

# Introduction

## The Politics of Media and Memory Representation in Japan

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Spanning six decades from the end of the Second World War, the chapters in this volume examine the transition from the Japanese experience of war to war as a memory through a variety of politicalized, artistic media productions. This transition led to many creative expressions of radical scepticism from the 1950s to 1960s. Moreover, much of this postwar era saw a 're-remembering' of the past through the reformulation of fictive narratives set in prewar Japan, a mythologized era in which 'shared' Japanese values could be celebrated. The critiquing of the present and nostalgic reimagining of certain epochs have persisted in tandem and manifest in a variety of ways within Japan's audiovisual culture. It is this dualism that is explored in this volume through an analysis of commercial, cult and animated (anime) films, as well as avant-garde documentaries and television dramas written by scholars from the fields of anthropology, sociology and film, media and cultural studies, all of whom are Japan experts.

This type of interdisciplinary approach was pioneered by the intellectuals associated with the Frankfurt School of social theory, who, regardless of their initial training and different specializations, all realized that multifaceted social phenomena demanded complex analyses. Many of the fundamental concerns discussed by these twentieth century critical theorists continue to trouble us in the twenty-first century. While none of the authors here has merely transplanted concepts such as 'social consciousness' (Marx 1977 [1859]; cf. Engels 1893)<sup>1</sup> or 'historicity' (Marcuse 1987 [1932]),<sup>2</sup> it is apparent that we all are grappling with the issues that have sprung from these milestone analyses of social phenomena – namely, trying to understand what discursive resources and epistemological tools

are mobilized by societies to account for their social processes, products and practices.

Yet, however much a single scholar may strive to produce such complex and complete analyses, a truly multifaceted methodology requires a multisited approach by different voices. Interchange and the implementation of contrapuntal strategies are paths that research in sociology and the humanities could take in order to achieve qualitative breakthroughs. This would entail people from different academic backgrounds and strata comparing perspectives on the same subject in a shared platform. The template for such critical enterprises was set by Said (1993: 18–19):

By looking at the different experiences contrapuntally, as making up a set of what I call intertwined and overlapping histories, I shall try to formulate an alternative both to a politics of blame and to the even more destructive politics of confrontation and hostility. A more interesting type of secular interpretation can emerge, altogether more rewarding than the denunciations of the past, the expressions of regret for its having ended, or – even more wasteful because violent and far too easy and attractive – the hostility between Western and non-Western cultures that leads to crises. The world is too small and interdependent to let these passively happen.

Thus, this book's interdisciplinary approach stands on an already rich tradition that has been developed in cultural and media studies. Additionally, the politics of cultural production regarding remembrance and representation almost demanded that we take different disciplinary approaches to the problematic of social, or collective, memory.

## Social Memory in Postwar Japan

Social memory comprises not only the most widely accepted and reproduced accounts and interpretations of history; it is intrinsic to the 'dominant cultural order' and to the 'structure of discourses in dominance' (Hall 1999: 513). Thus, it intervenes in the silting of hierarchically organized 'dominant or preferred meanings' (ibid.). While memory can be individual, linked with identity issues and psychology, recollection can be seen also as history or as an invention; or as an archive that shapes both personal and social genealogies; or even as the historical *a priori* of discourse. What these engagements have in common is an element of the political: either as an oblique articulation in the representation of the past or by begging the question of individual/collective responsibility and also through raising the possibility, or not, of redemption.

Hegemonic, guiding political principles favour a reified version of history that is then used to ground the representations of contemporary, shared identities. It is equally correct, then, to argue that the reification of history is 'reverse engineered' in order to create an epistemic rationale for a society's cultural identity. Such collective identities separate citizens from the Angel of History: in contrast to what the Angelus Novus glimpses from the corner of his eye, seeing the rubble and the storm, these constructed identities offer perfect teleological meaning (Benjamin 2007 [1940]: 257–58). In the case of modern Japan, as Vlastos (1998) and Gluck (1993) have argued for the country's 'restoration' post-1868, shared social memory has been worked and reworked many times, particularly in the postwar era.

