This is the main thrust of Chapters 4 through 6. In this second half of the book, Paramore describes how anti-Christian discourse continued to be applied to other types of thinking that were likewise deemed subversive of the Tokugawa order. He distinguishes two distinctly different stages, mediated by a third. The first stage occurred in the second half of the seventeenth century, when thinkers such as Kumazawa Banzan and others inspired by "Wang Yang-ming-ist Confucianism" (p. 85) came to be labeled "mutations of Christianity" (pp. 84, 101). Paramore locates the second important stage of "post-Christian–anti-Christian" discourse in the Bakumatsu period when this discourse came to be coupled to the *sonnō jōi* 尊王攘夷 platform. These two stages were connected by a mid-Tokugawa stage of a less rabid and more objective anti-Christianity, mainly from Arai Hakuseki and Ogyū Sorai, which simply concluded that Christianity (understood to be encouraging loyalty to God over that to the hierarchy of the ruling class) was inappropriate for Japan.

In this way, Paramore argues, anti-Christian discourse became a state-supporting system of orthodoxy that carried over from the Tokugawa era well into the Meiji period and influenced the emperor-centered ideology of the twentieth century in important ways. Although many of the details of this thesis are well known, the book as a whole presents a stimulating, new synthesis of the history of anti-Christianity in Japan. However, it is far from being the last word on the subject. One area Paramore barely touches upon, for example, is how anti-Christianity came to be embedded in Tokugawa custom and law. Some turns of phrase, moreover, especially the ironic (or even sarcastic) ways in which the words "strangely" and "interestingly" are sometimes employed, are a little grating in their youthful hubris. In the future, it may be better to show some restraint in this respect and instead concentrate on avoiding the kind of careless mistakes that ultimately determine whether one has done one's homework.

To give but one example, on p. 120 the author introduces Aizawa Seishisai's *Kikōben* 豈好弁, the three title characters of which also decorate the cover of his book. As printed in the locus indicated, however, the title reads *Tōkōben* 萓好弁, or, nonsensically, a "Discourse on Loving Beans" (the *kammuri* of the initial character should be *yama*, as on the cover, and not *kusa* as in the text). Others may have different quibbles; the range Paramore spans is too wide for there to be no mistakes, lacunae or omissions. But it is heartening to see this book published so soon after the author finished his graduate studies at Tokyo University, and it is even more gratifying to know that he is employed as a pre-modern historian in the Netherlands, in Leiden. On p. 187 (note 5 to Chapter 5), Paramore promises his readers that he intends make an in-depth study of the interaction between Arai Hakuseki and Giovanni Sidotti through "a close examination of the remaining Dutch and Japanese records." When he fulfills this promise, the Dutch records for Tokugawa history will finally get the attention they deserve from someone, through sheer proximity, best able to use them.

A Page of Madness: Cinema and Modernity in 1920s Japan.
By Aaron Andrew Gerow. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2008. Pp. 130.
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Japanese cinema has a special place in Western film studies, with *Page of Madness* (1926) as one of the key texts. Although the French cine-clubs of the 1920s marked an earlier efflorescence of serious

attention to film as an art, which led to *filmologie* and Andre Bazin's synthesis of aesthetics and social psychology, film studies as an academic discipline grew out of the increased attention to film art brought about by postwar European film festivals. "Strange, cruel, and beautiful" Japanese films were regularly the picks of the festival, celebrated by the critics-turned-directors of the "French New Wave" who focused their cinephilic celebration of the film author on Mizoguchi Kenji, among others. Interest in Japan faded during the 1960s only to blossom again with the "discovery" of the Japanese New Wave at Avignon in 1969, a discovery that coincided with a critical turn in film studies from cinephilia to a "political modernism" that combined the auteurism of earlier times with a critique of cinema as an apparatus of representation.

