gerda means protector or guardian and it can also mean defense boundary, connecting the name to the trope of space. The names of the Japanese characters are directly connected to Japan whereas the only German character with a speaking name has a name that connects her to upheaval and disturbance. Thus, Fanck expresses the difficulty that Gerda’s presence creates for the Japanese characters.
is a field that is associated with a shrine.\footnote{Hansen translates 輝雄 as ‘shining hero’ and 神田 as ‘divine rice paddy.’} The name of his adopted family is Yamato (大和), an ancient name for Japan and not commonly a surname in Japan. Through his first name Teruo is exemplified as hero, the savior of Mitsuko and a heroic figure in his service for his country. His last names connect him to his homeland by simultaneously alluding to ancient Japan and to the almost divine importance of rice for the nation.\footnote{Rice, for instance, served as an offering at shrines and temples, connecting it to the mythical realm of the Gods.} The name of Teruo and Mitsuko’s father Iwao (巌) means ‘huge rock’ or ‘rock cliff.’ Iwao is the still center of his family, or the rock upon which his family, and by extension the Japanese state, rests.\footnote{Both Fanck and Itami repeatedly intercut their narratives with images of the Japanese rocky coast against which high waves break – symbolizing at once the precariousness of the Japanese situation and the strength of Japan in the face of dangerous winds from the West.} Teruo’s birth father’s name, Kōsaku, 耕作, means ‘farming’ or ‘the cultivation of land.’ Both Itami and Fanck continuously stress the importance of soil for their films on the narrative and the visual level as well as through the symbolic names. Ultimately, it is precisely the Japanese soil that beckons Teruo to return to his Volk and take up its imperial work.

3.3. A Hybrid Man in a Hybridized Land – Teruo’s Role in the Imperial Project

The following analysis of the films will further expound upon Teruo’s hybridized character, the role of gender within the film as a reflection of gendered discourse on Japan at that time, and related to that, the significance of the Japanese family for the imperial project. All three points, I argue, are closely connected to questions of soil and space.

As demonstrated in the introductory chapter, Japanese thinkers utilized the notion of hybridity to support Japan’s colonialist expansions. Colonized subjects were foremost regarded as incomplete Japanese and Japan’s putative ability to successfully and peacefully incorporate other cultures and languages into a hybrid state came to justify its colonial expansionism. At least in theory, Japan was able to incorporate outside influences without losing its ‘Japaneseness.’\footnote{Similar thoughts can be found in the writings of Nitobe and Ichikawa, who both claimed that Japan consolidated Western technology with the ‘Japanese spirit’. The German ambassador to Tokyo, Dr. Solf (1862-1936, ambassador from 1920-1928) expressed the same idea about Japan already in 1929: “These highly gifted people in the East [had] taken everything that was comprehensible from the West, adapted it and made it blossom. But while doing this, it retained its treasures of Eastern wisdom, the endless richness of its art that was created from ancient Eastern tradition” (Solf in Ostwald 73).} Nazi thought was similarly
preoccupied with how a successful modernization could be achieved while still preserving what was perceived as uniquely German to its culture (Maltarich 146). In this light, Japan’s hybridity, its history of ‘successfully’ incorporating foreign influences without losing its ‘Japanese essence,’ proved exemplary for Nazi Germany (145). “Germany depicted Japan as facing and overcoming the very same problems of modernization that so occupied Nazi thought in ways similar to or exemplary for their proposed solution” (146). Thus, Teruo’s consolidation of his hybridity, exemplary of how to unite modernity and tradition, is ultimately a model story not only for a ‘correct’ Japanese modernity but also for Nazi Germany. Japan’s “capacity for mimicking [...] foreign technology, and [...] Japan’s reputation as a paradoxical combination of these modern, foreign elements and ancient tradition [...] recommended Japan as a role model for Nazi ‘reactionary modernism’” (141). The fear that Westernization would erode Japanese traditional culture was often expressed, especially by Western travellers, even before the National Socialists came into power, but it fitted especially well into the anti-modern tendencies of Nazi policy which articulated a similar anxiety about the possible dissolution of traditional German culture through Anglo-American influences (143).

The idea of a Japan with ‘two faces,’ to invoke an expression used by Teruo to describe his home country, is re-interpreted by the National Socialists as an exemplary model for the union between romantic beliefs and industrial technology (141). Maltarich writes:

The idea that westernization tainted or destroyed what was truly Japanese in Japan [...] mirrored the early volkish position in Germany, which saw the leveling force not as western but, more specifically as Anglo-American. On the other hand, the oft-cited Japanese ability to maintain tradition while adopting western technologies seemed to the Germans a national virtue. [...] Japan served as proving ground for German theories and beliefs, as an example to the German people [...]. (141-142)

The seemingly harmonious unity between modernity and tradition, captured in the ‘happy ending’ of Fanck and Itami’s films served Germans as a role model and affirmed Nazi Germany’s own beliefs regarding the interplay of time, modernity and culture (142). Thus, Japan’s hybrid identity, its tense unification of modernity and tradition, fitted well into Nazi German ideologies.

These ‘anti-modern tendencies’ were used to further connect Germany and Japan. In 1941 Ostwald writes: “[Germany and Japan] are aware of the necessities of life and the technical needs of the new time but they are committed to reviving the national tradition and to the keeping of their folklore... Zivilisation erfaßbar war, übernommen, sich angepasst und zur Blüte gebracht. Aber es hat dabei die Schätze der östlichen Weisheit und die unendlichen Reichtümer seiner Kunst bewahrt, die uralte östliche Tradition geschaffen.)
Thus, Teruo’s initially unchecked adoption of Western values and ideas coupled with his rejection of traditional Japan is presented as highly problematic in the film. Yet his final decision for Mitsuko and for his homeland and his ability to consolidate his Western influences with his Japanese roots, instantiates the successful unity of modernity and tradition for both nations. In the context of the National Socialists’ ideology “Japan would serve as proof of the possibility of using technology without spoiling the spiritual, traditional foundation of ‘culture’” (Maltarich 144).

Teruo’s Bildungsweg, from disruptive force to tool for Japan’s imperialist ambitions, illustrates how hybridity can be subverted into an instrument for colonialist agendas. Teruo is the archetype of a modern Japanese hybrid, effectively the ‘child’ of a hybrid Japan. When Teruo is first introduced to the audience, for instance, he is on board a ship about to arrive in Japan after departing from Europe. He has spent eight years in Germany, is fluent in German, wears Western clothes and has internalized a yearning for supposedly Western concepts such as individual freedom, while at the same time retaining strong ties to his homeland. His conflicted feelings both towards Japan and the West can be seen as typical for his time (Sakai 135). In the first extended dialogue of the film, Teruo attempts to describe his native country to Gerda [0:04:27-0:07:00]. In the engine room of the ship, he explains to her that Japan is only a free (not-colonized) country because in the last moment it chose to adopt western technology: “Woe our old Nippon if we hadn’t just learned this from you at the last moment. Otherwise there would be no free Japan anymore.” From the start of the film, Fanck establishes the German-Japanese relation as one of parent/teacher and child/student, a sentiment more or less subtly expressed throughout his film. The scene cuts to a montage of the Japanese heavy industry repeatedly intercut

228 [Deutschland und Japan] bejahen bewußt die Lebensnotwendigkeiten und technischen Bedürfnisse der neuen Zeit, halten aber dabei fest an der Wiederbelebung der nationalen Traditionen und an der Erhaltung ihres durch Leib und Seele bestimmten Volkstums.

229 Wehe unserem alten Nippon wenn wir das nicht gerade noch im letzten Moment von euch gelernt hätten sonst gäbe es kein freies Japan mehr.

230 In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that a Japanese-German student-teacher relationship was widely accepted in Imperial Germany. The same idea is also expressed throughout Ostwald’s Deutschland und Japan: “It was on the account of the guidance and upbringing by German officers that Japan was able to win a war against China already in 1894/5 and even defeated Russia ten years later in Manchuria” (Ostwald 32, emphasis mine). (Der Führung und der Erziehung durch deutsche Offiziere hatte Japan es jedenfalls zu danken, wenn es schon 1894/5 seinen siegreichen Krieg gegen China führen konnte, und wenn es zehn Jahre später sogar Rußland in der Mandschurei zu schlagen vermochte.) The parent/child or teacher/student relationship can also be found in The Holy Goal. Although the director of the film was Japanese and it appears that there were no German co-writers involved in the script, the relationship between the German and the Japanese characters is remarkably unequal. Since Peter is Akira and Takeo’s coach, their relationship has to be one of teacher-student. Peter takes an almost
with shots of a ‘Made in Japan’ label being stamped on pieces of fabric. After disembarking in Tokyo, Gerda expresses her disappointment that Tokyo looks just like Berlin and nothing like the image in her head. Western and Japanese scripts are superimposed on shots of Tokyo streets through bright neon signs. Traditional Japanese music accompanies pictures of dazzling lights and modern buildings. Teruo explains that Japan has two faces: an old, traditional Japanese face and a new, hybrid face. Moreover, when visiting his old teacher, a priest in a Shinto shrine, Teruo is told that it was right of him to learn the ways of the West and that it would be dangerous to ignore Western thinking and technology: “It is good that you breathed in some of the spirit of the West because it has become necessary so that our aged Nippon can continue to exist in the fight of the world powers for space on earth.” Hybridity is here explicitly brought into the context of the people without space trope. The film continuously stresses the hybridity of the Japanese character and state and the importance of this hybridity for Japan survival and modernization. While ultimately this hybridity is also elementary for Japan's imperial ambitions, the connection between the West and Japan is not without its dangers as exemplified in Teruo's conflict.

Teruo’s hybridity is a threat to the stability of his own state. Bhabha had elaborated on the danger of hybridity and mimicry for the colonizer in his “Signs Taken for Wonders” in which he states that hybridity “enables a form of subversion” (154). While Teruo is certainly a subversive and disruptive force, he is not a threat so much to any colonizer as to his own nation. For instance, immediately after Teruo’s birth family receives a letter announcing their son’s immanent return to Japan, their region experiences a frightening earthquake, foreshadowing the disruptive force of modernity Teruo will bring with him from Europe. If Teruo’s hybridity is thus a subversive and unsettling force, how is his return to his Volk and his place in society staged? In this section, I will demonstrate that Teruo's change into a model member of the Japanese state is closely tied to questions of soil and space.

Fanck stages Teruo’s decision process between Mitsuko and Gerda, and by extension between the West and Japan in several scenes in the film. When Teruo visits a bar in Tokyo, for instance, Fanck not so subtly places a Japanese woman with sake and a Western woman with wine on either side of him. His fatherly stance to the two ski jumpers, but he is often patronizing and superior, dismissing their concerns and even threatening physical violence when disobeyed.

231 “Tell me, are we in Japan or in Berlin? […] That’s not how I imagined Tokyo” (Sag mal sind wir jetzt in Japan oder Berlin? […] So habe ich mir Tokio nicht vorgestellt.) [0:17:58–0:18:55].

232 És ist gut, wenn du von dem Geist des Westens ein wenig eingedrungen hast, denn er ist nötig geworden auf das unser gealtertes Nippon bestehen könne im Kampf der Mächte um den Raum der Erde. [0:46:53–0:49:39]

233 Throughout the film, Germany and Japan are allegorized by female characters and Teruo must continually choose between Western women and Japanese women.
inability to choose between the two is underlined by a disharmonious mixture of traditional Japanese and Western music. Eventually, it is the face of the Japanese woman that Teruo, drunk both on sake and wine, can see clearly whereas the face of the Western woman has become blurred and unrecognizable, foreshadowing the direction of Teruo’s later decision. Fanck overlays shots of interracial couples dancing with images of the bar, Teruo’s face and the musicians to create an overall atmosphere of confusion and unwholesomeness. [00:36:01] The scene ends with a close-up of Teruo’s desperate face struggling with indecision, his head in his hands. In fact, it is an evening with his birth sister, Hideko, during which Teruo enjoys a variety of Japanese cultural events and items, from Sumo to Sake, that initiates his return to his birth family, which in turn leads to his decision to marry Mitsuko [0:41:00-0:45:57]. Teruo and Hideko attend a Noh performance that includes a scene in which a priest confronts a demon. While watching the performance, Hideko and Teruo talk about the language of the play. Neither of them can fully grasp the exact meaning of the play because the words are unfamiliar to them. However, Teruo claims that the ancestral blood which flows in his veins enables him to connect on a more instinctive and profound level with his culture [0:45:53]. Thus, Teruo is tied to Japan both by culture and by blood, and both intertwine closely. His contact with what German audiences would have perceived as original and traditional Japanese culture prompts Teruo’s return to his native roots. Crucially, such an evening does not feature in Itami’s version.

In both Fanck and Itami’s film, the most important scene, indeed, turning point of the film, occurs when Teruo visits his birth family. Fanck intercuts shots of Teruo walking towards Mount Fuji and his familial home with shots of pilgrims in traditional clothing, underscoring the almost divine aspects of this rice farming family and their connection to the Japanese earth and highlighting that Teruo himself is on a pilgrimage to his roots [0:51:19]. After a day with his family, Teruo comes to realize their poverty and their reliance on him. Unable to sleep, he rises early the second morning and starts to farm his father’s land, whose fields lie close to Mount Fuji. Teruo derives joy not only from the activity but also from the soil itself. He takes it in his hands and smears the water of the rice paddy on his face. The scene is accompanied by solemn, traditional Japanese music. The viewer understands that Teruo has finally

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234 The evening immediately follows the ‘Ostwind’ intertitle. In the course of one evening Hideko and Teruo attend an impossible number of events: drinks in a traditional bar, geisha dances, a sumo fight, and a Noh performance.

235 According to Hansen, this is a familiar motif in Noh. A restless spirit returns to earth in the shape of a human. While he/she talks about his/her past, he/she takes on the form of a demon that has to be released through the prayers of a priest. For German audiences unfamiliar with Noh, this might appear to be an exorcism but it should really be regarded as the salvation of the spirit. Hansen reads Teruo’s reaction to the play as indicative that he draws connections between the performance and his own obsession with Western ideals (Hansen 21).
literally and metaphorically connected with his roots [0:55:49-0:56:20]. In the film’s closing scene, by turn, Teruo is depicted farming in Manchuria [1:43:06-1:45:45]. However, whereas his fellow farmers in Japan are laboring with old-fashioned tools and under great duress, Teruo is shown driving a modern, Japanese tractor, thus harmoniously uniting modern technology with the old farming spirit of his people. The brand of the tractor is Komatsu, a Japanese company founded in 1917. According to the company’s website, they produced Japan's first crawler-type farm tractor in 1931. They also produced military tractors and tanks throughout the 1930s. In both Itami and Fanck’s farming scene, the brand name is written in large, white Western characters on the side of the tractor and is clearly visible. A Japanese audience might have connected the brand to industrial modernity and development as well as to the military.

Through notions of space and soil Teruo comes to reconcile the tension between his Western education and loyalty to his family and nation. By realizing his true calling as that of a farmer, Teruo reconnects to his birth family which, I will show, is an extension of the Japanese state.

3.3.1. A ‘Happy End’ in Manchuria

Having resolved his conflict between Western and Japanese values in the last third of the film, Teruo can use his hybridity to advance the Japanese imperial project. The knowledge of modern technology, science and farming acquired in Germany, when coupled with his sense of duty towards his nation and family, become paramount for his ‘successful’ colonizing work in China. Likewise, his wife Mitsuko has been prepared for this role through a blend of traditional Japanese and modern German education, including German language training, for her role as farmer’s wife in the colonies. The last sentence of the film, spoken by Teruo to his infant son as he carefully places him in a furrow (“You shall become a child of the Earth”239) indicates that he intends to pass on his newfound connection to the soil to the next generation [1:44:15]. However, this soil is no longer part of the Japanese archipelago but is in Manchuria, China. This scene captures two strands of thought important to both Fanck and Itami’s films:

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236 The scene concludes with Teruo’s birth father looking towards his son, saying “It’s good earth, but it is old.”
238 However, she does not receive any language training in Korean or Chinese, arguably a more useful skill than German in a Japanese colony.
239 「おまえも土の子になるよ。」
first, China is a natural expansion of the Japanese soil, and secondly, the family is vital to the Japanese imperial project.

Manchuria is first mentioned relatively early in the film when Teruo and Gerda are both at the Hotel Europe in Tokyo [0:30:33-0:31:55]. Teruo has argued with his adoptive father and goes to meet Gerda at the hotel’s bar. At the beginning of the scene Teruo sits alone and contemplates a globe in front of him. Gerda enters and playfully spins the globe. Teruo is visibly upset. When Gerda asks him if he wants to return to Europe, he replies: “No, Gerda. I am Japanese and we live for Japan. But look: this land, Manchukuo [Teruo uses the name of the Japanese puppet state in Northeast China and Inner Mongolia],

For an overview of the German-Japanese relationship with regard to the former German colony Qingdao, see my previous chapter in which I have demonstrated how both Japan and Germany represented themselves as the ‘rightful’ colonizers of Qingdao in the early 20th century. By the time of Fanck’s film, Germany’s imperial ambitions were no longer focused on Asia.

The decision to feature a scene in Manchuria at the end of the film was controversial, as by 1937, Nazi Germany had by no means decided whether Japan or China would be a desirable ally in Asia. Following World War I, Germany tried to maintain good relations with China while also improving its relationship with Japan - tasks that became increasingly difficult as Japan aimed to expand its territory into China and Mongolia. Germany and China normalized their diplomatic relationship with the signing of a peace treaty in 1921 after being on opposing sides in World War I. The treaty went against Japanese wishes, thus bringing Germany on course as China’s ally in the interwar period (Maltarich 49). In 1927 German military advisors were sent to China’s Kuomintang Army to support China in its fight against Japan, an act that would become a large obstacle in the establishment of German-Japanese relations (49). As late as 1931, the German foreign ministry officially remained neutral in questions of East Asian policy (Martin 192) while aiming to strengthen its cultural ties with Japan through a range of cultural events and a symbolic reconciliation between the two nations in 1929 (Maltarich 54). In reality, the German Reich pursued two completely different foreign strategies up to 1936. The sentiment in the foreign office was pro-Chinese as China was seen as the more promising economic partner. Likewise, both Sun Yat-Sen (1866-1825) and Kuomintang officials, among them Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975), desired a closer relationship with Germany (Martin 192). In contrast to this, the leadership of the NSDAP favored Japan as partner and aimed to establish an alliance with Japan. Between 1933 and 1936, Germany attempted to maintain friendly relations with both Japan and China, continuing the foreign policy of the Weimar Republic (Maltarich 59). Starting in 1936, a more pronounced preference for Japan began, possibly because high-ranking Nazi party officials, including Hitler, admired the militaristic strength and the anti-Russian stance of the archipelago. Yet it was only in 1938, one year after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) that the German military advisors were ordered to leave China, and Japan was consolidated as Germany’s sole ally in East Asia. For the economic motives driving Germany’s decision in favour of Japan, see Maltarich (60-63).

The overt preference for Japan over China thus reaches ahead of the politics of its time. In the version of Fanck’s film that circulated in Germany, all references to Manchuria were cut following a complaint by the Chinese ambassador in Berlin (Hansen 59). Although China was no longer explicitly mentioned in the film, the scenes depicting Manchuria were not cut, and it is possible that the audiences knew the ‘promised land’ in the film was, in fact, Manchuria, even if Manchuria was not identified as such on screen. Fanck most likely shot the Manchurian scenes in Japan since he does not speak of filming outside Japan in his account of the production He filmed with Glaciers, Storms, and Avalanches. A Pioneer of Film Speaks (Er führte Regie mit Gletschern, Stürmen und Lawinen. Ein Filmpionier erzählt, 1973).
is twice as big as your Germany and my Japan.” While he speaks, he puts his fingers on the globe and a map of Manchuria with the German word ‘Mandschurei’ takes up the screen. This is the key scene in the film with regard to Japan’s imperial project. During Teruo’s ensuing speech, Fanck cuts to scenes of Manchuria that emphasize its emptiness and spaciousness, as well as to scenes in Japan, with each shot underscoring Teruo’s words on a visual level. Teruo continues: “There, there is still plenty of new earth that could feed more people [Cut to shots of empty fields in Manchuria] if the right kind of agriculture would be done there [Cut to shots of antiquated farming methods]. But before that, peace and order have to be created there [Cut to shots of modern trains and planes]. And that is the mission of the Japanese people [Cut to shots of the Japanese military and to shots of very young boys in pathfinder uniforms]. We have to do an incredible amount of development work in these countries [Cut to shots of building sites and construction]. And we will do it [Cut to shots of modern houses and factory buildings]. But see: In a country like this, we not only need men who are real men [Cut to shots of soldiers and men labouring on a railway] but also women who are real women [Cut to a close up of Gerda’s face, shown in profile as she listens to Teruo]. Not these dainty dolls from rich houses. Do you understand?”

Instead of talking about the Japanese imperial project, Gerda takes up the topic of Mitsuko and wonders whether Teruo’s family was, after all, wise to choose exactly such a ‘real woman’ for him. Up to this point in Teruo’s monologue, the two characters had not yet been shown together on screen. Now the camera pulls away from a close-up on Gerda to a two shot with Gerda screen-left and Teruo screen-right, with the globe between them. This scene can be read in two ways. Firstly, the two are literally a world apart: even if the cut to Gerda’s face when Teruo mentions “real women” might suggest she could be

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242 ‘Nein, Gerda, ich bin Japaner und wir leben für Japan. Aber schau mal: dieses Land, Manchukuo ist doppelt so groß wie dein Deutschland und mein Japan.’ The fact that he calls Manchuria a country is already problematic because Manchukuo was a puppet state declared by Japan.

243 The map is bilingual. The Japanese name for Manchuria, Manchukuo (満州国, literally ‘state of Manchuria’), is written above the German name Mandschurei. Both Japanese and German audience would therefore have understood the map.

244 The shots of Manchuria are devoid of people and thee fields, building sites, modern cities and streets are completely deserted. Fanck thus emphasises Manchuria’s aptness for Japanese resettlements.

245 Da gibt es noch neue Erde in Hülle und Fülle, die viel mehr Menschen ernähren könnte, wenn sie richtig bebaut würde. Aber dazu muss dort erst einmal Ordnung und Frieden geschaffen werden. Und das ist die Mission des Japanischen Volkes. Wir müssen in diesen Ländern eine ungeheure Aufbaurarbeit leisten. Und wir werden sie leisten. Aber schau: In so einem Lande braucht es nicht nur Männer, die richtige Männer sind, sondern auch Frauen, die richtige Frauen sind. Nicht so verzärtelte Püppchen aus reichen Häusern. Verstehst du das? Teruo uses the plural for county here, which points to the fact that Japan’s Imperial ambitions did not start or end with Manchuria.
such a woman,\textsuperscript{246} Teruo and Gerda cannot be united as a couple, true to the stance that Japan and Germany were two parallel societies with no point of intersection. Alternatively, the scene could be interpreted as Nazi Germany and Japan dividing, or ‘carving up’ the world between them. Significantly the two characters do not make eye contact; instead each faces the camera, with Gerda looking towards the left, off-screen and Teruo towards the right. As a comment on their relationship this could mean that their interests, and by extent those of their respective states, lie in opposite directions or stand at cross purposes.\textsuperscript{247} While they will not hinder each other, they are unwilling or unable to give each other meaningful support. The scene ends with Gerda glancing briefly towards Teruo, her face impassive. Fanck, most likely unwittingly, created a perfect representation of the actual German-Japanese relationship, one that could be summed up as a performance without substance, since despite their claims to the contrary there was no real affinity between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan.

Hansen draws an interesting parallel between ‘the globe scene’ and an earlier scene with Teruo at the film’s beginning. While being interviewed by Gerda on the ship bound for Japan, Teruo stands on deck framed by a flag of Nazi Germany on the left and the flag of Imperial Japan on the right. His head is positioned exactly between the red Japanese sun and the white circle on the German flag (1997, 45). At this point in the story, Teruo is literally located between the two countries as he has not yet consolidated his hybridity. In the later ‘globe scene’ with Gerda, he is on the ‘right’ side again but has not yet harmoniously united his German and his Japanese side. This setup is mirrored in a later bar scene in which Teruo sits between a Western and a Japanese woman. No similar ‘in-between’ set-ups can be found in the later parts of the film.

Itami includes a similar scene in his film. In this scene Gerda and Teruo talk about Manchuria and Teruo expresses similar sentiments about “real men” and “real women” as well as “lands that need strong

\textsuperscript{246} Teruo’s characterization of Mitsuko is not an accurate representation of her. Mitsuko is more than a ‘doll’. She is also a samurai woman and as such is expected to show strength and self-control. This is made explicit when Mitsuko cries after being left by Teruo. She refuses to see Gerda, to which her father sternly replies: “You are the daughter of a Samurai.” Samurai women “could participate in the warrior spirit but their participation always seems marginal and paradoxical” (Morris-Suzuki 111). By making Mitsuko’s status as samurai daughter the title of the film, Fanck connects her at once to a patriarchal ideal of traditional Japan and to the Japanese warrior spirit while also anchoring her firmly in her family structure.

\textsuperscript{247} Goebbels had envisioned Germany, Italy and Japan dividing the world between, proclaiming: “Just like Japan who is trying to create a New Order in East Asia, the national socialist Germany works together with its new ally Fascist Italy on a New Order in Europe” (Goebbels in Ostwald 62). (So wie Japan bestrebt ist, im ostasiatischen Raum eine politische Neuordnung zu verwirklichen, arbeitet das nationalsozialistische Deutschland zusammen mit dem verbündeten fachistischen Italien am Neubau einer europäischen Ordnung.) Significantly, Germany and Japan allegedly pursue the same goals, that of a New Order, but do not intersect or connect in a meaningful way. Like Gerda and Teruo they are ‘a world apart.’ Their alliance can therefore be little more than gestural.
hands.” Interestingly, he also refers to California and the United States and draws parallels to Japan’s engagement in Manchuria. Teruo claims that Japan has the task to utilize land in Manchuria “as the Americans did in California.” The allusion to the United States in Itami’s film brings an interesting new perspective on Japan’s imperial ambitions within an international context which are thus portrayed as legitimate. Consequently, Japan is shown as a nation on par with the West and not as isolated as it is otherwise portrayed in Fanck’s film.

In the end, both Itami and Fanck’s films unite Teruo and Mitsuko as harmonious couple. Itami’s version shows Teruo and Mitsuko walking along a river in traditional Japanese clothes. Only their backs are visible as they move away from the camera. A subsequent shot of wedding gifts in a shopping window foreshadows their eventual marriage. Itami consequently shows them as farmers in Manchuria intercut with shots of livestock, such as cattle, sheep and donkeys. The farming sequences are longer compared to Fanck’s film. In Itami’s version Teruo and other presumably Japanese farmers are working in the fields. Itami cuts to a close-up of Teruo, Mitsuko and their child depicted as a contented family. The camera pans out to show soldiers marching in a straight line on the horizon, their dark silhouettes clearly visible against the bright sky. This is the closing scene of Itami’s film.

Fanck’s version differs slightly from Itami’s. After Teruo rescued Mitsuko, Fanck includes a scene in which the two receive a letter from Gerda wishing them well. Mitsuko then reveals that she also speaks German. The light-hearted exchange between the two involves a wordplay on the conjugation of the German pronouns me, you and us (mir, dir, uns) and actually mirrors an earlier conversation between Mitsuko and her German teacher, which takes place after Mitsuko learned of Teruo’s return from Europe. There, too, she conjugated the German pronoun, causing the teacher to interrupt her by saying: “And he will like her” (“Und sie wird ihm gefallen”) to which Mitsuko replies in a surprised tone: “Who is ‘she’?” (“Wer ist ‘sie’?”) The scene immediately cut to a shot of Gerda, making it clear for the audience that Gerda will be a disruptive factor for the relationship between Mitsuko and Teruo. By replaying the same conversation at the end of the film but replacing the last sentence (“He will like her” is replaced by “We will like each other”), Fanck harmoniously resolves the conflict between Teruo, Gerda, and Mitsuko, and by extent between a Japanese way of life and modern Western influences. Teruo and Mitsuko are well matched precisely because both have enjoyed this blend of traditional Japanese and modern German education. By having Teruo and Mitsuko speak German at this crucial moment in their

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248 Mitsuko: “We can speak German now.” Teruo: “What? You learned German?” Mitsuko: “You will like me. I will like you.” Teruo: “We will like each other.” (Mitsuko: ’Wir können jetzt Deutsch sprechen.’ Teruo:’Was? Du hast Deutsch gelernt?’ Mitsuko: ’Ich werde dir gefallen. Du wirst mir gefallen.’ Teruo: ’Wir werden uns gefallen.’)
relationship and including Gerda’s blessing in this scene, Fanck emphasizes the importance of the German connection and their German education for their future happiness together. Teruo needs the knowledge of agriculture and technology that he has acquired in Germany in order to play his part in the imperial and modernizing agenda of his state. The modern education of Mitsuko makes her a suitable companion for Teruo.

In Fanck’s film, subsequent scenes in Manchuria are shorter than in Itami’s version and the final sequence does not show the silhouetted soldiers. Instead, the camera follows Mitsuko’s gaze towards a lone soldier, shown in close up, guarding the fields and farmers on a small hill. His whole body is shot from a low angle making him appear larger than life. In the reverse shot, he watches Teruo, Mitsuko and their child enjoying a peaceful moment together on the field. The scene then cuts back to a close up of the soldier’s face, smiling on the young family but subsequently turning to stare directly into the camera. His smile fades, and his bayonet partially obscures his face as he continues to gaze earnestly at the camera until the film ends. Thus, whereas Itami only shows the soldiers from a distance, Fanck foregrounds one soldier in his finale, therefore closing on a more menacing note. The unfaltering gaze of the soldier towards the audience appears to draw the viewer into the scene; his almost accusing face challenges the audience to question their own position in reference to what they have just witnessed. Since Fanck made his film explicitly for a German audience, the serious gaze of the soldier is most likely a demand to follow Mitsuko and Teruo’s example and to subsume their individualistic desires in order to serve their nation or an affirmation of strength and resolve.

3.3.2. No Space outside the Family – Imperialism and the Japanese Family

Thus, both Itami’s and Fanck’s films end with the juxtaposition of a rural Japanese family and Japanese soldiers. In this section I will demonstrate that the visual representation of gender, soil and family in Itami and Fanck’s films each in their own way sought to create a shared German-Japanese cultural space transcending contentious issues of race.

The Japanese imperial project is closely connected to Teruo’s private relationships. By attempting to reject his fiancée, Teruo endangers not only his family but also ultimately his nation and its imperial agenda. Morris-Suzuki convincingly demonstrates in her book Reinventing Japan, how especially in the
early half of the 20th century the idea of the state as set of intersubjectivities between families gained importance in Japan. Thus, the spirit of self-sacrifice and obedience so important for the state begins with obedience to the family (116-117). Both Teruo’s father and a Shinto priest point out that the family is the backbone of the state and that obedience towards the father signifies obedience towards the nation. Teruo’s refusal to comply with his family’s demand is thus more than a simple rebellion against a father figure; it is a refusal to accept his role within the Japanese state.

The Japanese concept of the family (家, ie), which emphasised the vertical relationship between parents and children and patriarchal authority, increased in importance in the course of the 19th and 20th century (Morris-Suzuki 114). Through measures such as the introduction of the family registration system (1871) and the Meiji Civil Code (1898), the state attempted to impose the authoritative structure of the family upon everyday life. ie, or the family, became “the central image of Japanese nationalist ideology from the late nineteenth century onward” (Morris-Suzuki 115). However, not until the 1930s did the ideological and philosophical foundations of the family concept and its connection to the nation state gain further in sophistication, as exemplified by the philosopher Watsuji Tetsurō (1889-1960). Watsuji was instrumental in reinterpreting the relationship between the nation and its natural environment (jūdo). Watsuji, influenced by Dilthey and Heidegger, thought the environment affected people’s

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249 Ostwald quotes a speech made by Professor Uno on the occasion of the opening of the German Japan Research Institute that exemplifies this line of thought: “The emperor is the head of state and at the same time the head of the family; we give him […] our love as children. […] our duty towards the state and our duty towards our parents are in the end the same” (Uno in Ostwald 149, no date of the speech is given). (Der Kaiser ist das Staatsoberhaupt und zugleich Familienoberhaupt; wir bringen ihm […] unsere Liebe als seine Kinder entgegen. […] unsere Pflichttreue gegen den Staat und gegen die Eltern [ist] im letzten Grunde ein und dasselbe.)

250 The Holy Goal also features two characters that are initially reluctant to serve their state. Both Akira and Takeo initially turn down the offer to be part of the Olympic team. Consequently, Takeo is confronted by his employer. When asked for the reason for his refusal, he confesses that he is unwilling to give up his private life for the training and that he does not want to lose his sick mother alone. His employer tells him that he has no other choice but to accept; training for the Olympic Team is his national duty. Akira has a similar scene. When his sister hears of his refusal, she calls him a coward. Akira does not want to give up his job as a laboratory researcher and it is implied that he does not want to leave Natsuko, Takeo’s sister, who works with him in the laboratory. Both women convince him to go to Hokkaidō; Natsuko is willing to take on Akira’s workload. Both men are held back by their duty towards their loved ones as well as by their work. However, they cannot resist the urging of everyone around them who see their training as a matter of national duty. Thus, both Fanck’s and Nomura’s films show that the individual is subordinate to the will of the family and that the family is a natural extension of the will of the state.

251 Many scholars have shown that the concept of ie was at least a partially invented tradition, especially in the life of commoners. Although officials emphasized the importance of family, in reality Japan had higher divorce rates in the 1880s and 1890s than the US or Britain and sexual relationships, especially in rural Japan, were sometimes quite casual (Morris-Suzuki 115).

252 The following account of Watsuji’s philosophy relies on Morris-Suzuki (115-116).
deeper emotions, which were in turn assigned social meaning and channeled by historically constructed institutions. At the core of Watsuji’s thinking is the concept of intersubjectivity (*aidagara*), seen as “the fundamental relationship from which both self and society are simultaneously formed” (115). The most basic intersubjectivity is that between man and woman, for which a specific kind of love (*ren’ai*) is paramount. According to Morris-Suzuki, this love is characterized by its “calm contained within passion” and its “militancy combined with disinterested self-resignation” (116). Through this love, men and women are able to merge into a unit that is devoid of any separation (*zenzen hedatenaki ketsugō*). In doing so, they find their true self. This relationship between man and woman cannot exist by itself, but is instead always embedded into the family (*ie*) and its connection to both parents and children. Thus, the family symbolizes boundless and self-sacrificing love. According to Watsuji, Japanese houses are an embodiment of this spirit. Unlike Western houses, they do not contain finally separated rooms but allow, via sliding screens, the extension of rooms and the possibility for the family to converge. However, the family unit is not self-contained. Just as the individual must sacrifice self-interest for the sake of the family, the family is subordinate to the state. By toying with the fact that the very word for state, *kokka*, consists of the character for nation and for family 253 Watsuji underscores that “the state is merely a set of intersubjectivities between families” (116). Thus, “the forces of militant yet self-sacrificing love ultimately flow into the all-embracing nation state revolving around the nurturing parent-figure of the emperor” (116). Although the national spirit is founded upon self-sacrifice, however, the latter it is not tantamount to a denial of oneself so much as it is a means of realizing one’s “true spirit” (*magokoro*) (117). This picture of the national community was extremely influential in the 1930s and was echoed in official writings, most notably in the *Principles of the National Entity* (see Introduction), which Watsuji helped to revise. 255

This philosophy is mirrored in Teruo. Both Fanck and Itami have Teruo realize his true destiny by leaving Gerda and returning to Mitsuko. The family is of utmost importance for Teruo’s return to his *Volk*. When Gerda visits Teruo’s home in his absence, she attempts to explain her relationship to Teruo to his adoptive father, Iwao, as that of merely a companion. Earlier, Gerda had tried to convince Teruo to

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253 One of the Japanese words for state is *kokka* (国家), written by combining the character for nation, country 国 and the character for family, house 家.
254 The Emperor is also the descendent of the sun goddess Amaterasu, thus uniting masculine and feminine attributes.
255 At the same time, this concept was vividly criticized by Japanese feminists who formulated a critique of the nation state through engaging with the patriarchal power of the family. One of the most ardent critics was Kaneko Fumiko (1903-1926) (Morris-Suzuki 120-21).
continue his engagement with Mitsuko in spite of her personal feelings. As such, she “fulfills the
typical female occupation as preserver of the family that was idealized in both Japanese and German
propaganda” (Hansen 38). In the course of his conversation with Gerda, Iwao speaks of the importance
of family as “the foundation of our country.” The scene cuts away to shots of a storm-swept ocean and a
rugged coast. Gerda replies that this must be an old samurai’s maxim, but Iwao corrects her by
explaining that he speaks of the Japan of today.

In both Itami and Fanck’s versions Teruo is portrayed as being truly happy with Mitsuko. In Itami’s film,
this can be seen as the embodiment of Watsuji’s realization of one’s “true spirit” through militant yet
self-sacrificing love. Nothing speaks against an interpretation of Fanck’s film in the same light. Teruo’s
return to his Volk is in line with Nazi policy, which placed the community before the individual and
regarded individual duty towards the homeland as paramount. “The family, the community, the nation,
the leader – all were points on a single continuum and somewhere on that continuum every German
was supposed to be able to find a place [...] all were merged into the people’s community, the marching
columns of the mass” (Taylor 157). The fitting place for the individual is within his or her community, an
idea that has been frequently expressed in Nazi films (159) and that is taken up again in Fanck’s The
Daughter of the Samurai.