It should be no surprise, then, that scholars of Japan recently have turned away from analysing Japanese identity-making (*nihonjinron*, theories of the Japanese) to the examination of memory in twentieth-century postwar Japan, considering it a significant strand within the national discourse of a 'unique' homogeneity. Consequently, the politics of memory in the postwar era has been scrutinized from diverse theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches<sup>3</sup> and through various foci: war memory and history,<sup>4</sup> nostalgia and the invention of tradition,<sup>5</sup> cultural memory and identity-making narratives,<sup>6</sup> and memory and popular culture.<sup>7</sup>

In their edited volume focused on social memory in Japan, Hui, Van Bremen and Ben-Ari (2005) offer six explanations for this widespread and pervasive interest in memory. First, they posit that periods of accelerated social change often prompt individuals to look back and reconsider the past in order to face the present's uncertainties. This reaction also results from a dissatisfaction with contemporary reality, as was the case in post-bubble Japan (1991–2000) – particularly in light of the economic recession and both the Hanshin earthquake and then the sarin gas attacks in the Tokyo subway network in 1995. Second, responding to the internationalization of their society, many Japanese searched for the origins of their 'distinctive' cultural identity through a revision of past traditions. Related to this is a third cause: still-affluent Japan has seen an increase in associations, clubs and circles interested in local history, cultural traditions and heritage, in a 'memory boom' in which all the mass media, as well as the tourism industry, have played a key role. The fourth factor relates to the death of the Shōwa Emperor (1901–1989) and the cycle of commemorative events related to the Second World War that were held both inside and outside Japan at the time. The notion that an historical period had ended gained currency. This 'closure' narrative was shared by analysts from academia, politicians and the media.

The fifth cause is seen to be a result of both the foreign influence on Japan's politics of identity and the historical narratives that are discursively displayed in museums, exhibitions and commemorative institutions. Finally, the sixth factor revolves around the fact that Japanese studies have seen an expansion in the relationships between anthropology and other disciplines such as history, oral history, cultural studies and media studies, leading to a development of multiple, interdisciplinary approaches to the tropes of the past and memory in Japan. According to Hui, Van Bremen and Ben-Ari, what seems to characterize the scholarly study of the Japanese past is a complex intertwining of remembering and forgetting, particularly when examining postwar issues, in which the conceptual underpinnings of historicity, truth and identity are essential for an understanding of the links between memory and power. This has required a critical analysis of the politics of memory and its competing narratives. Therefore, we need to ask: in what way is Japan postwar and what does it mean to be a society that was rebuilt after being defeated in the Second World War?

Various dates have been posited for the ending of the postwar era: did it end in 1989 when the Shōwa Emperor was laid to rest? Did it end in 1995, fifty years after the end of the Second World War, with a series of disasters that highlighted the need for profound changes in Japan's economic, political and social domains (Harootunian 2000)? Or did it end on 11 March 2011 with the 'Triple Disaster' of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown (Gerteis and George 2013)? It seems that for some Japanese politicians on the Right, the era will only end with changes to the postwar Constitution that the Allies wrote for the Japanese. Many on the Right want an amendment to Article 9 that would allow Japan to go to war, thus restoring and expanding<sup>8</sup> the nation state's monopoly on legitimate violence – as Weber (2015) might have it – restoring Japan's full sovereignty and making it the equal of other nation states. This is hampered by many factors, including the hostility of the nation's former enemies, neighbours and colonies, whose own collective histories can be said to rely on Japan's representation as the dangerous Other.

In short, it could be said that Japan is a nation that cannot be trusted with the full constitutional powers that Western nation states enjoy – in fact, it is seen as not to be trusted, even when apologizing for its past actions. Thus, in discussing politics and memory, we are confronted by a contemporary situation in which, politically, Japan sees itself as emasculated: it is still reliant on the US in the international arena, since it is not allowed to wage war nor can it rely on a strategic use of violence that is the 'right' of every other sovereign nation state in the world. Even their 're-remembering' of history is monitored in the global

panopticon when there are attempts to downplay the atrocities of the war.

