

The Films of Kenji Mizoguchi: History, Tradition and Culture

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A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON JAPANESE CINEMA

At present, I am working on a 3 year, Japanese Government funded research project (科研費), which seeks to investigate the films of Kenji Mizoguchi, exploring the director's work in both cultural and historical contexts. The main purpose of this study is to re-addresses the director's films visually, but also to explore the specifically Japanese nuances that the work contains. This approach, using an alternative analytical framework, places culture at the forefront of any analysis undertaken and approaching Mizoguchi, and his films, through a deep knowledge of Japanese culture, art, history and society.



写真：映画『浪速女』撮影時の溝口健二と田中絹代。出典：新藤兼人著『ある映画監督―溝口健二と日本映画―』（岩波新書 962, 1976 年 4 月 27 日発行, p.177.)

Japanese filmmaker Kenji Mizoguchi has been the subject of film scholarship since the

Cahiers critics first discussed his 1950s films. His work has been further examined in regard to gender (Bock, 1990), style (Burch, 1976), (Kiriara, 1992), and psychoanalysis (Cohen, 1992).

In addition, Mizoguchi has also been the focus of various dedicated monographs, most



写真：映画『西鶴一代女』撮影風景。クレーン撮影を行う溝口健二。出典：新藤兼人著『ある映画監督―溝口健二と日本映画―』（岩波新書 962, 1976 年 4 月 27 日発行, p.21.)

notably Andrew and Andrew (1981), McDonald (1984) and LeFanu (2005). Despite the quality, range and volume of the work carried out on the director, none has gone as far as to explore his work from a specifically cultural perspective.

Thus far, (the project is in its third year), the research has revealed a great deal about Mizoguchi's motivations behind a number of his key films and scenes therein. My JSPS research has allowed a new approach to the analysis of Japanese film, which has been achieved through an analytical framework which places culture at the forefront of any analysis.