3.3.3. Multiple Oppositions – The Triangulated Visions of Nazi Germany and Imperial
Japan

For a large part of the film, Teruo’s hybridity is presented as a problem. His subscription to Western
values of individual freedom endangers the Japanese family by jeopardizing his marriage with Mitsuko
and his relationship to both his adopted and his birth father. When Teruo complains to Gerda about his
engagement with Mitsuko and his family’s influence on his life, she declares it his duty to give up his
individual desires in favor of his family and state. However, Teruo passionately proclaims that he would
never give up his individual freedom, a lesson he has learned in Europe. Gerda dryly replies that he has
learned the wrong lesson. In this moment, a group of soldiers march by and Teruo proudly exclaims:

256 These feelings are alluded to only through Gerda’s disappointed face when she learns of Teruo’s engagement
and her subsequent coldness towards him. According to Hansen, in the first draft of the screenplay, Gerda’s
feelings towards Teruo were more pronounced (14).
“That is what Japan’s power is built on.” Gerda jokingly asks if these soldiers are all free individuals. The scene breaks off before Teruo can reply, thus giving Gerda the last word. Teruo’s face, however, clearly signals that he understands the truth of Gerda’s words: He looks annoyed and pensive as his gaze follows the soldiers off-screen [0:23:06-0:25:02]; Gerda comes across as a particularly contradictory figure, representing both what is vaguely defined as ‘the West’ but also as representative of Nazi Germany, rejecting Western ideas and notions of individualistic freedom. Fanck portrays her as disruptive force from the West (analogous to the West wind), yet as a German woman she is supposed to also share the ideals and values of her Japanese counterparts, since both Germany and Japan were at pains to demonstrate their cultural connections and their distinction from other Western nations. Thus, Gerda’s character had to be ‘ungerman’ to a certain extent. As a modern, independent woman she does not represent the values of National Socialism and can thus serve as a stand in for the West.

The National Socialists did not position themselves as a part of the West but rather as “essentially opposed to the West – seen as Anglo-Saxon dominated, capitalist, industrialized world after Versailles” (Maltarich 18). Thus, Nazi Germany saw itself as being part of the same category as Imperial Japan, “whether that category be defined as ‘Have Nots,’ proponents of a new world order, opposing to Great Britain and the USA, or defenders of culture […] in short, against ‘Westernization’” (18). In doing so, they took part in a longer historical discourse reaching back to the eighteenth century, one Zantop convincingly demonstrated, aligned Germany with non-Western nations and Germans as morally superior to those of other Western countries (cf. Zantop 1997b). The German-Japanese alliance was possible because of their common enemies (such as Western nations like the United States and England as well as Russia) and through the fact that their geopolitical interests and goals did not oppose each other.

In fact, Germany “supported the Japanese claim to leadership in Asia as a challenge to ‘white imperialism’ in Asia” (Maltarich 177). In 1941 Heinrich Klingenberg wrote in This is Japan (Das ist Japan): “the end of the present war will find Japan on the side of the axis powers in order to strip the white man of his predominance in East Asia, in Japan’s Lebensraum” (Klingenberg in Maltarich 177-8, emphasis in the original). Just as Nazi Germany would create a New Order in Europe based on race, Japan would

257 Darauf steht die Macht Japans.
258 In fact, Fanck never defines who or what ‘the West’ is in his film. Other European nations besides Germany are never mentioned. The only reference to the West can be found in his intertitle ‘Westwind’ that is linked to Gerda’s storyline and that connects Gerda to ‘the West.’
259 Der heutige Krieg wird bei seiner Beendigung den Japaner an der Seite der Achsenmächte finden, um die Vorzugsstellung des weißen Mannes im ostasiatischen Raum, in seinem Lebensraum aufzuheben.
head the New Order in Asia. Both Germany and Japan are simultaneously opposed to common enemies and united by their respective imperial missions, but they are also presented “as parallel and thus never intersecting” (178). This triangular relationship with Germany and Japan on the one side, Western nations, and other non-Western, potentially colonial, states on the other side, is discernible in Fanck and Itami’s films. Fanck sets both Nazi Germany and Japan in opposition to what is vaguely defined as ‘the West’ and its apparent focus on the individual, thereby valorizing finding one’s prescribed place in society over individual freedom.

There is an additional triangular relationship in Fanck’s film: Not only are Germany and Japan set in opposition to the West, as Soldatenvölker they are also united against the Soviet Union, in particular, and communism, in general. Already in his 1933/4 lecture Härtl states: “This danger [communism] also threatens the culture nations (Kulturvölker) of East Asia. Today Japan in the East is not only the protector of the Eastern, but also of the Western culture world (Kulturwelt)” (Härtl in Maltarich 165, translation mine). When Gerda takes leave of Teruo’s father Iwao after tea and dinner at his home, they walk to the coast together and look out over a tumultuous sea, which prompts Iwao to take up the wind and storm motif again: “A dangerous storm sweeps the earth. For you it comes from the East, for us it blows from the West. Tell your country that there are people here in the furthest East who keep watch on its cliffs. On these walls the storm will break.” [1:08:08-1:09:00]260 Thus, Fanck connects Germany and Japan as two nations who jointly stand against communism and simultaneously against Western values of individuality while each fighting for their respective Lebensraum.261 There is no corresponding scene in Itami’s version.

Japan’s defence of both Western and Eastern values correlates with its stance against communism as perceived threat to Germany and Japan alike. In 1938 Hitler explicitly commented on Japan as a defender of culture: “Germany will always view and value Japan as an element of security in the fight against communism – even more in the protection of human culture” (Hitler in Maltarich 160). Thus, the

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260 Es weht ein gefährlicher Sturm über die Erde. Für euch kommt er vom Osten, für uns bläst er von Westen. Melden Sie Ihrem Lande, dass hier im fernten Osten ein Volk Wache hält auf seinen felsigen Inseln. An deren Mauern wird dieser Sturm sich brechen.

261 A short film detailing the German-Japanese youth exchange of 1938 is accompanied by the song Banzai Hitlerjugend (万歳ヒトラー・ユーヘン) composed by Takashina Tetsuo (1896-1945) and written by Kitahara Hakushū (1885-1942). The song also makes references to the Japanese-German alliance in their common opposition to communism: “Brilliant, shining swastika/ welcome sworn friend from the distant West/ now is the time to greet you with the rising sun/ we are Japan, the youth of East Asia/ Banzai Hitler Youth, Banzai Nazis/ Hear our joyful cheer, swastika/ resound from this flag, this wind, this summer/ we swore once together to defend the world from communism/ this is right for the progress or this age” (translation and source: National Museum of Japanese History, Chiba, emphasis mine).
praise of Japan, the emphasis of its uniqueness within East Asia, its harmonisation of Western and Japanese values and its role as defender against communism demonstrate that Nazi Germany was willing to make ideological concessions out of political expediency, while attempting to keep Nazi ideology intact (167).

3.4. Space, Imperialism, and Gender

3.4.1. Volcanoes or Cherry Blossoms? Mitsuko and Gerda

Having discussed Teruo’s position within the family structure and his nation, I now turn to Gerda and Mitsuko’s roles in Fanck and Itami’s film. In keeping with their preoccupation with fantasies of military conflict and sacrificial death, National Socialist ideologues mostly focused on men in “a utopian National Socialist vision of undying comradery and everlasting unity” (Ascheid 23). Women were relegated to the political margins, within the domestic sphere. Likewise, in Fanck’s film it is men who act and who speak, at least when it comes to matters of homeland, exemplified through one of the last scenes: Teruo and his birth father sit together, looking out towards the rice paddies, while Mitsuko sits in the background, wearing a traditional hairstyle and a formal kimono that sharply contrast with the men’s clothes and with her rural surroundings. While Teruo’s father speaks about the importance of land for the survival of the Volk (Japanese people), she remains silently removed from the main action, her gaze directed downwards. Mitsuko only acts when her private happiness with Teruo is endangered and then her action consists in disappearing, in removing herself to commit suicide. In contrast, Gerda appears to be more assertive. Her depiction as a single, working woman who is romantically interested in a man from another race contrasts sharply with the image of women that was sanctioned by the National Socialists. Nevertheless, her most important action in the film similarly involves her removal: Only after she has departed, can Mitsuko and Teruo (re)unite.

The relationship between Nazi propaganda and the depiction of women in film were not straightforward: “More often than not Nazi films featured actresses whose star images and screen characters struggled to incorporate National Socialist doctrine” (7). While partially contradicting the ideals promulgated by Nazi propaganda, they also had “no tangible subversive effect” but gave off the illusion of “false normalcy” (4). Ruth Eweler’s casting as Gerda Storm is one of these apparently conflicted figures. Since the romance between mixed-raced couples could not have been played out on the screen, Gerda
remains the chaste maiden in her relationship with Teruo. She does not encourage his flirting, instead removing herself from the scene or pretending not to notice Teruo whenever he flirts with her. At the same time she represents the West’s seductive power over Teruo and she is highly sexualized.262

One of the first scenes of the film shows Gerda and Teruo on deck aboard the ship headed for Japan. The scene is crammed with Japanese and Swastika flags and cherry blossoms, creating a claustrophobic atmosphere [0:8:55-0:11:48]. The connection between Germany and Japan is made through multiple shots of both flags together. Gerda in a floral dress, similar in cut to a kimono, blends effortlessly with the Japanese décor on the ship. Teruo flirts openly with Gerda in this scene. He tells her that he likes her looks and that the ‘winds of the west’ are seductive. Gerda appears receptive, but as soon as Teruo is forced to tell her about Mitsuko when explaining his family relations, she removes herself from the situation. The scene alternates between close-ups of Gerda’s and Teruo’s faces. The camera follows Teruo’s gaze, focusing on Gerda’s looks, emphasising his desire for her. After he has revealed that he has to marry Mitsuko, Teruo and Gerda share a frame but they look away from each other, Gerda on the left and Teruo on the right. Gerda claims: “Eastwind and Westwind will always blow from different directions” indicating that there is no hope for a harmonious union between her and Teruo. This setup is repeated later in the ‘globe scene.’

Gerda’s main function in Itami’s film is to heighten the conflict between Mitsuko and Teruo. In Fanck’s version she serves an additional purpose: through her eyes the German audience can learn more about their new ally Japan, as she poses questions about the country and about Japan’s prototypical national character throughout the film. The ensuing explanations bring Japan closer to the German audience, not least because they so closely fit with National Socialist ideology. Since Gerda arguably constitutes the central point of identification for Germans in Fanck’s film, she cannot be judged harshly or be shown in

262 Eweler appears to have been particularly apt to portray this double role between chaste embodiment of ‘Germanness’ and seduction. She had started her career by winning a beauty contest at the age of 16 in 1932. In an article entitled Blonde is trump (Blond ist Trumpf) the Revue des Monats (Revue of the Month) reported on the contest organized by a shampoo manufacturer aiming to find the perfect blonde beauty. The article emphasized Eweler’s innocence in a patronizing tone: “Ruth has never worn makeup or powder. She has never stood in front of a camera or recording device. She has a lot to learn before she will be a real star” (L.A. 6.1931/32, 99). In the same article, blonde hair was linked to seduction and ‘Germaneness,’ and at the same time also to international star appeal: “Greta Garbo, superior ruler of the silver screen, is blonde. Marlene Dietrich, the ‘vamp’ who quickly became a worldwide star, is blonde and if you look at international film stars, you will see that 90 percent of all film stars are blonde […] Think of the ideal German woman, Faust’s Gretchen. Blonde women enchant men” (6.1931/32, 96). In the following section I will demonstrate that these short excerpts from a much longer article detailing the beauty contest in Berlin exemplify the contradictory role Eweler played in The Daughter of the Samurai.
an overly negative way. A rare comic scene in which Gerda and Iwao share a meal exemplifies that she is ultimately harmless to the Japanese family structure. When Gerda learns to eat with chopsticks as a guest at Iwao’s house, this facilitates a reversal of the teacher-student relation that otherwise prevails throughout the film. Mitsuko sits down next to Gerda and shows her how to use the utensils [1:05:00]. The scene, which takes place already after Gerda had written her farewell letter, thus giving Teruo up, can be read as conciliation between Gerda and Mitsuko. As one woman mimics the movement of the other, sitting side by side and laughing, it also becomes evident that both wear similar dresses and hairstyles. After several unsuccessful attempts, Gerda finally manages to pick up the food with her chopsticks, but when she moves to eat it, the rumbling of a volcano in the distance stops Gerda in her tracks.263 Their meal is disrupted by increasingly louder sounds from the volcano. Gerda attempts to keep up appearances but several close-ups of her frightened face reveal that she is uncomfortable. The volcano has functioned as a symbol for Japan and for Japanese women throughout the film, signalling that, while Gerda is a welcome guest, she does not belong to this country. As such, she contrasts with the Japanese characters, especially with Mitsuko, who gently dismisses the volcano with the words: “[This is] only the volcano.” Gerda gives up Teruo when she witnesses the impact her presence has on Mitsuko; eventually, her stay in Japan leaves no lasting negative impact on any of the characters. In contrast, Itami who had no obligations to redeem Gerda’s character, is more explicit in his set-up of Gerda as Mitsuko’s rival and does not allocate much space within his film to Gerda’s motivation for leaving Teruo.

When Gerda visits Iwao and Mitsuko in their home before her departure for Germany the following conversation with Mitsuko’s German teacher takes place: The teacher warns her of Mitsuko’s state of mind:

[Teacher] Don’t be fooled. The girl’s condition is dangerous.
[Gerda] One can hardly imagine this with such quiet and docile creatures.
[Teacher] You should not think that. The same volcanic temperament that can be found in the men of this volcanic island can be found in the women. And then... they either erupt...
[Gerda] Or?
[Teacher] Or they throw themselves in [the volcano]. [0:59:00-0:59:33]265

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263 Itami retained the same scene in his film but shortened it.
264 ‘Das ist] nur der Vulkan.
There is no corresponding scene in Itami’s film. Throughout the conversation, Gerda absentmindedly plucks cherry blossoms from a tree and rips them apart. She appears to be deep in thought and looks off-screen instead of at the blossoms. Cherry blossoms accumulate on the earth around her while she listens to the teacher. The cherry blossoms have been associated throughout the film with Mitsuko. Gerda’s farewell poem makes reference to cherry blossoms. Gerda’s unthinking destruction of the blossoms can be read as a symbol for her relationship with Mitsuko and Teruo: although destructive, Gerda is not malicious. She is portrayed not so much as Mitsuko’s enemy than as someone unaware of the danger that she poses to another. When Mitsuko leaves the house to commit suicide, she is surrounded by falling petals [1:12:46]. Fanck follows this scene with several shots in which Mitsuko walks around, looking at the cherry blossoms, presumably on her way to the volcano. Instead of walking on the ground, however, her figure is shown as walking among the blossoms of the trees, as she herself has thus become a cherry blossom. Fanck intercuts these scenes of Mitsuko walking with shots of Japanese women doing hanami (cherry blossom watching) in their kimono, Shinto festivals as well as crowded festive streets filled with people during the cherry blossom season. These scenes are accompanied by koto music. The sequence ends with Mitsuko taking the train to the volcano. In contrast, Itami does not show any hanami scenes in his film, presumably because he did not see the need to foreground Japanese culture for his Japanese audience. Instead, Mitsuko simply takes the bus to the volcano after stepping out of the house.

Fanck might have taken the imaginary of Japanese women as volcanoes from Sugimoto, author of the novel A Daughter of a Samurai. According to Kuo, Sugimoto used the image to refute the stereotype of the submissive Japanese woman that had been transported to the West through Orientalists travelogues and operas such as Madama Butterfly. Sugimoto states: “Although our women are pictured as gentle and meek, and although Japanese men will not contradict it, nevertheless it is true that, beneath all the gentle meekness, Japanese women are like – volcanoes” (Sugimoto in Juo 74). Instead of

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266 Haukamp demonstrates that Hara herself was frequently associated with flowers even before she started filming with Fanck. She cites a film critic in Eiga no Tomo who described Hara as flowerlike actress who “alone stands out like a chrysanthemum, the flower signifying utmost purity, the sun, perfection, even the emperor, an eternal life” (Saeki in Haukamp, 2014 6). Note that the Japanese critic associates Hara with the Chrysanthemum, the symbol of the Emperor and thus of Japan itself, whereas in the German film her character Mitsuko is associated with the cherry blossom, a well-known symbol for Japan in the West.

267 The poem reads “The first cherry blossoms fall/ floatingly onto the earth/ to make space/ for the pushing fruit.” (Es fallen die ersten Blüten/ der Kirschen schwebend zu Boden/ um Raum zu geben/ der drängenden Frucht) Mitsuko is clearly associated with the cherry blossoms, while Gerda is symbolized by the fruit. Thus, the poem reinforces the image of Japanese women as submissive and weak.
being passive and delicate like butterflies, Japanese women are dangerous, forceful and unpredictable. In making the connection between women and volcanos, Sugimoto might be alluding to Yosano Akiko’s (1878-1942) poem *Yama no Ugoku Hi* (Mountain Moving Day):

> The day when mountains move has come.  
> Or so I said. But no one believed me.  
> The mountains have simply been asleep for a while.  
> In their ancient past,  
> The mountains blazed with fire and they moved. If you don’t believe that either, fine.  
> But trust me when I tell you this—  
> All the women who were sleeping  
> Are awake now and moving. (Translation by Jan Bardsley, quoted in Juo 75)

Juo notes that the connection between volcanoes and women is clearly rooted in Japanese feminist literature and thought (75). As I have mentioned, Sugimoto’s novel was translated into German in the 1930s so Fanck might have been familiar with her reading of the volcano metaphor. Interestingly, Fanck expands the motif to include both women and men in the volcano imaginary. Connecting both Japanese women and men to the earth, he claims that the environment, in this case the abundance of volcanoes in Japan, shaped the people’s character. However, it should be noted that the link he draws between volcanoes and women is not quite the one Yosano had in mind, for he adds the dimension of suicide and self-destruction, since it is Mitsuko’s “volcanic temperament” that leads to her suicide attempt. Even in her most energetic and self-determined action she is unable to envision a future disconnected from the domestic bliss that she had expected from a marriage with Teruo. Her only ‘action’ consists in removing herself; Fanck thereby subverts the feminist imaginary, prohibiting Mitsuko from seeking a viable place outside the domestic sphere.

3.4.2. ‘Feminine’ and ‘Masculine’ Japan – The Japan of ‘Past’ and ‘Present’

Although *The New Earth* and *The Daughter of the Samurai* emphasized Japan’s colonial ambitions, it was Hara’s role as Mitsuko that “dominated the publicity and press material” (Haukamp 2014, 8). Quiet and
at times demure, Mitsuko is arguably the star of both Itami’s and Fanck’s film. I will demonstrate in the course of this chapter that Mitsuko in both films served as a stand-in for Japan as a whole. In Fanck’s version, Mitsuko frequently engages in traditional Japanese arts. Towards the end of the story, for instance, she is displayed in full formal wear, playing the koto on a Japanese porch framed by cherry blossoms, a quintessential picture of traditional Japan. Teruo glimpses her this way immediately upon waking from resting after his adventures on the volcano. [1:38:07] The short scene combines all the images Fanck had used to depict old-style Japan: the koto as traditional instrument, the strict hairstyle and elaborate kimono, emphasizing wealth, status, femininity and beauty, and the cherry blossoms which throughout the film were associated with Mitsuko, in particular, but also with Japan more generally, and finally, the Japanese traditional house as site of the family. Mitsuko at the center of this mise-en-scène embodied not only the perfect woman but also perfectly symbolized Japan as conceived by Fanck. As such, the film is part of a discourse that saw Japanese culture “as being epitomized in the simplicity and refinement of traditional arts associated with women – flower arrangement and tea ceremony, for example” (Morris-Suzuki 111).

Mitsuko, although initially dismissed as an upper-class ‘doll’ or plaything, proves well-equipped to tackle the demands of the modern era by stepping ably into her role in the colonies – a role fully in line with National Socialist ideologies. The “new women” in Nazi Germany “was supposed to be healthy and robust, athletic and strong [...] [the National Socialists] needed physically and emotionally strong women – albeit only insofar as their female strength was not directed towards independence and self-sufficiency, but was productively placed in the service of the state” (Bechdorf in Ascheid 48). For instance, when Mitsuko prepares for her role as Teruo’s wife, she practices traditional crafts such as ikebana and tea ceremony, but Fanck also includes sequences in which Mitsuko is physically active, doing gymnastics, swimming and rowing. In addition, she does archery and takes kendo lessons. The kendo scene, the longest in the montage of Mitsuko’s composite education, is particularly interesting

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268 According to Haukamp, the film was even sometimes referred to as “Hara Setsuko’s The Samurai’s Daughter” (2014, 11).
269 Interestingly, when Fanck had seen Hara for the first time, she was wearing a kimono and a traditional hairstyle on the set of her first period drama (Haukamp 2014, 9). In contrast to what he might have perceived as her traditional looks, Japanese observers saw Hara as “tall ‘modern beauty’” (2014, 9). The final decision to cast her was made after Fanck had seen a photograph of her in which she was wearing a Western-style suit (2014, 9).
270 The cultural evening enjoyed by Teruo and his birth sister, arguably constitutes the embodiment of Japan in Fanck’s film, is preceded by several long shots of cherry blossoms as introduction.
because it depicts Mitsuko as fighter.\textsuperscript{271} Thus, Mitsuko is well-equipped not only for her role as a housewife, but more importantly, for the physical demands of life in the colony.

Japan’s feminization contrasts with the nation’s increasing militarization and modernization, which was codified as masculine. ‘Female Japan,’ at least since the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, was largely depicted in positive terms, in adulation of sweet, docile and fragile Japanese women by various Western male commentators (Morris-Suzuki 111-12). At the same time, this discourse was attributed a timeless quality. Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), esteemed collector of Japanese folk stories, describes the appeal of Japanese women as linked to “the charm of a vanished world – a charm strange, alluring, indescribable as the perfume of some flower of which the species became extinct in our Occident before the modern languages were born” (Hearn in Morris-Suzuki 112). Thus, the Japanese woman’s allure lies in her removal from the present world, indeed, her timelessness. In Fanck’s version, Mitsuko embodies this ideal. The counterpart to this timeless femininity was the spirit of modernity, embodied by masculinity and action, seamlessly incorporating the archaic concept of the warrior spirit. If the Japanese woman was perceived as alluring and seductive in the Western imagination, the Japanese man was a threat to Western stability as conjured in the ‘yellow peril’ discussed in the previous chapters. However, it was not only the West that equated masculinity with a contemporary and potentially threatening Japan, Japanese policy of the Meiji period reinforced and supported this connection between masculinity, modernity, and national power (112). Although, in reality, Japanese women also participated in the workforce and the modernization of the state, the “concept of woman as source of continuity, and man as agent of change, became a particularly enduring leitmotiv in the evolving notions of nationhood” in Japan (113, emphasis in the original).

The equalization of femininity with a harmless past and masculinity with a threatening modernity has been influential both within and outside the archipelago. Morris-Suzuki summarizes the connection between family, gender, time and the nation state as follows:

\begin{quote}
Japan as modernizing economic dynamo was often depicted in male terms, while Japan as a flexible, unthreatening, nonhegemonic nation [...] was seen as female. In all this imagery, the concept of the family commonly embodied gender differences in relation to time: Men were seen as the dynamic face of the nation – the creative, though sometimes disruptive, agents of progress; while women were the face of the cultural continuity, a source of stability in a changing world. (135)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{271} Even in the fight scenes, however, Fanck emphasizes Mitsuko’s ultimate harmlessness; she giggles throughout the fights and merely defends herself, never attacking her opponent.
Fanck’s film clearly chose to depict both sides of Japan through his two protagonists. Japan in his film is neither coded as fully masculine, nor as fully feminine. Nazi ideologues did not condemn the modern, militaristic Japan to the extent that Imperial Germany did under the Emperor Wilhelm II. An analysis of newsreels from the 1920s to the 1930s exemplifies this shift in the perception of Japan.

The newsreel was the first part of the German film industry that the National Socialists completely controlled after they took power (Taylor 147). Therefore, it is an apt medium for tracing changes in the official image of Japan in Nazi Germany. In his examination of Japan in interwar German newsreels, Ricky W. Law traces the connection between gender and the representation of Japan in the 1920s and 1930s in Germany. Law demonstrated in his analysis that Japan’s military rise and its modernization were greeted with unease in 1920s Germany. A newsreel segment on Japanese war ships in 1925 for instance showed Japan as a Western power on par with the United States, something that would, according to Law, “arouse far less admiration than resentment” (20) in German audiences. Had images of Shinto festivals and women in kimono dominated the picture of Japan in the 1920s, Japan became “a byword for violence and bloodshed in newsreels by the mid-1930s” (21). With their focus on soldiers and war, the newsreels participated in the discourse that coded Japan as masculine and thereby threatening space. Yet, women did play an active role in this new perception of Japan. In October 1934 a newsreel featured a segment on Japanese women and posed the question “What does a Japanese schoolgirl do in her free time?” over footage of young women carrying weapons and firing at targets. However, it was made clear that their role was to support the men in the war: “Maybe one day she will stand by her man for real” (25). In general, the newsreels focused on Japanese militarism and expansionism and on Japan as “a land dominated by men specialized in waging war” (26). After Japan became an ally through the signing of the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1938, viewers would still see images of Japan that were connected to masculinisty, war and the military. These images, however, were now shown in a positive light. The reporting on the Japanese-Chinese conflict showed a bias toward Japan and an admiration for the militaristic nation (27). Thus, what had been labeled as threatening in the 1920s, Japan’s military strength and its militaristic society, drew admiration of the Nationalist Socialists in the late 1930s. Significantly, the newsreel’s depiction of Japan under the National Socialists was “remarkably free of derogatory comments on race” (29), mirror Fanck’s neglect of issues of race in

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272 Significantly, a scene in a newsreel from February 1938 of Chinese women training for combat denounced this as “following the Bolshevist model” (Law 27) although no such allegation had been raised against the Japanese women’s training four years earlier. This may be interpreted as either indicative of a bias toward Japan or of a changed in the perception of women’s role in a militaristic society.
favour of a shared mission and culture between Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. Thus, the perception of Japan underwent a shift after the National Socialists resolved that the archipelago was a desirable ally. The militaristic rise of Japan, coded as masculine, thereupon replaced images of a feminine, timeless Japan in the 1920s, and where its military strength was previously perceived as a threat it was now recoded as positive. However, the somewhat simplistic differentiation that assigns modern Japan a masculine value and traditional Japan a feminine value, does not fully hold true in Nationalist Socialist discourse. The National Socialists also emphasized the shared past of both countries as Soldatenvölker (soldier people), thereby also recasting the Japanese past as masculine.

The essays submitted to the 1944 essay contest of the DJG, the German Japanese Society (Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft), on German-Japanese relations further illustrate the effectiveness of propaganda with regard to this changed in perceptions. Participants had to answer the following question with the incentive to receive 3,000 Reichsmark upon winning: “What binds Germany and Japan together in the fight against the United States of America a) Politically b) Economically c) Culturally?” (cf. Panzer 52) Sarah Panzer’s insightful analysis of the submission demonstrates participants primarily regarded Japan as a kindred martial culture; although not representative of Germany, these writers overall offer intriguing glimpses into the effectiveness of official propaganda on citizens interested in German-Japanese questions.

Masculinity in this context was framed not merely as a trait of modernity but also connected to a quasi-mythical past that united Germany and Japan. The most persuasive link between Germany and Japan made in the essay is that of the Soldatenvölker, the idea that the two nations could be connected through their shared martial spirit. One essayist writes: “Germany and Japan may rightly call themselves Soldatenvölker. They are both Soldatenvölker just as much from a thousand-year old tradition as from an always self-propagating upbringing” (Leo Feichtenschlager in Panzer 44). Thus, Germany and Japan are linked by a common history of military masculinity that still holds in the present. Panzer states: “The essayists, by linking German and Japanese culture and history in this specific way, are voicing a distinct variant of discourse about the non-Western world that is neither orientalist nor exoticist; rather, it represents a form of transcultural romanticism constructed around idealized images of masculine

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273 420 essays were submitted, among those 205 came from active soldiers, not uncommonly writing from the front. The essays arrived in Berlin from all over Nazi Germany, some even from allied nations, and were written by men, women and even children with varying levels of training and education (Panzer 55-6).

274 Panzer states that the Foreign Office most likely implemented the Essay Contest in order to check the effectiveness of their propaganda (53).
heroism” (54). By 1944, the National Socialists no longer regarded a Japan of the past as timeless, feminine and unthreatening space. German Japanisme in the first half of the twentieth century, especially under National Socialism, was associated in the popular imagination with samurai, bushido, seppuku and martial arts (55). Samurai and bushido, for instance, were connected to Teutonic knights and their code of chivalry. In listing various shared traits such as bravery, purity, self-discipline, a high feeling of honour and duty, and a willingness to be sacrificed for the Vaterland, the writers are “reifying a presupposed spiritual affinity between the German and Japanese peoples that is specifically oriented toward what one may call romanticized martiality” (57).

That Japan’s past is coded not solely as feminine in Fanck’s film is evidenced by the figure of Iwao, Teruo’s adoptive father whose traditional clothes, traditional Japanese house, and traditional Japanese cultural practices such as the tea ceremony, connote the samurai spirit German audience likely would have associated with Japan’s past. Teruo exemplifies the disruptive but essentially necessary forces of modernity, whereas Mitsuko is a symbol of an ancient and timeless past. Mitsuko’s world is thus that of the home and, to a certain extent, that of a bygone area. She is most frequently shown framed by walls and doors. Except when she attempts suicide, she is always in the company of a guardian. However, Mitsuko’s modern education indicates that this is not an inflexible past but rather a different kind of modernity rooted in the past. Nazi Germany and Japan were thus connected through a focus on tradition, the past and a preference for a

275 This connection was made even when Germany and Japan were on opposing sides in a war, at least in hindsight. Ostwald writes: “By the way, Germans and Japanese were truly chivalrous opponents in the fight over Qingdao” (91). (Im Übrigen zeigten sich Deutsche und Japaner im Kampf um Tsingtau als wirklich ritterliche Gegner.) An example of this ‘chivalrous spirit’ is given in the attempted Japanese evacuation of non-military persons before their attack on Qingdao. Moreover, Ostwald quotes Count Hutara, the leader of the Japanese Youth organization and his address to German and Japanese youth in the context of a 1937 German-Japanese youth exchange: “One day the spirit of chivalry, that is in all of you, will be the basis for the belt that will unite the awoken people of this world” (Hutara in Ostwald 108). (Einmal wird der Geist der Ritterlichkeit, von dem ihr alle durchdrungen seid, die Grundlage für das gemeinsame Band sein, das die erwachten Völker der Welt umschlingen wird.) Nitobe makes a similar connection between samurai and European knights in his book Bushido: The Soul of Japan.

276 In comparing Germany and Japan, Ostwald writes: “Just like Germany who embraced National Socialism as the way to victory, Japan thought back to its own nationalistic tradition. [...] Here like there national confidence, a readiness to sacrifice oneself for one’s people and fatherland, the veneration for the nationalistic past, and the belief in the historic mission of the new life of one’s own people; here like there one turned to manly virtues and the inner affinity that exists between beliefs which we call true Prussianess and the spirit of Bushido [explained by Ostwald in a footnote as: Way of the fighting knight], the old Japanese knighthood, the Samurai, could become important again” (106-7). (Denn so wie sich in Deutschland der Nationalsozialismus siegreich Bahn brach, so besann man sich in Deutschland der Nationalsozialismus siegreich Bahn brach, so besann man sich wieder mehr auf die eigene nationale Tradition. [...] hier wie dort gewannen nationales Selbstbewusstsein, die Opferbereitschaft für Volk und Vaterland, die Ehrfurcht vor der nationalen Vergangenheit und der Glaube an die geschichtliche Mission des eigenen Volkes neues Leben; hier wie dort wandte man sich in verstärkten Maße der Pflege männlicher Tugenden zu, und die innere Verwandtschaft, die zwischen Auffassungen, wie wir sie uns als wahres Preußenentum zu kennzeichnen gewöhnt haben, und dem Bushidogeist [Footnote: Bushido=Weg der kämpfenden Ritter] der altjapanischen Rittergeschlechter, der Samurais, besteht, konnte sich von neuem Geltung verschaffen.)
'pure' peasant culture over city life (Maltarich 139). Thus, Teruo becomes the film’s ‘shining hero,’ harmoniously uniting modern technology and traditional culture, while Mitsuko embodies the Nationalist Socialists’ New Woman: rooted in past traditions and strong enough to dedicate herself to the struggles of her state and people.

3.4.3. Mitsuko – The Perfect German Woman?

Manuela von Papen differentiates between the portrayal of two types of women in Nazi cinema: the ‘supporters’ who “are aware of their role in society and are prepared to give themselves totally to the creation of a great national future” and the ‘anti-women’ who are “seen as destructive of harmony and established role patterns” (713). In this section I will demonstrate that both Mitsuko and Gerda largely fall in line with these representations on screen. However, since Fanck and Itami also used the women in their films to comment on the German-Japanese relationship, the portrayal of Mitsuko and Gerda partially transcends these stereotypical depictions. At the end of the film, Mitsuko fulfills the role assigned to German women in Nazi ideology: she is in a desirable marriage and she has attained motherhood which the Nazis saw as “central to [their] vision of the ideal female whose bravery, selflessness, unquestioning devotion, and sacrifice mirrored the role individuals would be expected to play in the Volksgemeinschaft (national people’s community)” (Fox 22).

In her discussion of motherhood in Nazi films, Jo Fox points to the fact that motherhood in film represented the “safe, traditional image of women as ‘guardians of morality’” which often failed to attract female viewers (24). In this section, I will demonstrate how Fanck made Mitsuko appealing for his German audience despite her conforming to the lacklustre ideals of motherhood and sacrifice.

Mitsuko embodies a specific role within the concept of motherhood: that of the farmer’s wife in the colonies. In a montage of her education, Fanck demonstrates that Mitsuko had been prepared for this

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277 If women featured in Nazi films, they were usually assigned the role of lover, wife, mother or widow. For instance, La Habanera (1937) starred Zarah Leander as a heroine who, after many trials and tribulations in Puerto Rico, returns to her homeland as the future wife of a Swedish doctor. In Gustav Ucicky’s Return Home (Heimkehr, 1941), set in 1939 Poland, the heroine Marie finds her true calling as wife and mother at the end of the film after overcoming abuse and threats for being German by the Polish army. And in Veit Harlan’s The Great King (Der große König, 1942), the main female protagonist, the miller’s daughter Luise, is not expanded beyond her role as wife, mother and eventually widow.

278 Likewise, Japanese thinkers of the Meiji Period summed up their vision for Japanese women under the slogan “good wife, wise mother” (ryōsai kenbo) (Goldstein-Gidoni 154).
role for most of her life and her education is similar to the colonial training of German women in a Colonial Women’s School. In 1926, the only colonial school for women in the world, the *Koloniale Frauenschule Rendsburg* (KFS), was founded through the initiative of the colonial women’s society and the Ministry of the Interior. Initially a hybrid between an agricultural school and an adult education center (*Volkshochschule*), the KFS became a ‘proper’ colonial school in the 1930s, preparing women for their roles as wives in potential future colonies (Linne 34). At the KFS, women learned the fundamentals of housekeeping, agriculture and other colony-specific occupations such as: cooking, slaughtering, joinery, dressmaking, husbandry, gardening, and later National Socialists classes on race and heredity (34). The students were educated to become diligent farmers and helpers for their husbands in the colonies. The graduates of the school were supposed to symbolize the ‘new Germany’ and to act as exemplary National Socialists in the colonies “through the quiet fashion of women that is often more effective than the louder one of some men” (*Deutsche Kolonialzeitung* 49, in Linne 35).

Throughout the 1930s and 40s the school steadily increased its enrollment numbers in an effort to prepare for the time after the War and the new colonies that a victory would bring. From 1942 onwards, the school shifted its focus from overseas territories to Eastern Europe and students were only taken on if they pledged to go to the East (35-6).

Extensive footage in Fanck and Itamis’ films is dedicated to Mitsuko’s education, which displays remarkable similarities to the education of the KFS, including gymnastics, rowing, swimming, cooking, gardening, and dressmaking. As daughter of an old samurai family she also receives an education in traditional Japanese arts such as ikebana, the koto, tea ceremony, Japanese archery, and kendo. Thus, her education is a mix between more traditional crafts and a specific preparation of her role as a specifically Japanese farmer’s wife. Moreover, Mitsuko also receives German lessons whose purpose most likely is to bring her closer to Teruo as the possibility of her relocation to Germany is never mentioned. Eventually, Mitsuko fulfills her role as farmer’s wife. As mentioned previously, the last scenes of the film show her in Manchuria, standing on her husband’s field and cradling a small child. She has exchanged her elaborate clothes and hairstyle for more simple attire. Significantly, she remains silent in these scenes, keeping in line with the National Socialist’s preference for the quiet female supporter of male endeavours in the colonies. Why did the films foreground Mitsuko rather than Gerda and why was this specific mix of modernity and tradition employed to portray her? Given the censure of

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279 in der stillen Art der Frau, die aber oft wirksamer ist als die lautere manchen Mannes
another film, *Typhoon* by Robert Wiene (1933),\textsuperscript{280} which depicted a Japanese character in a more positive light than his German counterparts, Fanck’s decision to show Mitsuko as he did could have exposed the film to censorship.

Although it is too reductive to say that the Nazi treatment of German women was only repressive, women were largely limited to the role of wife and mother in Nazi ideology.\textsuperscript{281} Yet, Nazi cinema, according to Antje Ascheid, “is the cinema of the female star actress” (4). In popular cinema, women usually played the central role as exemplified through stars such as Zarah Leander or Marika Rökk; women were “the locus of desire and seduction in the films” (Bruns 4). On screen, Nazism fully embraced neither the femme fatale, nor the femme fragile, or the ‘new women,’ instead foregrounding the German mother and the de-eroticized female fighter and comrade (Ascheid 6). However, since stereotypes such as the self-sacrificing mother or the virtuous maiden failed to attract large audiences, who preferentially gravitated towards Hollywood depictions of women (Ascheid 4), Fanck had to make his female role model more appealing for his audiences. The figure of Mitsuko offers an intriguing opportunity to do so. Fanck portrays the racialized woman as the character that is most in line with the National Socialist policy. Unlike Gerda or Teruo, Mitsuko never questions her role in society. The film makes it clear that audience sympathy should lie with Mitsuko. Hara Setsuko plays her as unassuming, pleasing and obedient character without making her tedious. The preference for Mitsuko exemplifies the apparent willingness to neglect questions of race, since Mitsuko can be the ideal woman within the National Socialist ideology, despite her race. However, one could also argue that it was precisely because of her race that Mitsuko was chosen to be the model character in Fanck’s film since the depiction of an ‘Aryan’ woman completely in line with the National Socialist doctrines would most likely not have held much interest for a German audience.