No wonder that the country's postwar history could be interpreted in terms of themes that arise from this sense of impotency: from the first attempts to come to grips with the idea that they were the villains, not the heroes, of their own recent history; to the 1960s student protests over the US-Japan relationship; to the turn of the century's struggle to understand why Japanese society appears to be somehow in stasis, there is an inherent concern with how the country's economic and political power does not quite translate into equality with the Western world. In order to understand this continued sense of powerlessness from the world's third most powerful economy, we need, then, to consider the way in which being postwar has been represented in the last 60–70 years – this is the aim of this volume.

The various chapters in this collection build on recent scholarship to describe the end of the war as a moment of rupture, one in which the past was invalidated – state propaganda was debunked and 'traditional' ethics and values were considered dangerous. Japan had to be 'remade' as democratic, to be switched onto the 'right track'. This was simpler for some than for others. Children might well not understand all the shifts in the cultural and political milieus but would come to adjust to modernity and capitalism more or less easily, often seduced by the latter's commodities (Bourdagh 2005). Adult women, who were just as implicated in the culture of fascist prewar ideology as their menfolk, were being asked to do what they had always been expected to do: to work hard to support the family and, by extension, the economy; to marry and have children to secure the nation's future; and to properly socialize their children to be good Japanese citizens. The definition of what it is to be a good citizen had changed from the beginnings of the Meiji era (1868–1912) through to 1945, but the idea that women had to ensure that their children grew up to be good Japanese remained the same (see Imamura 1996). Men, of course, also had a role: to be the warriors of the peace, rebuilding the nation both at home and abroad, undoing the damage of the war. In all this it would seem that Japan and its citizens have succeeded.

The scars, however, remain. As Davis (1992) argued in his essay on the anthropology of suffering, such events are not transient – here today, cured tomorrow. Collective trauma is experienced as an anguish that suffuses the social whole and echoes down the generations, influencing history and myth, memory, politics and social relations. Moreover, collective trauma that must be repressed has unfathomable effects. This is not to say that, as noted above, we cannot find the traces of this trauma within postwar Japanese media representations. Certainly, suffering occupied

the minds of a generation of artists, whose work revealed reverberations that now might seem difficult to decipher in light of the narrative of Japan's successful postwar recovery. Yet, as the chapters in this collection demonstrate, for those who look, the signs are there and can be followed through to any number of dilemmas that are seen to beleaguer the construction of modern Japanese identity: NEETs, freeters, *hikikomori*, *otaku* and workaholic men have all been signalled out as problematic and have been analysed both within and outside Japan as examples of the problems that 'traditional' Japanese social organization has engendered.

The Japanese case importantly underscores how, as individuals and as members of communities, we all are equally enmeshed within multi-layered, criss-crossing networks of images that contribute to the creation of both an individual and collective selfhood. Within this system the past only figuratively precedes the present. More exactly, history is a multifaceted, contingent process of contestation and adjustment in which remembering inextricably coexists with forgetting. Therefore, we define the past as an historical projection of identity – individual and collective – since selfhood is shaped in the flow of the present, although it is often encapsulated in the dominant *episteme* as transcendental. Consider the teleological reasoning behind aphorisms such as 'we can't know where we're going until we know where we've been'; 'knowing the past to understand the present'; or even 'those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it' (Santayana 1948 [1905]: 284). More often than not, when it comes to the historical *a priori*, it is actually the condition of being oblivious to contemporary discourses that hinders our awareness of the biases in the past's chronicling.

## Media and the Representation of Memory

As Martínez has argued (1998: 9), the mass media act as a platform for social negotiation: imagining possibilities for all sorts of situations and relationships within modernity and offering imaginative solutions to their audiences. Keeping the potential of such mediation in mind, this volume's focus is not just on the ways in which we might use media representations to understand particular societies but also on how they connect to the politics of an era and a place – and how that political dimension shifts on an historical axis. The study of any mass medium as cultural production cannot be understood without considering its political dimension. This dimension is expressed on two levels: the first encompasses its role in producing a society's superstructure, through which a feedback loop is established between political discourses and the social, artistic and

ideological dimensions of the mass media. The second includes its distribution and reception in wider national, transnational and global contexts. Building on the audiences' experiences, cultural productions can reinforce or contest other systems of representation, exploit personal and collective narratives and formulate new cultural meanings. Moreover, audiovisual productions are examples of 'reading' modalities (Hall 1999) that occur both dialogically and diachronically: they are open to constant reworking and reinterpretation within the global context. Their circulation is produced within a complex network of relationships that involves cultural representations, social strategies, economic interests and political projects, as well as the consumption patterns and (re)interpretations of audiences.