Small wonder, then, that Kinugasa Teinosuke's *Page of Madness* would be welcomed on its rediscovery in 1971 and rerelease in 1975, first at Western film festivals and then in Japan, as "the first full feature film whose plot development is radically subverted, while its cinematic structure includes virtually every film device known at the time."[1] The ontogeny of *Page of Madness* seemed to recapitulate the phylogeny of film studies: it combined the experiments in subjective representation of 1920s French cinema with a "war of utter rebellion" against film language, establishing the critical distance from "transparent" representation preferred by the new school of academic film studies. However, in his ground-breaking new book Aaron Gerow shows that the parallels go further: just as Ernst Haeckel doctored his images of fetal development to fit his ideas about evolution, so *Page of Madness* was reedited before its rerelease, seemingly to conform to the current conception of avant-garde cinema. Going back to the original script, censorship records of the release prints, and published accounts of the time, Gerow shows that about twenty-five minutes of the film's original running time is missing – footage that seems to have focused on a marriageability crisis that could easily be part of a *shinpa* melodrama.

It is hard to square those observations with some of the hyperbole surrounding the film: if it has been reedited, how can it be a "seamless whole"? More generally, if these "devices, moreover, are used not for their own sake but to convey complex psychological content without the aid of titles," then why did Tokugawa Musei provide a well-received solo *benshi* commentary for the film for all its Tokyo screenings?[2] Rather than simply "restore" the film, Gerow argues that it should be seen as an unstable text: at one and the same time a bid for commercial success in an industry dominated by emotion-laden narratives and an attempt at a European-style "art film" – something like L'Herbier's *L'Inhumaine*, or Murnau's *Die Letzte Mann*. Even the more historically informed accounts of Kinugasa's film coming out of Japan Studies, as that field takes over custody of the cinema from Film Studies, do not consider the ambiguous status of the film text when finding in it allegories of the originary "trauma" of modernity in Japan, or the somatic frenzy of capitalist spectacles.[3]

Gerow carefully considers the film's genesis as a collaboration between an obscure young filmmaker (Kinugasa), a popular and highly regarded actor (Inoue Masao), and a sensational new literary movement (the *shinkankakuha* or "new impressionist" school), and shows how the ways in which it was exhibited and advertised reveal tensions between quite distinct ideas of what cinema should be, both as a text and as an institution. The book consists of a series of short chapters that provide multiple, overlapping views of the film as a whole – a strategy that, as Gerow points out – is not so different from that of the film itself. He puts the film in the context of Taisho film production, explains the

1 Vlada Petric, "A Page of Madness: A Neglected Masterpiece of the Silent Cinema," *Film Criticism* 8:1 (1983), p. 86.

2 Petric, *ibid.*, p. 87.

3 See for example, Eric Cazdyn, *The Flash of Capital: Film and Geopolitics in Japan* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 214; William Gardner, "New Perceptions: Kinugasa Teinosuke's Films and Japanese Modernism," *Cinema Journal* 43:3 (2004), p. 70.

connections to Kawabata Yasunari and other novelists of the "new impressionist" school, decribes Kinugasa's existing career, and argues that the Shochiku studio was far more involved in this production than the film's reputation as "independent" would suggest. He then traces in detail, by reference to the handwritten original, how the shooting script that Kawabata worked from in writing up the published version of *Page of Madness* was not only the blueprint from which Kinugasa worked on the set but was probably more the work of the young Shochiku scriptwriter Inuzuka Minoru and Kinugasa's assistant Sawada Banko than of the more celebrated new impressionist authors.

Gerow then traces the exhibition history of the film, to show how important the new film study circles were in its reception, and to acknowledge that despite securing a release in some of the most prestigious cinemas in Japan, the film soon disappeared from the screen and could not be called a financial success. Finally, Gerow ventures an interpretation of his own, suggesting that the film be understood less as an avant-garde masterpiece or as a vernacular modernist negotiation with Western modernity than as an allegory of Taisho cinema itself: a medium driven almost mad by conflicting pressures to register the vertiginous new sensorium of modernity and to provide that age, and its spectator, with some kind of order. The masks that famously end the film then become ambivalent figures, standing both for the repression of difference that Gerow sees in the realist, commercial cinema of the early Showa period, and as disturbing surfaces that put the naturalist aesthetic of appearances into question.