Central for many films and for Nazi propaganda in general was the concept of blood and soil, which was frequently tied to the female star. Ascheid claims that such qualities as youth, an athletic disposition, innocence, a child-like character, and purity linked the female character to the concept of blood and soil

\textsuperscript{280} Robert Wiene’s film tells the story of a Japanese doctor on secret mission in Paris, who starts a romantic relationship with a cabaret singer. The Japanese man is the noble character in the film whereas the Western figures are shown in unflattering light. After it was banned, it was re-released in 1934 with dramatic changes, making the Japanese character the villain. The film starred the Russian Burja Valéry Inkijinoff as the Japanese doctor, as well as Veit Harlan and Arthur Bergen as additional Japanese characters.

\textsuperscript{281} Fox points out, however, that the female experience in the Third Reich did not exhaust itself in the cult of motherhood (22). Especially as the war progressed and men were away fighting, women were needed to fill their places in the workspace. Likewise, in Japan the constraints of the Pacific War made it difficult to continue to confine women to the space of the home as they were needed as factory and farm labor (Morris-Suzuki 113).
by inscribing the women as “nature children” (46). All these character traits can be found in Mitsuko, who is remodeled to portray a specifically Japanese “nature child.” Despite being mostly shown in formal wear and within the confines of a house, Mitsuko appears to be connected to nature throughout the film in two ways. Her volcanic temperament, which according to her German teacher, she shares with all other Japanese women, links her to a wild and potentially dangerous Japan. Her stylized outfits and hairstyles, however, make her appear perfectly placed in curated natural settings such as Japanese gardens. Mitsuko is therefore as much at home in the fields of Manchuria as she is in the gardens of her family.

In her first scene, Mitsuko converses with animals in a garden setting and is introduced through an extreme close-up of her smiling face before the camera pans out to show the natural surroundings of a beautiful garden. In subsequent shots, emphasizing gentleness and innocence, she frolics around a garden and greets animals such as tame deer. She also loses balance and falls to the ground when running through the garden – an act that further marks her as childlike. Mitsuko never wears visible make-up and the education montage in the middle of the film shows her to be young and athletic. In her research on the star persona of Kristina Söderbaum in Veit Harlan’s films, Ascheid demonstrates that in order to embody the discourse of soil and space while also satisfying the popular demands of the audience, Söderbaum had to become an erotic object, because a “pure innocent, an ‘Aryan’ model female, wouldn’t have held the kind of attraction a star needs in the culture industry (even in National Socialism)” (47). Likewise, Mitsuko’s ‘exotic charm’ served to make the soil and blood trope appealing to the audiences.

In his discussion of mass culture and manipulation, Fredric Jameson argues that mass culture should not be seen as “empty distraction or ‘mere’ false consciousness, but rather as a transformational work on social and political anxieties and fantasies which must then have some effective presence in the mass

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282 Mitsuko is frequently depicted in her own room, engaging in ‘appropriate’ domestic behavior such as preparing her clothes, writing and simply looking at her wedding kimono [0:16:23-0:17:54; 0:58:02-0:59:05; 1:01:45-1:02:22]. Towards the end of the film Fanck emphasizes that this space has become constricting for Mitsuko as it is no longer the site of a future marital bliss with Teruo. In these scenes, Fanck cuts to shots of window lattices reminiscent of prison bars [1:10:47; 1:11:56].

283 Towards the middle of the film there is a parallel scene to this focusing on Gerda. Teruo has left Gerda to speak to his birth family and to tell them that he does not intend to marry Mitsuko. It is certainly possible that he even tells them of his intentions with regard to Gerda as she sends him away with the words “Don’t talk about me yet.” To which he replies: “I must.” In the subsequent scenes Gerda walks around the hotel complex by herself. Instead of being surrounded by nature, Gerda walks among modern buildings. Several long-distance shots show her as small against the tall houses. Her walk is subdued, contrasting sharply with Mitsuko’s frolicking. The scene ends with a close-up of Gerda’s sad and worried face.
cultural text in order subsequently to be ‘managed’ or repressed” (141). Since The Daughter of the Samurai was clearly intended for mass consumption while also working through social and political themes, the question arises how the character of Mitsuko functions within this film. Referencing Norman Norwood Hollands The Dynamics of Literary Response, Jameson demonstrates that commercial artworks manipulate their audiences by combining two apparently incompatible features: wish-fulfilment on the one hand, coupled with the necessity to protect the psyche against “frightening and potentially damaging eruption of powerful archaic desires and wish-material” (141). The desire that the audience might feel for Mitsuko’s ‘exotic allure’ could be harnessed for National Socialist propaganda by reflecting model virtues of German women that render harmless the forbidden and unrealizable desire for a racialized Other. Thus, Mitsuko “strategically arouses fantasy content within careful symbolic containment structures which defuse it” (141).

As I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, the trope of the erotic allure of Japanese women was already well-established in the 1930s through travelogues and dramas about East Asia, which conjured Japanese women as mystical, demure, erotic and essentially rooted in the past. However, this is not the only image Fanck’s audience would have been familiar with. According to Uta Poiger, German consumers were exposed to a range of eroticized representations of East Asian women in the 1920s through advertisement campaigns which also utilized East Asian aesthetics in form of stylized leaves or the rising sun (325). Women featured in these advertisements could often “be read as East Asian through the shape of their eyes and lips” (320). These women embodied the spirit of modernity or the “modern girl,” a global phenomenon reaching diverse and seemingly unconnected global sites from Germany to Okinawa. According to Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, who researched this phenomenon in the context of Japanese women films, a specific genre catering to a female audience, the modern girl emerged at a time when women were increasingly visible in the Japanese public sphere and women were more and more connected to a capitalist consumer culture (76). The trope of the modern girl “served the marketing needs of cultural producers and consumers, as well as the national political needs within patriarchal discourse” (87). In Japan, the modern girl was associated with Western consumption. She could be used to affirm or mock the Japanese adoption of Western culture, but, in any case, “always served to refigure and re-establish Japanese national identity” (87). The look of modern girls was defined by short hair, loose dresses and the promise of leisure and wealth, while also connoting promiscuity (Poiger 320); as such, it could be deployed for a wide range of propaganda both in Europe and in Japan.
The erotic allure of East Asian women was evident in German advertisement campaigns up until the late 1920s and early 1930s. The German Jupp Wiertz’ illustration for *Vogue*, for instance, featured a woman with almond-shaped eyes, short dark hair and pale skin. Her contemporary dress, style and jewellery mark her as embodiment of modernity (Poiger 326). Wietz was not the only illustrator who took inspiration from East Asia in his depiction of women. In the 1929 issue of *Die Reklame (The Advertisement)*, Germany’s professional advertising journal, Albert Rabenbauer included an illustration of a modern woman with clearly identifiable East Asian features (327). In 1929, an image of Japan’s “Beauty Queen,” Miss Kahotura, was featured in a German paper in swimwear. The new look was seen as a signifier of Japan’s modernity and of an increasing universality in global beauty standards (329).

Images of women in swimwear, in particular, were considered markers of modernity as well as of eugenics. Women with exposed arms and legs engaging in sports “served as indicators of the health of the population of a given locale and marked it as modern” (331). According to Poiger, as late as 1933, the *Leipziger Illustrierte Zeitung* (*Leipzig Illustrated Paper*) featured an advertisement of two women who could be read as East Asian through the shape of their eyes (334). Overall, however, references to other ethnicities became increasingly rare in the advertisements of the 1930s and stereotypical representations of ‘Germanness’ became favoured.

German and Japanese films of that time featured actresses that cultivated the modern girl look. Louise Brooks (1906-1985), for instance, wears a short bob, heavy eye makeup and dark lips in her films *Pandora’s Box* (*Die Bücher der Pandora*) and in *Diary of a Lost Girl* (*Tagebuch einer Verlorenen*, both 1929) [Fig. 14]; Betty Amann’s heroine in the silent film *Asphalt* (1929) with her short dark hair and heavy makeup is another example. In all three films, the modern woman is connected to sexuality, crime and dubious morale. In the case of Japanese cinema, Hideaki Fujiki cites the actress Natsukawa Shizue

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284 The picture of Japanese women with ‘almond eyes’ has remained prevalent in the latter half of the 20th century. The novelist-journalist Hisako Matsubara titled her essay collection *Gaze from Almond Eyes* (1968) and an article on the filmmaker Marie Miyayama for *Deutschlandradio Kultur* described Miyayama as “the Japanese filmmaker with the short black hair and the almond-shaped brown eyes” (Geuenich, “Auf der Suche nach der Verlorenen Identität,” *Deutschlandradio Kultur*).

285 In her article on the connection of eugenics, blood and marriage, Jennifer Robertson demonstrates that the eugenics movement in Japan chiefly targeted the health and physique of girls and women (2005, 337). Since women were responsible for generating “the human capital with which to fund nation- and empire-building” (337), their bodies were subject to a host of laws and regulations. Robertson points out that positive examples of “healthy, eugenically fit” boys and girls such as the winners of an “eugenics contest” had their pictures displayed in newspapers in which they were scantily clad and which focused on their physical, fit appearance (2005, 337). The display of a healthy young body is thereby placed within the context of Japanese Imperialism since these “eugenically fit” girls were the future mothers of the Japanese empire. Likewise, in Fanck’s film Mitsuko has to be physically fit to fulfill her role as colonial farmer’s wife.
(1909-1999) as “epitome of the modern girls” (279). [Fig. 15] In contrast to Yoshiko Okada (1902-1992), another silent era actress portraying a sexually charged version of the modern girl and causing numerous scandals off set, Natsukawa portrayed a “socially respectable” version of the modern girl as her roles in the popular left-wing tendency films allowed her to “harmoniz[e] certain new values such as sophisticated fashion and consumption with a ‘spiritist’ effort” (280). In that way, she is much closer to Mitsuko who, although at times portrayed as modern girl, is never threatening in her sexuality.

According to Fujiki, the “construction of the star persona as national identity was a process whereby the old and the new was interwoven in a highly complex way” (242). Japanese actresses such as Kurishima Sumiko (1902-1987), who most frequently portrayed the lovable heroine until the mid-1920s, had to represent traditional values such as female obedience while at the same time actresses like her were seen as crucial in building a national identity for the modern nation state (243). Mitsuko, too, embodies both the traditional and the modern aspects of the Japanese woman. I have shown that Fanck’s decision to depict her in traditional kimonos and hairstyles harks back to what German audiences would interpret as essentially anti-modern Japan of the past. However, his film does include scenes in which Mitsuko also engages in sports and is clothed in swimwear that aligns her with the Modern Girl of 1920s advertisements. This depiction of Japanese woman such as Mitsuko was familiar to German audiences and rendered her an erotically charged object of fantasy for the German viewers. German women, in particular, would have looked at her appearance as something to aspire to since they had been exposed to alluring depictions of East Asian women in magazines such as Vogue and in fashion advertisements. Mitsuko thus became the perfect vehicle for selling German values to the German audience.

To summarize, Mitsuko thus emerges as a condensation of all the major discourses played out in the film. She symbolizes a seemingly unspoiled and harmonious time in Japan’s past. This idealized picture also conforms to the anti-modern tendencies of the National Socialists. However, she is at the same time a modern woman (in the sense of the National Socialists), embodying the ancient martial samurai spirit and physically able to take up her role as colonial farmer’s wife. She therefore also represents modern Japan as a militaristic and imperial space, deeply rooted in its martial past. Mitsuko as innocent ‘earth child’ and at the same time as bearer of a volcanic temperament is connected to the Japanese natural landscape. Bound in spirit to the Japanese soil, she embodies the blood and soil trope;

286 In his memoir Fanck speaks at length about Hara’s allure. When he first saw her, he “exploded from being so excited about her charm” (340). (Ich explodierte bei ihrem Anblick vor Begeisterung über so viel Liebreiz.) While he dismissed all other Japanese actresses as “neither pretty nor even alluring” (nicht hübsch oder auch nur anziehend, 340). Hara was precisely chosen because Fanck thought that Western audiences would find her beautiful (341).
consequently, Teruo has to re-connect both to her and to the soil of his country in order to serve his nation. Mitsuko’s apparently easy adjustment to Manchuria makes the Chinese soil appear as natural extension of the Japanese earth. In addition, Mitsuko embodies first the virtuous maiden and then the supporting wife, two feminine roles the National Socialists approved of and encouraged. At the same time, as an East Asian woman she held an erotic charge for Western audiences, who perceived her as demure creature of the past and as the modern woman familiar from advertisements. Mitsuko is thus also a hybrid character, but in contrast to Teruo, she effortlessly harmonizes ‘East’ and ‘West.’ Her appeal thus makes the otherwise somewhat tedious and pedantic blood and soil trope more palatable to both German men and women.

3.5. Against the Exoticizing Gaze

3.5.1. Itami’s The New Earth as Counter to Fanck’s Film

3.5.1.1. Fashion as Expression of Difference

In the following section I will highlight that Mitsuko is crucial beyond her role as representative of Japan: her character is the site where Itami and Fanck’s different views of the archipelago become apparent. Despite his apparent preference for Mitsuko, Fanck’s portrayal of her character as well as the changes Itami made, reveal the German director’s patronizing and exoticising view on Japan, notwithstanding his claims of kinship between the nations and their cultures. After splitting from Fanck and directing his own version of the film, Itami undertook several changes that, although at times quite subtle, signal his determination to portray Japan as a country technologically and culturally on par with Germany.

In his memoir, Fanck himself confesses one reason for his disagreements with Itami. While Itami wanted to portray Japan as modern, industrialized nation through glimpses of its trains, skyscrapers and infrastructure, Fanck attempted to portray Japan in the exact opposite way. Itami wanted to avoid showing the “old” Japan, meaning the traditional way of life and values, but Fanck aimed to show nothing but this side of Japan because for him Japan’s “magic” lay in its past (Fanck 342). Despite Fanck’s claims that there was a “striking similarity”\(^\text{287}\) between the German and the Japanese culture (358) and that his film would serve as an expression of the German-Japanese friendship, an analysis of

\(^{287}\) Verblüffende Ähnlichkeit
his usage of costumes, specifically of Mitsuko’s clothes, as well as of Mitsuko and Teruo’s relationship, reveals the orientalist and patronizing gaze that Fanck directed onto Japan. Fashion therefore emerges as one site which Fanck and Itami used to express their different opinions.

Fashion was regulated in Japan even before the Meiji Period with dress rules that mainly served as delineators of class (Goldstein-Gidoni 154). However, beginning with Japan’s modernization process, the Meiji government devised strict rules both with regard to men and women’s fashion. For instance, in 1871, men were fined if they did not follow the newly-mandated close-cropped hair cut and from 1872 onwards women were forbidden by law to cut their hair in the short style of the Modern Girl (155). Around that time, the kimono for women became the symbol of a traditional and uniquely Japanese dress which stood in opposition to modern Western dresses (156).288 According to Ofra Goldstein-Gidon, “the beauty of the kimono is found in immobility and calm gestures, as in those of the tea ceremony; Western attire encourages movement” (157). In his monograph on Japanese stardom, Fujiki Hideaki devotes a section on the emergence of female Japanese stars at the intersection of American actresses and onnagata (men performing the roles of women in Kabuki) in 1920s Japan. He demonstrates that in the 1920s, actresses performed in a “culturally familiar” way, moving through sets that were clearly identifiable as Japanese locales, restricting their body languages to what was traditionally expected of women, for instance only sitting with their legs folded under them, and most often donning kimono (Fujiki 222-223). Only from the mid-1920s onwards did photo cards and promotional material depict Japanese actresses in swim wear and Western clothes (223). By that time the kimono had started to signify tradition and a specific Japanese ethnicity (223).

In Fanck’s film, the audience is first introduced to Mitsuko dressed in an elaborate kimono as she feeds deer while wandering around the shrine and nature of Miyajima, an island close to Hiroshima.289 In Itami’s film she is likewise shown feeding deer and framed by a torii, a traditional shrine gate, although the scene is shorter. Both films emphasize Mitsuko’s youth and innocence by having her frolic through the gardens while playing with deer and other animals. Fanck’s prolonged establishing shots of Japanese shrines, nature, and animals, coupled with shots of a picturesque Mitsuko framed by torii, doors and shrine architecture, presents Mitsuko as a beautiful but essentially iconic image of Japan not dissimilar to those of shrines and nature. [12:19-16:03] Mitsuko is less a person and more an ornament. Although

288 Some Japanese women such as an unnamed writer in the journal Bunka Seikatsu (Cultural Life, 1924) urged women to adopt Western dress as a way to liberate their bodies from the restrictions of a kimono (Goldstein-Gidoni 157).
289 Miyajima is supposed to be the backyard of Mitsuko’s family house.
she is wearing a kimono in this scene, Fanck lets her run around and even fall to the ground, thereby de-emphasizing the formal constrains of the kimono.

In Itami’s version, Mitsuko appears in Western clothes immediately after that initial scene. She sits in her own room, gazing at a photograph of herself and Teruo in Western mountain climbing clothes and gear, perched on the edge of a volcano. The camera zooms in on the photo and the film cuts back to the time when the picture was taken. Teruo uses an automatic release to take the picture of the two on the mountain. He and Mitsuko do not look significantly younger in this shot. The short, intimate scene between the two is missing in Fanck’s version. In Itami’s film it establishes Teruo and Mitsuko as a couple in love and it shows Mitsuko dual identity: her traditional, childlike self in kimono feeding animals and her more modern self as lover on equal footing with Teruo.

Likewise, a dream scene in which Mitsuko conveys her fear that she is not good enough for Teruo is included in both films, but only Itami’s version contains shots of Teruo and Mitsuko as equal lovers. In Fanck’s work Mitsuko, still played by Hara, wears a school girl’s uniform, as she stands in the harbor and waves goodbye to Teruo, who is leaving for Europe. Teruo’s face is briefly glimpsed as he happily throws paper strings on land. Mitsuko catches such a string and holding onto it, her face sad and searching for Teruo who is not shown again. Eventually, the string rips apart. The scene makes it clear that while Teruo is happy to leave, Mitsuko loves him and is saddened by his departure. Her dream ends with a short scene in which someone is playing a piano. Mitsuko wakes up and wonders if she should have studied the piano more, as Western girls are usually good at it; her dream indicates that she had instead learned to play the koto. In contrast, Itami’s version of the dream repeatedly shows Teruo and Mitsuko looking for and at each other in quick succession as Teruo’s ship leaves the harbor, thus establishing that both of them love and will miss each other equally. Here, too, the string rips apart but Mitsuko manages to throw a new one. Itami’s dream scene also features brief shots of Gerda. Mitsuko sees the back of her blonde head and she has a vision of Teruo on a ship with an unrecognizable blonde woman. Whereas in Fanck’s film Mitsuko worries that her education was not Western enough to make her a worthy wife for Teruo, in Itami’s work the concrete disruptive force of Gerda is foreshadowed.

When Teruo and Mitsuko meet again for the first time following Teruo’s return to Japan, they wear Western clothes in both film versions. However, it is significant that in Itami’s version the viewer does not learn the motivation behind Mitsuko’s clothing selection, whereas in Fanck’s film the choice of a

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290 While it is possible, there is no indication that this is the same volcano in which Mitsuko will attempt suicide.
Western dress is made for her. When her father tells Mitsuko that she will go and see Teruo tomorrow in Tokyo, she wonders aloud what to wear, whereupon her German teacher, a middle-aged German man, enters and tells her: “European of course” and continues by questioning her in a patronizing tone: “Why did I tell you to wear a European dress?”291 Mitsuko blushing and turns her face away but eventually says in German “Because he will like me more like this.”292 Thus, while Mitsuko’s Western dress is not emphasized in Itami’s version and could just be the natural way a modern woman in Japan dresses, it receives attention in Fanck’s film. The Western dress is shown as more appropriate and superior to the Japanese kimono, at least in the eyes of the German teacher. When Mitsuko meets Teruo at his hotel immediately after his arrival, in Fanck’s version, he initially does not recognize her. Instead he walks past her with Gerda on his arm. Gerda sees Mitsuko and without knowing who she is, whispers to Teruo: “The Japanese women don’t realize that they look much more appealing in a kimono, don’t you agree?”293 For most of the hotel scene, Mitsuko’s face is hidden behind a big white hat, making her reactions and emotions invisible to the audience.

Thus, Gerda and the German teacher represent two Western viewpoints on Japanese women. The fact that the German teacher advises Mitsuko on a Western dress is an expression of his power and the belief that Western clothes are superior. Mitsuko, however, cannot participate in this power by wearing Western clothes, instead she is dismissed. At best, Western fashion on her is an act of mimicry but without any tangible benefit for her. Whereas the teacher prefers Western dress because presumably he thinks that Teruo will have acquired a taste for modern fashion in the West, which the Japanese woman should satisfy, Gerda would like to see Japanese women in their traditional dress, thereby firmly placing them in the realm of the past. At the same time, her statement expresses superiority. She realizes that Japanese women look better in kimono whereas they themselves do not. Gerda thus not only makes a blanket statement, putting all Japanese women in one category, she also asserts her own dominance as modern Western woman who can critique the supposedly ‘backwards’ Japanese women. Mitsuko understands German, the comment and the picture of a united Gerda and Teruo shock her into silence. Gerda and Mitsuko wear very similar cream-coloured dresses in Fanck’s film, whereas in Itami’s version, the antagonism between the German and the Japanese woman is emphasized by Gerda.

292 weil ich ihm so besser gefallen werde
293 Du, dass die Japanerinnen nicht merken, dass sie viel netter im Kimono aussehen, nicht?
wearing a very dark and Mitsuko a very light dress. Gerda’s short comment is missing in Itami’s film. He thus avoids both a blanket statement on Japanese women and an expression of Gerda’s authority.

Goldstein-Gidoni has shown in her study of fashion and cultural identity in Japan since the Meiji Period that the kimono “that is wrapped around the female body has become a symbol of traditionality, and so perfectly completes the image of Japaneseness, which is opposed to Westerness” (153). By relegating Japanese women to the world of kimono, Fanck denies them participation in modernity because throughout the film the kimono is associated with a notion of a traditional, ‘authentically Japanese’ past, whereas Western clothes signify modernity. Teruo’s birth sister Hideko, for instance, is an example of a modern Japanese woman. Hideko wears modern Western clothes throughout the film with one significant exception: when spending the evening with Teruo, she wears a kimono. Her function as representative of traditional Japan in this scene is further emphasized by her choice of clothes. The image of a Japanese woman in kimono is, according to Goldstein-Gidoni “one of the ‘eternal’ images of Japanese uniqueness” (153) and it is used in this way, as stand-in for traditional Japan in general, in Fanck’s film.

Mitsuko’s wedding kimono plays a significant role in the later part of the films, especially as metonym for Mitsuko’s relationship to Gerda. In Itami’s version, Gerda and Mitsuko meet at the latter’s house. Gerda wears a Western dress and Mitsuko a kimono, both are made from white fabric and have a floral pattern. The earlier antagonism between the two women is no longer emphasized. Teruo has already made his decision for his homeland and his fiancée although both women remain unaware of this. Mitsuko shows Gerda her wedding kimono. Immediately after Mitsuko learns of Teruo’s return to Japan, she takes the wedding kimono out of its box. It is thus indicated that their wedding plans are confirmed, since Mitsuko already owns the wedding garments and that Teruo’s return means that they will be married in the near future. The German woman initially remains unaware of the significance of the clothing and lets Mitsuko help her to put it on. Through the expression with which Mitsuko’s servant watches them, Gerda realizes that she is wearing Mitsuko’s wedding dress. After a close-up of the kimono, the scene cuts to Gerda who is writing her farewell letter to Teruo with the words: “When you are here, please take care of Mitsuko. I am satisfied in leaving before you, dear friend.” Mitsuko’s wedding dress has arguably made Gerda realize the seriousness of Teruo and Mitsuko’s relationship.

Fanck changed the scene slightly. Gerda is shown Mitsuko’s wedding kimono, admires the garment and tries to put it around Mitsuko’s shoulder but the young woman declines with the words: “One only
wears this once in a lifetime.”294 She subsequently alludes to her suicide in stating that she might wear the kimono tomorrow. The scene cuts away from Gerda’s pensive face to Teruo racing home in his car and immediately cuts to Gerda’s farewell letter, which is much longer and written in German in this version.295 The change between the two scenes is slight but significant. Fanck’s version is more centered on Gerda. By taking more time to explain Gerda’s motives for leaving and emphasizing that she is leaving for both Teruo and Mitsuko’s sake as well as by not having her wear the wedding kimono, Fanck paints a sympathetic picture of the German woman and stresses that Gerda and Teruo are destined to part ways. In contrast, Itami foregrounds Mitsuko through her pre-existing relationship with Teruo and her more dignified and controlled manner towards Gerda.

The wedding kimono features again prominently in Mitsuko’s suicide attempt. In Fanck’s version, Mitsuko carries the kimono with her up to the volcano and puts it over her shoulders when she stands on the mouth of the volcano. She looks down pensively and it is in this moment that Teruo reaches her. He takes the dark kimono from her shoulders, revealing Mitsuko’s white, virginal kimono underneath.296 Both characters are dressed in white and shown in front of a white background. Mitsuko uses her precious wedding kimono to wipe the dust from Teruo’s feet before being carried down from the mountain.297 In contrast, in The New Earth Mitsuko and her kimono actually fall into the volcano. Mitsuko survives but is only found because Teruo sees a white cloth on the mouth of the volcano that leads him to his fiancée. Teruo brings her into a farmer’s house where he apologizes and the two reconcile—a scene that is missing from Fanck’s film except in short, faint dream sequences superimposed over Teruo’s face just before he awakens in Mitsuko’s house. A kimono hangs at the wall of the hut which could possibly be Mitsuko’s wedding kimono. In contrast to Fanck’s film, a wedding is actually alluded to in form of the display of wedding gifts.

294 man trägt ihn nur einmal
295 “My dear Teruo! If you arrive here today and don’t meet me, you will later see that it was right. Take care of your little Mitsuko because this girl will wear her wedding kimono once even without you at her side. In the distance, I hear the rumbling of the volcano! I hope you two will one day think fondly of your German friend Gerda.” (Mein lieber Teruo! Wenn Du heute hier eingetroffen bist und mich nicht antriffst, wirst Du das später einmal als richtig erkennen. Gib acht [sic] auf deine kleine Mitsuko, denn dieses Mädchen wird seinen Hochzeitskimono einmal tragen, notfalls auch ohne, dass Du dann an ihrer Seite stehst. In der Ferne höre ich schon das Grollen des Vulkans! Ich hoffe aber, ihr beiden könnt eins in guter Erinnerung behalten, Eure deutsche Freundin Gerda.)
296 Most likely Fanck committed an editing error in this scene: In the close-up Mitsuko is wearing a darker kimono whereas in the long-distance shot, the kimono is purely white.
297 The cleaning of Teruo’s feet can be seen as another religious symbol in the context of the mountains as sublime space. In Christianity, the washing of feet is an expression of selfless love and humility. (see: www.britannica.com/topic/foot-washing, last accessed: 15-02-2017)
Thus, the two directors paint similar, yet subtly different, pictures of their two female stars with Itami clearly depicting Mitsuko as the more sympathetic character. Itami not only establishes an earlier love relationship between Teruo and Mitsuko, he also shows Mitsuko as a woman who has modern characteristics despite being rooted in tradition. In Fanck’s film, however, Mitsuko’s role is not expanded beyond that of a samurai’s daughter. Her Western dress is an expression of an unfitting modernity that is forced upon her. Mitsuko can be seen as stand-in for Fanck’s view on Japan as essentially aesthetic, unthreatening and child-like. Itami, however, in creating a more modern and plausible Mitsuko, pushed back against Fanck. One scene, in particular, is exemplary for this antagonism: When Gerda visits Iwao in Fanck’s version, Mitsuko acts as a servant to her to honor Gerda as guest. Gerda even remarks that Mitsuko serving her is too high an honor to which Iwao replies that acting as a servant is part of Mitsuko’s education. [1:04:06] In Itami’s film, however, Mitsuko sits as equal next to Gerda, a servant attends to both. The character of Mitsuko becomes thus the space in which Fanck and Itami’s conflicting attitudes towards Japan are displayed.

With regard to Teruo’s clothing, there is only one subtle difference between Fanck’s and Itami’s version. Both films introduce Teruo wearing a Western suit and standing on board a ship that is just about to return to Japan. He continues to wear that suit in Fanck’s version until he returns to his birth family in the countryside. Signifying the return to his roots, initiated through the cultural evening with his birth sister, Teruo now dresses in a dark kimono which he later changes to a traditional farming outfit. After briefly wearing a Western suit for his drive home, Teruo changes into a traditional kimono to appear in front of the family assembly. He changes again into a suit to rescue Mitsuko. Finally, he is shown in a kimono when reconciling with Mitsuko, and in a warm farming outfit in Manchuria.

Itami’s film differs only in one aspect from this: When Teruo returns home to his birth family, he wears a Western suit, signifying either that his return to his ‘Japanese roots’ has not yet happened, or that a change of clothes is not important in this context. Likewise, when he farms the land of his ancestors, he does so in his Western suit, not in Fanck’s traditional Japanese work clothes. The sharp contrast between his Western dress and the act of farming symbolizes Teruo’s dual nature. Yet, he is not afraid to soil his suit through farming in the muddy rice paddy; his modernity does not hinder his farming endeavours. Interestingly, Fanck mentions this change from his version to Itami’s in his memoir as a particularly vexing incident for him. Whereas Fanck had decided to let Teruo wear old-fashioned clothes

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298 In this scene Mitsuko brings a tray of food to Gerda and serves it to her before bowing down low. The somewhat degrading scene for Mitsuko is softened by Gerda’s comic inability to use chopsticks.
because he found them beautiful, Itami was ashamed of the choice of clothing for his protagonist (Fanck 343). In Itami’s opinion, a modern, Western-educated man would have never worn simple farming attire. The Japanese director claimed to feel ashamed if Western audiences saw Japanese men portrayed in that way (343). According to Fanck, whose memoir has to be read with scepticism because of his frequent exaggerations and omissions, the clothing of Teruo in this scene was so important for Itami that he tried to prevent Fanck from filming his version by hiding set pieces (343). Although this difference between Itami’s and Fanck’s film is subtle, it is significant that in the German version Teruo returns to his homeland because of his love for the Japanese high culture, experienced during the evening with his birth sister, whereas Teruo’s return to his rightful place within his society and family in Itami’s version is prompted by the dual act of visiting his birth family and farming his homeland, connecting him to the ancient rice agriculture of Japan.

3.5.1.2. Teruo’s Family as Signifier of a ‘Less Developed’ Japan

A second difference between Itami and Fanck’s film is the portrayal of Teruo’s birth family. In both versions, the family, consisting of a father, a mother and a younger sister, is shown at the very beginning of the film before Teruo is introduced and in the penultimate scene when Teruo and his new bride visit them in the countryside. The action in both films sets in when Teruo’s family receives the news that their son is returning to Japan. Their happiness is briefly disrupted by an earthquake that does not cause serious damage and during which the family remains calm. In Fanck’s film, shots of the breaking house are intercut with close-ups of the impassive faces of the farmers. In Itami’s film, however, instead of remaining calm, the family exhibits signs of distress and fear. A shot shows some grains of rice shaking in a bowl, foreshadowing the importance of this crop for the plot of the film299 and the house receives

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299 Rice paddies are frequently shown throughout Fanck and Itami’s films and the question of whether the Japanese earth will yield enough rice for its people is at the center of the narrative. In the mid-19th century, Japan’s economy was still mainly based on agriculture with rice being the most important crop. Rice was not only the staple food, it was also the main source of revenue and the medium of exchange (Nair 79). Thus, the stability of the whole country depended on the rice harvest. At the end of the Meiji era (around the beginning of the 20th century), farms in Japan remained relatively small (about one hectare) and techniques of rice cultivation were labor intensive, manual and still largely traditional (188). However, despite that and especially during the 1920s the food grains outstripped the increase in population through modest and largely private reforms of farming techniques (189). Japanese agriculture yielded the highest production per hectare in the world shortly before the outbreak of World War II. In 1938, for instance, Japanese farmers produced an average of 3,860 kilograms of wet rice per hectare, compared to 1,390 kilograms in India (189). Thus, while the depiction of traditional farming methods and the importance of rice as crop appear to be founded on accurate observations in Fanck film, the fear
considerably more damage. Thus, while the representation of Teruo’s family in Fanck’s film participates in the stereotype of the ‘stoic Asian,’ Itami humanizes Teruo’s family by letting them behave in a more plausible way. Another subtle change in this scene is presented in the toy of Teruo’s little sister. In Fanck’s version she plays with a large reproduction of a Western military ship, whereas Itami lets her play with a small paper ship that is decorated with a Japanese flag. The alteration is subtle, yet Itami saw it as important enough to make the change in his version. It is possible that Itami thought a paper ship would be a more plausible toy for impoverished farmers or that a warship was no suitable toy for a girl. He could also have opted for the smaller Japanese paper ship so as to not allude to the West in this scene.

In both films, Teruo’s birth father and sister visit him in Tokyo. Their arrival in the city is accompanied by several low-angle shots of modern and traditional buildings, creating an atmosphere of awe and greatness against which the characters appear out of place and insignificant. When they visit him in the hotel, Teruo’s sister has to explain to her father how revolving doors work while the father appears to be very impressed by the mechanism. Thus, Fanck emphasizes the supposed ‘backwardness’ and naiveté of Japanese people who had either no contact with modernity or who were not upper class, wealthy and urban. Itami shows the arrival of Teruo’s family at the hotel but the scene with the revolving door is missing, thus presenting Teruo’s birth family in a more dignified manner. Although the plot of both films is essentially the same, the crucial changes between Itami and Fanck’s versions illustrate Fanck’s orientalist and reductive perception of Japan as well as Itami’s continuous struggle to have his country displayed as equal partner of the West.

that Japan would not produce enough rice to feed its people, is technically not. However, following several failed harvests, Japan experienced a devastating famine in 1934 that hit farmers hard with some villages experiencing only 12% of the normal rice harvest (Hane 115). This famine can be linked to the search for new Lebensraum as right-wing activists saw a possible solution to Japan’s agriculture problems in the expansion to other Asian countries (117).

300 This scene and that of Teruo and Gerda’s arrival in Tokyo are the only ones in Fanck’s film in which he foregrounds the cityscape over nature shots. Whereas his shots of rice paddies, farmers and ocean waves exuded a sense of calm and dignity, his city scenes are marked by hectic music, disorienting perspectives and an overall atmosphere of confusion. Fanck clearly distinguished between rural and urban Japan, with a strong preference for the former.

Contemporary German reviews for The Daughter of the Samurai were overall positive but most likely not genuine. When a research team from the Japan Broadcasting Corporation NHK visited Germany in 1985 to conduct research on the films, they came to the conclusion that Goebbels had instructed the press to praise Fanck’s film (High 163). Yet, although the film was duly discussed in most major and minor papers in Germany, the reactions of the critics were by far not as homogeneous as the officials had hoped (Hansen 80). The political aspects of The Daughter of the Samurai could not be criticized freely, so reviewers focused on other, less conspicuous aspects of the film such as its length. The German press viewed the scenes in Manchuria favourably, as Japan’s expansion plans in Asia did not conflict with Germany policy and were thus regarded as equally legitimate as Germany’s push for colonies (1997, 81). Several articles, among them those published in Licht-Bild-Bühne, claimed that Fanck’s film showed the “real Japan” and “Japan as it is” (1997, 82). The Völkische Beobachter went as far as to claim the film “thoroughly finishes with the sweetish Butterfly-romanticism and shows Japan as it really is: Japan whose fundaments are thousand year old, ancient traditions to which European experience can be applied fruitfully” (1997, 82). This image of Japan as old culture and as a kindred spirit to Germany, yet also an inferior a student of the West, fitted well within the National Socialist’s view of Japan. Yet not surprisingly, German reviewers fell back on romantic clichés of Japan, citing the charm and magic of cherry blossoms, gardens and Mt. Fuji when describing the film’s allure.

Perhaps due to the novelty factor of having a German film made in Japan, Fanck’s version was a “sensational hit” with Japanese audiences while Itami’s was a “dismal failure” (High 162). However, Japanese reviewers, not bound by official orders to praise the film, were far less favourable in their assessment of Fanck and especially Itami’s works. According to Hansen, most Japanese critics dismissed Itami’s film as “so stupid it makes one angry,” “boring” and “failed” (Hansen 68). The paper Sekai Bunka even went as far as calling the film “a sacrilege against humanity, nature and art” (1997, 68). Itami, in particular, was in the focus of the critics because they felt that he did not oppose Fanck’s wishes enough and had brought shame on the nation by allowing Fanck’s exoticizing portrayal of the archipelago. It was felt that Fanck as a foreigner was bound to make mistakes in the depiction of Japan and could therefore be forgiven more easily (1997, 68). Fanck’s overuse of imageries taken from his version of a ‘traditional

301 gründlich mit der süßlichen Butterfly-Romantik aufräumt und Japan zeigt, wie es wirklich ist: Japan, in dem die Tradition des jahrtausendealte, urewige Fundament ist, auf dem die europäischen Erfahrungen nutzbringend aufgebaut werden
Japan,’ as exemplified in the Geisha, Cherry Blossom and Samurai fantasies, was critiqued by the Japanese press (1997, 73). The depiction of ‘old Japan’ in The Daughter of the Samurai, conjured forth a backward country, still entrenched in feudal times. Japan’s conflicting position between East and West, the core of Fanck’s film, was regarded as especially unfitting, since many Japanese critics saw the harmonious unity of West and East in Japan as strength of the Japanese national character. Nevertheless, Japanese advertisers reverted back to the same traditional clichés when describing the film as coming from “the country of the grand cherry blossom” in the paper Yomiuri Shinbun (1997, 74). For Hansen, this signifies that although Japanese critics were weary of stereotypical depictions of their home country, images of a sublime Japanese nature were needed to successfully market the film abroad and at home (1997, 74). Fanck’s prolonged exterior landscape shots received the greatest attention in the Japanese press, with mostly positive reviews (1997, 71). While admiring the technical beauty of the shots, however, Fanck was criticized for failing to see the ‘true essence’ of Japan, instead focusing on picturesque but essentially hollow images of Mt. Fuji and of cherry blossoms. Japanese audiences had become inured to orientalist portrayals of their country by both American and German filmmakers for decades (Baskett, 2009, 228). However, since one aim of the film was, arguably, to foster goodwill between the two nations, it “seemed to raise the question of the very possibility of finding any mutual understanding among Axis nations” (2009, 228).