Accordingly, the consumption of Japan's audiovisual productions occurs within a global distribution circuit, which ensures different receptions and interpretations. While some of the works examined in this volume are part of mainstream media production in Japan or are, at least, accessible to non-Japanese (see Morisawa and Lozano-Méndez's chapters in Part III), others have not been licensed in many countries or remain firmly as part of a niche market. Some works even enjoy classic status both within and outside Japan, as is the case with Kurosawa, who is seen to be part of the world history of cinema (see Martínez's Chapter 1). None of this is just a matter of trends and tastes developing in a void – these media products are all enmeshed in the fabric of transformations that take place in both society and the mass media. For example, read Treglia's contribution to compare the preferred readings of *yakuza* films (specifically *ninkyō eiga*) by male audiences in the 1960s–1970s with some of the more gender progressive critical readings that can be performed in the twenty-first century. It is not just because there is an oppositional code at play that requires an acknowledgement of the original dominant code; rather, the professional code and the production and distribution structure in which both dominant and professional codes were inscribed have changed (see Hall 1999).

*Yakuza* films also are no longer as widely produced, nor are there as many movie theatres in Japan as there were in previous decades; audience preferences have also evolved as the price of admission to theatres has increased. Moreover, the wide range of media products available through multiple channels has forced consumers to actually see their leisure choices as a matrix of both cultural and libidinal economic investment, in which the 'least objectionable programme' has become a passive consumption mode and just another of the available options. Building on these considerations, this volume's contributions explore the representation of the past in the cultural production of, and by, Japan both on a local scale and within transnational processes of production, distribution and consumption. This approach allows us to illuminate the inner workings

of the mediation of the politics of memory as well as the vicissitudes and overlapping that memory is subjected to throughout time.

The attention to 'overlapping histories' by a single author can yield (has yielded) illuminating readings. However, this book represents a collaborative effort that results not just in a focus on different histories but also on different analyses as to *which* histories are vying for dominion within Japanese collective narratives. Importantly, they represent different perspectives as to how these histories collaborate with and/or challenge each other. Such intersecting narratives are not clearly laid out in detail to produce an authoritative output: they are not self-contained 'devices'. Indeed, some of these histories may only make sense as the converse of another, contrarian, history with which the receiver must also be familiar. To reiterate: while none of the histories are apolitical, their social reproduction does not occur in isolation nor does their transmission follow a master plan.

Contextualized within its network of relationships, the mass media's political reconstruction of memory becomes, as we have noted, a resource in which the process of 'remembering is paired with the process of forgetting' (Igarashi 2000: 10). It also becomes a medium where unresolved conflicts and tensions surface. The myth-making practices and nostalgic celebrations of such mediations attempt to erase, but never fully succeed in erasing, the struggle of dealing with the past. This is why the most productive lens through which to analyse such histories is to examine them as they affect discrete cultural products, agents and practices; to see them as reproducing political discourses that formulate the past in order to legitimate the present, and therefore as key drivers in the production of consistent genealogies for social memory.

This politics of memory in the Japanese media also can be seen as an effort to reconcile the actuality of the present with the experience of the immediate past. Such deliberately slanted views of a past that is both spectral and vanishing from living memory incite the constant re-emergence of narratives suffused with fragmentation and continuity, complicity and redemption and decontextualization and (re)articulation. These vectors are interwoven throughout this book's chapters. While each author produced their own take, and focus, on different cultural products and practices, all of them have identified similar geneses to the discursive function of memory within the Japanese context.

