theoretical meditations. Sophisticated engagement with critical theorists Georges Bataille, Mikhail Bakhtin, Paul de Man, Gilles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari will appeal to literary scholars. At the same time, those in urban studies will find two noteworthy contributions in *Osaka Modern*. First, Cronin adds his voice to a number of others calling for scholars to look outside Tokyo to decentre narratives of Japanese urbanism and urban culture. Second, Cronin usefully carries his analysis beyond the end of the war in 1945, proving the benefits of transcending a date that has all-too-often been treated as a breaking point in Japanese history.

With its blending of deep textual analysis, rich historical detail, and rigorous conceptual engagement, *Osaka Modern* is a model study for employing literary sources and cultural products to add texture to our understanding of urban culture and modern life in the city.

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WOMEN IN JAPANESE CINEMA: Alternate Perspectives. *By Tamae K. Prindle.* *Portland, ME: MerwinAsia; Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press [distributor], 2016. viii, 497 pp. (Illustrations.) US$35.00, paper. ISBN 978-0-9832991-4-1.*

Although the subtitle of *Women in Japanese Cinema* promises the reader "alternate perspectives," it should be noted at the outset that this lengthy monograph focuses on how male directors portray female characters in their work. Every filmmaker discussed is male, and the creative agency of actual women, such as actresses and screenwriters, is not taken into consideration. The "women" in Japanese cinema who are discussed are all fictional, and the perspective from which they are viewed is primarily male. Accordingly, each of the book's chapters focuses on an archetypal feminine role defined by a woman's relationship to men in what the author describes as the "pre-feminist era."

After a brief introduction establishing the study's positionality within the framework of postmodern cultural studies scholarship, *Women in Japanese Cinema* explores the roles of "Mothers," "Wives," "Prostitutes," "Girls," and "Women" (specifically working women in male-dominated environments) in its five chapters. Each chapter contains extended discussions of three live-action films, which were selected for their representation of female characters existing within the diegetic settings of premodern Japan, Japan during the Pacific War, and postwar Japan. The films themselves were released between 1946 and 1997, with a slight emphasis on titles from the 1980s. The directors, such as Kurosawa Akira, Ichikawa Jun, and Itami Jūzō, are all relatively well known within the field of cinema studies.

What makes *Women in Japanese Cinema* unique is its emphasis on films

that have been adapted from literary works. For example, the fourth chapter, "Girls," is a study of titles based on Kawabata Yasunari's *The Izu Dancer* (*Izu no odoriko*), Akagawa Jirō's *The Sisters* (*Futari*), and Yoshimoto Banana's *Goodbye Tsugumi* (*Tsugumi*). In her treatment of these short novels and their adaptations, Prindle is especially interested in the construction of the *shōjo*, the adolescent girl who symbolizes a "stand-by state [that] appeals to Japanese minds as precious" (257). Prindle begins the chapter by outlining the major visual themes in Kawabata's novella *The Izu Dancer* and runs through five early cinematic adaptations, pointing out the differences between them before focusing her attention on Nishikawa Katsumi's celebrated 1974 film of the same name. The author then moves to *The Sisters*, explaining why it is "a shōjo novel," namely, because it "rejects patriarchal common sense and opens up a space for dreams" (296). She then describes how this liminal space is portrayed in Ōbayashi Nobuhiko's 1991 adaptation of the story. The final film of the chapter is Ichikawa Jun's 1997 interpretation of *Goodbye Tsugumi*, one of the only literary source texts not written by a man and, refreshingly, one of the few films appearing in *Women in Japanese Cinema* in which the main female characters are not seen primarily through the eyes of a male protagonist. Throughout the chapter, the author returns to the themes of transition, liminality, and the illusory nature of female adolescent selfhood. These observations and arguments are illustrated and summarized with the author's own drawings and diagrams.

One of the more fascinating sections of the book is its discussion of Itami Jūzō's popular 1985 film *Tanpopo*. In her reading of the film, the author is interested in how the postmodernism of the film "sheds light on women's liberation" (377). A major element of this postmodernism is the range of foods celebrated within the film, "whose homelands are France, the Netherlands, Japan, and Mother Nature" (379). Prindle explains that the director's focus on extended depictions of cooking and eating is distinctly postmodern: "Itami dwells on these details because he believes that big stories are bad and little stories are good, as do the postmodernists" (380). Prindle also describes how the director portrays class differences as a source of amusement, which she explains with supplementary aids such as a seating arrangement chart and a table of expressions used by the characters according to linguistic registers of formality. In order to highlight the postmodern disconnect between the events in the film, Prindle also includes a numbered list of its scenes and a diagram of their complicated relation to one another. At the end of the section, she connects *Tanpopo* to her broader study of feminism with a count of how few of these scenes the female protagonist actually appears in.

The strength of *Women in Japanese Cinema* lies in its thorough and vivid plot descriptions of each film under discussion. As not all of these films are readily available in North America and Europe, the text serves as a convenient reference. Although Prindle draws on a wide range of scholarship, she does not embark on lengthy theoretical reflections, which makes her writing

accessible to non-specialists, including undergraduates. In fact, certain relevant sections of the chapters could easily act as supplementary reading to ensure full comprehension of certain films that often appear on the syllabi of college classes. The lists of major characters, their roles, and the performers that portray them at the beginning of each section are quite useful as well.

For specialists in Japanese cinema, the appendices of this monograph are one of its most useful aspects. Each of these nine short essays details one of the Japanese terms or concepts only lightly touched on in the main text, such as *ryōsai kenbo* (a late nineteenth-century ideological expression meaning "good wife, wise mother") and Japanese ecofeminism. Prindle provides both detailed historical context for these ideas and concise summaries of relevant Japanese-language scholarship on the topic.

Women in Japanese Cinema is an ambitious examination of gender roles in twentieth-century Japan and a welcome addition to the body of work on both Japanese cinema and Japanese literature. The range of the texts the author references extends into lesser-known titles while highlighting "alternate perspectives" on cinematic masterpieces. Prindle's monograph is a valuable resource for experienced scholars and students of Japanese culture alike, and it can easily serve as an engaging introduction to Japanese film and fiction.

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MANGA VISION: Cultural and Communicative Perspectives. ***Cultural Studies. Edited by Sarah Pasfield-Neotifou and Cathy Sell, with manga artist Queenie Chan.*** *Clayton, Australia: Monash University Publishing, 2016. vii, 293 pp. (Illustrations, music.) AUD$49.95, paper. ISBN 978-1-925377-06-4.*

Manga Vision: Cultural and Communicative Perspectives, edited by Sarah Pasfield-Neotifou and Cathy Sell, joins an increasing number of academic books examining the overlapping Japanese popular media forms manga and anime (comics and animation). As its title indicates, the volume is mainly concerned with manga, though some chapters inevitably move well beyond the page. Not unsurprisingly, all of its contributors have research interests in Japanese popular culture. However, the volume is unusual in its particular assemblage of scholars whose primary area of expertise is Japan alongside scholars working in other fields, and in its consequent examination of these media, both in and outside Japan. In fact, most of the chapters do not focus on Japanese popular culture or on its (re)production and consumption in other cultures; rather, the authors address various aspects of interplay between the two. As the distinction between Japanese popular culture within Japan and its manifestations abroad grows increasingly blurry, this is a welcome approach.

In addition to the many illustrations, including excerpts of manga, charts, graphs, and figures supplementing some chapters, the book's cover,