Moreover, the implication in Fanck’s film that Nazi and Japanese aesthetics were interchangeable disturbed the Japanese press. An example for that can be found in the scene in which Teruo visits his old teacher, a Shinto priest; the latter’s head is shown in a frontal close up, situated directly in front of a Buddhist Manji, traditionally a representation of universal harmony. A German audience, however, would instantly make the connection to a Nazi Swastika. In the next scene, a close up of Teruo has the Manji clearly visible in the background. In both shots the center of the Manji is in the exact center of the screen. This blatant equalisation of Nazi imagery and Buddhist symbols was picked up unfavourably by contemporary Japanese critics such as Tsutomu Sawamura:

The scenery that appeared on screen was definitely Japanese, but the way it was shown was Western (batakusai), exhibitionist, and queer. Holding up a Buddhist manji to resemble a Nazi swastika, he [Fanck] portrayed temples as if they were the sole repository of the Japanese spirit. [...] He applied the Nazi spirit of self-sacrifice indiscriminately to the Yamato spirit. [...] [W]hile claiming to praise the samurai spirit he was really praising the German spirit. He openly recognized Manchuria, but it is Germany that is requiring this New Order. (Sawamura in Baskett, 2009, 227-8)
Baskett argues that the critical failure of the film and the backlash by Japanese film journalists against German misrepresentations of their culture “brought to the surface culturally exclusivist attitudes, with each criticizing the other side” (2009, 214). Fanck’s apparently indiscriminate insertion of Nazi ideologies, in particularly those of Volk ohne Raum, were disturbing to some Japanese film critics (2009, 227), who may have perceived this as disregard for uniquely Japanese concepts and philosophies. Almost no review agreed with Fanck’s representation of the people-without-space-trope (Hansen 1997, 71). While this could possibly be a covert critique of Japan’s expansion politics in Asia, it is much more likely that the apparent preference of new, ‘better’ soil in China over the old and overused Japanese soil that was felt to be an insult by Japanese critics (1997, 71). Only a few critics agreed that the political message of the film not only conformed to Nazi politics but also to the Japanese kokutai policy.\footnote{See the introduction chapter for more information on the kokutai (国体, national body or entity) ideology.}

Significantly, the Japanese press almost ignored the subplot of Manchuria that is found in The Daughter of the Samurai (Baskett 2009, 229). Instead reviewers were preoccupied with Fanck’s editing choices such as his decision to present night scenes shot in Osaka passing off as Tokyo. According to Baskett, only the screenwriter and critic Sawamura Tsutomo commented in his book Gendai Eigaron on the Manchurian subplot wondering if the last scene of the film in Manchuria will affect the marketing of the film in nations that did not recognize the puppet state (2009, 229).

The love triangle between Gerda, Teruo and Mitsuko was picked up by Kijima Yukio, who wondered in his article in Eiga Hyōron how the German press and audience would react to Teruo choosing Mitsuko and leaving Gerda and whether they would concur that “a member of the yellow race Hara Setsuko was more beautiful than the Aryan Eweler and won over her in the end” (Hansen 72). Alluding to the 1933 film Typhoon by Robert Wiene, which was forbidden in Germany, Kijima claimed that if The Daughter of the Samurai would be censured, it would not be the first film censored for depicting a victorious Japanese character (1997, 71).

Japanese critics saw in Hara the archetype of the Japanese woman (1997, 75). The discourse around her star persona was further heightened when the Japanese press heard that Hara was to travel to the premiere of Fanck’s film to Berlin. Hara was supposed to stay in Germany to film a second German-Japanese coproduction, this time on German soil, but for unknown reasons the project was never realized (Haukamp, 2014, 10).\footnote{The title of this second co-production was The Diplomat’s Daughter (Die Tochter des Diplomats, Gaikōkan no Musume). Reversing the story of The Daughter of the Samurai, the heroine leaves her four German lovers to be} True to her persona as symbol of Japan, Hara vowed to only wear
kimono while touring Germany. According to the contemporary press who dissected every aspect of her journey, she packed 15 kimono and even a Shimada-style wig (2014, 12). The Japanese film industry promoted Hara as symbol of the nation and as international film star by extensively reporting on her meetings with German actors and politicians (2014, 13). While Hara was praised for the beauty of her character, Mitsuko, and was regarded as stand-in for all young Japanese women, Kosugi’s stubby, indecisive Teruo was not seen as fitting role model for Japanese men (Hansen 75). Ruth Eweler’s Gerda was seldom discussed in the Japanese press, apart from some critics who remarked on her bad acting and on the fact that she was not beautiful. Just like the Japanese press, the German press focused positively on Hara in their reviews and cautiously critiqued Eweler for her unconvincing acting (1997, 84).

The critique of Fanck’s film must be seen within the context of a “history of indignity over what many Japanese felt were repeatedly patronizing misrepresentations of Japan by the West” (Baskett, 2009, 228). However, it was around the same time that the Japanese film industry orientalised other Asian nations in a similar way in order to promote their concept of a New Order in Asia under Japanese rule. Thus, “Japanese representations of bilateral goodwill toward Japan’s ‘Asian brothers’ were no more legitimate than Fanck’s vision of a ‘pure’ Japan” (2009, 229). In Japanese reviews, the core problem of Fanck and Itami’s film becomes visible. Had Fanck really portrayed the ‘true’ Japan of his times, he would have shown a country riddled by social upheavals, political tensions and economic depression. Instead, he chose to focus on a quasi-mythical portrayal overemphasizing Japan’s feudal past while neglecting its modern achievements. If his film confirmed the German audience’s expectation, Japanese critics felt humiliated by a portrayal that firmly rooted their nation in the past.

3.6. Chapter Conclusion: All a Question of Culture?

Throughout Fanck’s film, Japanese and German thought has been brought together, real or imagined parallels between the two nations have been emphasized and potential conflicts have been downplayed. Thus, the film arguably served as vehicle for an enhanced German understanding of Japan. In seeing their ideologies and beliefs reflected in Japan, it was easier to accept the archipelago as ally. Fanck’s film stands in a longer tradition among German Japanophiles and among Japanese thinkers of reunited with her fiancé in Japan (Haukamp 2014, 10). The film was to be co-directed by Fanck, Kumagai Hisatora and the Italian director Carmine Gallone, making it a production of all Axis Powers (2014, 12).
overemphasising the refinement and traditions of the Japanese culture as a means to justify imperial expansion. Likewise, the essays written as part of the DJG’s essay contest portray Germany and Japan as two similar culture nations, united by their status of soldier people (Soldatenvölker).

According to Ascheid, the National Socialists “saw entertainment culture as a means of either wrapping ideological contents into a seemingly innocuous package or deliberately counteracting the public’s frustration with overt indoctrination by allowing the relief of escapism” (214). The Daughter of the Samurai has elements of both strategies. The happiness of Mitsuko at the end of the film and her consistent portrayal as a positive character leave no doubt that the message of Fanck’s film was that subordination under the state and family structures should be the ultimate goal for both men and women. At the same time, the beautiful shots of the Japanese landscape, of which Mitsuko appears to be an extension, served to “package” this message in an alluring and appealing way.

In summary, Fanck’s film employs natural landscapes, and mountains, in particular as a means to connect Germany and Japan, while also superimposing the people without space trope onto the archipelago. Using depictions of the Japanese nature that are directly tied to orientalist suppositions about Japanese national character, he seeks to justify both the Japanese, and by extension also the German, imperial project. At the same time Fanck’s extensive shots of the Japanese landscape coupled with the frequent explanations of culture and customs allowed German viewers to ‘travel’ to Japan without leaving home.
4. Germany and Japan at the Turn of the 21st Century

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. Japan and Germany – The Erasure of Empire?

The end of the Second World War saw the Japanese and the German empires in ruins. After 1945, their respective occupation laws initially banned Germany and Japan from restoring their diplomatic and economic relations (Wippich, 2016, 208). In the 1950s, West Germany and Japan started their political and economic rapprochement process by signing a trade treaty, exchanging ambassadors, and re-establishing embassies and consulates (2016, 210). Overall, however, both nations were more invested in their own political and economic recovery than in re-establishing diplomatic ties. West Germany and Japan were “at best, supportive, but could never have a crucial influence on [each other’s] national politics” (2016, 219). Starting in the 1960s, both West Germany and Japan experienced unprecedented economic growth, leading rising living standards in both nations. As an expression of their respective economic importance, West Germany and Japan were founding members of the G7.

Following Germany’s division into two separate states with distinct economic and cultural affiliations in 1949, Japan retained closer ties to West Germany. Consequently, the relationship between East Germany and Japan remained restrained. In his article on the two nations, Volker Stanzel points out that “neither country moved out of the confines of the blocs to which they belonged” (227) and up until the 1970s, trade relations were negligible (233). In the realm of culture, the East German-Japanese exchange was principally restricted to language and music exchanges as well as to limited youth exchange programs (238). In 1972, a large East German exhibition was held in Japan and in 1974 Japan established an embassy in East Berlin (231). Trade relations improved in the 1980s but remained insignificant for both nations (235).

How did Germany and Japan deal with the legacy of their empires? In his monograph *The Quest for the Lost Nation*, Sebastian Conrad explores West Germany and Japan’s historiography following the Second

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304 All translations in this chapter are mine, unless otherwise noted. I use Susan Bernofsky’s translation of *The Naked Eye* throughout.
305 For instance, in 1951 Germany and Japan signed a Commodity and Tariff Agreement, which “materially substantiated postwar bilateral relations” (Wippich 2016, 209). Heinrich Northe, who also served as a diplomat in China during Nazi Germany, was appointed the first West German ambassador to Japan and Kase Shun’ichi became his counterpart and the first postwar ambassador on German soil in 1954 (Wippich 2016, 210).
World War. Conrad claims that both “in Germany and in Japan, post-war recovery was predicated upon a virtual amnesia about the imperial past”; coming to terms with the recent past was “typically conducted with a focus on internal social conflicts, not on imperialism” (2010, 174). In addition, historians and thinkers in both nations stripped loaded and problematic concepts such as ‘East’ and ‘West’ of their concrete geographical connotations (2010, 175). In the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, the term ‘West’ after 1945 encompassed a larger geographical unit of which West Germany was a part (2010, 207). In Japan, historical scholars had treated the nation’s relation to the West as a question of temporal distance (2010, 207). Following the end of the American occupation and the beginning of the economic upswing in the 1950s, however, “this distance appeared to decrease and even to vanish in the eyes of many Japanese” (2010, 207).

In her essay “Is Europe Western?,” Yoko Tawada connects the concept of ‘the West’ to capitalist modes of production. Speaking of Japan after the Second World War, she states: “The end of the War didn’t lead to the dissolution of the national identity. In the name of the nation everyone was pressed to rebuild the country and to generate wealth.” Moreover, according to Tawada, the terms “West” and “Europe” have overly positive connotations when compared to words such as “German.” One of Tawada’s most known texts is entitled “Actually you are not allowed to say it but Europe does not exist.”

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306 Historians in West Germany and Japan explained differences between nations or people through questions of temporality so that various interventions could be justified in terms of progress or a “catch-up” to modernization (Conrad 2010, 233). “Unequal development” between different nations, for instance, could thereby be explained by a “delayed” moment of ‘takeoff’ on the common path to modernity” (2010, 174). Frequent references to both Japan and Germany as ‘latecomers’ to the world stage in the 20th century, exemplify this approach to historiography.

307 In previous chapters, I have followed Japanese custom and set the family name before the first name. However, in this chapter, the first name will precede the family name because the authors identify themselves with this name constellation. Tawada herself commented on her ‘German’ and her ‘Japanese’ name: “To avoid unnecessary complications, I switch my name in America and Europe. The switch of the name parts significantly changes the sound so that it is not the same name anymore. Yoko Tawada is a completely other name than Tawada Yoko. [...] I don’t think that in Europe Japanese names have to be written in their original order. It is a trait of personal names that they can be transformed when crossing borders” (Tawada, 2007, 223, emphasis in the original). (Um unnötige Komplikationen zu vermeiden, stelle ich in Amerika und Europa [...] meinen Namen um. Durch die Umstellung der Bestandteile des Namens verändert sich sein Klangbild so stark, dass man nicht mehr von ein und demselben Namen sprechen kann. Yoko Tawada ist ein vollkommen anderer Name als Tawada Yoko. [...] Ich denke nicht, dass man in Europa japanische Namen in der Originalreihenfolge schreiben müsste. Denn es ist eine Eigenschaft des Personennamens, dass er sich bei der Überschreitung einer Grenze verwandeln kann.)


309 Analogous, Tawada speaks of the impossibility of defining a concrete ‘East’ against such a West: “I can’t speak about an ‘Eastern world’ either. The concept ‘Eastern’ is very west-European. This word is used to refer to the Near East, China and Japan, sometimes Russia, and quite often even middle European countries or the former GDR. This idea of the ‘East’ has always been necessary to make the image of the ‘West’ appear concrete” (www.kyotojournal.org/the-journal/kj-classics/is-europe-western/, last accessed: 28-03-2017).
(“Eigentlich darf man es nicht sagen, aber Europa gibt es nicht”, in *Talisman*, 2003) emphasising that what is commonly labeled as “Europe,” is actually an artificial construct. Likewise, with regard to Asia, Tawada claims:

The term “Asian” is a child of colonialism; born in Europe and adopted and abused by the Japanese, who abandoned it after the Second World War. In Europe people like to talk of Asian cuisine, Asian medicine, or of Asian philosophy, because they would like there to be some sort of unified Asian culture. If they didn’t, the existence of a European culture would be in doubt. (“Is Europe Western?”)

Thus, categories such as ‘East’ and ‘West’ as well as questions of culture, time and civilization, so important for understanding the German-Japanese relationship at the turn of the 20th century, underwent a dramatic shift after 1945, with these labels being fundamentally questioned.

How did Japanese authors and filmmakers in Germany address these changes? The protagonists of post-war German-Japanese films and literature are no longer the honour-bound samurai, beautiful geisha or dutiful students of Western thought that were prevalent in the early 20th century. Instead, tourists, office workers, and illegal immigrants have replaced these characters. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that ‘the foreign’ is a commodity in the realm of German-Japanese exchange, both on the extra-textual and the textual level. According to Graham Huggan, in “contemporary cultural theory, marginality is often given a positive value, being seen less as a site of social exclusion or deprivation than as a locus of resistance to socially imposed standards and coercive norms” (20). Writers such as Matsubara and Tawada utilize their marginality in Germany – as women, as immigrants, as people of colour – not only to market their works, but also to deconstruct established paradigms of national identity, gender, and race. However, the question of marginality is complicated with regard to Tawada and Matsubara, as both women occupy privileged positions: they come from middle and upper class families, have a PhD in German Studies, and are well connected in academic and literary circles. Rather than a lived experience of the authors, their marginality is an aesthetic one: it is “deprived of its subversive implications by being rerouted into safe assertions of a fetishized cultural difference” (24). Analogous to Dean MacCannell’s concept of “staged authenticity,” Huggan coins the term “staged marginality” as “the process by which marginalised individuals or social groups are moved to dramatize their ‘subordinate’ status for the benefit of a majority or mainstream audience” (87). What does that mean for contemporary German-Japanese literature and film? The self-orientalising acts that Matsubara and to a certain extent Tawada
engage in is a conscious strategy to affirm and subvert stereotypes and assumptions about Japanese women and to gain financial and artistic success. 

4.1.2. Japanese Authors and Filmmakers in Post-War Germany

Given that both nations were preoccupied with the immediate aftermaths of the Second World War and that Japanese pleasure trips abroad were banned until 1964 (Cooper 145), it is not surprising that no Japanese filmmakers or writers appeared to have been working in Germany in the 1950s. To my knowledge, the first post-war Japanese author to settle in Germany was Hisako Matsubara (b. 1935) who started working as a journalist in West Germany in 1962. Over the following decades, more Japanese writers and filmmakers such as Yoko Tawada (b. 1960) and Marie Miyayama (b. 1972) settled in Germany. Other artists and writers with a Japanese background in German-speaking countries are Hito Steyerl (b. 1966) and Milena Michiko Flašar (b. 1980). Since my thesis has hitherto focused on Japanese writers and filmmakers who emigrated from Japan to Germany, I will not discuss Steyerl and Flašar, born in Germany and Austria respectively, in the context of this thesis.

Of the above-mentioned authors and filmmakers, Tawada receives the most critical acclaim within the field of German Studies. Her works will be the focus of this chapter because she is the only German-speaking Japanese author directly addressing questions of colonialism and culture in the German-Japanese context. Her books therefore continue a discourse begun by other German-Japanese authors such as Tamai Ki sak and Kitasato Takeshi almost one hundred years prior to Tawada’s arrival in Germany.

As of 2017, Tawada has published twenty-three works in German, ranging from novels, poetry collections to literary essays and dramas, and twenty six works in Japanese. She has written some of her novels, such as Brother-in-law in Bordeaux (ボルドーの義兄, Borudō no gikei) in both German and Japanese. Because the focus of this thesis lies on German-language representations of Japan by Japanese writers and filmmakers – or in the case of The Daughter of the Samurai and Bushido on German-Japanese co-productions – I will exclusively analyse Tawada’s German-language oeuvre. For this

I will demonstrate how on a textual level, for instance, Matsubara’s protagonist Uba in The Gate of Happiness utilizes Western stereotypes of Japanese femininity in order to disguise her true self and intentions more successfully. On an extra-textual level, Matsubara’s essay collection Gaze from Almond Eyes, while ostensibly aiming to enlighten Germans about Japan, has arguably been successful precisely because she plays into many common stereotypes about the archipelago.
discussion, I have chosen two of Tawada’s short novels, *The Naked Eye (Das Nackte Auge, 2004)* and the German-language version of *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux (Schwager in Bordeaux, 2008)*, as my main focus because Tawada’s comments on colonialism and imperialism are most pronounced in these two books. I will also refer to other, earlier works such as *Rothenburg ob der Tauber. A German Riddle (Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Ein deutsches Rätsel, 2000)* and *A Guest (Ein Gast, 1993)*.

Compared with Tawada, Miyayama and Matsubara have received less critical acclaim and public attention. Japanese and German reviewers praised Miyayama’s *The Red Dot (Der Rote Punkt, 2008)* which remains her only feature film as of 2017. Matsubara’s problematic attempts to explain her home country to Germans could be one reason why her work appears to have been largely forgotten. Her editorials for the German magazine DIE ZEIT, for instance, are marked by clichés and platitudes such as: “If you speak directly to a Japanese, they are startled,” “[Japanese] don’t care what other people think about them when they walk around,” and “[they have] mostly bad teeth, discoloured from drinking so much tea” (DIE ZEIT, October, 13th, 1967). Matsubara’s aptly titled essay collection *Gaze from Almond Eyes* (Blick aus Mandelaugen, 1968) exemplifies her self-orientalising and essentializing approach to culture which is out of date in a scholarly community that, as I have demonstrated in the introduction chapter, privileges transcultural and postcolonial experiences.

Yet, a comparative reading of these women lays bare how the discourse on Japanese authors in Germany has both transformed yet also remained unchanged since Tamai and Kitasato first attempted to portray Japan as equal to the West in their works. The contributors to Tamai’s magazine *East Asia* regarded Japan as student of Europe. In contrast, in the early 1980s, Japan’s economic boom established the nation as model for the West, exemplified through various German-language guidebooks on how to transform the economy after the Japanese model (Köh 8). Japan’s economic success led to a renewed interest in the nation and its culture. A scene in Matsubara’s novel *The Gate of Happiness (Die Glückspforte, 1980)* alludes to this connection between economics and culture. When the German protagonist Maxill travels to Cologne for the opening of an East Asian Art Museum, he asks himself why

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311 Reviews on Japanese film blogs were also generally positive, praising, for instance, the intertwining of the German and the Japanese language on screen ([www.blogs.yahoo.co.jp/shigekisatojp/4783641.html](http://www.blogs.yahoo.co.jp/shigekisatojp/4783641.html)) or the performance of the main actress ([www.cdlpassهجم/8933273](http://www.cdlpassهجم/8933273)).

312 Spricht man einen Japaner, eine Japanerin unvermittelt an, so erschrecken sie, Es macht ihnen auch gar nichts aus, wie sie herumlaufen und was andere Leute von ihnen denken, meist schlechte, vom vielen Teetrinken braun verfärbte Zähne.

313 It is not clear if Matsubara chose the title herself or if her publisher chose it for her.
the gallery is crowded: “Maxill wondered why he [his friend] came to Cologne for the vernissage although he was an expert in economics” (71).\textsuperscript{314} Maxill quickly learns to adapt to this discourse, however, and soon proclaims:

‘It took long enough,’ Maxill said, ‘for Cologne to get a museum for East Asian Art. He spoke about how the renewed interest in the Far East found expression in this, a development that was overdue given the importance of Japan for the German economy. Maxill purposely talked about the economic aspect although it had no direct relation to art and especially not to the old artefacts that were shown in this museum. (73)\textsuperscript{315}

Matsubara wrote her novel in 1980, towards the end phase of Japan’s economic miracle. Japan’s economic success arguably led to a renewed interest in the archipelago that did not diminish in the so-called “lost decade” of the 1990s. However, according to Stephan Köhn’s study on German-Japanese exchanges, this interest, combined with globalisation and the increasing interconnection of goods, space and people, have done little to influence cross-cultural representations of self and other in Germany and Japan (8). Likewise, in his monograph on German and Japanese historiography, Sebastian Conrad claims “the modernist historiography of the postwar period […] continued to operate within an Orientalist discourse. Sometimes this is evident in an openly derogatory characterization of the Other. But more important was a theoretical construction permitting the incorporation of cultural stereotypes into the allegedly neutral, universal system of scholarship” (2010, 174).

In her essay “The Clever Japanese,” (“Die klugen Japaner”, 1983) Matsubara illustrates that while the stereotypes may have changed, the West still perceives Japan in clichés:

Fifteen years ago, most German’s favourite image of Japan consisted of various scuttling Geishas with parasols or paper fans. The Fuji Mountain was the background. In quiet temples meditating Japanese sat. From time to time, someone did Harakiri. Now the image has changed. Japan – that is a horde of unemancipated, Self-less workers, all focused on working even more, on producing more. Japan is an economic giant who is eating the German market and endangers German jobs. This is audacious, because the Japanese, say the Europeans, say the Germans, have learned everything from the West, from us. (76)

\textsuperscript{314} Maxill wunderte sich, wieso gerade er [sein Freund] zur Museumseröffnung nach Köln gekommen war, wo er doch im Grunde ein Wirtschaftsfachmann war.

\textsuperscript{315} Es hat lange genug gedauert, sagte Maxill, bis Köln wieder ein Museum für ostasiatische Kunst bekommen hat. Er sprach davon, dass sich darin das wiedererwachte Interesse für den Fernen Osten ausdrückte, eine Entwicklung, die längst überfällig sei, wenn man die Bedeutung Japans für die deutsche Wirtschaft bedenke. Maxill betonte mit Absicht den wirtschaftlichen Aspekt seiner Überlegung, obwohl dieser keinen direkten Bezug zur Kunst und vor allem nicht zu der alten Kunst besaß, wie sie in diesem Museum gezeigt wurde.
Matsubara’s quote confirms that early 20th century discourses continue to shape the German-Japanese relationship. The accusation that Japan’s success is nothing more than a product of Western mimicry has been prevalent ever since Japan transformed itself into a modern nation state. In this chapter, I will demonstrate that not only have new stereotypes come to dominate Western perceptions of the archipelago, but that picturesque and patronizing depictions of Japan as land of dainty geisha and fearsome samurai still exist in Western consciousness.

### 4.1.3. Gender and the Contemporary German-Japanese Context

One of the most persistent stereotypes about Japan in the West remains the representation of Japanese women as sexualized and essentially silenced objects. In her essay on Japanese female alterity in European literature, Renate Giacomuzzi convincingly demonstrates that many of the 19th century tropes about Japanese women are still prevalent in contemporary literature. Giacomuzzi quotes from a range of novels such as Cees Nooteboom’s *Mokusei* (1982), John David Morley’s *Pictures from the Water Trade* (1987), and Uwe Schmitt’s *Tokyo-Tango. A Japanese Adventure* (1999) to demonstrate that these authors still attach an essential otherness to ‘the Japanese woman’. German-language examples of this discourse are Christoph Peters’ *Mitsuko’s Restaurant* (*Mitsukos Restaurant*, 2009) and Leopold Federmair’s *Transformations of Prince Genji* (*Wandlungen des Prinzen Genji*, 2014). According to Giacomuzzi, in these stories the Western man frequently possesses “the Japanese woman either as ‘loan’ or as ‘hospitality gift’” in a “colonial-like act” (173), thereby re-creating 19th century colonial power structures. In previous chapter of this thesis, I have demonstrated how stories such as Loti’s *Madame Chrysanthemum* (1888), or the reviews of the Hanako and Sada Yacco Troupes’ performances reinforced and shaped the perception of Japanese women as sexualized and demure objects. In the introductory chapter, I highlighted the connection between notions of imperialism and power in the discourse on ‘the Japanese woman’. Western sources depicted a feminized Japan as object of colonial desire, exemplified through beautiful and sexually available Japanese women. How do contemporary Japanese writers react to such stereotypical representations of Japanese femininity?

A scene from one of Tawada’s earlier short novels, the surrealist *A Guest* (*Ein Gast*, 1993) exemplifies the relation between contemporary German-Japanese literature and Western tropes about Japanese
femininity. In the scene, the Japanese narrator-protagonist visits a doctor because of pain in her abdomen. The doctor examines her ear instead and claims:

I see a stage, he replied in the tone of a child. [...] I [the protagonist] kept asking questions although I was not really curious anymore because I guessed that the doctor was an un schooled audience member and when he saw the arrival of the women he would only see old, boring images. His voice became a little higher when he reported: The women wear long dresses, made from silk, what are their names again, ah, yes, Kimono, and one of them has a knife in her hand. Now she jabs it in her stomach, on the white silk is a red spot, it grows and grows. (17)316

What the doctor sees is most likely the last scene of *Madama Butterfly*, in which Cio-Cio-san commits suicide because her Western lover has betrayed her. Tawada’s protagonist reacts with distain: “I groaned and just pushed his hand away. Mr. Mettinger, this is Madame Butterfly, what you describe is not inventive” (17).317 This scene is significant for two reasons: first, the Butterfly-motif cannot define Tawada’s unnamed protagonist-narrator, as she refuses to engage with the symbol of the self-sacrificing geisha. Instead, she pushes the doctor away, claiming a position of power with regard to her self-representation. Tawada thus demonstrates how outdated this trope is.

Yet, Tawada does engage with this trope in her short novel. Although demonstrating its irrelevance, the trope remains too relevant to be entirely omitted. This scene captures much of the discourse on Japanese women in German literature at the turn of the 21th century: authors dismiss and ridicule old stereotypes, yet cannot entirely ignore these omnipresent depictions. Likewise, Matsubara in her essay collection *Gaze from Almond Eyes*, states that Japanese women are objects of desire in the West, if they confirm preconceptions:

If a Japanese woman walks through Germany in a kimono, her appearance creates fantasies. Wherever she is seen, at a concert, a party, drinking her afternoon coffee or even on the streets, always she is deemed a ‘delightful creature,’ a praise that the same woman would never or seldom get had she worn Western clothes. [...] However, a Japanese woman should not be upset

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317 Ich stöhnte und schob seine Hand einfach weg. Herr Mettinger, das ist *Madame Butterfly*, das ist nicht originell, was Sie da beschreiben.
if honourable German gentlemen try the only Japanese word they know on her. Happily, they say: ‘Geisha’. (10-11)

Throughout her novel The Gate of Happiness, Matsubara plays with the motif of the woman as sexualized objects. For instance, she uses it to display the patronizing attitude of Western men towards Japanese women. When Maxill meets his fellow ‘Japan-expert’ Stens at a vernissage for East Asian art, the sight of a kimono-clad woman leads Stens to proclaim: “Isn’t she cute?” audibly enough for the woman to hear him (65). Likewise, Stens remains silent about his affairs with German women in Japan but loudly proclaims his ‘Japanese adventures’: “Some people in the German colony [in Tokyo] thought he was very successful with [German] women but one could never get much out of him. He talked much more openly about his Japanese experiences. He knew the prices of bar hostesses well and offered his knowledge to everybody free of charge.” Likewise, at a party the state secretary speaks freely about his visits to Japanese “massage girls” (102). Japanese women in this context are talked about, but not talked to; they remain silenced objects of desire.

Thus, stereotypes about Japanese women as desirable and demure, exemplified in the image of the geisha, prevail. At the same time, the counter discourse proliferates with authors and filmmakers in this chapter highly aware of such representations of Japanese femininity, which they either ridicule or reject.

In this chapter, I demonstrate how Matsubara, Tawada and Miyayama construct a female Japanese identity in their German-language works beyond such stereotypes. I will address the following questions: How do the female protagonists in contemporary German-Japanese literature and film experience Europe and does a specific ‘German-Japanese’ female identity exist? How is European colonialism represented in Tawada’s works and to what extent does she address Japanese imperialism? Does she construct Japan as Western nation and, if so, what are the paradigms for defining Japan as Western? How do Matsubara and Miyayama see Japan’s position vis-à-vis Germany? Whereas questions of race and culture had been vital for defining the relationship between Europe and Japan in the previous one

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318 Taucht dann aber gar in Deutschland eine Japanerin im Kimono auf, so beflügelt ihr Anblick die Phantasie. Wo immer sie zu sehen ist – im Konzert, auf einer Party, beim Nachmittagskaffee oder gar auf der Straße – stets wird sie als „entzückendes Geschöpf“ bezeichnet, ein Lon, das der gleichen Japanerin in europäischen Kleidern selten oder nie zuteilwürde. [...] Allerdings darf so eine Japanerin im Kimono dann auch nicht bestürzt sein, wenn feine deutsche Herren an ihr das einzige japanische Wort ausprobieren, das sie kennen Freudestrahrend sagen sie: ‘Geisha.’

hundred years, the discourse started to shift towards the end of the 20th century. In the following sections, I will demonstrate that an individual’s participation in capitalist consumer culture has become paramount in defining who has the right to participate in post-war Europe.

After introducing the filmmaker and authors and their works, I will discuss travel and tourism, particularly as a gendered practice and with special attention to the tourist gaze. What happens when Japanese women travel in Europe? How do they observe the foreign locales and how are they perceived in return? What knowledge do they produce, about Japan and about Europe, through their travels? In my last section, I will discuss the connection between Western and Japanese imperialism in Tawada’s works.

4.2. The Authors and Filmmakers and their Works

4.2.1. Yoko Tawada

4.2.1.1. Biographical Sketch

Yoko Tawada is one of the most prominent representatives of contemporary transnational literature in Germany today.320 In her works, she deconstructs established paradigms about national cultures and cultural identities to great critical acclaim. Her numerous novels, essays and poetry collections have received several prestigious awards, notably the Akutagawa Literary Prize (1993), the Tanizaki-Junichiro Literary Prize (2003), and the Goethe Medallie (2005). Tawada studied Russian literature at Waseda University in Tokyo before moving to Europe in 1982. In 1998, Tawada, who holds a PhD in German Literature from the University of Zurich, was a lecturer in poetics in Tübingen. Her talks, subsequently collected and published as Verwandlungen: Tübinger Poetikvorlesungen (Metamorphoses: Tübingen Poetics Lectures, 1998), contain poetological reflections on metamorphosis, language and alterity, motifs which reappear throughout her works. Tawada was the inaugural holder of the Guest Professorship in Intercultural Poetics at Hamburg University in 2011. In 2015, she was Visiting Professor and Distinguished DAAD Chair for Contemporary Poetics in the Department of German at New York University.

320 For a more detailed biography including an extensive bibliography, see: Bohnke. Yoko Tawada Biography. Institute of Modern Languages Research.
The protagonists in Tawada’s short novels are often travellers, migrants or refugees, shifting between spaces, cultures, and identities. The importance of travel to her work also extends to Tawada as a writer. After living in Hamburg from 1982 until 2006, she is currently based in Berlin. Tawada has given more than 900 readings worldwide and has also been a writer-in-residence at several universities across the USA, including MIT, Boston (1999), the German House of New York University (2004), Washington University (2007), Stanford University (2008) and Cornell University (1999, 2008).

Contemporary German Studies Scholars have adopted Tawada as ‘poster child’ of what is most commonly deemed ‘transnational’ or ‘intercultural’ German literature. Since the late 1990s, scholars have produced an astonishing amount of secondary literature about Tawada, among them several monographs such as *Die Lücke im Sinn: Vergleichende Studien zu Yoko Tawada* (2014), *Yoko Tawada: Poetik Der Transformation: Beiträge zum Gesamtwerk* (2010), and *Yōko Tawada: Voices from Everywhere* (2007). Scholars habitually access Tawada’s works through postcolonial theoretical paradigms such as ‘hybridity,’ ‘the third space,’ and ‘mimicry’ (Arnaudova, 2006; Breger, 1999; Ervedosa, 2006; Fischer, 1997). They utilize postcolonial theory, for instance, to demonstrate how Tawada subverts western stereotypes about Japanese women. To date, German Studies scholars have paid scant attention to how Japanese imperialism and its aftermath feature in Tawada’s German-language writing.

In the following sections, I will demonstrate how Tawada connects colonialism, communism and capitalism to portray Europe as threatening space for non-European migrants. For Tawada’s protagonists, a successful integration into European societies remains impossible if they cannot or do not want to subscribe to capitalist and neo-imperialist practices of consumerism and exploitation. Ultimately, Tawada paints a bleak picture of Europe as a hostile locale, unwilling to face up to its imperial past and its neo-colonial present. In the light of such a portrayal, how does she position Japan, also a capitalist nation and former empire, vis-à-vis Europe?

4.2.1.2. *The Naked Eye and Brother-in-law in Bordeaux – Context and Content*

In most of Tawada’s prose, the protagonist is a Japanese woman living without children or partner in Europe. *The Naked Eye,* whose protagonist has a definitive nationality, age, and place of origin, which she mentions right at the beginning of the novel, is an exception.
The Naked Eye follows a young Vietnamese woman who is sent to pre-unification East Germany to give a speech about Vietnam as victim of Imperialism at an International Youth Conference. Shortly after her arrival, the West German man Jörg abducts her to Bochum, ostensibly to ‘free’ her from life under communism. After several months in Bochum, she attempts to escape to Moscow but boards a wrong train and instead arrives in Paris. There she meets a cast of French, Vietnamese and German women and men, among them the sex worker Marie, the Vietnamese woman Ai Van and her French husband Jean, and a Vietnamese doctor. In Paris, she almost stars in a theatre production, works in an illegal clinic as test object for skin care products and develops an obsession with French cinema. Throughout the narrative, the protagonist-narrator shifts between various identities and ethnicities to escape prosecution for being an illegal immigrant, and she gives herself numerous names without ever revealing her ‘true self’.

Each of the book’s thirteen chapters carries the title of a Catherine Deneuve film and the plot of the chapter loosely corresponds to the plot of the respective film. For instance, Repulsion emphasizes the seeing act as well as the protagonist’s passivity and her attitude towards men whereas Indochine highlights the topic of colonialism and the relation between France and Vietnam. The penultimate chapter, Est, Ouest, eventually points towards the connection between ideology and the cinema in the context of communism and capitalism. The novel increasingly merges the world of the films with the protagonist’s reality until the protagonist fully loses herself in the films of Deneuve. In the last chapter, carrying the title of Lars von Trier’s Dancer in the Dark (2000), the protagonist and Deneuve appear to have become one persona.

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321 The train is a recurring theme in Tawada’s writings, signifying mobility, and a space for surreal and magical encounters. For a discussion of the train motif in Tawada, see Bay (2010) and Fachinger (2010).
322 The Naked Eye is comparatively well researched. Mousel Suzuko Knott, for instance, in her appraisal of the nameless protagonist, demonstrates how Tawada plays with the genre of the Bildungsroman in conceiving a protagonist who, instead of developing a coherent self, transforms into “an intensely ‘messy’ constellation of selves” (Knott 247). Schmitz-Emans (2008) and Bay (2010) researched the cinema motif in the novel, highlighting the interconnection between the narrative, the media, and the protagonist’s visual experience of Europe. German scholarship on The Naked Eye has so far neglected that in creating a Vietnamese protagonist, Tawada is an author from a former empire writing one of that empire’s colonial subjects.
In contrast, Tawada’s protagonist-narrator in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, Yuna, is a Japanese woman who lives and works legally in Hamburg. She travels to Bordeaux with the night train via Brussels to learn French and to stay in the house of Maurice, the brother-in-law of her friend, possibly also lover, Renée. The plot sets in when Maurice picks her up from the train station and ends with her visiting a swimming pool in Bordeaux. It is disrupted by Yuna’s memories and reflections about her time in Hamburg and in Osaka, her relationship with the people in various cities, and by her recollection of her train journey to France. The novel’s last chapters take place in a swimming pool in Bordeaux where Yuna has to live through fantasies of rape, birth and death and where she meets all the novel’s characters again. *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* ends with her walking into the closed space of a changing room.