## The Chapters

The chapters included in Part I, 'War's Aftermath', provide the reader with analyses that cover the first attempts to make sense of the fresh



experiences of war, defeat and occupation. The initial media engagements invested in projects of redemption and social democracy, albeit the representation of such ideals was humbled by a sinking nihilism that prevented any aloofness. By the 1960s, such nihilism had turned into a feeling of absurdity in the face of 'the mediation of the total society' (Adorno and Horkheimer 2002 [1944]: 29) and the 'administered world' (ibid.: 232). Part II, 'The Past in the Present', offers insights into the evolution of media and of popular perceptions of historical events, both for intergenerational media remakes and for intellectual property iterations within the span of a single life. Part III, 'The Persistence of Memory', addresses the recent strategies that the culture industry, the press and public discourses have developed in order to paste over perceived fractures in the transmission of established memories and identities to others: be they foreign sub-contracted professionals or a large segment of society, such as all of Japan's youth. All these issues are touched on again in the Conclusion to this volume.

### *War's Aftermath*

The contributions in Part I, 'War's Aftermath', illustrate how the political demands of the postwar period in Japan implicitly made the construction of Japanese social memory one of the most striking and powerful instances of how history is assembled that we might examine, where continuities are enabled and endure precisely through, and thanks to, fragmentation. There was a social fragmentation of recent experiences that encompassed everything from creative accounts to material mementos. Personal recollections were progressively displaced in favour of increasingly sympathetic depictions of the Japanese as the innocent victims of the military government – soon enough even the Emperor was depicted as having been in need of rescue from his own generals (see Igarashi 2000: 13–14, 20).

The war period was splintered from 'history' in that it was bracketed as an aberration that the Japanese would redress as soon as they could get back onto the 'proper' historical track that led towards modernity (see Gluck 1993). This process was helped by the complete collapse of the public narratives that were prevalent during the war period. The process of fragmentation, in turn, required the turning of a blind eye to many of the prewar values that had facilitated the emergence of a more expansionist and aggressive emperor system ideology (*kokutai*), and which paradoxically allowed many of these mores to continue to exist during the Occupation (1945–1952) and after.

This section thus deals with the vexed issue of the degree to which the Japanese were complicit with or critical of the official regime. SCAP

(Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, embodied in General Douglas MacArthur) held the authority to pardon the guilty. Even before the penalizing of only a fraction of Japanese war criminals in the Tokyo War Crimes Trials (1946–1948), it was apparent that the Occupation needed to entrench the intelligentsia within the political, economic and bureaucratic systems, or in what remained of them. This milieu was favourable to the emergence of a narrative of redemption, which manifested as self-victimization, not as a resolute repentance; the aforementioned state of fragmentation prioritized accounts of suffering by Japanese civilians rather than of any savage acts committed during colonization or the war. This process was facilitated by the undeniable fact of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 as well as widespread postwar hardship. The redemption was self-redemption inasmuch as the Japanese media helped establish the requirements needed to attain salvation in an era in which ‘the victim became the hero for Japan’ (Orr 2001: 10).

The first chapter in Part I, Martínez’s analysis of *Ikiru* (among other films by Kurosawa), raises important questions about guilt and responsibility, complicity and redemption as well as the problem of memory and the legacy for the next generation. Her piece asks about the possibility of responsibility in a world that lacks certainty, and hence the very notion of guilt becomes an open question. Martínez relates this to a lost generation of leftist artistic liberals, who bowed their heads, cooperated with the establishment and, at the war’s end, had to decide not just how to or how not to assume responsibility for their inaction but what they would do about it as survivors. Given this context, Martínez understands Kurosawa’s work as a part of his personal redemption at a time when the feelings of guilt about the past were a source of continuous tension beneath the social fabric.

The issue of responsibility is also indirectly present in the chapter by Marcos P. Centeno Martín. In his analysis, Centeno documents how the films *Tokyo 1958* (by the creative group Shinema 1958, led by Hani Susumu) and *Furyō Shōnen* (‘Bad Boys’, Hani 1960) materialized the demands for a new type of documentary film after the crisis of realism and the ideological rupture within the Left took place from the second half of the 1950s onwards. These productions reclaimed the political sense that the term *avant-garde* had carried before the war and drew on the idea of subjectivity to attack the old objectivism while casting a critical gaze over the concurrent period.