The only criticism one could make of the book is that it is too short. It raises important issues – the history and interpretation of one film leads into questions about how to understand the social history of the period, and the role of cinema in it – that one would like to read in a more extended form. It also raises questions about some of the narrative "modes" employed by particular fields of inquiry: the textual commentary of a certain form of Film Studies that fails to give sufficient consideration to reception, or the ahistorical historicism of a certain form of Japan Studies that sees only political allegory, for example. A more extended discussion of fields and their ruling modes of interpretation would perhaps be rewarding here.

Finally, there are roads of inquiry that the book starts down but does not follow as far as this reader would have liked to go: *Page of Madness* is taken by many as the high point of "medium specificity" but its history as laid out by Gerow points instead in a far more "intermedial" direction. To list just some possibilities here: it would be interesting to know what Kataoka Teppei said when he lectured on the *shinkankakuha* at the first public screening of the film, at the Aoyama Kaikan on 10 July 1926. What connections can be made between *shinkankakuha* interest in multiple layers of subjectivity and the narrational experiments of this film, and how can we relate the "sensational" publicity for the film, which never failed to mention that connection, to the new forms of celebrity of which the writers, as much as the filmmaker, were symptoms?

It would also be instructive to learn more about the intermedial relations between theatre and the film. Inoue Masao, certainly not a typical *shinpa* actor, ran a film research group in the 1910s and seems to have been deeply engaged in new developments in his craft. Gerow points out that Kinugasa watched Murnau's *Die Letzte Mann*, the most highly regarded foreign film of 1926, repeatedly. The shots of warehouses toward the end of *Page of Madness* could be compared to that film's "neue sachlichkeit" objectivity, and Emil Janning's performance exhibits the *kammerspiel* intensity that the surviving scenes with Inoue point toward. Inoue was perhaps the most prominent name associated with *Page of Madness* in its publicity, just as Emil Jannings stood for *Die Letzte Mann*. Perhaps we should recognize the (lost) "melodramatic" aspects of *Page of Madness* not simply as *shinpa* but as part of European avant-garde narrative film – death, madness, despair, sexual anxiety, etc. were also common themes in *Caligari*, *Die Letzte Mann*, and *L'Inhumaine*.

That connection to the new European art cinema was made structurally explicit by the *benshi*. Tokugawa Musei was more than an explainer, he was a mode: he pioneered solo *benshi* performances

for Murnau's *Die Letzte Mann*, during the spring and summer of 1926, and for L'Herbier's *L'Inhumaine* – "the world's first constructivist film" – which was playing in Tokyo while *Page of Madness* was in production and was shown, again with Tokugawa as *benshi*, at the Aoyama Kaikan the week before *Page of Madness*. From the mixture of melodrama and experiment to the interest in levels of consciousness, even to the tropes of masks and spinning black and white shapes, it seems to me that a rewarding comparison could be drawn between L'Herbier's and Kinugasa's films. Gerow is one of the few scholars who could consider *Page of Madness* as part of a "film club culture" struggling into being in Japan in the late 1920s; one would like to see him explore that possibility.

Gerow's thorough research should stand as a model for all scholars of Japanese film hoping to make historically informed arguments about the significance of films by setting them against specific horizons of reception. The only comparable work in a Western language is Marianne Lewinsky's account of the film in German, which also gives a production history and studies the surviving fragment of the *benshi* script, but Gerow's is the first extended account in English to document the many problems with our current understanding of the film. No-one outside of Japan has gone to such depths in tracing the production history of a Japanese film, and within Japan only Saso Tsutomu's work on Mizoguchi comes to mind. Beyond his historical scholarship, Gerow also offers a judicious assessment of the multiple interpretations the film has gathered over the years, pointing out errors of fact and logic that will prove a reliable guide to readers new to the film. He also offers a stimulating new interpretation of the film as a reflexive of the status of Japanese cinema in the Taisho period, a perspective that anyone with an interest in the history of Japanese cinema should find highly enlightening.