Tawada divided *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* into subsections of varying lengths, ranging from a single sentence to several pages. A kanji, a Chinese character used in Japanese writing, prefaces each section. In the novel’s Japanese version, the kanji are mirrored and thereby alienated, or *verfremdet*. Relying on the unreadability of kanji for most German readers, Tawada presents them in their non-alienated form in the German version. Each kanji roughly corresponds to the main motif of its section. For instance, a paragraph detailing Renée’s fraught relationship with men is prefigured by the kanji for man or male [男 *otoko*]; the character for to quarrel [讃 (い), *isaka(i)*] heads a section on Yuna’s disagreements with her French teacher in Japan. The kanji are taken up on the narrative level in an additional way: Yuna claims that she wants to be a writer but can currently write nothing more than single kanji, the characters in the printed novel therefore symbolize Yuna’s own writing.324

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324 The last kanji of the novel is 汝 (nanji), an anachronistic way of expressing the second person pronoun “you” and a good example for how Tawada’s kanji create a second narrative layer superimposed on the text. 汝 is reprinted on the last page in a very large font and thereby additionally emphasised. In the previous sections, a strange, “blood-coloured” woman with brown hair steals Yuna’s dictionary in a swimming pool, thereby preventing her access to the language, in particular, and European agency and power more generally (196-97). Yuna briefly chases after her, but eventually gives up and returns to her change room. The change room has so far been the only place in the novel where she truly felt safe. However, now she cannot remember the code she needs to enter, which prompts her to cry for hours. Eventually, the book thief reappears, “gently pushes Yuna’s body aside” (204) and enters the code for her. The door to the changing room opens and Yuna is free to enter. At this point, the novel ends. Understanding the kanji opens up an additional reading of this scene. Through 汝, Tawada addresses an implicit imagined European audience, pointing towards the fact that “you” are the mysterious woman, restricting Yuna’s access to Europe. The kanji is comprised of two elements: the radical for water 氵 and the character for woman, or female 女 (onna). Simply put, radicals are graphemes used to categorize kanji. For instance, 汁 (soup; juice, *shiru*), 海 (ocean, *umi*), 滝 (waterfall, *taki*), and 泳 (swim, *oyo[gu]*) all have the same three-stroke radical with the meaning ‘water’ on the left (氵). Throughout the novel water has been a recurrent motif (98, 100, 102): it is something that Yuna loves (45, 171) and hates (162). The name Yuna itself is an allusion to water since in the Edo Period yuna (湯女) was the designation for women who assist bathers at hot-springs resorts. An archaic meaning of the term is also ‘bathhouse prostitute.’ Water is arguably the most important motif
Several similarities between *The Naked Eye* and *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* make a comparative reading a productive endeavor. The novels are of roughly the same length, are set in France and Germany and lay emphasis on perception and visibility. Both novels’ protagonists travel from a Germany city to a French city by train at night. The French city, however, was not their intended destination. The nameless Vietnamese woman of *The Naked Eye* only boarded the train to Paris because she was under the impression that it would bring her to Moscow. Yuna wanted to go to Dakar instead of Bordeaux. Both do not speak French and their attempts to learn the language fail. Neither the Vietnamese woman nor Yuna take up a permanent work in the French cities but they express the wish to become actresses. They explore their surroundings primarily on foot, which exposes them to the hostile gaze of others.

Yuna in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* is a tourist if tourism is defined as voluntary exploration of a foreign locale. The Vietnamese protagonist of *The Naked Eye* has been abducted to the West and is prevented from leaving France again. Both women, however, are flâneuse, accessing their cities mainly on foot and creating meaning through the act of walking.

*Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* and *The Naked Eye* are city novels. In the former, Osaka, Hamburg and Bordeaux, harbor cities that do not lie directly by the sea, dominate. In *The Naked Eye*, Paris, Bochum and East Berlin are the main sites of action. The two protagonists experience their respective cities differently. Tawada’s Vietnamese woman, an illegal immigrant in France and in West Germany, constantly questions her status in Europe as well as her right to be in the European cities. She also moves through very different social spheres, ranging from interactions with sex workers, to students, to lawyers. In contrast, Yuna’s contacts are almost exclusively members of the middle class and she is in possession of a visa that not only allows her to stay in Germany but also to freely cross European borders. While the nameless protagonist of *The Naked Eye* experiences the cities as a stranger and an outcast, Yuna views Hamburg with the gaze of a local and Bordeaux as a tourist. However, after she has taken possession of Maurice’s house, Yuna imagines how people question her about it and how they assert that she has no right to be there (134). Instead of being afraid that she has to leave like Tawada’s

in all of Tawada’s writings, reoccurring in most of her novels. According to Brandhauer, who discusses the water motif in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, in “mythopoetic traditions water is often seen as female element, also because it is formless and is thereby connected to the ylem, it is also closely connected to creation, dissolving, birth and death” (204). Thus, the last kanji in the novel brings several reoccurring motifs together: It draws in the reader, challenging her to reflect on her own position in the narrative, and it connects femininity to water, fluidity, and creativity.
Vietnamese protagonist, however, she confidently affirms her right to live in Maurice’s house (134). Moreover, the questions she faces are only imagined whereas the threat of deportation and imprisonment is very real for the woman in *The Naked Eye*.

Themes such as sexual violence and exploitation, the connection between gender and migration, class issues, and the conflicts between westernized and not westernized migrants are central for Tawada’s construction of Europe as threatening space for non-European migrants. However, Tawada’s Japanese protagonists, exemplified by Yuna, move much more freely through Europe. Although occasionally faced with discrimination, they ‘belong’ to Europe as they stem from a capitalist industrial nation and can thus take part in Western consumer culture. My argument is thus twofold: Tawada demonstrates that migrants can only participate in European societies if they subscribe to its capitalist practices or hail from a capitalist country. She thereby connects (West) Germany with Japan as nations that fully embraced capitalism after 1945. Her Japanese protagonists enjoy the same privileges of free travel, and work as many European characters without ever attaining full equality. Tawada thus constructs her Japanese characters as Western and, at the same time, non-Western.

### 4.2.2. Hisako Matsubara

#### 4.2.2.1. Biographical Sketch

Hisako Matsubara (b. 1935, Kyoto) stems from an old samurai family in Japan. In Kyoto, she trained in classical Japanese theatre and afterwards studied comparative literature and religious studies in at Tokyo’s International Christian University, and Theatre Studies at Pennsylvania State University. Matsubara moved to Germany in 1962 and in 1970 received her doctorate from the Ruhr University in Bochum with a thesis on “Secularity and Transcendence” (Diesseitigkeit und Transzendenz). She then settled in Cologne, where she worked as journalist, author and documentary filmmaker. In the following decades, she published a wide range of German-language articles and books, among them historical novels such as *Brokatrausch* (1978) and *Abendkranich* (1981), as well as observations on the German-Japanese relationship for various German papers, collected in *Gaze from Almond Eyes* (1968). Since the 1980s, Matsubara lives in the United States.  

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325 "Matsubara, Hisako" in Munzinger Online/Personen – Internationales Biographisches Archiv,  
4.2.2.2. The Gate of Happiness and Gaze from Almond Eyes – Content and Context

The Gate of Happiness (Die Glückspforte, 1982) is Matsubara’s only German-language novel with a contemporary setting. It centers on Uba, a middle-aged Japanese woman, once a famed expert of the West who has been largely forgotten when the novel opens. Her chance to be revered once again as an expert, this time of Japan, arises when she meets Maxill, a former diplomat turned broadcaster for the Deutsche Welle. Maxill, a Japanophile, invites Uba to Germany to stay with him and his wife Rosaly and to work as Japanese expert for the Deutsche Welle. Uba, desperate for validation and importance, accepts this offer, pretending to be a sought-after publicist in Japan. In addition, Uba pretends to come to Germany to prepare the Tenno’s visit and falsely claims to move in the highest circles of Japan and Germany. At the same time, she feeds the Japanese press lies about her importance in Germany. Maxill, blind for Uba’s deception and desperate to stylize himself as Japan expert by association with Uba, jeopardizes his marriage and professional standing with his blind support for the ‘Japanese expert.’

Gaze from Almond Eyes (Blick aus Mandelaugen, 1968) is a collection of essays that first appeared in the German paper DIE ZEIT. Employing a casual, often humorous, tone, Matsubara writes about her encounters with the German language and culture – for instance, her inability to use German proverbs correctly – and explains aspects of Japan in order to bridge the cultural gap between her home and her adopted country. Her essays range from comparisons of German and Japanese children, to meditations on Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christianity, to clarifications of the hara-kiri and kamikaze concepts. Matsubara’s intended audience is German. Her title, Gaze from Almond Eyes, simultaneously exoticizes and others Matsubara, while also redirecting the gaze of the ‘other’ back onto the German society.

4.2.3. Marie Miyayama

4.2.3.1. Biographical Sketch

Miyayama (b. 1972, Tokyo) studied Creative Writing and Film at Waseda University, Tokyo before moving to Germany in 1995. In Munich, she took courses in drama at the Ludwig-Maximilians-

326 ‘Uba’ (姥) can mean ‘older woman.’ It is also the term for the Noh mask that represents the face of an old woman.
Universität and studied at the Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film München. The Red Dot (Der Rote Punkt, 赤い点, 2008) is her only feature film as of 2017. Her oeuvre includes the short films Where is my Feeling? (Wo ist mein Gefühl?, 1997), NOWHERE (1999), Maika's Weekend (2001), as well as the documentary Between Earth and Sky (2004). Miyayama currently works as Coordinator of the Japanese Program at the Technical University, Munich.

4.2.3.2. The Red Dot – Context and Content

The Red Dot follows Aki (Yuki Inomata), a young Japanese woman from Tokyo, on her quest to find the place where her family had died in a car crash on their holiday in Germany, 18 years previously. In an interview with the French film blog film de culte, Miyayama explains how real-life events influenced The Red Dot. When working as a Japanese interpreter, Miyayama met a Japanese woman who travelled to Germany to find the spot where part of her extended family had died in a hit-and-run. Only the woman’s young cousin had survived the accident. This cousin provided the foil for The Red Dot’s Aki who is the only survivor of her family’s car crash in the film. In addition, Miyayama backpacked by herself while a student, an experience that informed Aki’s mode of travel in her film as Aki becomes a backpacker in Bavaria.

The film opens with a performance of the Japanese Itsuki lullaby (五木の子守唄). A woman sings the song while the names of the crew and cast are shown superimposed over a black screen. The sad and wistful melody creates a solemn atmosphere even for the audience members who cannot understand the words. The version of the lullaby that Miyayama chose for her film, has a lyrical I speak of their presence at the obon festival, thereby introducing the themes of family, remembrance and death.

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327 www.mariemiyayama.de/marie_miyayama_filmmaker/Vita_deutsch.html (last accessed: 27-10-2016)
328 www.sprachenzentrum.tum.de/en/languages/japanese/ (last accessed: 27-10-2016)
329 Aki, a common name in Japanese, can have several meanings depending on the kanji used. Japanese materials give the name as 亜紀, of which one possible meaning is ‘Asian chronicle.’ http://www.mariemiyayama.de/marie_miyayama_filmmaker/Der_Rote_Punkt_jap.html (last accessed: 28-03-2017)
331 Bon, or Obon (お盆), is the term for a Buddhist festival in summer during which relatives that have passed away are honored and remembered.
332 The song goes as follows: Odoma bon-giri bon-giri/Bon kara sakya oran-do/Bon ga hayo kurya/Hayo modoru. (roughly: Here until Bon/After Bon I will not be here/When Bon comes earlier/I can return home earlier)
Following the performance is a dream sequence in which Aki subconsciously remembers the last minutes with her family in the car before the accident. Upon waking, Aki is so shaken by the dream that she cannot concentrate on finding a job although she is close to graduating from university. When her adopted mother unwillingly presents her with a box of her parent’s possessions, Aki finds a map of Germany marked with a bright, red spot in Bavaria. She leaves her concerned adopted parents and her boyfriend behind in Tokyo and travels by herself to rural Bavaria. While looking for the red dot’s location, Aki encounters a young man, Elias Weber (Orlando Klaus), who offers her a place to stay with his family. During Aki’s stay, the tensions within Elias’ family, consisting of his mother Erika (Imke Büchel), his sister Martina (Zora Thiessen), and his father Hans (Hans Kremer), heighten, exposing a deep rift between father and son. Moreover, Hans, was, unbeknownst to anyone, responsible for the car crash that killed Aki’s family. As Aki searches for her family’s remembrance stone, Hans comes to terms with his own guilt. Eventually, he confesses his involvement in the accident at the spot where Aki’s family had died. After a picnic at the site of the crash during which Aki is joined by the ghosts of her dead family members, Aki is able to make peace with her family’s death and returns to Japan. The film ends with the possibility for a new beginning for the Weber family as they share Aki’s Japanese snack.

The Red Dot is Miyayama’s final project for her film degree at the University of Television and Film Munich (Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film München). The film premiered at the Montréal World Film Festival and consequently screened at various German and international film festivals, among them the Berlinale and Cannes. It won the Förderpreises Deutscher Film and the VGF Nachwuchsproduzentenpreis. Unusually for final degree projects and possibly due to its success at various festivals, the film received a theatrical release in Germany. Although critics generally reviewed the film positively, it does have weaknesses. The chance encounter between the protagonists Aki and Hans feels forced and some actors visibly struggle with their roles. Miyayama had to work through several budget constraints; the actors, for instance, were not paid at all. Shooting took place over three weeks in the Allgäu, Bavaria, and for a week in Tokyo and Chiba.

The Red Dot is a bilingual production. In the Tokyo scenes, the language is exclusively Japanese and Miyayama herself wrote the dialogues. Christoph Türkewitsch, a German native speaker and Miyayama’s co-writer, wrote the dialogue in the German-language sequences. The film includes scenes

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333 Aki’s adopted parents are her aunt and uncle who took her in after the accident.
entirely in Japanese and scenes exclusively shot in German. Aki speaks German; a brief sequence in Tokyo shows her studying the language in a university classroom, but the exact extent of her proficiency remains unknown. At times, Aki appears not to understand simple German sentences and directions, whereas in other scenes, she is able to conduct a brief but more complex conversation with Martina on the topic of her boyfriend in Japan.

More significant than the spoken languages, however, is the silence on screen. For Miyayama, Japanese and Germans communicate differently. According to her, Germans are comfortable talking about a variety of topics, whereas in Japan, silence is more valued. This ‘clash’ of communicability is, for her, one of the film’s main features, and indeed one of the reasons why Miyayama makes films. This silence is, according to Miyayama, the ‘Japanese Element’ of the film. Aki frequently remains silent throughout the film. If she speaks in the scenes in Germany, she does so in single words or in very few sentences. This might be partially due to Aki’s limited German skills. Her inability to speak the language fluently inhibits her expression of ideas. However, in the Tokyo scenes Aki also frequently refrains from expressing her thoughts. Miyayama portrays Aki as contemplative and introspective character which allows her to direct her focus away from spoken communication and towards feelings and thoughts that cannot be expressed in words. In this way, Miyayama could also work around the fact that Yuki Inomata, the actress who portrayed Aki, does not speak German and had to learn her few German lines by heart. Consequently, the film features several scenes in which the actors communicate primarily through gazes.

In my interpretation of The Red Dot, I will focus on the gaze of and on Aki as traveller in Bavaria, as well as on the depiction of the German landscape.

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337  In an interview for this study, Miyayama states: “This [the silence] is exactly the reason why I make films and why I am fascinated by films; there is something that cannot be expressed through words, just like in life” (Miyayama, 2016). (Das ist genau der Grund, warum ich Filme mache und warum mich so Filmkunst fasziniert; dort gibt es etwas, was man nicht mit Worten erklären kann, genauso wie im Leben.)
4.3. Japanese Women Walking through Europe - Tourism and Flânerie in the German-Japanese Context

In this section, I will focus on Tawada’s *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* and Miyayama’s *The Red Dot*, whose respective protagonists are young female Japanese tourist exploring their European destinations mainly on foot, and directing their gaze at strange Bavarian towns and French city squares. According to Dean MacCannell’s seminal work *The Tourist*, the tourist holds a unique status in modernity; indeed she holds the key to understanding “recent changes in the way we frame our humanity” (2011, 3). Tourism is one of the biggest economies today, affecting almost all areas of our planet and influencing the way millions of people live.\(^{339}\) As such, the tourist emerges as an apt figure for negotiating issues of modernity, gender, class, mobility, and race. For this chapter, I follow John Urry’s usage of the term tourism, which he defines as a “leisure activity” as opposed to labour. Tourist activities are limited to a certain time period and the tourist has to have a plan to return home. The tourist also has some kind of expectation and preconceived image with regard to his/her destination (2011, 3-5).\(^{340}\)

According to Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, “travel narratives articulate a poetics of the wandering subject” (13). The protagonists in this chapter are such ‘wandering subjects.’ Their journeys do produce knowledge - not necessarily about faraway, ‘exotic’ places - but rather about the ‘home’ of their presumed audience and the travelling subject as such. The Japanese woman travelling alone is a recurrent motif in contemporary German-Japanese literature and film, present in the works of Tawada, Flašar,\(^{341}\) Matsubara, and Miyayama, perhaps because the authors themselves are ‘travelling subjects,’ living and working in the West, or because their poetological reflections on alterity, culture and gender find their best expression in traveling protagonists. In 1994, almost 18% of international Japanese

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\(^{339}\) For an extensive history of European Tourism, see Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism*.

\(^{340}\) For the purpose of this study, I do not distinguish between tourists and travellers. According to Holland and Huggan, both travel writers and scholars continue to uphold the distinction between tourists and travellers, with tourists embodying the exploitative aspects of travel (2). MacCannell claims that the distinction between travellers and tourists serves as a strategy of self-exemption on the part of the traveller, a strategy through which they can displace on the tourist the guilt they harbor about interfering with other cultures, and by so doing, stylizing themselves as open-minded explorers rather than “mere” pleasure seekers (22). However, both tourists and travellers access a foreign locale as commodity. The difference lies in marketing. While group and package tours might appeal to what is commonly deemed ‘tourists,’ travellers are marketed to through ‘authentic’ experiences. Thus, the difference between traveller and tourist is an artificial one.

\(^{341}\) Flašar’s short novel *Okaasan – My Unknown Mother* (*Okaasan – Meine Unbekannte Mutter*, 2010) tells the story of Franziska, a young woman living in Austria. The first part of the novel deals with the death of Franziska’s Japanese mother and their difficult relationship with each other. In the second half, Franziska journeys to India in search of a semi-mythical mother figure.
Female travellers outranked male tourists by 2:1 in the 1990s and over 80% of international students were women at that time (Kelsky 2). According to Karen Kelsky’s extensive monograph on Japanese women and travel, *Women on the Verge*, international travel is “the most important means currently at women’s disposal to resist gendered expectations of the female life course in Japan” (2). The foreign locale thus becomes a means to self-fulfilment, the search for personal liberation, or for romantic conquest (2).

In *The Red Dot*, Germany is Aki’s site of searching for a deeper understanding of herself. In one of the first scenes, her boyfriend’s phone call wakes Aki from a dream about her family’s fateful trip in Bavaria. The boyfriend asks her why she is not yet at the job fair. Aki’s gaze falls on her ‘job hunting suit’ that hangs to the left side of the screen: a simple black skirt, a white blouse and a black blazer. These clothes represent the typical ‘uniform’ of future university graduates on the job market. Aki is most likely towards the end of her degree and expected to take part in *shuukatsu* (就活), the highly competitive annual job hunting process for soon-to-be graduates. Aki’s defeated gaze towards her uniform, her tardiness, and her detached and preoccupied demeanour in her subsequent conversation with her boyfriend all point towards the unease with which she contemplates her future. Her journey to Germany therefore not only provides her with a chance to get closure with regard to her family’s death, but also with an opportunity to escape the rigid procedures that rule the lives of job-hunting university students – at least for a short time. Moreover, travelling to Bavaria at this time of her life also underscores the importance of the journey. If Aki misses the *shuukatsu* process, she will have to wait another year to apply for jobs, since Japanese companies often only hire once a year. As a result, her prospects on the job market are significantly diminished.

When Aki voices her wish to travel to Germany, her adoptive mother is upset about the timing of her trip, but foremost about her desire to travel by herself. The motif of the Japanese woman traveling alone is set against two stereotypes: that of the ‘Asian tour busses,’ driving groups of Chinese or

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342 In the early 2000s, this figure plummeted to around 10% due to a decline in the young population, a decrease in disposable income for young people and a lack of interest in oversea destinations (145).
343 Significantly, Kelsky sees this desire for a potentially liberating West conflated with the “desire for the white man as fetish object of modernity” (4), a discourse that Tawada, Matsubara and Miyayama reject. The men in the texts that I address in this chapter are exploitative (Jörg), opportunistic (Maxill), or somewhat naïve and to a certain extent child-like (Elias); at no point are they the object of desire for the female protagonists.
Japanese tourists to the most important sights in Europe, and that of the demure, static Japanese woman.

Tourists, be they part of a group or individual travellers, are typically understood to be in search of an attraction. For MacCannell, tourist attractions are both signs and signifiers comprised of the following: a sight, a marker, the information about a sign, and tourists. The interplay between the gaze, the marker and tourists is complex and shifting. Markers, usually the first contact a tourist has with a sight, give information about sights, either on- or off-site. As examples for sights, MacCannell gives landmarks in San Francisco: a cable car, the Golden Gate Bridge, or Chinatown. Tourists do not see San Francisco; they see these sights which together constitute the attraction through the eyes of the tourists and the markers that are attached to them and give them value. In *The Red Dot*, the Bavarian sights are arguably not sights at all: crosses at the roadside, cows, and expansive fields. They are given sightseeing value by Aki whose gaze, I will demonstrate, renders them foreign and exotic. Miyayama’s portrayal of Bavaria is remarkable in its unremarkableness. Her shots of the Allgäu are devoid of dramatic mountain vistas, people in traditional clothes or other romanticized aspects of the landscape and Bavarian culture, instead focusing on the *Alltag*, the everyday life, of a small Bavarian town.

According to MacCannell, “tourists have been criticized for failing, somehow, to see the sights they visit, exchanging perception for mere recognition” (121, emphasis in the original). Attractions can become so seminal that in public consciousness they come to represent a nation and its desired self-representation. And yet, such seminal tourist signifiers are absent in the works of Tawada, Miyayama and Matsubara. Europe is a blank stage in their works, the basis for acute cultural observations or the pursuit of personal quests. The tourists and travellers in this chapter do not seek attractions or ‘authentic experiences,’ they do not merely recognize objects in their environment, but rather actively perceive them. The precise locale of their travels, be it Bordeaux, Paris, Cologne or Bavaria, matters less compared to the function of the traveller figure. One reason for this could be that Miyayama, Matsubara

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344 Cooper points out that early post-war international tourism in Japan, particularly beginning in the 1960s when the ban on pleasure trips overseas was lifted, was indeed “in large part supported by package tours,” but that the significance of these tours diminished in the following decades. Instead, Japanese tourists are more likely to explore overseas territories independently (145).

345 The relationship between markers as signifiers and sights as signified is essentially arbitrary (MacCannell 117). The elevation of a signifier to a sight is determined by society (117). Thus, there is nothing inherent ‘in’ a church spire that marks it as a sight, but the sight is created via complex societal structure and preconceptions that mark the spire as symbol and attraction within the German countryside.

346 An example for this is the Eiffel Tower, symbol of Paris, and by extension, France.

347 An exception is one brief shot of Neuschwanstein Caste in *The Red Dot*. 
and Tawada film and write in German implicitly for a German audience. They stand in contrast to, for instance, the writer Mori Ōgai who included long cityscape and descriptions of customs in his German novellas in order to paint a vivid picture of Europe for his Japanese audiences.\textsuperscript{348} Instead, Matsubara and Tawada utilize the figure of the tourist as a symbol of the changing East-West relationship in a globalized world. All protagonists in this chapter travel through European cities and landscapes on foot, while observing their surroundings, an act that arguably turns them into migrant flâneuse.

The flâneur is traditionally defined as a wanderer, a stroller in the city, who regards city life with a certain detachment. Anke Gleber, in her extensive monograph on flânerie, defines the flâneur as “\textit{man} of the streets. He is at once a dreamer, a historian, an artist of modernity, a character, a reader, and an author” (171, emphasis mine). In its original conception, the flâneur was exclusively male, white, and a member of the middle or upper classes (173). The flâneuse is remarkably absent from the most canonical and influential works on flânerie by, for example, Benjamin, Kracauer or Baudelaire. Benjamin saw the flâneur as male member of the bourgeoisie, a “\textit{man of leisure}” (188). As such, only a minority can enjoy the privilege of flânerie.\textsuperscript{349} For the flâneuse, from “the very first step she takes, her experience is marginal, limited and circumscribed” (Gleber 172). Women in Benjamin and Baudelaire’s works are sex workers, and objects of the gaze of the flâneur, they are consumers whose gaze is glued to the shop windows. The protagonists in this chapter are confronted with and transcend these three aspects of female flânerie: They are marked as ‘other’ based on their gender, class, and race and yet they walk through Europe. In \textit{The Naked Eye}, Tawada significantly transports her protagonist to Paris, arguably

\textsuperscript{348} For instance, in his novella \textit{The Dancing Girl}, Mori gives a detailed description of Berlin when his protagonist Ōta Toyotarō arrives in the city: “There was nothing that did not astonish the eye: the coaches that glided silently along the asphalted streets, a little removed from the dome of water that reached to the sky from the fountain, water that fell like heavy rain from a fair sky, and in the distance, in between the green foliage, beyond the Brandenburg Gate, the goddess of victory can be glimpsed as if she were floating in the sky” (14). (Da war nichts, was das Auge nicht verwunderte: die Kutschen, die lautlos über die asphaltierten Fahrbahnen rollen; ein wenig entfernt von dem gleichsam bis in die Wolken hinaufragenden Dom die Fontäne eines Springbrunnens, deren Wasser rauschend wie ein Platzregen aus heiterem Himmel herabstürzt, und in der Ferne schaut zwischen dem Blätterdach der Bäume jenseits des Brandenburger Tors die Göttin auf der Siegessäule hervor als schwebt sie in den Lüften.)

\textsuperscript{349} In the last decades, a range of scholars (Wolff, Pollock, Friedberg, Gleber) questioned the assumed masculinity of the flâneur, by pointing, for instance, to the ideology of the separated spheres which confined women to the realm of the domestic and away from the open streets, which made female flânerie difficult, if not impossible. Some scholars argued that the flâneuse could not have existed alongside Benjamin and Baudelaire’s flâneur because of the patriarchal structure of society (Pollock), whereas others engaged in the project of excavating the female flâneur in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century (Friedberg). However, this research also often assumed the flâneuse to be white, neglecting the experience of women of colour walking in Europe.
capital and birthplace of flânérie and ‘home’ of Benjamin’s flâneur. Yuna also walks through a French city, whereas Miyayama places her “wandering subject” in the Bavarian countryside.

The mere act of walking in a city is not an act of flânérie. Crucial for the flâneur/flâneuse is the seeing act, the gaze with which he/she accesses their environment. The following sections will therefore focus on the gaze of the protagonists, as well as on the connection between flânérie and consumer culture, as the act of consumption and shopping is often attributed to women walking the city.

4.3.1. A Woman Walking Through Bavaria – Aki’s Journey in The Red Dot

The overwhelming research on women walking, on female flânérie, focuses on urban environments, on how women walk and perceive the cities and on how they in turn are subject to the gaze of others (Wolff 1990, Wilson 1992, Peng 2010, Gornick 2015). Benjamin, Baudelaire and Poe’s flâneurs are city dwellers and the bearers of the gaze. Baudelaire, for instance, describes flânerie as an enjoyable pastime: “For the perfect flâneur […] it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude […] To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world-” (9). The flâneur “is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito” (9, emphasis mine). Likewise, Benjamin’s flâneur “demanded elbow room” (84) and was “at home” (68) in the streets. In this respect, Griselda Pollock argues in her feminist art history, Vision and Difference, he differs from the flâneuse who “did not have the right to look, to stare, scrutinize or watch” but instead became the “object of the flâneur’s gaze” (71, emphasis in the original). However, it is possible to be at once the object and the bearer of the gaze. Tawada’s protagonists in The Naked Eye and Brother-in-law in Bordeaux, for instance, walk around their cities, watching and being watched.

Miyayama’s Aki, however, walks rural Germany, which is depicted as almost devoid of people. This emptiness liberates her to direct her gaze onto the countryside and its cultural artifacts without also being the object of another’s discerning gaze. Miyayama places her flâneuse in the Bavarian countryside
where one might expect her racialized body to draw attention, if not suspicion, but instead Aki is able to explore her surroundings for her own purposes and pleasure, free from the gaze of others.  

Aki takes two journeys: one from Tokyo to Bavaria and one from her present self into her past self and to her dead family. Throughout her time in Germany, Aki wanders the fields of Bavaria, along small roads, framed by trees, church spires, and cows. Bavaria appears to be remarkably free from people. Long landscape shots throughout the film do not include any locals. Instead, Aki wanders alone, her figure often dwarfed by overwhelmingly large shots of fields, forests, and meadows. When Aki encounters people, they do not regard her with suspicion. A group of young children watches her and giggles when they ride the bus together but Miyayama does not include any other scenes in which Aki incites distrust or even interest. On the contrary, when Aki walks into the police station to ask for directions, the police officer, busy lecturing Elias for speeding on his motorcycle, establishes contact between Aki and Elias’ family so nonchalantly that it almost appears as if he has young Japanese women walk into his office every day. Aki thus walks rural Bavaria freely. When she interacts with locals, they are helpful and supportive: a farmer gives her a lift on his tractor, Martina provides Aki with a bike, and Elias shelters her in his family home.

Travel, movement and the act of arriving are prevalent themes throughout the film. Miyayama depicts Aki travelling in cars, buses, and on foot. In these shots, Aki’s head frequently takes up a third of the frame, with the rest given to blurred landscape shots, emphasizing speed and movement. In contrast, the camera remains static, highlighting Aki’s movement through the landscape and directing a neutral gaze on her. Miyayama frames The Red Dot via opening and closing shots of Aki and the blurred Bavarian countryside in the background. The first scene, a flashback to Aki’s childhood travels in Germany, depicts a blurred landscape, shot from a low angle perspective from the backseat of a car. Aki’s face is superimposed on the landscape as a reflection in the window. [0:00:09-0:00:17/0:00:45-0:00:51] The camera takes the viewpoint of young Aki who is counting in Japanese; green fields rushing by fill the screen. [0:00:21-0:00:25] The sun shines through the foliage, creating a pleasant, calming effect. In the last scene, Aki leaves Bavaria on a bus; fields are visible in the background. [1:19:24-

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\(^{350}\) A similar setup can be found in The Naked Eye. After her abduction to Bochum, the Vietnamese protagonist quickly becomes bored of the confines of Jörg’s apartment and starts wandering the streets of the small town. Bochum is described as completely devoid of people (31). According to Wolff, “[t]he anonymity of modern cities” provides “an asylum for the person on the margins of society” (39). However, it appears that for the migrant flâneuse, the countryside or small town with its emptiness and absence of discerning gazes provides the most freedom.
1:19:45] By framing the film with a shot of Aki as child and one of her as a grown woman, both traveling in Bavaria, Miyayama tells a coming-of-age story, following Aki on her journey to adulthood.

Throughout the scenes in Bavaria, Miyayama employs a cold colour palette consisting mostly of dark greens, brown and grey. However, almost every landscape shot includes a red object slightly to the off-centre such as Aki’s backpack, an *omamori* (a Japanese charm) in the window of her parent’s rental car, a traffic sign or a statue of Mary on the roadside. Likewise, when Aki walks through Bavaria, her figure is always slightly off-centre. When she is at the end of her quest and finds her family’s memorial stone, Aki occupies the center of the frame, walking slowly towards the camera and the stone. [0:50:22-0:50:51] This move to the center signifies Aki’s arrival, not only at the site of the accident, but also in terms of her individual development. By making peace with the loss of her family, she is able to return to Tokyo, no longer haunted by the past. Miyayama additionally emphasizes her transformation through Aki’s use of her mother’s red lipstick in the last scenes. 351 For the director, the lipstick symbolizes “that she [Aki] has changed, that she grew up a little and reached another level.” 352 The red dot, now firmly centered on Aki, signifies the closure of a quest. Bavaria has therefore become the site of self-fulfillment for Aki, something that arguably would not have been possible in Japan.

Miyayama’s decision to shoot in Bavaria might have been due to her being based in Munich, but it also puts her film in conversation with a variety of other German films set in Bavaria. In her article on the relatively new genre of “urban Heimatfilm,” Angelica Fenner cites a wide range of contemporary German films with a Bavarian setting, such as Tom Tykwer’s *Winterschläfter* (1997), Marcus Rosenmuller’s *Beste Zeit* (2007) and *Sommer in Orange* (2011), as well as Hans Steinbichler’s *Hierankl* (2003) and *Winterreise* (2006). She demonstrates that the genre “can be understood as participating in the new regionalism emerging across Europe as a counterstrategy to economic and cultural globalism” (244). Bavaria is arguably Germany’s most recognizable region in an international context. The *Oktoberfest*, *Dirndl*, and *Lederhosen*, often signifiers of Germany abroad, all have their origin, indeed their only locale of dissemination, in Bavaria. Although Miyayama avoids such clichéd depictions of Bavaria, opting for a more grounded, realistic portrait of a German rural community, the film’s religious symbolism and extended landscape shots connect her film to German Heimatfilms. In his appraisal of the Heimatfilm genre, von Moltke enumerates various clichés of the Heimatfilm: “a fairly stable set of plots and images, consisting of picturesque Alpine landscapes or herds of sheep roaming the northern

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351 Aki had found the lipstick among her family’s personal possessions that her aunt gave her.
plains, of morally upstanding men and girlish women clad in traditional dress [...] Additional associations might include the repeated integration of (pseudo-)traditional Volksmusik [...]” (23). Miyayama affirms, subverts and updates these Heimatfilm tropes. Her depiction of the locals as without exception helpful and supportive bears traces of the ‘morally upstanding’ protagonists of earlier Heimatfilms, as do her extensive landscape shots. However, Miyayama does not romanticize the Bavarian landscape in the sense of representing it as a picturesque locale. Whenever Aki moves through the woods, fields, and meadows, a dark, almost threatening and disharmonious organ motif is playing. [0:18:51/0:19:04/0:32:40-0:33:01] Moreover, when Aki arrives at Neuschwanstein Castle, arguably one of Germany’s biggest tourist attractions, the sky is overcast and the music is ominous. [0:18:46] The castle is shown from a low angle shot, looming over the protagonist as she regards a picture of her family posing before the attraction. Whereas the sky in the photo was blue and the smiling faces of Aki’s family dominated the picture, the gloomy shot of Neuschwanstein Castle sets up the mood for Aki’s journey. Despite the appearance of a tourist trip, something darker awaits Aki in Bavaria.

Simultaneously, The Red Dot also shares certain characteristics with Berlin School films, including a preference for a minimalistic acting style, little background information and the usage of frequent long takes “without a central event or climax to serve as a dramatic focal point” (Cook 155). Fenner cites a range of Berlin School films that transplant characteristics of the Heimatfilm into an urban setting such as Andreas Dresen’s Summer in Berlin (Sommer vor dem Balkon, 2005), or Fatih Akin’s Soul Kitchen (2009) to demonstrate that these films keep the inherent tensions between insiders and outsiders, the clear ‘us’-‘them’ divide typical for the Heimatfilms but map them unto an urban setting (244). At the same time, these films articulate a tension between the local and the global: settings and audience address remain distinctly local, whereas tropes of consumption, renewal and gentrification are globally recognizable (245). In The Red Dot, however, no tension is articulated between locals and Aki. Bavaria, location of various Heimatfilms, is not a site for inclusion or exclusion. If there is a figure of the ‘other’ in the film, it is Hans Weber. His secret responsibility for the death of Aki’s family alienates him from his family. Roger Cook sees one characteristic of the Berlin School in the “refusal to foist a particular view or position on either a character or the viewer” (157). The camera never takes a condescending

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353 The Berlin School (Berliner Schule) is the term for a German film movement that has gained traction since the 1990s and has received wider scholarly attention since the early 2000s. Filmmakers attributed to the school, such as Christoph Hochhäusler, Maren Ade, Benjamin Heisenberg, among others, have questioned the validity of the term, rejected or affirmed it. For more information on the Berlin School, its reception and genesis, see Cook (2015). For more information on what he calls the Berlin School’s ‘first’ and ‘second wave’s’ aesthetic strategy and political stance, see Abel (2013).
perspective, enabling the audience to perceive the film in a non-predetermined way (158). Likewise, Miyayama does not deal with easily definable categories of insider, outsider, good, or evil. While her characters are too complex to be reduced to these categories, her portrait of rural Bavaria does not allow extended meditations on the influence of foreigners on the community structure. The audience gains no insight into whether or how Aki’s presence influences the local community. This omission enables Miyayama to fully focus her story on issues of grief and forgiveness.

Miyayama’s long landscape shots of fields and wide expanses of unsettled sky, transition shots of sunrises in Bavaria, the depiction of humans in miniature compared to the natural world, and heavy Christian symbolism are reminiscent of Romantic paintings. Aki’s small figure against the backdrop of forest and the sky echo the paintings by the 19th-century German Romantic landscape painter Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840). Friedrich, if he painted humans, presented them as “contemplating their place within the scheme of things as small, often lone, figures usually seen from behind, who gaze out at the landscape or seascape depicted” (Mercer 152). [Fig. 16] Likewise, Aki’s silent gaze at the Bavarian countryside is in line with the Romantic’s preference for subjectivity and introspection (151). Frequent shots show Aki contemplating the Bavarian landscape. [0:48:50/0:50:51/0:53:49-0:54:25] Miyayama thereby employs imagery that is familiar to her German audience, a conscious choice. When asked about her intended audience for The Red Dot, she states: “First of all, I had to get the money, in other words I had to convince the committee of the FFF Bavaria [the film and TV board Bavaria]. That is why I tried to make my film accessible from a German viewpoint.”

The landscape in The Red Dot serves two purposes: On the one hand, it reflects Aki’s state of mind. When searching for her family, the Bavarian countryside is cold, uninviting and at times appears to swallow the protagonist. After Aki’s initial arrival, Miyayama combines a sequence of traveling shots in which her protagonist walks along deserted country roads. [0:19:00-0:19:55] Long shots focus on wide fields, idyllic villages and roadside shrines. Several extreme long shots depict Aki as tiny figure walking along a straight horizontal line, with trees piercing a grey sky above her, emphasizing emptiness, loneliness and a sense of loss. Aki is alone: physically in the Bavarian countryside but also symbolically. She is unable to connect with her boyfriend, her family, and her predestined life in Japan, and she does not yet know anyone in Bavaria. After Aki has made peace with her past, the sky has cleared; birdsong and sunshine dominate the scenes. Additionally, Bavaria serves as a locale through which Miyayama can

354 Erstens musste ich das Geld auftrreiben, d.h. das Gremium von FFF Bayern zu überzeugen. Deswegen habe ich mich schon bemüht, meinen Film auch von der deutschen dramaturgischen Sicht her verständlich zu machen.
compare and contrast Germany and Japan in mirrored landscape shots. Aki moves through Bavaria in the same way she moves through Tokyo: on bike, by walking, and by public transit. This serves to contrast both locales and simultaneously to show their similarities: On her bike in Japan, Aki passes small, urban houses and concrete structures, whereas in Germany, she rides through fields and forests. In some shots, rural Bavaria and the outskirts of Tokyo look eerily similar. When Aki takes a train to her adopted parents in Chiba, for example, rows of suburban houses and wide fields rush by. [0:04:56-0:05:11] Likewise, on a bus in Bavaria, similar houses and fields pass her window. [0:20:29-0:20:35]

Japan and Germany are not only mirrored with regard to the representation of landscape and towns, but also on a narrative level. For instance, Miyayama connects Germany and Japan through the motif of shared meals. Aki and her stepmother share a cup of tea when Aki visits her in Chiba. [0:05:40-0:06:14] Hans and Erika also drink tea together. [0:36:52-0:37:52] Happiness and warmth dominate the scenes between Aki and her stepmother, whereas Hans and Erica argue or remain silent. The Weber family meals are tense, if the family members speak to each other, they argue. In several scenes, Elias and Martina refuse to share meals with their parents or leave the dinner table in anger. In contrasts, a sense of community and warmth marks the scenes in which Aki shares meals with her family in Japan. Aki and her adopted parents talk throughout their meals; Aki’s father makes sure that she has enough meat and beer. When Aki stays in the Weber household, she brings some of that light-heartedness to the Bavarian family. In the penultimate scene, the Webers meet at the kitchen table to share Aki’s onigiri. The scene is playful with Martina attempting to eat the rice balls with knife and fork and Hans taking a spirited bite, pointing towards the possibility for reconciliation in the Weber household.