Subjectivity is explored as well by Ferran de Vargas’ chapter through the analysis of the film *Kōshikei* (‘Death by Hanging’, 1968), in which the function of the characters’ subjectivity – as well as that of the audience and of the director Ōshima Nagisa – is continuously addressed. As one of the prime

representatives of the 1960s Japanese *Nūberu Bāgu* (New Wave), Ōshima was trying to develop a filmic text based on radical scepticism and subjectivism as opposed to humanist cinema, whose themes expressed a fear of Japan's premodern past and a trust in the structures of modernity. Within this intellectual and artistic context, different aesthetic movements appeared and, from their own standpoints, they attempted to foster the Japanese subject in terms of its autonomy. In light of this trend, De Vargas' work explores how the radical subjectivity advocated by the cinema of the *Nūberu Bāgu* acquires its full meaning as an aesthetic correlate of the Japanese New Left movement that reacted to the prevailing progressive thinking – heavily influenced by the Marxism of the Japanese Communist Party – that characterized the humanist cinema in the immediate postwar years.

### *The Past in the Present*

As previously mentioned, the responsibility for the war was transferred to an ill-defined Other, an abstract idea of the militarist state or a vague entity called simply 'the system' (Orr 2001: 3), meaning a 'system of irresponsibilities' that had constituted Japan's fascist rule (Maruyama 1969 [1949]) and that was typified as an autonomous and self-contained body, a sort of single agent considered responsible for the war. Through this practice war actions were anonymized and abstracted from any historical or political context. Such a decontextualization of war memories led to an amnesia about the war era. The more that forgetting became the political hegemony's norm, the more possible it became for the past to be associated with the contemporaneous ideological interests of different political groups. Concurrently with this top-down amnesia, war memories emerged everywhere as a persistent and inevitable 'absent presence' (Igarashi 2000: 3, 10).

Mirroring the summary execution depicted in *Kōshikei*, Part II opens with Griseldis Kirsch's analysis of the TV drama *Watashi wa Kai ni Naritai* (I Want to Be a Shellfish) in which Shimizu, an ordinary man from a small town, is arrested on charges of being a war criminal after Japan's defeat. Kirsch explores the politics of identity in a production that has been the object of several remakes, considering especially the way in which the present reconstructs and shapes the past according to contemporary social demands and political intentions. It is particularly interesting how Kirsch reveals the narrative strategies that link the individual story of Shimizu, a good man sent to the war front, with an entire generation and how his particular victimization embodies the victimization of Japan as a whole.

The fragmentation of memory through the nostalgic reimagination of the past also constitutes a core issue in Laura Treglia's analysis of

myth-making and the reworking of cultural gender meanings in *yakuza eiga* (gangster movies) – one of the few early postwar genres in which Japanese men could be represented as both violent and heroic. Treglia explores the ambiguous impact of parodic inversions in women's representation in 'pinky violence' genre movies by observing the redefinition of their characters vis-à-vis a continuation of the masculine tragic hero ideal. It is significant that these reversed images, ultimately, reinforce as much as contest stereotypical gender representations, revealing the exploitation and reproduction of a trite feminine archetype that becomes significant not only in the reading of the past but mainly in the critical understanding of the present. The archaeology of *yakuza* movies traced in Treglia's chapter is especially illuminating, not just in its scope but also in tracing both a genealogy of outlaw characters and failed heroes drawn from past collective memory and the popular culture that is bequeathed to the future. In this sense, her analysis of the *yakuza* film genre eloquently demonstrates the extent to which past fictional narratives reveal much about present-day reality.

By analysing the media representations of the legendary 300 million yen robbery that occurred in 1968 in Tokyo, the account of the past takes a different spin in the chapter by Katsuyuki Hidaka, without departing from the issues of nostalgia for a postwar era that allowed contestation, idealism and the struggle for a progressive future. If memory is always a reconstruction of history through the gaze of the present, the nostalgic appeal of the failed heroes of the past – whether romantic white-collar criminals or idealist student radicals of the 1960s – reveals also the current discontentment with the present and has its roots in a Japanese tradition of appreciating nonconformist, tragic heroes (see Morris 2014). Hidaka explores how the media have represented that robbery both heroically, as an anti-authoritarian political offence associated with the New Left student movement, and critically, by denouncing the student activists' self-deception and their complicity in the development of Japan's full-scale consumer society.

### *The Persistence of Memory*

Closing the collection, Part III, 'The Persistence of Memory', addresses the transnational presence of Japanese media productions in relation to the issues hitherto discussed. In the first chapter, Artur Lozano-Méndez underscores how the animation industry also adopts a multifaceted approach to memory that foregrounds the social arena as the hub where the past is negotiated to explain contemporary political realities. *Eden of the East* (2009–2010), the anime franchise analysed in his chapter, takes a

more unforgiving view of the Shōwa era's legacy than the films discussed by Hidaka. While older and powerful characters may feel responsible for their past actions (given Japan's current social and economic stagnation), they maintain that it is the younger generation that is morally obliged to come up with a solution to a crisis that they have not created.

Lozano-Méndez explores other issues of legacy with which the series deals: digital memory, rumours and memes, amnesia and alternative identities. Thus, the reified concept of historical fact is undermined, as is the notion of utopia as intrinsically unattainable. *Eden of the East* asks why is it 'mature' to temper current political aspirations with realism and who sets the limits as well as the historical *a priori* of realpolitik. Director Kamiyama Kenji and his team of writers are eminently worried about the perceived stagnation of the Japanese economy and social prospects, and they point to the idea that the same dominant cultural order that stifles memory is inhibiting the emergence of new paths out of the postmodern simulacra, be these akin to Disneyland or Watergate (Baudrillard 1978: 29, 36).

Focusing also on the animation industry, in the closing chapter, Tomohiro Morisawa poses a fundamental question regarding the weight of memory in the building of contemporary expectations. The animation industry has followed the path of other Japanese industries in cutting the cost of production and outsourcing links in the production chain, but as semiotic codes are embedded within the process of production, the question of how to keep Japanese anime 'Japanese' and, therefore, what makes Japanese animation 'Japanese' arises. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Filipino and Japanese studios, Morisawa explicates how the Japanese industry has tackled this and how it manages to do so in a situation that could only be labelled 'postcolonial', since the outsourcing is to former colonies of the Japanese Empire. His chapter provides an analysis that, ultimately, queries the meaning of 'national creative industries' – particularly that of Japan – in an era of transnational production and the global circulation of media culture.

This section showcases the recursivity of the previous chapters' concerns regarding responsibility, identity and the political direction of the country. The modalities of management and representation of these issues adopted in recent media reveal the continuity with roots in the emperor system, the Greater East Asia War and the Occupation. The dynamics observed in Part I – the decontextualization of victim and aggressor – and the lack of focus in the re-emerging media industry on the hundreds of thousands Japanese *nanmin* (refugees) returning to Japan from its former colonies is echoed in the use of the term *nanmin* in the 2000s to designate the Japanese victims of economic hardship or the working poor.

Japanese victimization, then, neglected the victims of the country's war aggression and now neglects the citizens from other countries who are fleeing persecution and life-threatening situations in a global context of periodical refugee crises that Japan's legislative majority has not felt compelled to address – the state's provisions for immigration and asylum remain amongst the most stringent in developed countries.<sup>9</sup> The desultory repentance of prewar leaders, then, is mirrored in the half-hearted assumption of the responsibility by baby boomers employed in public administration and on the boards of major companies (including the media) apropos their role in Japan's listless economic recovery. They are also quick to 'share' the responsibility with younger generations, who they criticize on moral grounds – pointing to their supposed lack of entrepreneurship and work ethics. We posit that these are not mere coincidences or loosely drawn parallelisms. There is historical *a priori* at work that (re)articulates familiar performative rules that draw from pre-existing preferred readings and reinforce dominant-hegemonic positions.