In contrast to many other Western films about Japan, such as Doris Dörie’s Enlightenment Guaranteed (Erleuchtung Garantiert, 1999) or Sofia Coppola’s Lost in Translation (2003), The Red Dot does not emphasize the incommensurability of East and West, their essential difference. The German foreign locale in Miyayama’s film is not a total place of unfamiliarity. The fact that Aki is Japanese is not necessarily relevant as long as she can be an outsider figure who disrupts the Weber’s ossified family

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355 According to Miyayama, these onigiri, small rice balls, represent Japan, whereas the wooden Mary figurines that Hans creates in his workshop, symbolize Germany. At the end of the film, Aki is in possession of such a figurine and the Webers eat onigiri, pointing towards the successful conclusion of a German-Japanese cultural exchange (Miyayama, 2016).

356 However, that Miyayama sees similarities between Tokyo and Bavaria does not necessarily mean that Aki does so, too. In the next section, I will demonstrate that for Aki, Bavaria is an exotic space. Through presenting Bavaria as a familiar, yet exotic locale, Miyayama questions the construction of ‘otherness’ in the German-Japanese realm.
structure.\textsuperscript{357} The difference between Aki and Elias’ families is no essential difference between two nations; Miyayama does not attempt to portray Japan or Germany in easily definable clichés. Instead, she gives her audience a glimpse of how two families from two different cultures deal with grief and the re-emergence of the past without attempting to make definitive statements about either country. She thereby portrays Germany and Japan as two very similar nations: They mirror each other in landscape and housing structure, as well as in the setup of family life. Europe is no threatening space for Miyayama’s protagonist. Although Aki experiences a painful confrontation with her past, Germany is essentially a space for a successful search for closure. I will demonstrate in the following sections that for Tawada’s protagonists, in contrast, Europe is a highly ambivalent, if not outright dangerous, locale.

\textit{4.3.2. Tourism and Identity in Tawada’s Brother-in-law in Bordeaux}

Tourism and travel are two of the most prevalent motifs in Tawada’s writings. In fact, \textit{Where Europe Begins (Wo Europa anfängt, 1991)}, her story of a Japanese woman’s journey from Japan to Europe on the Trans-Siberian Railway, has come to represent the foundational myth of Tawada as writer. In it Tawada interweaves the narrative of a Japanese woman’s voyage to Europe with geopolitical reflections on border crossings and travel as well as with fairy tale and dream sequences. Various German articles on Tawada make note of the author’s own train journey to Germany, thereby drawing parallels between her and her travelling protagonists and also situating her as a travel writer on a narrative and a personal level (cf. Bay 2010, Holdenried 2012, Maier-Katkin and Roberts 2016).

Tawada uses the figure of the tourist to frame such questions as who has the right to move through European cities, who belongs to them and who is allowed to pass on knowledge about them. She also examines the difficult, occasionally contentious, relationship between locals and tourists and its connection to questions of identity. In the following section, I will demonstrate that for Tawada, ‘tourist’ and ‘locals’ are performed and artificial concepts. By transcending these categories, Yuna, the protagonist of \textit{Brother-in-law in Bordeaux}, questions the allegedly fixed line between Europe and its ‘others.’

\textsuperscript{357} When asked why she chose a Japanese protagonist for \textit{The Red Dot}, Miyayama states: “I can best narrate from the perspective of a Japanese woman because I am one myself” (Miyayama, 2016). (Ich kann am besten von der Sicht einer Japanerin zu erzählen, da ich selber die bin.)
To what extent tourists and outsiders are allowed to participate in the ‘everyday life’ of a city is a question that runs through the novel. MacCannell states: “Sightseers are motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived, even to get in with the natives, and at the same time, they are deprecated for always failing to achieve these goals” (94). Can tourists, and by extension also Yuna, take part in the ‘real life’ of the city? To what extent are tourists important for defining a local identity and who is allowed to transform from tourist to local?

For instance, on the first glance, Hamburg in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* appears to be divided into clearly demarcated areas that belong to the locals and those that belong to tourists. This echoes the concept of Judd and Fainstein’s “tourist bubble,” a city space created or transformed solely for the desire of the tourists, which requires the removal of residents who would disturb the curated picture of the city (92). In *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, locals count on the existence of such tourist bubbles. A university professor, for instance, meets the woman with whom he is having an affair in a harbor bar because he assumes that only tourists will frequent those places and that he will be unobserved by people connected to his family life (103). The bar is decorated with objects that evoke common clichés about harbor cities such as fishing nets and lifesavers. Those objects form what Dean MacCannell calls a “staged authenticity” (99). These items have two purposes: They confirm the tourist’s image of Hamburg as a harbor city. But through them locals can also affirm their sense of belonging to the city because they can identify the objects as clichés that have nothing to do with the ‘real’ city. Tawada’s narrator observes: “sometimes locals would come to those places with their guests and in looking sheepishly at the lifesavers they would smile ironically and call themselves local or Hanseatic. It’s a pleasure to be Hanseatic” (103). The inhabitants of Hamburg need tourists to validate their identity. By being able to identify the staged authenticity as such, locals can define themselves against ‘clueless’ tourists.

Within the system that strictly differs between tourists and locals, or ‘us’ and ‘them,’ Yuna remains an outsider. She merely ‘performs’ the role of a local when acting as a guide for her friend Elena: “Yuna had learned a lot about the harbor from Carl even before she knew Elena. Otherwise she could not have played the part of a ‘Hanseatic by choice’ [Wahlhanseatin] for her” (125). Thus, knowledge about a place is one element that constitutes a local. In theory, this means that everybody with access to this knowledge can become a local. However, throughout the novel, German characters appear not to hear Yuna when she wants to impart her knowledge, thereby diminishing her status as local (39, 101, 102).

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358 Denn es gibt immer wieder Einheimische, die mit ihren Besuchern zusammen dort hingehen und einen verlegenen Blick auf die Rettungsringe und das Fischernetz, die an der Wand hängen, werfen, um sich selbst mit ironischem Lächeln als Einheimisch oder Hanseatisch bezeichnen. Es ist ein Genuss, hanseatisch zu sein.
This becomes especially apparent when Yuna takes up the role of a tourist guide for her German friends. A guided tour is usually “designed to reveal inner workings of the place; on tour, outsiders are allowed further in than regular patrons” (MacCannell 98, emphasis in the original). However, the tourists do not register the knowledge that she wishes to impart - for example that neither Bordeaux, nor Hamburg lie next to the sea. Although Yuna is asked to take on the privileged position of a guide, she essentially remains voiceless in this role.  

In addition, in Bordeaux Yuna cannot play “the role of the oriental tourist” [Besucherin aus dem Morgenland] (77) since Maurice does not want to act as her local guide. Because Maurice refuses to play the European citizen, she cannot pretend to be a tourist from Asia who categorizes the city as ‘European other’ (77). Tawada emphasizes that ‘tourist,’ ‘local’ and ‘Europe’ are arbitrary and performed categories that play off each other. Yuna, as someone who stands outside these categories, disrupts and questions the fixity of these groups. Although Yuna is prepared to assert her right to move through Bordeaux, the city proves to be a hostile place. When she walks around the streets of Bordeaux, the heat and the gleaming white houses become oppressive for her and the big city squares remind her of revolutions and bloodsheds (77, 126). Locals continually make Yuna aware of her outsider status as a tourist in the French city. In a restaurant, for instance, she receives a tourist menu with higher prices. When she points out the discrepancy, both her companion Maurice and the waitress respond with unashamed laughter (82).

Tawada takes up the motif of the tourist again at the end of the novel when Yuna visits a swimming pool in Bordeaux. An unknown woman steals her dictionary, motivating Yuna to follow her through the maze of the pool, only to realize that several wet figures that resemble the people she has met in Hamburg

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359 In fact, Yuna can be neither tourist nor local; as guide she inhabits a position between both categories. A guide has to have the insider knowledge of a local, but exists only within the confines of the tourist bubble. However, rather than settling into this ‘in-between’ position, Yuna rejects the role of a guide and consequently all labels that define her position in Europe.

360 Under the kanji 史 (shi, history), Tawada writes: “Yuna looked at Maurice. He was still in deep thought and did not intend to explain his city to Yuna. Had he played the role of an established, hospitable citizen and explained a story of the city’s history at every corner, Yuna could have taken on the role of an oriental tourist and could have called the place that she admired Europe. But this game was not on” (77). (Yuna warf einen Blick auf Maurice. Er war nach wie vor in Gedanken versunken und hatte nicht vor, Yuna seine Stadt zu erklären. Hätte er die Rolle eines etablierten, gastfreundlichen Bürgers gespielt und über jede Ecke der Stadt eine Anekdote aus der Geschichte erzählt, hätte Yuna in die Rolle einer Besucherin aus dem Morgenland schlüpfen können, und den Ort, den sie gerade bewunderte, Europa nennen können. Aber dieses Mal war dieses Spiel nicht angesagt.)
and Bordeaux, follow her (195). Yuna is sure that she is not leading a revolution but a tourist group and takes on the role of a guide. However, she lacks the red flag that would identify her as such and that acts as orientation point for others. The tourists occupy all the significant places in the city such as the church, the palace and the space in front of the palace. These places are not unique to Bordeaux but generic destinations in most European cities. The group, which consists entirely of Europeans who are aimless and hungry, wants Yuna to give them a tour through a European city (196). Yuna has already ‘played’ the guide for her German friend in Hamburg and is now asked to do the same again in Bordeaux. However, after unsuccessfully ‘playing’ the guide earlier, Yuna finally rejects this role: “Yuna shouted irritably: The program for today is over! Please return to your hotel rooms immediately! The masses withdrew disappointed into their own dreams” (196).

Bordeaux signifies Europe as a whole. In several scenes in the novel, Tawada makes no difference between the city and the continent (77, 80). Europe therefore emerges as a hostile place for Yuna. If categories such as locals, traveller and tourists are increasingly blurred and subject to performance, Tawada problematizes the question of insiders and outsiders. Throughout the novel, Yuna, a Japanese woman, is solicited as a guide for Europeans in Hamburg and Bordeaux, a scenario that places into question the traditional image of the non-European tourist in Europe. Thus, MacCannell states “we are all equal before the attraction” (5). However, while it appears on the surface that Yuna hardly differs from the Europeans around her, she is an object of suspicion when walking in Hamburg and she feels the need to defend her presence in Europe. In addition, tourists and locals need each other to affirm their identity. Analogous to this, Europe needs its ‘others’ to define itself against them. If Tawada’s protagonist disrupts these categories, the distinction between Europeans and their ‘others’ is blurred.

If Yuna and her European counterparts are simultaneously locals and tourists, insiders and outsiders, does Tawada distinguish Europe from its ‘others’ in any other way? What happens when Tawada’s protagonist walks through Europe? Does she transform into a flâneuse, and how does she access her city? In the following section, I will demonstrate that for Tawada’s protagonists, flânerie is a dangerous and subversive act. Because the flâneuse walks through the city as a spectator and not a consumer, she has no place in a neo-capitalist Europe. Tawada’s women who walk the streets of Paris, Hamburg, Bochum or Bordeaux are suspicious, taken for sex workers or for criminals. Only when the act of walking

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361 The kanji for this section is 群 (gun), which can mean group, crowd, herd or swarm, emphasizing that these figures are not individuals.

362 Yuna rief genervt: Das heutige Programm ist zu Ende! Gehen Sie bitte alle sofort in Ihre Hotelzimmer zurück! Die Masse zog sich enttäuscht in ihre eigenen Träume zurück.
a city is repurposed as tourist experience, can the flâneuse walk safely through Europe. As part of a tourist group, the flâneuse is also ‘made safe.’ As tourist, she is clearly identifiable as an outsider, as someone who will leave Europe again and is therefore no threat to an ‘us’-‘them’ divide as long as she consumes in clearly defined ways.

4.3.3. Tourism and Consumerism

MacCannell connects tourism to consumption and production by coining the term “exploited leisure” (28). Attractions such as, for instance, Greek ruins, generate capital by appealing to tourists who, in turn, buy souvenirs, food, packaged tours and other commodities related to the tourist industry (29). Tawada takes the connection between tourism and consumption a step further by claiming that both are essentially the same.

In her travel story, Rothenburg ob der Tauber: A German Riddle (Rothenburg ob der Tauber: Ein deutsches Rätsel, 2000), Tawada connects tourism to consumption by recounting the experiences of a Japanese tourist group in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, a small town in northern Bavaria. The Japanese protagonist-narrator takes part in a guided sightseeing tour through Rothenburg during which almost every stop is taken as an opportunity for shopping. The guide directs the tourist group to various shopping windows and shops where they buy local bread, wine, teddy bears, chocolate, and watches. Through the act of shopping, the city becomes accessible. In fact, the town’s attractions, for instance, its medieval architecture, are secondary to the shopping experience. The narrator proclaims: “In the first twenty minutes our eyes were glued to the different shop windows. Nobody looked at the roofs, walls or windows of the old houses. The goods in the shop windows seemed more accessible than the old houses because we could buy them and take them away” (2).363 It is not the goods as such that interest the protagonist but their essential foreignness. When the narrator finds out that one shop accepts Yen, the goods lose their allure (2). In this short story, the Japanese tourists can only access the German city if it is made safe for consumption in the form of a guided tour and if they can possess parts of it as a souvenir. The story is interspersed with reflections on Japanese and German culture as well as dream-

like and surreal \(^{364}\) observations of Rothenburg. \(^{365}\) By looking at and reflecting on Rothenburg, Tawada’s protagonist creates the German town as a tourist attraction, without tourists there would be no attraction.

Shopping scenes also feature in Tawada’s *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* as well as in *The Naked Eye*. However, in contrast to the nameless traveller in Rothenburg, Yuna and the Vietnamese woman of *The Naked Eye* reject the act of shopping as a way to access the city. Yuna bases her rejection on her confident assertion that she does not want to shop, whereas the protagonist of *The Naked Eye* lacks the spending power to engage in such a pastime.

In the case of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, the connection between tourism and consumption has transformed the city from a sleepy Bavarian town into a shopping destination for overseas travellers. In *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, capitalism and gentrification also change the cityscape. For Yuna and her Hanseatic co-worker Walter this change represents a loss. In the first half of the novel, the harbor signifies Hamburg before its transformation into a late-capitalist city, no longer a site for industrial production, but a place of consumption and leisure. The railway tracks in that part of the town, signifiers of industrial production, are unused and overgrown (117). The harbor possesses semi-magical qualities and is Yuna’s preferred walking area. For Yuna, it is possible that mythical creatures rise from its waters (51) and strange people populate it (117). This part of the city scares and simultaneously attracts her (116). While walking around the harbor, Yuna herself transforms into another woman in search of prey, “hunting” for the people that pass through the harbor (125). Tawada does not specify whether Yuna is seeking sexual encounters or ‘only’ new inspirations for her diary but in any case, Yuna adapts herself to the city. If the harbor is wild and untamed, Yuna becomes wild, too, when she enters that part of the city. However, after its gentrification, Yuna, too, has transformed into a tame office worker.

In the course of the narrative, the harbor is changed as part of a city development and is consequently ‘domesticated’: “In the year in which Yuna’s company moved into the new office building at the harbor,

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\(^{364}\) Tawada frequently employs surrealist and magical realist elements in her writing to open up new ways of understanding culture, alterity, and their connection to identity questions. For more information on Tawada as surrealist writer, see Brandt (2007).

\(^{365}\) For instance, the narrow, winding streets remind the narrator of sleeping snakes that should not be disturbed. She imagines these snakes as guardians of the streets, preventing the modernization and demolition of the medieval architecture and in this way ‘explicates’ the city’s strict building and heritage codes. This in turn leads the protagonist to ponder on the differences between Germany and Japan, whereas buildings in Germany are often strategically preserved, they are often torn down in Japan after only twenty years. Tawada’s observations are free from judgement. Her protagonist merely observes.
the place had not been the blind spot of the city anymore since some time. Walter said: The harbor does not howl anymore" (117). In her essay on Fatih Akin’s Soul Kitchen, Fenner critical reads recent strategies and tendencies in Hamburg’s urban planning and gentrification through the lens of theorist Richard Florida. She demonstrates how creativity becomes a concrete value that can be exploited for property development and how these developments in turn marginalize and dispossess the so-called ‘creative class’ as well as laborers (246-248). Analogous to this thought, Yuna can only be creative in a non-gentrified Hamburg. Once the harbor had been transformed from industrial port into a place for leisure consumption, it lost its creative and ‘magical quality’ for Yuna. In section 4.2.4.2, I will demonstrate that when walking around this newly developed harbor without engaging in the act of shopping, Yuna becomes a suspect in a police interrogation.

In one episode in Brother-in-law in Bordeaux, Yuna and her friend Nancy wander through the Alster-Arkaden, an upscale shopping center in Hamburg, looking at goods in the shop windows without intending to buy them. Instead of fearing that this means they cannot participate in the city life, however, they laugh about the “astronomic prices” (81) of the goods from all over the world. The prices are high in part because the goods are advertised as authentic items from other countries. Their exoticism and authenticity make them into a valuable commodity. Just as the souvenirs in Rothenburg rendered the Bavarian accessible, consumers in Hamburg are able to possess a piece of a foreign locale by buying, for instance, a handmade “authentic” [wahr] tablecloth from Hungary (81). Although Yuna does not participate in this consumerism, her status as legal immigrant allows her to take part in the city life regardless of her spending power.

In contrast, Tawada establishes the participation in capitalist practices as ultimate markers of inclusion and exclusion when her Vietnamese protagonist walks the streets of Paris in The Naked Eye. Initially, the protagonist is scared that she will be deported, but soon she realizes:

Fortunately, my Asian features did not make me conspicuous. This city was full of Asian-looking women. Most of them were in the habit of glancing into shop windows to check the quality and prices of handbags and dresses for sale. Sometimes, to my surprise, I caught a glimpse of my own mirror image, which always horrified me. You could tell from my body language that I had no intention of buying anything in the display window. […] Anyone could see at a glance that I had no right to be there. (55)
The above mentioned “Asian-looking” women do not excite suspicion because they move through Europe as consumers. The concept of the flâneuse, of women walking the city, is connected to the establishment of shopping as a socially acceptable pastime for bourgeois women (Friedberg 36). Walking the city alone was for women “equated with the privilege of shopping on her own. The development in the late nineteenth century of shopping as socially acceptable leisure activity for bourgeois women [...] encouraged women to be peripatetic without escort” (36). The flâneuse was born as consumer (34) and at the same time was an object of consumption for the gaze of the flâneur. Her spaces were the shops and department stores, a discourse that Tawada takes up and consequently rejects in *The Naked Eye*.

Tawada dismisses the connection between consumerism and female flânerie. After Jörg abducts the protagonist to Bochum, he attempts to win her over by taking her to various shops and shopping centers (24). However, the Vietnamese woman is unimpressed, calling the goods “garbage” (24). Instead, she prefers to roam the streets of the small German town, without goal or purpose (28). Compared to Benjamin or Baudelaire’s flâneur, Tawada’s Vietnamese flâneuse is much closer to the original conception of the flâneur as “a lazybones, a loafer, man of insufferable idleness, who doesn’t know where to take his trouble and his boredom” (1808 dictionary definition of “flaneur,” quoted in Ferguson 83). Yet, this figure of the flâneur is still conceived as a male member of the bourgeoisie and his idleness is a result of his not having to work whereas Tawada’s protagonist cannot work. Several times the Vietnamese woman asserts that she is “useless” (45, 48) because she has no paid profession and thereby no access to the city. While unemployed, she does not feel that she deserves to walk in the middle of the sidewalk, visible to all (82). Although she does not necessarily want to shop, she intrinsically understands that only by participating in capitalist practices of consumption and production, she does have the ‘right’ to be in Europe.

Eventually, the mimicry of one of the shopping women in Paris offers the protagonist a way out of her situation as stateless refugee in France. Tuong Linh, a Vietnamese man with whom the protagonist lives for a while in Paris, offers to marry her in Thailand. In this way, they could re-enter France as a couple, thereby enabling her to stay in France legally. In order to leave for Thailand, the protagonist is supposed to masquerade as a Japanese woman. However, a Japanese passport is not enough to pass the border.

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367 Ferguson credits Balzac for transforming the flâneur into the urban artist that fascinated Benjamin and Baudelaire (90).
controls. The protagonist has to become a capitalist to pass successfully as Japanese, so she and Tuong Linh shop for designer clothes as part of her costume as ‘Japanese woman’:

I picked out a light blue dress with a colourful collar and a gold chain-shaped belt and tried on both of them in the fitting room. Tuong Linh nodded and said to my reflection: ‘You look like a Japanese woman.’ I looked uneasily at my reflection, trying to ascertain whether my eyes were now sparkling with capitalist consumer desires. (149)

Thus, Tawada uses shopping as a way for the traveller to access the European city and to achieve legitimacy within the European nation state. She links the buying of foreign goods to an act of comprehending and belonging. The protagonist in Rothenburg understands the town through the act of shopping. Yuna as a Japanese woman in possession of a visa, on the other hand, does not have to participate in consumer culture. In contrast, the Vietnamese protagonist is unable to take part in the life of the French city because she lacks spending power. Tawada therefore opens up a difference between migrants and tourists from a Westernized, capitalist nation and people from nations in the global south. In the following sections, I will demonstrate that this difference between Yuna and the Vietnamese protagonist extends to the gaze with which they are viewed and with which they access their surroundings.

4.3.4. The Tourist Gaze

In his book The Tourist Gaze, John Urry defines different types of tourist gazes, each inspired by a different motivation for travel such as health, education or group solidarity (19). For instance, the “romantic gaze” gives expression to a desire for “solitude, privacy and a personal, semi spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze” (19). The bearer of the romantic gaze seeks to be alone before the tourist sign or seeks out solitary nature. In contrast, the collective tourist gaze requires large amounts of people, movements and liveliness (19). Urry cites further gazes such as the environmental gaze, the anthropological gaze or the spectatorial gaze (19). None of the protagonists in this chapter are bearers of a collective tourist gaze. They do not form part of a tourist group, either by choice or circumstances. Tawada, Miyayama and Matsubara’s women move alone through streets, shopping

Likewise, Matsubara’s The Gate of Happiness features several scenes in which the protagonist Uba goes shopping, wanders the high street of Cologne, or meets Japanese tourist groups on the lookout for the best German shops (176).
arcs, fields, and meadows. They are not propelled by a desire to ‘see Europe’ or its signs and their gaze does not focus on the attraction. Conversely, they are often hyper-aware of being the object of another’s gaze.

Urry claims that “all over the world the unsung armies of semioticians, the tourists, are fanning out in search of the signs of Frenchness, typical Italian behavior, exemplary Oriental scenes” (3). Tourists look at features of everyday life because they differ from the daily experience of the sightseer (3). Likewise, the gaze of Tawada’s tourist in Rothenburg ob der Tauber lingers on everyday objects, such as bread in a baker’s window, which she re-interprets as extraordinary object. The Bretzel, a German type of bread product, transforms into something mysterious and unknowable, a part of the baker’s secret language that the protagonist cannot understand (2). Thus, Tawada’s travel stories differ from travelogues in that they do not aim to impart knowledge on or describe foreign places. By portraying ordinary German places and objects as extraordinary and foreign for her German audience, Tawada’s travel stories invert the tourist gaze that Europeans had habitually directed at their ‘others’. Likewise, Miyayama portrays the Bavarian landscape as an exotic place for her Japanese protagonist. By doing so, Tawada and Miyayama demonstrate that ‘otherness’ and ‘the exotic’ are always subjective and constructed.

4.3.4.1. The Gaze of the Other

4.3.4.1.1. The Strange Otherness of Rural Bavaria

Miyayama presents Bavaria as a religious locale. Crosses and figurines of Jesus and Mary feature in many scenes, either prominently, in wayside shrines (Bildstöcke), or in the background in the Weber’s house. Elias is a religious name and the film includes a scene in which Elias and Aki unsuccessfully look for an inn for Aki, reminiscent of Mary and Joseph in the bible.

Throughout the film, the audience experiences Bavaria through Aki’s eyes, either through close-ups of Aki’s face as she contemplates a scene before her, or by taking Aki’s viewpoint. The camera lingers on

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369 To a certain extent, Aki’s gaze on Bavaria is an exception, as she focuses on both familiar and unfamiliar aspects of the Bavarian landscape. Her depiction of Bavaria’s similarities compared to Japan is an expression of the shrunken distance and difference between the two nations.

370 These symbols align with the central theme of forgiveness and trauma. Although Aki’s forgiveness of Hans is not shown on-screen, their cordial goodbye suggests that they have made peace. Likewise, there is a possibility that Hans and Elias can forgive each other and move towards a better relationship.
Christian symbols when it takes Aki’s point of view, emphasizing their strangeness and that these objects puzzle the young woman. In the reaction shots of Aki whenever she sees a roadside shrine or a religious figurine in the Bavarian landscape, Aki’s face remains emotionless. Only the length for which she focuses on the objects demonstrates their strangeness for her. Aki seeks meaning in the Bavarian landscape instead of trying to ‘consume’ Bavaria. Unlike the tourists in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, her gaze is not searching for souvenirs and novelties. Her journey to the Allgäu serves a concrete purpose: she wants to reconnect with her lost family in the belief that the locale of their death holds the key to this connection. 

Aki’s gaze turns the Bavarian landscape into something unfamiliar (verfremdet) and ostensibly everyday objects such as roadside shrines or church spires become the ‘other’ because the audience experiences their strangeness for Aki. According to Huggan, “the exotic is not [...] an inherent quality to be found ‘in’ certain people, distinctive objects or specific places; exoticism describes, rather, a particular mode of aesthetic perception – one which renders people, objects and places strange even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery” (13, emphasis in the original). Miyayama’s film represents this take on the exotic. Aki renders Bavaria an exotic space; Miyayama thereby enables her German audience to see the German landscape through the eyes of a stranger, effectively questioning notions of sameness and difference. For Huggan, exoticism is an aesthetic and a political practice, a question of power insofar as ‘the exotic’ is not to return the gaze that is laid upon him/her (14). Therefore, “exoticism has proved over time to be a highly effective instrument of imperial power” as the exoticizing gaze might “precede [...] violent subjugation; the exotic splendour of newly colonized lands may disguise the brutal circumstances of their gain” (14). In the case of The Red Dot, however, Aki’s gaze is not a tool to exercise power. Although the Bavarian landscape appears exotic to her, the locals do not, and at no point does Aki appear superior to them. There is no scene in which Aki’s gaze lingers on people. The film never expresses an unequal power relation between Aki and the people in Bavaria. In contrast, Tawada’s protagonists also redirect their gaze back onto the European cityscape and people. However, for them, the return of the gaze does not obliterate unequal power structures.

371 Towards the end of the film Aki achieves such a connection: at the site of the accident the ghosts of Aki’s family, her father, mother and baby brother, join her for a picnic. The scene is touching, with the father sharing stories of Aki’s childhood and the family affectionally sharing homemade onigiri.
4.3.4.1.2. The ‘Subjective Flâneuse’

Aki therefore accesses her surroundings in Germany primarily visually. The seeing act, looking at other people and foreign places, is also one of the most prevalent motifs in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*. MacCannell defines the act of sightseeing “as effort based on desire ethically to connect to someone or something ‘other’ as represented by or embodied in an attraction” (7). However, Yuna cannot connect with Bordeaux or participate in the life of the city; for her, Bordeaux remains unknowable. Moreover, she cannot grasp the city visually. If Urry defines the tourist experience as the direction of a specific tourist gaze towards a signifier, Yuna ‘fails’ as tourist. When she attempts to remember how certain landmarks looked, she can only think of generic representations of European cities but not of specifics of Bordeaux (80). One reason for this could be that while in France, Yuna cannot actually focus on the act of sightseeing. Her travels are marked by uncomfortable encounters (170). In addition, Yuna has little interest in Bordeaux as originally she wanted to travel to Dakar, Senegal but was redirected to France by Renée who could not accept that Yuna wanted to learn French in Africa.

In *The Naked Eye*, the attempts of the Vietnamese woman to make sense of Paris using her Communist education create Paris as a locale that has little to do with the actual city. In that, she differs from Benjamin’s flâneur “who goes botanizing on the asphalt” (36) and is at once the city’s “chronicler and its philosopher” (37). According to Priscilla Ferguson, who wrote extensively on the relationship between Paris and the flâneur, the flâneur was “[l]iterally propelled by curiosity to investigate the city whose continual metamorphoses challenged the very possibility of knowledge, the writer moved through urban society. Could the city be known? By whom? How?” (80-1) In contrast, Tawada’s migrant flâneuse in *The Naked Eye* does not investigate, analyze, or understand the city. Ferguson points out that already for Flaubert “[f]lânerie ceased to signify freedom and autonomy; it implied instead estrangement and alienation” (81). In the mid-19th century, the city was a place of bewilderment for the flâneur. Under Haussmann, Paris had changed into a distinctively modern city with broad, straight boulevards. Quoting *L’Education Sentimentale (Sentimental Education, 1869)*, Ferguson demonstrates that for the book’s protagonist, the city “remains out of reach. At every turn the city frustrates desire, baffles intelligence, and resists control” (99). Likewise, instead of being an investigator and chronicler of urban life, in *The Naked Eye*, the Vietnamese woman’s view on the city and its inhabitants is remarkably personal. She observes women and men in the streets, imagines their stories and secrets and makes up partly absurd tales without ever fully understanding the city (41-3, 120, 139, 159).
Ortega points to the importance of *flânerie* as an artistic response to urban space (140). By walking the city, the *flâneur/ flâneuse* create “metaphoric cities by writing poetic ‘maps’ of urban spaces” (140). The walking individual thereby produces the city by observing its inhabitants, its streets, shops, and landmarks. Tawada’s concept of accessing the city through walking echoes de Certeau, who conceived of cities as written by the individual walkers within. With regard to walkers, de Certeau states that “the created order is everywhere punched and torn open by ellipses, drifts, and leaks of meaning: it is a sieve-order” (133). The protagonist’s access to the city is personalized and removed from the ‘official’ narrative of the space. Tourists arguably often participate in such an official narrative, sticking to signifiers such as the Eiffel Tower in Paris and remaining within ‘tourist bubbles.’ Tawada’s women produce the city beyond official tourist depictions. Instead of portraying Europe as inviting, cultured and accessible locale, Tawada’s wandering subjects demonstrate European acts of exclusion towards people that do not fit fixed and pre-determined categories such as ‘local’ and ‘tourist.’ This rejection that Tawada’s migrant flâneuse experience is especially apparent in the gazes that are directed at them.

4.2.4.2. The Gaze on the Other - Walking the City in Tawada’s Novels

The individual’s gaze is intrinsically connected to questions of agency and power. Yuna is aware of the hostile gaze of others and she is afraid of the police officers on the street and their questions (13, 50, 54, 78, 180). For instance, in Hamburg, the police confront her because of her aimless walking in the city. She had been walking around the harbor when a crime happened about which the police question her. Yuna states that she had been walking around that day observing the city (50). “It was I who did this but this I was not made for being questioned by the police later on. This I had no name [...]” (50-1).³⁷² The “I” in this case is a part of the protagonist’s persona that cannot be grasped with labels such as ‘office worker,’ ‘tourist,’ ‘consumer,’ or ‘language student,’ as such, she remains unknowable and potentially dangerous. The police cannot understand why the protagonist has walked around the harbor if there was no particular reason for it (51). Benjamin writes: “No matter what trail the flâneur may follow, every one of them will lead him to a crime” (41). However, for the migrant flâneuse, the mere act of walking warrants criminal investigation.

³⁷² Das war ich, die es tat, aber dieses Ich war nicht dafür gemacht, später von der Polizei unter die Lupe genommen zu werden. Dieses Ich hatte keinen Namen.
Likewise, in *The Naked Eye*, Tawada’s nameless protagonist is constantly aware of her status as illegal immigrant; she is afraid to walk the streets of Paris lest the police should pick her up and deport her (50). She avoids walking smaller, more intimate streets because she fears that “someone might peer into my head” (142). The protagonist cannot become an accepted member of a Western society, not necessarily based on account of her skin colour or cultural origin, but because her nonparticipation in capitalist practices make her hyper visible. Since she does not engage in the act of shopping, she cannot blend in with all the other women on the Parisian streets.

Citizenship, the possession of a passport and all the privileges connected to it, are central problems for Tawada’s protagonist. Because she does not have a valid passport, visa, or work permit, she is unable to attend French classes, find work, or cross borders freely. Drawing on a wide range of scholarship, Colin Mooers in his *Imperial Subjects*, demonstrates how capitalist societies conceive citizenship as white and masculine (38). “Its presupposition, in other words, entailed the exclusion of women, the working class and racialized others who did not correspond to the bourgeois masculine ideal” (38). Thus, those who did not fit in the categories ‘white’ and ‘male’ became lesser citizens, subjects to laws and regulations (38). In Lauren Berlant’s words: “The white, male body is the relay to legitimation, but even more than that, the power to suppress that body, to cover its tracks and its traces, is the sign of real authority” (Berlant in Mooers 39). Tawada’s Vietnamese protagonist is defined essentially through her body. Other characters sexualize, rape, and abduct her; her only profession is selling her body as test object. Moreover, she does not have the power to make herself invisible, to blend in with the people on the streets, to “cover her tracks” (119, 136). She is not, in Baudelaire’s words someone who “everywhere rejoices in his incognito” (9). Trinh T. Minh-ha states in *elsewhere, within here* that “colonized and marginalized people are socialized to always see more than their own points of view” (34). This is certainly true with regard to Tawada’s protagonist who is not only observed by others but also constantly reflects on her perception by the people that surround her in the city. She is especially afraid of police officers, living symbol of the state’s power (49, 50, 100).

Tawada’s protagonist shares some experiences with the French flâneuse of the nineteenth century. While the flâneuses as consumers direct their gaze at the shopping windows and the displays in the department stores, their bodies became “objects of consumption, objects for the gaze of the flâneur”

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373 Only after she has found a job as an illegal test object in a clinic, does she feel that she can walk the city more freely. She uses the middle of the sidewalk and walks with her head held high because her work provides her with a justification for being in Paris (82).
The historian Jules Michelet (1798-1874), for example, wrote in his treatise *La Femme* (1858-60): “How many irritations for the single woman! She can hardly ever go out in the evening; she would be taken for a prostitute” (Michelet in Gleber 173). Likewise a doctor who is doing illegal experiments on the skin of Tawada’s protagonist claims: “Not long ago someone saw you on the street at night. Why don’t you try streetwalking?” (115-6) Partly as a way to escape the gaze of others that follow her in the streets of Paris, the narrator turns towards the cinema, which I argue constitutes an in-between space between the interior and the exterior similar to Benjamin’s arcades.

The cinematic seeing act, which Friedberg regards as a “further instrumentalization of the consumer gaze” (66) finally allows Tawada’s Vietnamese flâneuse to observe without being seen. The cinema screen bears traits of the shop windows from which the protagonist flees (66). Both the shop window and the screen imply a distanced mode of consumer contemplation (68). Although she was able to reject the European shop windows and all they entail, the cinemas in Paris captivate the protagonist-narrator. However, in the space of the cinema, the protagonist is more than a consumer. As the films begin to exercise power over her by supplanting her sense of reality, the narrator can draw on her experiences in the cinema in order to make sense of her surroundings. She continues to explore Europe not on foot but through the movies of Catherine Deneuve. In this way, Tawada transplants her migrant flâneuse into the semi-public, semi-interior space of the cinema, where she finds a refuge from the open streets and can - at least in her mind - wander freely. The theater allows the Vietnamese woman to do what she cannot do on the streets - travelling and observing without being seen and judged in return. However, the cinema is also an ambivalent space; a space where conflicting ideologies attempt to exercise power over the spectator. In the novel, it is where Tawada stages conflicts between the Western and Westernized characters, the protagonist, communism and colonialist ideologies. Whereas the tensions between the narrator and the Western characters on the Paris streets are alluded to in the form of gazes and the protagonist’s increasing paranoia, it is through the space of the cinema that the conflicts are fully articulated and Tawada’s criticism of European capitalism and imperialism becomes strongest, a point which I will discuss further in 4.4.1.

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374 Benjamin saw the arcades as vital for the flâneur because they provide a home in which he could watch the life of the streets undisturbed and protected from vehicles and other dangers of the street. Likewise, those in-between spaces are crucial for Tawada’s protagonist as they offer a refuge from the danger of streets, not in the form of vehicles, but in form of the gaze of others.
Analogous to Tawada’s Vietnamese protagonist who is always aware of the gaze of others, Matsubara, in her essay collection *Gaze from Almond Eyes*, reports on her hypervisibility when she walks the streets in Germany. In her essay “Germany, a Paradise,” (“Deutschland, ein Paradies,” in *Gaze from Almond Eyes*) Matsubara recounts two walks in a medium-sized German town, one dressed in a kimono, the other dressed in a pink suit. She attracts notice in both attires. However, people react positively to her ‘otherness’ when she wears a kimono. In contrast, people see her as “disgrace” when she wears Western clothes. Matsubara writes of her experience wearing a kimono: “I walked on. Everybody avoided me. Everybody looked at me with a mix of unease and friendliness. When I stopped in front of a shop window, a woman next to me called out: ‘You look delightful. How nice that you are here with us,’ and a well-groomed, attractive man said: ‘It is an honor for our town...’” (1968, 14).³⁷⁵ People stare at her when she wears a kimono, but for the most part these gazes are friendly and accompanied by smiles. In contrast, when she wears a pink pantsuit, Matsubara is subject to “severe, calculating gazes of younger women” and the “shaking heads of older women,” young men’s “deliberate pushes,” and encounters “older men who almost stopped” on the street when they perceive her (1968, 15). When Matsubara looks into a shop window, two well-dressed women stop behind her and exclaim: “‘Look how the Chinese there walks around!’ And the other said: ‘A disgrace for our town’” (1968, 15). Matsubara writes: “If I don’t wear a kimono, the disciplined smile [of the Germans] is missing. Only the long gaze remains. Often I want to retreat into a grey raincoat, stiff and serious, because everywhere I see stiff and serious faces around me. I almost feel like the yellow peril” (1968, 16).³⁷⁶

When Matsubara wears a kimono, she is easily identifiable as Japanese. In previous chapters, I have demonstrated that although clichés marked the relationship between Japan and Germany, Germans often admired the archipelago for its culture and arts. The same patronizing ‘benevolence’ that led Germans to declare Japan the ‘Prussia of the East’ is extended to Matsubara in her kimono. In contrast, in Western clothes she is harder to identify and categorize. Matsubara is no longer an “exotic Japanese beauty” akin to the geisha that feature in Japanese travel advertisements (1968, 10) but a potentially dangerous ‘other.’ She alludes to the ‘yellow peril’ trope, which, as I have demonstrated in previous chapters, was most often attributed to China and occasionally to Japan to exemplify the dangers of East

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Asia. Moreover, identifying Matsubara as ‘typical Japanese,’ also allows the observers to categorize her as outsider, possibly as tourist. As a clearly identifiable ‘outsider,’ Matsubara does not disrupt ‘us’-‘them’ distinctions and categories. Her ‘otherness’ is unthreatening to the consuming gaze of the German people on the streets. According to Matsubara, there is a marked difference between how Germans perceive and treat Japanese women compared to women from other Asian countries. Both excite interest but the Japanese woman is not usually taken as a threat.

4.2.4.3. The Tourist Gaze as Commodity

In the previous chapters I have demonstrated how Japanese artists such as the Kawakami Group engaged in a process of self-orientalization, making the ‘exotic’ is into a marketing tool. This self-orientalising discourse continues in contemporary German-Japanese literature, most notably with Hisako Matsubara’s work. In this context, Graham Huggan coined the term “postcolonial exotic,” meaning “the global commodification of cultural difference” (vii). This commodification of culture can be found in Matsubara’s essays, written throughout the 1960s, in which she attempts to explain the Japanese culture to her German audience and which liberally employ stereotypes and pseudo-scientific half-truths. Matsubara’s essays have titles such as “Geisha,” “I learn German,” “Do not Lose Your Mask,” or “Letters on Kissing.” In those, she draws parallels between Germany and Japan, speaks of her own experiences in Germany and attempts to explain certain Japanese customs and concepts. Ultimately, she describes ‘the German’ and ‘the Japanese’ culture as two essentially different entities, underscoring their incommensurability and thereby also her importance as ‘bridge’ between the two cultures.

The Japanese man or woman writing columns on either German or Japanese culture is a recurrent theme in German-Japanese literature. In The Dancing Girl, Mori Ōgai’s protagonist Ōta Toyotarō earns his living in Berlin by becoming a correspondent for a Japanese paper, writing articles explicating German culture (2010, 30). In the late 19th and early 20th century, many members of the ‘Japanese colony’ in Germany, among them Tamai Kisak, wrote articles on the culture, politics and life in Japan and Germany. Likewise, Tawada’s nameless Japanese protagonist in her short novel A Guest works as a columnist for a German paper and is supposed to write articles on Japan. However, she only agreed to be a correspondent out of financial need and for her, both the German and the Japanese culture remain
intangible (1993, 55). Her inability to explain German customs and traditions to her audience throws her into a writing crisis, which eventually becomes a life crisis, leaving the protagonist unable to articulate anything beyond disjoined words and letters (1993, 78). For Tawada, culture is not a monolithic entity that can be explained. Because all cultures are inherently hybrid and subject to changes, it is fruitless to speak of ‘the’ German or ‘the’ Japanese culture. Consequently, articles about these cultures are always about an imagined and artificial construct. Crucially, both Tawada and Matsubara deal in culture. Both authors are apt at exploiting the prevalent discourses of their times. Whereas Matsubara profited from the relative ‘foreignness’ of Japan in the 1960s, Tawada employs post-national, globalisation discourses in her works. Instead of ‘explaining’ Germany or Japan to her audience, Tawada explains the inexplicability of culture. Both women consciously take up the role of an ‘outsider’ in order to write their German-language works.

Twelve years after her essay collection *Gaze from Almond Eyes*, Matsubara published her novel *The Gate of Happiness*, set in the 1980s. The short novel reads almost as a satire of her former columnist persona with the protagonist Uba, an ageing Japanese woman and former correspondent on German culture, struggling to find her place in a globalized world where knowledge of the ‘other’ is no longer a currency.

When the novel opens, Uba is a middle-aged woman reminiscing about her time as famed expert of the West. Uba had studied for seven years in the West and had returned as revered expert to Japan. However, globalisation and an increased mobility have diminished her status as singular expert. She feels particularly threatened by younger women (7, 15). Uba resents that the distance between Japan and the West has shrunk, in part because of the increase in tourism. She is bitter when she encounters a group of young Japanese tourists in Cologne:

> She wanted nothing to do with this pack of [Japanese] tourists that recently started to flood Europe in the thousands. Every year they became more. [...] How simple it was in the past, she thought bitterly, when the Japanese and their banks and companies were not yet sitting in every country, when there had not been millions who could travel though Europe and the world. Back then, she did not have to worry. Europe was a field of rice that only she harvested. [...] Now everything was worse for her. On every street corner, she had to be afraid to encounter Japanese men and women. (176)\(^{377}\)

Uta’s language with which she speaks about her fellow Japanese travellers, mirrors anti-immigrant rhetoric which describes immigrants as “floods” and “hordes” and which, for instance, can also be found in articles in *East Asia* in the context of Chinese immigrants in Europe (*East Asia*, 1905, VIII).

In an increasingly interconnected world, knowledge about foreign countries is no longer an invaluable commodity as it has become available to a broader range of people. Culture as commodity is a paradox. Explanations of cultures can only generate monetary value if the culture remains essentially unknown. Crucially, Uba resents this new knowledge of Europe in Japan because she can no longer get away with her lies and fabrications. Instead of reporting on European culture and policy, Uba had falsely stylized herself as upper-class woman moving through the highest circles in Europe and America and her gaze on Europe had little in common with the ‘real’ West:

When she wrote or talked about Europe, she connected her experiences and always it was she at the center. She described a fairy tale world in which only tall, blue-eyed, white-skinned, good people lived – dressed in expensive and very stylish-elegant clothes – who gently took the diminutive Japanese women into their midst and honoured her. She, the small, diminutive Japanese woman, whose beauty and wit surprised everyone, entered the castles of Europe, danced the Waltz underneath crystal chandeliers [...], ate priceless dishes with silver cutlery off golden plates [...] walked arm in arm with lords and ladies [...] walked besides scientists, diplomats, statesmen, ministers and even presidents through shadowy avenues, passed fountains and water games, watched hunters riding in their red coats [...] She spoke French, English, Italian, German, whatever was needed [...] And everything that she wrote about Europe, was faithfully taken in by her readers, her radio listeners, and the viewers in front of the TV.

(9)
Uba idealized Europe and her own persona in her reports for her readers. In contrast to her claims, she cannot speak French, Germany, or Italian, and had never moved in the highest circles of European society. Without having access to Europe her readers could not verify her claims. However, Europe has become “disenchanted” [entzaubert] (15). Uba can no longer pretend to be a European expert since many others have traveled from Japan to the West, bringing back their own stories and observations, contributing to a Japanese-Western convergence.

Uba adopts the stereotypes that are commonly attributed to Japanese women in the West, their diminutiveness, for instance, in order to solidify her position in Europe. Throughout the novel, Uba attempts to portray herself as ‘typically Japanese’ by arranging her face as a smiling mask, by being quiet and unobtrusive, although her real personality is brash, cunning and calculating. She successfully uses Western presumptions of Japanese culture to her advantage. Because Western men such as Uba’s German host Maxill expect Japanese women to behave in a certain way and because Uba adheres to these expectations on the surface, she can more easily disguise her true self. Uba and Maxill stylize themselves as experts in European and Japanese culture respectively. Each has written a successful book on the other culture (36, 38). Yet, Maxill does not speak Japanese (28), he has problems identifying different kinds of sushi (41), cannot navigate the subway system in Tokyo (67), and despite his proclaimed knowledge of Japan, he is unaware that Uba is no longer regarded as an expert in her country. Admitting that Uba is no expert draws his expertise into question since he is not able to identify her as fraud. Thus, Maxill is willing to overlook or explain away increasing discrepancies in Uba’s behavior. Likewise, Uba, despite her proclamations of the opposite, speaks no German (223), although she introduces herself as an expert on German culture. When Maxill’s wife Rosalie voices her scepticism of Uba’s expertise, her husband claims: “I also only speak fifty words Japanese and I wrote all my life on Japan. The best books on Japan are written by Japan experts who don’t speak Japanese” (223). The difference between Uba and Maxill is that while he can confidently own that he does not speak the language and is still regarded as expert, Uba has to lie about her language skills to give herself legitimacy. In The Gate of Happiness, both German and Japanese characters profit from the relatively large distance between Germany and Japan.

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379 Such as when Uba sends him flowers. Maxill sees in this gesture a proof of her knowledge of European culture since, he claims, flowers are not sent as gifts in Japan, but the habit exists in Europe, notwithstanding that it is also unusual in Europe for a woman to send a man flowers.

4.4. Colonialism in Contemporary German-Japanese Literature

Japanese travellers in late 19th and early 20th century Europe were invariably interconnected to questions of empire and culture. To further their modernization project, Meiji Japan sent politicians, students, doctors, and scholars to the West to accumulate new knowledge and a greater understanding of the world which were crucial for the establishment of the Japanese empire. As part of their official missions, they frequently travelled through the heart of European empires. In contrast, contemporary Japanese authors move through postcolonial Europe. More importantly, instead of hailing from a young nation striving to ‘catch up’ with the West, Tawada, Miyayama, and Matsubara stem from a modern, capitalist nation and former imperial power.

Do the former European and Japanese empires play a role in contemporary German-Japanese literature? Interestingly, the Japanese imperial period is almost a void in German-language publications of Japanese writers. For instance, in her history of Japan, *Way to Japan* (*Weg zu Japan*, 1983), Hisako Matsubara focuses on Western proto-colonial interferences in Japan and ends her book precisely at the beginning of the Meiji period, which marked the formal birth of the Japanese empire. Likewise, in an article on Japan’s economic and social development, “The Clever Japanese,” Matsubara deliberately omits the Japanese empire. She writes that Japan’s economic troubles of the 1920s and 1930s mirrored Germany but emphasises that, “although the prisons were full [...] there were no concentration camps [in Japan]” (76). The 1930s and 1940s, were, according to Matsubara, a period of calm within Japan, after which she leaps directly to the postwar American occupation of the archipelago (76).

Likewise, in Miyayama’s work, imperialism and colonialism, be they European or Japanese, play no historical role. In contrast to Matsubara’s writings, however, this appears not so much to be an erasure of the empire. Rather, thoughts on Japanese and European imperialism simply have no bearing on the story that Miyayama wants to tell. Tawada therefore emerges as the only German-Japanese author currently discussing imperialism and colonialism in her works. In the following sections I will demonstrate how imperialism and neo-imperialist practices influence the way Tawada’s protagonists move through and experience Europe. I will focus on *The Naked Eye*, arguably Tawada’s most profound discussion of colonialism in her German-language works as well as reference *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*.

In an interview with Bettina Brandt, Tawada comments on her choice to write a novel with a protagonist whose origins lie in communist Vietnam:
First we had Indochina and French colonialism [in Vietnam], then Japanese colonialism, and ultimately the Vietnam War with the United States. [...] In my eyes, the Vietnam War is not over, and colonialism in Southeast Asia is not over either. I don’t have the impression that communism, as a topic, has been resolved and that suddenly an entirely new issue has reared its head. (Tawada in Brandt 2006, 45)

Tawada juxtaposes communism and imperialism within the German, French and Vietnamese context. She thus further complicates the geopolitics of East and West, in which Vietnam is associated with the East in a colonial context, but is also connected with Eastern Europe through ideology. The protagonist, who identifies as a communist first and as Asian woman second, stands at the crossroads between two continents and two conflicting ideologies. Her ‘hybridity,’ however, is not a chance for resistance or creative engagement with alterity. Rather, it silences and blinds her, making it impossible for her to become an accepted member of a European society.

4.4.1. Imperialism, Capitalism and Communism in The Naked Eye

In recent scholarship, a wide range of publications point to the connection between imperialism and capitalism as evidence that imperialism does not necessarily entail only the acquisition of new territory (Mooers, 2014; Smith, 2016; Wood, 2003). In his discussion of the history of imperialism, Patrick Wolfe defines Imperialism as follows: “the word ‘imperialism’ dates from the end of the nineteenth century and minimally connotes the use of state power to secure (or, at least, to attempt to secure) economic monopolies for national companies. On this basis, imperialism is not necessarily an extranational project” (388). Likewise, the historian Ellen Meiksins Wood states that the “capitalist mode of economic imperialism […] does not depend simply on capturing this or that bit of territory” (xi). According to Mooers, after 1945, imperial power rested “chiefly on non-territorial, market-based forms of domination and control” (2). In the following section, I will demonstrate how Tawada processes these thoughts in her novel. Tawada articulates a critique of what Hansjörg Bay terms “a capitalist victory rhetoric” (558), which celebrates Western Europe’s identification with capitalist practices and denies the validity of non-Western knowledge. Her communist protagonist, an ‘other’ based on her gender, race and ideology, enables her to draw attention to modern European capitalism as a tool for imperialism.

381 The protagonist states that she grew up in a communist, not a tropical, climate (65).
Tawada thereby demonstrates that European imperialism is not an event confined to the history books, but instead continues to shape the life of Europe’s ‘others’ within and outside the borders of ‘post-colonial Europe.’

Western imperialism continues to shape the protagonist’s current life. Although she refers to “bygone eras” with regard to Europe’s colonialism and occupation of Asia, she makes it clear that Western wars and exploitation have not stopped:

Studying revolutions at school, I sometimes felt pity for the countries that had accidentally developed capitalist governments, forcing the people to play an unsavory role in history. Capitalism can sustain itself only by exploiting other countries, my teacher said. And so the first countries to develop capitalism were compelled to first exploit us and then feel ashamed, while we were always able to hold our heads up as Heroes of World History. If new wars were not always being waged, I wouldn’t be demanding apologies from the miscreants of bygone eras. Inevitably, new situations constantly arise, each more secret and cruel than the last. (104)

When she speaks of “us,” it is more likely that the protagonist paraphrases her Vietnamese teacher, but the “I” statements appear to be her own thoughts. The protagonist perpetuates a clearly demarcated ‘us’-‘them’ divide. This is not necessarily a divide between ‘the West’ and ‘the rest,’ meaning Europe and Asia, but rather one alongside the differing political-economic ideologies of communism and capitalism. Notwithstanding the naive voice of the protagonist, the lengthy statement is worth unpacking because it reflects how she links imperialism, capitalism and communism. For her, imperialism is a logical consequence of capitalism. She thus echoes Lenin who, in his *Imperialism – the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), argued for a causal connection between capitalist modes of production and imperial exploitations of colonies. For Lenin,

Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun; in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed. (92)

In his preface to the 1920s edition, Lenin makes an explicit reference to Japan, counting the nation among capitalist ‘advanced’ countries: “Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the people of the world by a handful of
“advanced” countries [...] (America, Great Britain, Japan)” (Foreword, quoted in Lorimer 9-10). I will demonstrate that Tawada likewise connects capitalist Europe, America to Japan while also portraying Japan as victim of Western imperialism.

At the beginning of The Naked Eye, her communist education is the only framework within which the protagonist can understand the world. She feels completely detached from non-communist countries and her knowledge of geography is limited to communist states. Her lack of knowledge about the West makes her an easy target for Jörg when he attempts to bring her to Bochum against her will. She claims: “It was not easy to say anything against Bochum because I had no clear idea of the city” (15). She is still unable to find Bochum on a Western map after Jörg has abducted her (31). Her transplantation to the West, for which she was ill prepared to begin with, has not produced any real knowledge of it. Unaware of her somewhat limited understanding of her surroundings, the narrator-protagonist uses aspects of communist ideology to criticize Western capitalist practices. In addition,

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382 I found it strange that the existence of so many cities [in the West], whose names were unknown to me, had no influence on my everyday life whatsoever (31). (Mir kam es seltsam vor, dass die Existenz so zahlreicher Städte [im Westen], deren Namen ich nicht kannte, keinen Einfluss auf mein Alltagsleben haben sollten.)

383 Of course, I knew that there was a country named Holland but the European map in my head had blank spaces. I saw Russia and Poland clearly but everything further West was blurred because of the sandy desert storm there (13). (Ich wusste natürlich, dass es ein Land gab, das Holland hieß, aber die europäische Karte in meinem Kopf hatte blinde Flecken. Ich sah Russland und Polen in klarem Licht, aber alles, was westlicher lag, als Berlin, war verschwommen, weil dort ein sandiger Wüstenwind wehte.) The desert wind most likely is an allusion to the fact that everything in the West beyond the border would have been displayed as white or yellow colored space in the textbooks and on the maps she uses.

384 Es war nicht leicht, etwas gegen Bochum zu sagen, denn ich hatte gar keine Vorstellung von dieser Stadt.

385 In contrast, in East Berlin she is still able to make out similarities between her new environment and her home country. The men that pick her up from the airport, for example, remind her of boys in Saigon (9), a musician looks like a figure from her textbooks (12) and the restaurant in the hotel resembles a hall in Saigon (12). However, already in East Berlin her communist education is no longer sufficient for her to make sense of her environment. She wrongly concludes, for example, that there must be a food shortage in East Germany because the hotel restaurant is not open all the time (11).

386 When she observes Jörg drinking coffee, for instance, she comments: “I am sure that some West European company had betrayed the Latin-American workers and bought these coffee beans for a few coins. I secretly wished that the ghosts of the minor workers who died in the coffee plantations appeared at night and tortured Jörg” (19). (Sicher hatte irgendeine westeuropäische Firma südamerikanische Arbeiter betrogen und ihnen diese Kaffeebohnen für einige Münzen abgekauft. Ich wünschte heimlich, dass die Geister der minderjährigen Arbeiter, die in der Kaffeepflanztage gestorben waren, in der Nacht bei Jörg auftauchten, um ihn zu quälen.) Moreover, immediately after her arrival in Paris, communism is for her still something she can turn to. She, for example, envisages how she will transform France into a communist country, which for her is a country of work and happiness and of relative wealth (53-4). Tawada highlights the naiveté of her protagonist as well as her complete believe in communism when she lets her say: “The rats and mice, which tortured us the cellar, would not be found in the new apartments. They will return to the woods voluntarily. I wasn’t really sure if that’s where they are really from or if they had always lived in basements. In the second case, we will have council basements for the rodents” (54). (Die Ratten und Mäuse, die uns im Keller quält, werden in der neuen Wohnung nicht mehr zu finden sein.
her communist ideas and ideologies initially enable her to cope with the realities of being an undocumented immigrant. For example, when she thinks about working as a cleaner although her original aspiration was to become a student or actress, she tries to vindicate the profession: “When you clean, you see what people consume or throw out. That way you get an overview over the national economy. You should always start your career as cleaner. I forgot if this proverb had come from Confucius or Ho Chi Minh. In any case, it made sense to me” (76). Her knowledge of communism is imperfect since she cannot correctly attribute the quote. Yet, she does not need a more realistic or balanced perspective on communism as long as the communist ideology enables her to position herself against Western capitalism and imperialism, thus providing her with a sense of identity. The more she loses herself in the world of the cinema and the more she is alienated from her old self, the less important communism is for her as an ideology or a political system. This is particularly evident when she asserts that the real world has nothing to do with her life – as opposed to the world of the cinema – and thus, that it is not important for her that the Berlin Wall has fallen and that communism as she has known it has ended (75).

In the penultimate chapter, Jörg again kidnaps the narrator and brings her to Bochum where they watch Régis Wargnier’s film Est, Ouest. Jörg accepts the film as a true representation of communism. He identifies with the figure of Alexej and is incapable of distinguishing between the communism displayed in the film and reality, analogous to the protagonist who increasingly merges the film world with her reality in previous chapters of Tawada’s novel. Jörg, unable to extend sympathy to the communist figures in the film, which he deprecatingly calls “simple people” (einfache Menschen) and “workers” (Arbeiter), regards them as inferior to the people in the West (171). His resolute belief in the superiority of Western ideology and practices echo the protagonist’s initial naïve confidence in communist thought.

Sie werden freiwillig in die Wälder gehen. Ich war allerdings nicht sicher, ob sie tatsächlich daher stammten oder ob sie nicht schon immer in Kellern gelebt hatten. Im zweiten Fall sollten Sozialkeller für Nagetiere eingerichtet werden.)

387 Wenn man putzt, sieht man, was die meisten Menschen konsumieren oder wegwerfen. Somit gewinnt man einen Überblick über die Volkswirtschaft. Man sollte immer als Putzfrau seine Karriere beginnen. Ich hatte vergessen, ob diese Weisheit von Konfuzius oder Ho Chi Minh stammte. Sie kam mir auf jeden Fall plausibel vor.

388 Est, Ouest (1999, dir. Régis Wargnier) tells the story of a Russian doctor Alexej and his French wife who voluntarily return to the Soviet Union in 1946 where their personal freedom and their privileges are taken away.

389 This is surprising because Jörg should know better. Upon meeting the protagonist for the first time in East Berlin he claimed to have lived in Moscow for a year and to have studied Russian literature (14). Despite that, he falls into an anti-communist rhetoric “which propagated the unquestioning identification with the [capitalist] system after the Cold War” (Bay 559). Just like the protagonists whose transplantation to the West produced no knowledge about it, Jörg’s time in Moscow appears not to have broadened his horizon.
However, in contrast to Jörg, the protagonist is able to identify the film as an expression of capitalist propaganda.\(^{390}\) I will demonstrate in a later section that other characters exhibit a similar mindset with regard to European imperialism, which the Western characters regard as an essentially positive and liberating force.

Tawada’s discussion of European imperialism and its connection to capitalism are most pronounced in the fifth chapter of *The Naked Eye*, entitled *Indochine* after Régis Wargnier’s film of the same title. When the protagonist first sees *Indochine*, she comments on the term and its absurdity: “The word sounded like a botched tofu dish. The movie was about neither India nor China – it was about us” \(^{391}\) and points to the fact that Indochina is an artificial, western concept: “The only Indochina I’ve ever seen was on the screen in Paris” \(^{392}\). At the same time, she seems to identify with the term: “The landscape of my face is a mix of the Indochina peninsula and the Mongolian veld” \(^{393}\).

After the protagonist sees *Indochine* for the first time, she discusses it with Ai Van and Jean. The protagonist claims that she is satisfied with the way the film portrayed colonialism as a precondition for communism.\(^{394}\) Ai Van and Jean argue against her criticism of the French colonial rule. They reproach the protagonist for being influenced by the communist propaganda while simultaneously repeating Western propaganda without being able to reflect upon it or to identify it as such. For instance, Jean concedes that France should have behaved in a “gentler, more adult way” as colonizer so that the idea of independence from colonial rule would not have been infused with communism \(^{105}\). He also briefly mentions the Japanese occupation of Vietnam, claiming that the French administration “was never as destructive as the Japanese one” \(^{106}\). For Jean, the relationship between Europe and its former colonies resembles the relationship between men and women, mirrored in his marriage to Ai Van:

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\(^{391}\) Das Wort klang wie ein misslungenes Tofugericht. Es ging weder um Indien noch um China, sondern um uns.

\(^{392}\) Außer auf der Leinwand in Paris habe ich kein Land gesehen, das Indochina heißt.

\(^{393}\) Die Landschaft auf meinem Gesicht ist eine Mischung zwischen der Indochinesischen Halbinsel und der mongolischen Steppe (118). In chapter ten, the protagonist briefly takes part in a rehearsal for a student play. The students pick her for their play because she ‘looks Asian’. They tell her: “We are from a student theatre group and are looking for an Asian actress” (148). (Wir sind von einem Studententheater und suchen nach einer asiatischen Schauspielerin.)

\(^{394}\) The protagonist states: “I gave a brief, objective summary of the film, adding that it offered a suitably critical look at the late-stage colonial period that paved the way for revolution” (105).
Jean: independence is a trinket one gives a woman to make her happy [...] For example, we give economic support to the former colonies in West Africa.

[the protagonist] Support? The investors need someone who is dependent on them’ [...]

Jean] When we support others, we gain no profit from this. (108)

Just as France as colonizer had exploited Vietnam, Ai Van depends on Jean’s good graces and his financial support. Their marriage shows similarities to the relationship between the narrator and Jörg. In both cases, a Western man ‘possesses’ a woman from Vietnam. However, Ai Van is not a passive victim. The protagonist had only fantasised about revenge and violence against Jörg, but Ai Van is at times actually violent towards Jean as a way to assert her dominance. At the same time, she fully identifies with her husband’s nation and, as a wife, her presence in Europe is legitimized. Ai Van is willing to accept dependence if she can thereby participate in her husband’s power. Likewise, the protagonist has been promised marriage twice in the novel, once by Jörg and once by Tuong Linh, as a way to establish legitimacy and, to a certain extent, agency. Tawada demonstrates that for the Vietnamese women in her novel, a submission into a heterosexual relationship/marriage - even if violence marks the relationship - is one of the few options available to them if they want to claim a place in a European society.

Ai Van, irritated by the protagonist’s criticism of France, reminds her that freedom and independence are inherently French products (105) – an assertion that has also been made in Indochine by a Vietnamese character. In his discussion of the medium film in Tawada’s text, Hansjörg Bay states: “In order to equalize freedom with capitalism, Ai Van and her husband are willing to ignore economic disparity, social injustice and global exploitation” (558). Tawada exposes the faulty connection of freedom with capitalism throughout the novel. At the beginning of The Naked Eye, Jörg has also given freedom as the reason why he abducts the protagonist to Bochum: ‘Jörg pressed his lips against my earlobe and asked: ‘Don’t you want freedom?’ His breath was a vodka ghost. ‘Why do you speak of freedom? What does freedom have to do with Bochum?’” (11)

A similar rhetoric of freedom emerged in the Cold War when the term ‘free world’ commonly denoted the United States and its Allies, or, broader, all non-communist nations. According to the Cambridge dictionary, ‘free world’ is defined as: “those countries whose governments have been chosen in fair elections and whose people have full

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396 Jörg drückte seine Lippen gegen mein Ohräppchen und fragte: ‘Möchtest du keine Freiheit haben?’ Sein Atem war ein Geist aus Wodka. ‘Warum sprichst du plötzlich von Freiheit? Was hat sie mit Bochum zu tun?’
human rights, usually used to refer to the Western world in contrast to other countries, for example countries that have a Communist government." Likewise, in her essay "Is Europe Western?," Tawada states: “The term ‘Western’ on the other hand contains an insidious concept. It tries to wrap up an ideology in a geographic packaging: whoever is in favor of democracy, freedom and individualism is considered Western in their orientation." The patronizingly positive depiction of the Western world inherent in the term ‘free world’ is undermined by Tawada’s usage of the attribute ‘free’ as tool of subjugation. Tawada claims that in the West freedom does not mean liberation but the freedom of Western subjects to do as they please. With regard to Japan, Tawada demonstrates that a forced ‘Westernisation’ actually restricted individual rights and freedoms:

When the Americans came to Japan at the end of the 19th century new laws were passed in Japan designed to modernize the country. For example, unisex public baths, public nudity and homosexuality were all banned for the first time in Japanese history. This modernization had nothing to do with freedom or individualism but had more to do with attempts at Puritan industrialization and militarization of the country.

Tawada does not offer easy solutions in her novel: neither Asia, in particularly Vietnam and Japan, nor communism as an alternative political system, provide the protagonist a refuge from a neo-capitalist, neo-imperialist Europe. With regard to a rhetoric of superiority, communism and capitalism emerge as two sides of the same coin in Tawada’s novel. Both ideologies restrict the protagonist and neither offers her a concrete way to escape her desperate situation as illegal immigrant in France. Whereas in Western consciousness communism is clearly identified as propaganda, the Western and Westernized characters are unable to see capitalism as equally problematic.

In the last scene of the Est, Ouest chapter, Tawada presents the text an increasingly fragmentary sequence of words and sentences, a strategy that she also employed in A Guest to draw attention to the connection between power, agency of self-expression, and language. In The Naked Eye, Tawada gives Jörg’s accusing speech in long sentences, which become sentence fragments until ultimately only single words are written on the page:

Think of how you look. 
What are those... 
...disgusting, broken sandals made from car tyres? You must have noticed:
It was nothing but 
hardship there, 
nothing but, 
disgusting imposture! Realize this 
and 
forget 
finally the pictures of the past! (180-1).  

Jörg’s last sentence brings together the most important aspects of the novel with regard to the relation
between East and West meaning communism and capitalism as well as Asia and Europe. He first alludes
to her looks, which mark her as Vietnamese woman. The sandals made from car tires refer to the Ho Chi
Minh sandals that were made of old tires and that were worn by Ho Chi Minh and used extensively by
the Viet Cong forces during the Vietnam War (Ministry for Culture and Heritage). In this way, they can
be seen as a Vietnamese symbol of resistance against Western imperialism. The fact that the
protagonist seems to wear them could point to a resistance against Jörg and his ideologies. However,
earlier in the novel the Vietnamese woman reflects that the meaning of those shoes has changed. In a
globalized world in which they have become an exotic commodity wearing them does not signify
frugality but cosmopolitanism. In his final speech, Jörg demands the prerogative of interpretation over
both the protagonist’s past and her future. Unable to think about the antagonism between communism
and capitalism in a nuanced way, he demands that the Vietnamese woman conforms to his limited
worldview. Tawada thereby exposes both capitalism and communism as equally limiting. Tawada does
not resolve this conflict in her novel. Her observations on the interconnection of communism and

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400 Du sollst an dein Aussehen denken./ Was sind das für.../ ... ekelhafte, kaputte Sandalen aus Autoreifen? Du
musst gemerkt haben:/ Das war nichts anderes als/ Elend dort,/ nichts anderes als/ ekelhafte Hochstapelei!
Erkenne das/ und/ vergiss/ endlich die vergangenen Bilder!

401 "Be quiet, I said to the streets underneath my feet but it kept on flowing like a conveyor and I was a car tyre. I
remembered the so-called Ho-Chi-Minh Sandals, made from tyre rubber. If I would wear them here, they would
not be seen as a symbol of frugality, but as embodiment of an endlessly increasing pace“ (49). (Ruhe, sagte ich zu
der Straße unter meinen Füßen, aber sie floss wie ein Fließband weiter, und ich war ein Autoreifen. Ich erinnerte
mich an die sogenannten Ho-Chi-Minh-Sandalen, die aus Autoreifen gemacht worden waren. Wenn ich sie hier
tragen würde, würde man sie nicht als Symbol für die Sparsamkeit, sondern als Verkörperung der pausenlos
steigenden Geschwindigkeit verstehen.)
capitalism are questions, not answers. Unlike her protagonists, Tawada abstains from dualistic and
simplifying observations and perspectives, while remaining critical towards an absolute attitude towards
communist and capitalist ideologies.

4.4.2. Gender and ‘the Asian Woman’ in The Naked Eye

4.4.2.1. The Impossibility of Being a Female, Asian Communist

It is the intersectionality of her female Asian communist identity that makes the protagonist in The
Naked Eye into a perpetual outsider. As a woman, she is sexualized and exploited. As a female
communist she is not granted a status equal to her male counterparts.

Since Jörg’s abduction prevents her from giving her speech at the youth conference, her initial reason
for travelling to East Germany, she acts it out in a dream sequence (20-22). In this dream sequence, the
protagonist crouches on a cushion in front of 300 party members from East Germany who themselves sit
on chairs. The cushion transforms itself into Jörg’s breathing face, which forces her to sit uncomfortably,
and distracts her from what she wants to say. The protagonist attempts to give her speech but is met
with crushing silence. Throughout the dream, she is not treated as a communist giving a speech in a
communist country but foremost as an Asian woman. Initially, she attempts to resist this classification
by asserting that, although people sit on cushions in Japan or Iran, this is not customary in Vietnam (20).
The audience, however, dismisses her voice by stating patronizingly: “Now we should overcome such
petty cultural differences and unite for the peace of the world” (20). Jörg as breathing pillow distracts
the protagonist to such an extent that she forgets her speech. The sexual violence that Jörg inflicts upon
her follows her into her dreams and effectively silences her.

The protagonist attempts to convert her fear and silence into a short speech, which her audience
ignores. She consequently moves from a bigger anti-capitalist topic to talking about Vietnam, because
she presumes that that is what the audience would like to hear and then jokes about a cultural
difference between Vietnam and Germany. This echoes Spivak’s assertion that women from non-
western countries are often limited to their role as representative of their nation and are “nothing but a
whole example of that culture” (Spivak 405). The protagonist is thus reduced to her Vietnamese identity

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402 Aber jetzt sollten wir solche kleinen kulturellen Unterschiede überwinden und uns für den Frieden der Welt
vereinigen.
despite the fact that she primarily identifies as a communist and that, by definition, her communism should make her a part of a global communist community which transcends nation states.

As soon as she tries to talk about the Doi Moi policy in Vietnam, two spies climb onto the stage and kill Jörg/the cushion on the pretext of saving her from a “political rape” (22). Her raped body is therefore connected to the exploitation of Asian states by Western states. Thus, her body becomes an extension of her own nation in danger of being exploited/ colonized/ raped by the Western man Jörg. She is ‘saved’ by the two men that had picked her up from the airport, but their murder of Jörg brings no liberation for the protagonist. Even within a structure that orders the world into communists and capitalists, notions of European superiority and of Asia as needing a European savior, are upheld. Although she identifies as communist, the narrator remains the personification of a stereotypical unmündig ‘Asian woman’ in the eyes of the men around her.

Throughout the novel, the protagonist is confronted with the notion that her value only lies in her sexuality. Her mother in Vietnam scolds her for wanting to learn instead of wanting to please men (29) and even while still a star student in Vietnam, she is assessed in sexualized terms as “pupil with the iron blouse” (2). Send to East Berlin in an official capacity, she could have expected equal treatment since both East Germany and Vietnam are communist countries. Yet, almost immediately upon her arrival in the GDR, she is objectified and sexualized. Although she seems to be a teenager, the two men that pick her up from the airport look at her blouse and smile salaciously (9). Jörg looks at her in the same way while she is talking to him about the Vietnamese demographic policy. The protagonist is acutely aware of carrying the burden of representation. Throughout the novel, she attempts to rectify stereotypes of both communism and Vietnamese women. For instance, when Jörg asks her whether she is with her parents she replies: “‘Do I look so young? There are women my age who have children already.’ […] I regretted what I’d just said and added: “Of course, that’s the exception. Women try to get married as late as possible and usually only give birth to a single child. This is our modern notion of population control […]’ (10). Jörg, however, “seemed utterly uninterested in Vietnamese politics; instead he was gazing attentively at the seam of [the protagonist’s] white blouse” (10).\footnote{‘Sehe ich so jung aus? Es gibt Frauen in meinem Alter, die schon Kinder haben.’ […] Ich bereute, was ich gerade gesagt hatte und fügte hinzu: ‘Natürlich ist das eine Ausnahme. Frauen versuchen so spät wie möglich zu heiraten und gebären meistens nur ein Kind. Das ist die heutige Bevölkerungspolitik […]’ Jörg schien sich aber überhaupt nicht für die vietnamesische Politik zu interessieren und betrachtete aufmerksam die Naht meiner weißen Bluse.}
The Asian woman as sexualized and silenced object is a trope that has been relevant for the representation of Japanese women throughout this thesis. In *The Naked Eye*, Tawada connects the sexualized image of the Japanese woman as geisha to issues of imperialism while highlighting the consequences of such a portrayal for the rest of Asia. In her imagined speech to an East German audience during the dream sequence, the protagonist laments that Western men perceive Asian women as commodities or at best as opportunists who try to seduce Western men in order to achieve a better life for themselves. She makes Japan partially responsible for perpetuating such an image of Asian women because they “exported the concept of the Geisha to the West” (21). Tawada thereby alludes to the overarching stereotype of Japanese women as sexually available and submissive, a trope that continues to shape the representation of Asian women as a whole. Her protagonist claims: “We [Asian women] have to pay the price [for Japan’s exportation of the Geisha image] and suffer today as potential Geishas” (21). Interestingly she uses her communist education to explain this phenomenon, echoing Lenin’s stance on the importance of exporting capital – as opposed to commodities – as basic feature of the imperialist stage of capitalism (92). She blames capitalism for Japan’s “export” of the geisha motif: “Why did they export the word ‘Geisha’? Maybe it wasn’t their fault because a hundred years ago they did not have anything else to export. […] A capitalist nation always has to export something, even if it is pointless and dangerous” (21).

It is too simplistic to say that Japan actively exported the geisha as a symbol to the West. Rather, Western thinkers utilized the trope to categorize Japan as ‘inferior other’. However, as I have demonstrated in the first chapter, some Japanese artists such as the Kawakami Theatre Group also exploited the geisha’s exotic appeal to gain financial success and popularity in Europe. In any case, Tawada subtly draws Japan into the league of colonizers by linking Japan to capitalism and capitalism to imperialism while underscoring that it was the West that imposed capitalism upon Japan. In previous chapters, I have argued that the geisha as representation of Japan as a whole served to submit the nation to an exoticizing Western gaze, interpreting the archipelago as erotic, mysterious and essentially ‘other’ space. If Tawada employs the geisha motif to argue against the commodification of Asian women, she portrays Japan simultaneously as victim and perpetrator. Tawada places Japan as exporting nation on the side of the imperialist powers while simultaneously drawing attention to Japan as object of a Western imperialist gaze.