While Part III is called 'The Persistence of Memory', we could have just as easily opted for a 'return of the repressed' epigraph, and the Conclusion tackles this aspect through a discussion of national trauma and suffering. Case studies such as the ones compiled here function as tangible entry points into narratives and worldviews that refuse to be reduced to a clear pattern and to a unique voice, although trauma might be seen as a unifying theme. As Kaplan and Wang argue, 'trauma consists in the unmaking of the world' (2008: 12), and the Japanese have long been trying to remake their nation, but no amount of image management has yet healed the fracturing of 1945. The chapters in this collection can only sketch out some of the ways in which this has been represented in a long postwar that seems to be Japan's state of being, but they also remind us that the Japanese case is not unique. Modern societies are all damaged; their citizens live with suffering marked by past traumas – whether as 'winners' or 'losers'. The fruits of this condition are cross-cultural: we live in uncertain times and desperately attempt to shore up our identities in the light of that ambiguity. Fragility may well be our postmodern default setting.

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Hansen, Routledge, 2018). His work in this volume has been supported by the Research Group GREGAL (2017 SGR 1596) at the UAB.

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## Notes

1. For Marx's definition of 'social consciousness' see his 1859 'Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*' (Marx 1977 [1859]). Most famously he argued that: 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness,' pointing to the ideological dimensions of consciousness. Engels further developed Marx's concept of social consciousness in a letter to Franz Mehring (1893), coining the term 'false consciousness'. Here Engels clearly links consciousness with ideology: 'Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, indeed, but with a false consciousness. The real motives impelling him remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process at all'. Most important for our volume is Engel's (1893) assertion that 'The ideologist who deals with history (history is here simply meant to comprise all the spheres – political, juridical, philosophical, theological – belonging to society and not only to nature), the ideologist dealing with history then, possesses in every sphere of science material which has formed itself independently out of the thought of previous generations and has gone through an independent series of developments in the brains of these successive generations'.
2. Marcuse (1987 [1932]: 1) outlined the premises of this term: 'Historicity is what defines history and thus distinguishes it from "nature" or from the "economy"'. Historicity signifies the meaning we intend when we say of something that it is "historical". Historicity signifies the meaning of this "is", namely the meaning of the Being of the historical'. Stephen Bronner (2011: 14) provides a more synthetic definition: '... "historicity", or the phenomenological structures whereby social reality is experienced by the individual'.

3. See especially: Gordon 1993; Hui, Van Bremen and Ben-Ari 2005; Saaler and Schwentker 2008; Yoda and Harootunian 2006.
4. See: Barnard 2003; Buruma 1994; Dower 1999, 2012; Hein and Selden 2000; Hogan 1996; Nozaki 2008; Orr 2001; Saaler 2005; Seaton 2007, 2016; Seraphim 2006.
5. See: Bestor 1989; Ivy 1995, 1998; Kelly 1986; Martínez 1990; Morris-Suzuki 1998; Robertson 1991, 1997; Vlastos 1998; Yano 2002.
6. See: Cook and Cook 1992; Hashimoto 2015; Igarashi 2000; Ohnuki-Tierney 2002, 2006; Selden and Selden 1989; Tamanai 2009; Trefalt 2003; Yoneyama 1999.
7. Some selected readings on this would include: Frühstück 2007; Ikeda 2014; Morris-Suzuki 2005; Stahl and Williams 2010; Tachibana 1998; Treat 1995.
8. While Weber discussed the state's monopoly on violence as the core of its internal control over its citizens bounded by the nation's territory, his argument applies equally to the state's attempts to defend its borders.
9. According to Dower (1999: 48–49): 'In the wake of defeat, approximately 6.5 million Japanese were stranded in Asia, Siberia, and the Pacific Ocean area', that includes both the military and the civilians (many of these were employed in the structure of the empire too). Regarding the contemporary use of the term *nanmin*, which preceded the introduction of *genpatsu nanmin* (nuclear refugees) to designate populations displaced from Tōhoku after the Triple Catastrophe of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear reactor meltdown on 11 March 2011, see Allison 2013 and also Lozano-Méndez in this volume. The yearly report of the UNHCR for 2017, 'Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017', depicts the upward trend in the number of millions of people forcibly displaced during the previous decade, with the figure reaching a historical record high in 2017 (68.5 million forcibly displaced worldwide).

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