404 Als Preis dafür müssen wir aber heute noch als potentielle Geishas leiden.
4.4.2.2. The Protagonist as Hybrid Woman

The protagonist’s experiences in Europe are a replay of European colonialist practices. Throughout the novel, Western men exploit, rape, abduct, belittle, and patronize the narrator. Non-Western characters and Western women such as the sex worker Marie, Ai Van, or Tuong Linh, while essentially benign or at least not benevolent, fail to offer the narrator security or any perspective beyond her life as illegal immigrant.

In the course of the novel, the narrator turns into a hybrid subject, influenced by the French culture, consumerism, and her Asian and communist heritage, without fully belonging to either locale or ideology. For instance, the more time the protagonist spends in Paris, the more Tawada uses French loanwords in her speech (57, 58, 60, 64, 77, 104, 165). At the beginning of the novel, she had criticized Jörg for his habit of drinking coffee as exploitative practice. Towards the second half of *The Naked Eye*, however, the protagonist spends more and more time in coffee houses (104, 107, 160). When watching Indochine, she does not identify with the Vietnamese character Camille, but with Deneuve’s Elaine (98). At the end of the novel, she appears to have merged with Catherine Deneuve, which makes it impossible to identify her body as white or Asian. In the last chapter, entitled *Dancer in the Dark* after Lars von Trier’s film, the narrative point of view changes. The chapter is told from the perspective of a woman named Selma who appears to meet the protagonist as an old woman. When Selma asks the woman where she was born, she receives the following answer:

She smiled as if she had waited for this question all along and answered with pride: in Saigon. Selma asked: Where? In Saigon. Selma remained silent and watched the European looking face of the woman. You could add blond highlights into the grey hairs but were these eyes, nose and cheekbones Vietnamese? Then Selma had the idea that maybe this woman was a descendant of the French that had stayed behind in Vietnam. Do you have French ancestry? No, all my ancestors came from Asia [...]. (184)

The old woman continues to tell her life story, which identifies her as the Vietnamese protagonist. Thus, towards the novel’s end, the protagonist has become a hybrid with regard to her language, culture, and race. This hybridity is not a liberating force, nor does it enable the protagonist to formulate a successful

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defense against her exploitation. In the introduction to this thesis, I have demonstrated that hybridity has become almost glorified in recent scholarship (cf. Moslund 2010). Scholars have identified the position of ‘in-between’ different cultures and languages as advantageous location. For instance, in the case of Tawada, her hybridity, her being German and Japanese, is often taken as source of or at least major influence on her creativity. This productive hybridity extends to Tawada’s characters. For example, in “Where Europe Begins,” the protagonist’s journey on the Trans-Siberian railway, her being in an ‘in-between’ space between Europe and Asia enables her to reflect poetically on both continents. Whereas for Bhabha, hybridity is “the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal” (154), Tawada’s protagonist in The Naked Eye, has been silenced and blinded by her hybridity.

Bhabha claimed that through hybridity “other ‘denied’ knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority” (162). However, the protagonist was never able to disrupt the dominant discourse that ascribed a marginal position to her. Tawada thereby paints a bleak picture of hybridity, removed from the celebratory undertones, which often accompany the concept in recent scholarship. By doing so, the experience of Tawada’s protagonist is arguably much closer to the lived experiences of migrants in Europe, who can face exclusion based on their race, culture, religion, and gender.

Hybridity in the German-Japanese realm has so far been a productive force. The Kawakami Troupe successfully created a hybrid Western-Japanese theatre for financial gain; Kitasato Takeshi utilized German Sturm and Drang narrative modes in his drama Fumio to argue for the inherent worthiness of the German and the Japanese culture. Teruo in The Daughter of the Samurai is eventually able to overcome the conflict of his hybridity to become a productive member of his nation state. While not without its dangers (Teruo almost destroys his family, and members of the ‘Japanese colony’ in Berlin

407 Examples for this can be found in a The New Yorker article which emphasizes Tawada’s writing in a “foreign language” as influence on her style (www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/yoko-tawadas-magnificent-strangeness), a New York Times article on Tawada which draws on immigration as artistic practice as a way to understand the author (www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/30/magazine/yoko-tawada.html?_r=0), or in interviews from the German paper DIE ZEIT (www.zeit.de/online/2008/38/yoko-tawada/seite-3) and the Heinrich Böll Foundation (www.heimatkunde.boell.de/2009/02/18/fremd-sein-ist-eine-kunst-interview-mit-yoko-tawada).

408 In several scenes, the protagonist states that she cannot speak anymore (72, 105). In the penultimate chapter, the narrator claims that she would have to gauge her own eyes out if she ever wanted to forget her heritage. The old woman in the last chapter that might be the protagonist is blind, pointing towards such an act of self-mutilation.

409 Tawada also expressed the idea of hybridity as silencing and limited status in her early novel A Guest. Towards the end of the short novel, the Japanese protagonist’s ‘in-betweenness’ with regard to her culture, language, and even her status as human/object, has effectively silenced her. She can no longer express herself except in disjoined sentence and word fragments.
were dissatisfied with the hybrid theatre of the Kawakami Troupe), hybridity was hitherto mainly a tool to connect Germany and Japan. In *The Naked Eye*, however, Tawada demonstrates the danger of not fully identifying with one culture. For Tawada, questions of German-Japanese equality are no longer relevant in the way they had been for German-Japanese authors in the previous century. She does not have to prove that Germany and Japan are both ‘advanced,’ equal nation states. By making her Vietnamese character mimic a Japanese woman, Tawada demonstrates that Germany and Japan have attained equality as two capitalist, and arguably, postcolonial nations. For Tawada, questions of culture and imperialism have shifted from a more specific German-Japanese context, to the critical reflection on the very concepts of ‘East,’ ‘West,’ and ‘culture’. She shows that the same exclusionary discourses of racial and cultural inferiority that previously led to a labeling of Japan as ‘yellow peril’ and potential colony are still at work, but now discrimination is played out along the lines of globalized capitalism.

4.4.3. Imperialism in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* - Renné and Yuna’s Relationship as Subverted Colonial Romance

In her extensive monograph on romance writing, colonialism, and global interconnections, Emily S. Davis defines colonial romance as “the orientalist genre designed to titillate Western audiences with an inside knowledge of the exotic and lawless colonies in order to reinforce support for their continued subjection” (63). Davis discusses two novels depicting interracial couples in the context of the colonial romance genre: Ahdaf Soueif’s *The Map of Love* (1999) and Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us* (1985), are stories “of female friendship and political activism” (63) through which these authors write back against narratives of masculine conquests of foreign lands and women. According to Davis, colonial romances served “primarily to connect colonial subjects with members of the populations they rule rather than disparate elements of the postcolonial nation” (65). In her short novel, Tawada offers a genderbending, queer colonial romance narrative. *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* arguably affirms and subverts the colonial romance genre in the relationship of Yuna and the French-German woman Renée.

Yuna encounters Renée when she accidentally enters her lecture on Racine and reflections on and memories of their relationship dominate much of the novel’s first half. Renée is a Romanist, at one point, she was leading the French cultural institute in Hamburg and her worldview is decidedly Eurocentric,
evidenced in her dismissal of Yuna’s wish to learn French in Dakar (11). In order to facilitate an introduction, Yuna acts as representative of Japanese culture by pretending she is planning to stage Racine in the style of a Japanese Noh play, although she herself has no knowledge of Noh (14). Renée, with her aggressive interest in men, her absolute belief in European superiority and her attempts at exercising control over any given situation, is in many ways the reverse of Yuna. The age gap between the two women is pronounced: Renée’s age is not specified, but the fact that she has silver hair and is a widow point to her being beyond middle age. Yuna is in her mid-twenties (23). According to Davis, “[o]ne of the central obsessions of orientalist discourse was (and continues to be) the supposed sexual decadence of the ‘native’ male, who is presumed to harbor an insatiable desire for the white Western woman” (68). Tawada plays with this trope by making Yuna’s desire for Renée a dominant motif in her novel. Yuna is immediately attracted to the older woman’s wrinkles; she is jealous of Renée’s male lovers, and there is sexual tension between the two characters throughout the book (11, 13). The relationship between the two women is not one of equals. Tawada describes it first as a student-teacher relationship (10) and throughout the novel, the power to define their relationship lies with Renée. Essentially, Tawada reproduces a genderbending twist on the colonial narrative of a Western man as instructor of a Japanese student, or lover of a Japanese woman. Their relationship is a symbol for Europe’s colonial gaze towards the other. In her discussion of the water motif in *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, Brandhauer, too, sees Renée and Yuna as representative of Europe and Japan respectively:

As non-Western subject Yuna is seen by Renée, who also through her age represents and uses the dominance of Europe, in the sense of Chakrabarty [Spivak] only through the perspective of a deficit or incompleteness [...] That Yuna is not an actual colonial subject does not preclude this viewpoint because Renée, through her colonial gaze onto the Japanese woman Yuna, produces her Otherness in contrast to Western intellectual history. Yuna is defined by what she is not. (207, emphasis in the original)

Tawada connects Renée to Western culture and imperialism: When Renée shames a young construction worker for his lack of knowledge about Racine, thereby betraying her elitist attitude, Yuna has to think of the word “colonizer” [Kolonialistin] (19). Renée is further connected with the topic of imperialism: the products she uses, such as her soap or her tea, are made in former French colonies (22, 40), her ancestors migrated from Hamburg to Bordeaux in the 18th century where they presumably worked in the trade with colonial goods (169). At the same time, she is in denial about the existence of French

\[410\] Roughly 100 years before Tawada, Mori Ōgai also reversed the narrative of Japan as student of the West in his novella *The Dancing Girl* in which the Japanese protagonist Ōta teaches proper German to his German lover Elise.
colonialism. Renée hates the word “colonial”; when a radio show moderator attempts to speak of French colonialism, she turns off the program mid-word (170).

Renée’s appropriation of colonial goods also finds expression in her taste for men. While still the head of the cultural institute, Renée had surrounded herself with attractive, young men from former French colonies in Africa, and she reminisces about her love affair with an Iranian man (41, 67). Renée constantly craves the attention and recognition of the men around her while attempting to portray herself as superior to them. In pursuing men, she reminds Yuna of a “predator” [Raubtier] (19). If Renée is a personification of Europe, Tawada paints a bleak picture of the continent: Renée does not create culture, she “manages” culture as part of her position as head of a cultural center, but by the time she meets Yuna, even this employment is over: “She did not show herself at public events and allowed nobody besides Yuna to enter her house. Her fingers did not write essays anymore, her voice was not heard on the radio” (27). Therefore, although she positions herself as a teacher, she has nothing to teach anymore. In addition, she wants to be desired by non-European men, but involuntarily remains chaste. Renée’s best days, both in terms of her professional and her personal life, are over, yet she blindly clings to her long diminished status.

Analogous to the relationship between the Vietnamese narrator-protagonist and Jörg in The Naked Eye, violence marks Renée and Yuna’s relationship: at one point Yuna recalls being murdered by Renée, questioning the validity of her memories. The relationship between Yuna and Renée mirrors the relationship between colonizer and colonized to a certain extent. Renée dominates and controls the relationship and she is convinced of her, and analogous of Europe’s, superiority. Yet, in contrast to other works in the colonial romance genre, which gave Western audiences knowledge of ‘exotic places,’ Tawada’s novel is firmly set in Europe and is told from Yuna’s perspective. The audience only learns about Renée through Yuna’s eyes, thereby firmly anchoring the narrative power with the Japanese woman. Through Renée, Tawada exposes the impossibility of maintaining a sense of European superiority in the 21st century. In contrast to Yuna, who travels, writes, works and meets other people, Renée remains mostly at home, reminiscing of more happy and successful times in the past. By portraying Renée as an essentially impotent figure, unaware or in denial of her diminished status, yet eager to exploit non-Europeans, Tawada sharply criticizes European attitudes of superiority and dominance. However, she also paints a complicated picture of Yuna. In her relationship with Renée,

411 Sie zeigte sich auf keiner öffentlichen Veranstaltung mehr und ließ außer Yuna niemanden mehr ins Haus. Ihre Finger schrieben keinen Aufsatz mehr, ihre Stimme war in keiner Radiosendung mehr zu hören.
Yuna is clearly disadvantaged. Renée dominates every scene between the two women, defining the parameters of their relationship, and eventually breaking it off. At the same time, Yuna benefits from Renée and her resources when stays with Renée’s brother-in-law Maurice, and she never stops craving Renée’s validation and affection.

In his article on *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux*, Nakagawa Shigemi comments on Yuna’s role as Japanese woman in Europe: “Yuna is a Japanese woman and between the lines of the novel, one can read that Japan, which never experiences becoming a colony in the age of colonialism, is caught in the exact same powerlessness like all the colonies that Europe marginalized through its dominance” (653). However, classifying the archipelago in one category with Europe’s former colonies, Nakagawa risks simplifying the complex relationship between Europe and Japan. In addition, Yuna is not powerless. Effectively, Yuna is a hybrid, not quite European, not quite ‘other.’ She benefits from many of the privileges that Europeans have, such as free movement and employment opportunities, while also being an object of suspicion. However, just as hybridity was no liberation for the protagonist in *The Naked Eye*, Yuna’s in-between status likewise leaves her an outsider. Throughout the novel, Yuna cannot find a space where she feels like she belongs. Yuna’s somewhat awkward position between ‘the West’ and ‘the rest’ mirrors Japan’s position as a nation that has alternately affirmed and denied its status as Western(ised) nation. While critical of European Imperialism, *Brother-in-law in Bordeaux* does not address Japan’s colonial period.

### 4.5. Chapter Conclusion

According to MacCannell, one commonplace rationale for tourism is the desire to “get away from it all” (xvi). In this sense, neither Tawada’s protagonists, nor Miyayama’s Aki are conventional tourists. It is not a wish to get away from something that motivates them, but rather a need to find a new locale. These protagonists are seekers of their past, of a new form of expression, new languages, of new possibilities of seeing the world.

The analysis of Matsubara, Tawada and Miyayama’s portrayal of foreign women in Germany exposes common themes that run through their works. The three authors created ‘wandering subjects,’ women who walk through Europe, observing and being observed. In all the works of this chapter, the authors turn the gazes of their protagonist back onto Germany. Matsubara and Tawada emphasized that foreign
women cannot move through Germany without becoming the object of the gazes of others. In addition, they demonstrate that certain discourses, such as that of the geisha or the Japanese woman as sexualized object, continue to shape the experience of their protagonists. Tawada and Miyayama have created two fundamentally different types of tourists in their works. Whereas France for Yuna cannot be more than a generic European locale, without distinguishing features and meaningful connections, a hostile place that does not welcome her, Aki’s experience is markedly different as she is easily able to connect with the locals. Moreover, in Bavaria, she can successfully achieve closure on her past.

Tawada is the only author in this chapter who engages in depth with themes of colonialism and imperialism. For Tawada, European imperialism is not an event confined to the past, but still influences the life of Europe’s ‘others’ at the turn of the 21st century. Although she does not discuss Japanese imperialism in-depth in her German-language works, the different experiences of her Japanese and Vietnamese protagonists allude to Japan’s complex position as belonging and not belonging to the West, a direct result of Japan’s modernization process and imperial period in the 20th century.

Matsubara, Tawada and Miyayama present three different approaches to alterity in the German-Japanese realm. Whereas for Matsubara, Germany and Japan are essentially foreign to each other, in other words two separate, clearly identifiable entities in need of a mediator, for Tawada, borders between the self and the others are continually negotiated and blurred. The role of a mediator is therefore made impossible. In contrast, Miyayama appears to have moved on beyond questions of cultural alterity in *The Red Dot*.
In the following sections, I will briefly summarize the preceding chapters and highlight commonalities which emerged throughout this thesis. The works in this thesis were produced either in or close to the margins of the 20th century, a time of almost unprecedented turmoil in both Germany and Japan. In one hundred years, the German and Japanese empires rose and fell, the Holocaust and the nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki came to define each nation’s post-war identity, and after the Second World War, both West Germany and Japan experienced extraordinary economic growth, followed by the crash of the bubble economy in Japan. While Japan had to come to terms with the so-called ‘lost decade,’ (1991-2001) Germany struggled with unification after the end of the Cold War. Yet, the discourses that influenced the German-Japanese relationship remained remarkably similar throughout the century.

For this thesis, I have brought together diverse works, ranging from sensationalistic theatre productions to serious family dramas, from propaganda films to postmodern meditations on cultural identity. A focus on culture as mediator between Germany and Japan unites these sources. When Japanese thinkers, such as Mori Ōgai, Tamai Kisak or Kitasato Takeshi first came to Germany, they were acutely aware of the burden of representation. They ‘wrote back’ against stereotypical representations of their nation, aiming to portray Japan as equal to the West. As such, they were part of a discourse that situated Japan at the juncture between Asia and Europe, a discourse that started with the rapid modernization of Japan and which continues today. Most of the writers and filmmakers in this thesis utilized textual and visual representations of Germany and Japan as a way to draw the two nations closer together, to create a shared cross-cultural German-Japanese identity, although the specifics of this identity varied. Three main discourses emerge throughout this thesis to interconnect and play off each other: A focus on gendered representations of Japan as land of sexually available and submissive geisha as well as of menacing samurai, a shared German-Japanese culture that disregarded questions of race, and the utilization of hybridity as tool for imperial endeavours.

This thesis began by posing a range of questions on postcolonial theory, Germany, and Japan: How do postcolonial concepts such as hybridity and mimicry have to be re-evaluated when researching a non-Western imperial power? What discourses on race and gender shape the relationship between two

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412 Tamai’s magazine *East Asia* was first published in 1898, Tawada and Miyayama created their works in the first decade of the 21st century.
imperial powers? How can postcolonial theory be made productive for the research on the collaborative or mutually influential cultural productions of two former empires?

In her appraisal of postcolonial studies within the field of Germanistik, Lennox states that in German Studies there is a certain insecurity about what constitutes postcolonial German literature and research (621-623). In the introduction to this thesis, I have demonstrated that scholars disagree, for instance, as to whether Anglo-American concepts can be applied to German literature. Yet, postcolonial studies have developed into a major research strand within German Studies in recent years, exemplified by the creation of several postcolonial research centers, such as the Frankfurt Research Center for Postcolonial Studies (FRCPS) or the Center for Postcolonial and Gender Studies (CePoG) in Trier. Likewise, German-Asian Studies, and particularly the research on Germany and Japan, has become a focal point within German Studies, with the publication of numerous monographs and essay collections that have also been referenced extensively throughout this thesis such as Martin’s Japan and Germany in the Modern World (1995), Conrad’s The Quest for the Lost Nation (2010), Sprengagrđ et al. Deutschland und Japan im 20. Jahrhundert (2010), Shen and Rosenstock’s Beyond Alterity (2014), or Cho et al. Transnational Encounters between Germany and Japan (2016). While these publications have made important strides in the research on the German-Japanese realm, they rarely focus on Japanese writers and filmmakers working in German and seldom follow the development of a selected discourse throughout the German-Japanese relationship, but rather focus on very specific contact zones between these two nations.

Therefore, given the increasing importance of both postcolonial and Asian-German Studies within German Studies, it is crucial to critically re-examine the relevant concepts and sources. In this thesis I have shown how, for instance, hybridity - among the most widely disseminated concepts in postcolonial theory - offers a productive and novel reading of German-Japanese culture if the concept is adapted for the German-Japanese realm. In the introductory chapter, I have demonstrated that Bhabha defined hybridity as subversive and essentially anti-colonial force. Starting with the forceful opening of Japan to Western trade after 1853, Japan effectively merged Western technology, governmental, legal and military structures with Japanese thought and culture, in what has been called a “self-colonizing act” (Tierney 22). Japan’s growing military power and its victories in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars attest to the ‘success’ of such a hybridization. Certainly, Japanese thinkers used the alleged

413 The exceptions are articles on Yoko Tawada that can be found in almost every essay collection on the German-Japanese realm.
position of Japan ‘in-between’ the West and Asia as defense against Western imperialism. However, hybridity was also transformed into a tool for imperialist expansion. Around 1900, writers in the magazine *East Asia* claimed that Japan was a ‘culture nation’ (*Kulturnation*) on par with the West and that based on this status, Japan should be the dominant imperial power in Asia. Another example for this discourse is the hybrid character of Arnold Fanck’s protagonists Teruo and Mitsuko in *The Daughter of the Samurai* (1937) who consolidate their Western education with their Japanese ‘spirit’ to successfully colonize Manchuria. In addition, the creation of a hybrid Japanese-Western theatre form by the Kawakami Troupe, served to exploit Western stereotypes of Japan for financial and artistic gain. Hybridity becomes an even more ambivalent concept in contemporary German-Japanese culture, despite a scholarly discourse that celebrates and privileges hybridity as creative force. The protagonists in Yoko Tawada’s novels, for instance, are hybrid characters; they do not fully belong to either Asia, or Europe. However, their hybridity is not liberating for them, nor does it enable them to exploit Western misconceptions of Japan. Tawada’s protagonists remain marginalized. Thus, hybridity emerges as a concept that ties many of the cultural productions in this thesis together in that through the concept Japan created a defense against Western imperial endeavours and advocated for Japanese imperialism. Japanese thinkers throughout the 20th century highlighted the advantages and the dangers of such a discourse.

A second discourse that reoccurs throughout the works in this thesis is that of a shared German-Japanese cultural identity, often set against an explicit third party. German-Japanese cultural productions throughout the 20th century heavily relied on a clearly demarcated ‘us’-‘them’ division. In the German-Japanese context, the ‘us’ often included both Germany and Japan, either as ‘latecomers’ to the world stage who were denied their ‘rightful status’ as imperial powers, or as two nations jointly standing against both Communism, and the Western world. An example for such a discourse can be found in Fanck’s *The Daughter of the Samurai*, where Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan are explicitly shown to stand united against communism. In reality, the German-Japanese alliance throughout the 1930s and 1940s can best be described as hollow performance with each side adding secret amendments to all their agreements, which left them free to act against the interests of the other nation. Japan and Germany created commonality through concepts such as that of the ‘culture nations’ or, under National Socialism, ‘soldier people’ (*Soldatenvölker*). Examples for this can be found in various articles in *East Asia*, in Kitasato’s drama *Fumio* (1900), in the silent film *Bushido* (1926), and in Fanck’s *The Daughter of the Samurai* (1937). Despite such a professed affinity, however, German thinkers habitually anchored Japan within a student position. They conceded that Japan had, in fact, become a
Western, that is to say ‘civilized,’ nation, but emphasized that the nation only attained this status because it had mimicked the West, and especially Germany. With regard to the Kawakami Troupe’s audience, who were under the impression that they were seeing ‘real’ Japanese theatre, Tamai Kisak remarked drily in his magazine East Asia that their knowledge of “customs, conventions and languages of foreign countries is lacking” (IX, 1898, 395). Thus, the unequal power structure between Europe and Japan is exemplified by the lack of understanding and knowledge in the West with regard to Japan. Whereas the Japanese government sent countless officials to Europe and the United States throughout the Meiji Period (1866-1912), and although Western experts came to Japan, European states did not send officials to learn about Japanese governmental and legal structures. If Japan wanted to be taken seriously on a global stage, they had to emulate Western thought and technology. Thus, Japan was locked into a student position with Western observers rationalizing the nation’s rapid modernization and military victories as result of Western instruction and thereby participating in Japan’s ‘successes’ such as Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese and Sino-Japanese Wars. Japanese thinkers were quick to point out that it was their successful unity of Western technology and Japanese spirit that made Japan’s modernization possible, that they were not mere mimics.

This discourse would begin to change in the 1930s and 1940s, and then again in the 1980s. Japanophiles in Nazi Germany looked towards Japan as possible role model with regard to the successful synthesis of modern technology and the ‘ancient spirit of the people’ (Volk). Hybridity is crucial for this discourse. According to Maltarich, National Socialists interpreted the Japanese unification of Western technology and Japanese culture as “exemplary” and as a possible role model (141). Yet, demeaning and reductive stereotypes of Japan as traditional land of geisha and cherry blossoms continued to define the German-Japanese discourse throughout the Third Reich. Arnold Fanck’s The Daughter of the Samurai, for instance, heavily uses well-established imaginaries of cherry blossoms, kimono, sumo, and volcanos in depicting Japan as an almost pre-modern locale. Against his exoticizing gaze stands Itami Mansaku’s The New Earth in which he aimed to portray Japan as nation equal to the West. Both directors are united in displaying Teruo’s hybridity as fundamental for the Japanese imperial project. Even while Itami was pushing back against Fanck’s orientalising depictions of Japan, he advocated for Japanese imperialism in China. The films are an expression of Japan’s paradoxical position in Asia in the early and mid-20th century, as a nation that stylized itself as defender against Western aggression in the region while engaging in similar acts of aggression itself.
After 1945, Japan came to be seen as possible instructor of the West once more. In the 1980s, the nation’s economic miracle led to a range of publications on how to successfully emulate Japan’s economy. Albrecht Rothacher cites numerous Japanese strategies and concepts that managers imported to the West in hopes of rivalling Japan’s economic miracle, including books on the economic influence of Zen, the Kaizen, or the Kanban strategy.\footnote{Simply put, the Kaizen strategy is a strategy of continuous improvement on all levels of a company. Kanban is a scheduling system for manufacturing processes.} The discourse of Japan as economic role model itself was highly ambivalent and bore traits of European rhetoric of Japan after the First Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese War. Japan’s victories in these wars had exacerbated fears of a ‘yellow peril’ in the West. Using a similar rhetoric of threat and danger in his monograph on the Japanese economy, Rothacher speaks of “the great threat of the Japanese export industry that everywhere lead to anxiety and panic in the [19]80s” \footnote{die große Bedrohung durch die japanische Exportindustrie, die in den 80er Jahren allenthalben Besorgnis und Panik auslöste} (v, emphasis mine).\footnote{Moreover, the title of Rothacher’s monograph on the Japanese economy toys with the trope of Japan as land of the samurai: The Return of the Samurai: Japan’s Economy after the Crisis (Die Rückkehr der Samurai: Japans Wirtschaft nach der Krise, 2007). In this thesis I have demonstrated that Japan was coded as masculine, often exemplified through the samurai image, whenever Western observers wanted to emphasize the threat – economic or military – that the archipelago allegedly posed for the West. This discourse continues into the later decades of the 20th century.}

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The increased importance of the Japanese economy, of Japan as capitalist nation, influenced post-war German-Japanese cultural productions. Writers such as Matsubara and Tawada emphasized commonality between Germany and Japan, not based on their alleged status as ‘culture nations’ or ‘latecomers,’ but on (West) Germany and Japan’s status as capitalist nations. In The Gate of Happiness, Matsubara remarks on the importance of the Japanese economy for the country to gain recognition in the West. However, far from making Japan a complete equal, the successful Japanese economy is perceived as threat. In her essay “The clever Japanese,” Matsubara writes with regard to German stereotypes: “Japan – that is a horde of unemancipated, I-less workers, all focused on working even more, on producing more. Japan is an economic giant who is eating the German market and endangers German jobs” (76). Thus, the discourse surrounding Japan remained highly ambivalent. Its status as economic, capitalist power effectively rendered Japan a Western nation, without erasing Western anxieties about the archipelago. The Tawada novels discussed in this thesis were written after the
Japanese bubble economy burst. Consequently, she does not engage with the trope of Japan as economic threat to Europe, but rather, criticizes the exclusionary and discriminatory practices of capitalist nations. Tawada sees the unchecked adoption of capitalist ideologies as inherently problematic because it marginalizes racialized women in Europe, especially when they hail from a non-capitalist country.

An emphasis on a shared German-Japanese culture coincided with a repression of racial questions. While writers in East Asia had discussed the racial status of the Japanese insofar as they claimed it should not matter and that Japan was not part of the ‘yellow peril’ scare that shaped Asian-European relationships at the turn of the 20th century, questions of race were suppressed in later works. The silent film Bushido, for instance, advocated for a shared German-Japanese culture as soldier people, based on the Japanese chivalry code. While the film upholds racial boundaries with regard to the love stories, overall, race is not the primary marker of inclusion and exclusion. This discourse is even more pronounced during the 1930s and 1940s where - given the National Socialists’ fixation on race – discussions of race had to be suppressed in favor of creating a shared German-Japanese identity as soldier people. Likewise, in contemporary German-Japanese cultural productions, discussions of race are almost non-existent. Rather, writers such as Tawada or Matsubara create commonality between Germany and Japan based on the two nations’ status as capitalist powers. However, the equal status of Germany and Japan on an international level did not erase Japanese stereotypes in Germany. Tawada’s Yuna in Brother-in-law in Bordeaux, for instance, finds herself in the paradoxical position of ‘belonging’ in Europe through her work, her visa, and her social circle, but remains perpetually an outsider, confronted with misconceptions and stereotypes.

At the turn of the 20th century, questions of culture and gender interplayed to shape the German-Japanese relationship with demeaning and reductive stereotypes confronting Japanese writers and thinkers in the West. Exacerbated by Western travelogues, merchant reports, and fantasies, Japan came to be associated with the geisha image. In line with imperialist notions of the ‘other’ as female, the archipelago was codified as feminine, as seductive, essentially ‘other’ locale that could be subjugated. The geisha stereotype operated in tandem with the bushido trope, exemplified by the figure of the samurai. Both geisha and samurai, representing feminine and masculine Japan, presented an exotic, pre-modern image of the archipelago. However, it is too reductive to say that only Westerners perpetuated such a discourse and that Japan was nothing more than a ‘victim’ of the Western gaze. The Japanese performers of the Kawakami and Hanako Troupe cleverly exploited the exoticist mindset of their
Audience. By apparently confirming Western stereotypes, they were able to fill European and American theatres and thrill audiences throughout the West. They effectively marketed their ‘exoticism’ and performed a Japan that did not exist. Similarly to the Kawakami Troupe, Hisako Matsubara marketed her ‘Japaneseness’ by emphasizing Japan’s essential ‘otherness’ through clichés and truisms in her articles for the German paper DIE ZEIT. On a narrative level, Matsubara’s protagonist Uba in The Gate of Happiness cleverly hides behind misconceptions about Japanese women to disguise her true self and intentions. Thus, although demeaning stereotypes continue to impact the representation of Japanese women in the West, Japanese women have appropriated and inverted the discourse. By reversing and redirecting the Western gaze, they reclaimed their agency, but did not fundamentally threaten the discourse. Even if the writers rejected the trope of the Japanese woman as geisha as no longer relevant, they owned that they had to engage with it. To a certain extent Tawada’s depictions of Japanese femininity are more complex. The rejection of the geisha motif can be found in her earlier works such as A Guest (1993) and The Bath (Das Bad, 1989) but disappears from the later works that were discussed in detail in this thesis. In Brother-in-law in Bordeaux, the Japaneseness of the protagonists, or in The Naked Eye the mimicry of a Japanese woman, is only relevant insofar as it clearly shows Japan as neocapitalist, Western country.

With regard to gender, the German-Japanese cultural landscape shifted towards the second half of the 20th century. Around 1900 and up to the 1940s, the main participants in the discourses surrounding the German-Japanese realm were men. Japanese women were the subject of a discourse without being able to participate in it. East Asia, for instance reprinted various, sometimes sexist German reviews of the Kawakami Troupe, Western men attempted to assert their dominance by depicting Japan in feminized terms, Mori Ōgai argued with the geologist Naumann about the respect that women were afforded in their respective cultures, and feminized depictions of Japan continued to shape the German-Japanese discourse during Nazi Germany. In the 1980s, Matsubara takes up the trope of Japanese women as silenced objects of desire in her novel The Gate of Happiness where she has high-ranking Western men openly talk about their ‘Japanese adventures’ in the presence of Japanese women and during an official function. In her novel, Matsubara directs an uncompromising gaze at these men, exposing their follies and self-importance and demonstrates that despite their self-professed expertise with regard to Japan,

416 In The Bath, the German man Xander attempts to take pictures of the Japanese protagonist. However, her face is not displayed on the film because, in Xander’s eyes, she is not “Japanese enough.” Only after he painted her face white, coloured her hair black and “drew on” her eyes and lips – in other words stylizes her how Western observers would perceive a geisha-, does a Japanese woman appear on the film (33-35).
they can impart no meaningful knowledge or insight. Likewise, Western German men in Tawada’s novels such as Jörg or Jean, are portrayed as violent and exploitative, willing to support a system of oppression if it serves them and able to vindicate it through Western rhetoric of superiority and progress.\textsuperscript{417}

From the end of the Second World War onwards, the main actors in the German-Japanese cultural exchange were women writing about female protagonists with a shift from the others’ gaze on the women their gaze upon others. I do not argue for the existence of a specifically ‘female gaze’. Rather, these authors highlight the perceptiveness of Japanese women, not their perception. The protagonists of these recent German-Japanese works are moving subjects, tourists, migrants, mobile workers, who create interconnections between gender, culture, and capitalist practices by walking through Europe. Their main concern is no longer Japan’s imperial ambitions, its strive to be included into the realm of ‘cultural nations,’ but rather the continued neo-imperial acts of exclusion that are perpetuated by Western nations, among which they count Japan.

An exception with regard to all the hitherto mentioned discourses on gender, race, or culture, is Marie Miyayama’s \textit{The Red Dot}. Miyayama’s story of her Japanese protagonist’s travels to Bavaria, devoid of any geisha and cherry blossom clichés, does not dwell on questions of culture or race but focuses on a narrative of family, love, and atonement almost regardless of the protagonists’ nationalities. Miyayama demonstrates that a German-Japanese exchange is possible without discussing questions of culture and alterity.\textsuperscript{418}

Why have tropes such as the geisha, German fears of Japan’s military and later economic success, and questions of belonging to so-called ‘cultural nations’ have remained important for the German-Japanese relationship for more than one hundred years?\textsuperscript{419} One reason for this could be the relatively large

\textsuperscript{417} Tawada’s earlier works such as \textit{A Guest} and \textit{The Bath} exhibit a similar setup with a Western man exploiting and silencing a Japanese woman. For instance, in the surrealist novel \textit{A Guest}, X, the neighbor of the Japanese protagonist-narrator, is a therapist. In these sessions, he places the protagonist in a corner of his room to give his therapy a ‘more authentic Eastern atmosphere.’ The body of the protagonist becomes a vessel for German women’s fears and anxieties, which they discard in the therapy. Eventually the narrator transforms into a silenced object, a stone, more a tool for X than a living human being. This transformation is highly ambivalent with the protagonist at once relishing her new trans-human status and fearing it.

\textsuperscript{418} Tawada’s novel \textit{Études in the Snow} (\textit{Etüden im Schnee}, 2015) is another example for a German-Japanese novel that does not focus on explicitly German-Japanese questions of culture, race, and alterity. In her novel, Tawada follows three generations of a polar bear family as a way to meditate on familiar relations, racial ex- and inclusion, as well as the culture of the German Democratic Republic.

\textsuperscript{419} An example for the continued presence of the ‘cultural nation’ discourse is the title of Sprengard, Suejirō, and Yasuo’s essay collection \textit{Deutschland und Japan Im 20. Jahrhundert: Wechselbeziehungen Zweier Kulturnationen} (2000).
geographical distance between Germany and Japan. As German and Japanese political interests almost never intersected in a meaningful way, there was no pressing reason for Germans to confront their stereotypes and misconceptions of Japan. Moreover, the Japanese writers and filmmakers in this thesis, with the exception of Yoko Tawada, were generally not widely disseminated among the German public. Indeed, it is safe to say that with regard to the German public, Tamai Kisaku, Kitasato Takeshi, Kako Zanmu, Itami Mansaku, Hisako Matsubara, and Marie Miyayama remain unknown. Their ‘writing back’ against stereotypical representations of Japan could therefore have no effect on the public perception of the archipelago.

However, given the increasing and almost instantaneous exchange of goods, ideas, and people made possible in the 21st century, it is conceivable that the German-Japanese relationship will be less defined by clichés in the future. The discourses surrounding race, gender, and culture in the German-Japanese context are ongoing. Presumably, new authors and filmmakers will emerge in this field in the future. Their works will, implicitly or explicitly, stand in conversation with the films, novels, dramas, theatre productions, and magazines that were so fundamental for this thesis. Miyayama’s *The Red Dot* is one example for how German-Japanese productions can free themselves from these prevalent gendered and cultural tropes to focus on narratives where the alterity of the protagonist is secondary. It remains to be seen if other writers and filmmakers in the 21st century German-Japanese cultural realm continue to ponder the same questions of gender and culture that were prevalent throughout the 20th century, or if they will open up new ways of understanding the relationship between Germany and Japan.


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Appendix

[Fig. 1]
Title page of East Asia

[Fig. 2]
An example of a multilingual advertising page in East Asia

[Fig. 3]
Add campaign by Louis Oppenheimer ‘demonstrating’ the ‘civilization’ of Germany (1916)

People of Europe, protect your most holy Goods, the so-called Knackfuss Painting (1895)

Hanako, presumably in Vienna, Austria in 1908.


Pictures of Sada Yacco in East Asia
[Fig. 7]
Title page of Kitasato’s play *Fumio* (1900)

[Fig. 8]
Sketch in Kitasato’s play *Fumio* (1900)

[Fig. 9]
Title Screen for *Bushido* (1926)
[Fig. 10]
Still from *Bushido*: Shinzuoke dances

[Fig. 11]
Intertitle with image of Japanese woman and the header “Japanese Playthings” (Japanisches Spielzeug) in Bonsai or Shanghai font

[Fig. 12]
Still from *Bushido*: Manuel and Eva are captured, Eva leans on Manuel’s shoulder in the foreground, Nishida is in the background

[Fig. 13]
Still from *Bushido*: Eva as ‘Japanese woman’, Nishida is crouching and looking at her
[Fig. 14]
Luise Brooks
Source: commons

[Fig. 15]
Natsukawa Shizue in 1932
Source: commons

[Fig. 16]
Caspar David Friedrich
*Woman in Front of Setting Sun (Frau vor Untergehender Sonne, 1818)*