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**Technofetishism of Posthuman Bodies:
Representations of Cyborgs, Ghosts, and Monsters in
Contemporary Japanese Science Fiction Film and Animation**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
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Representations of Cyborgs, Ghosts, and Monsters in Contemporary
Japanese Science Fiction Film and Animation

Summary

The thesis uses a feminist approach to explore the representation of the cyborg in Japanese film and animation in relation to gender, the body, and national identity. Whereas the figure of the cyborg is predominantly pervasive in cinematic science fiction, the Japanese popular imagination of cyborgs not only crosses cinematic genre boundaries between monster, disaster, horror, science fiction, and fantasy but also crosses over to the medium of animation. In regard to the academic research on Japanese cinema and animation, there is a serious gap in articulating concepts such as live-action film, animation, gender, and the cyborg. This thesis, therefore, intends to fill the gap by investigating the gendered cyborg through a feminist lens to understand the interplay between gender, the body and the cyborg within historical-social contexts. Consequently, the questions proposed below are the starting point to reassess the relationship between Japanese cinema, animation, and the cyborg. How has Japanese popular culture been obsessed with the figure of the cyborg? What is the relationship between Japanese live-action film and Japanese animation in terms of the popular imagination of the cyborg? In particular, how might we discuss the representation of the cyborg in relation to the concept of national identity and the associated ideology of “Japaneseness”, within the framework of Donna Haraway’s influential cyborg theory and feminist theory?

The questions are addressed in the four sections of the thesis to explore the representation of the gendered cyborg. First, I outline the concept of the cyborg as it has been developed in relation to notions of gender and the 'cyborg' in Western theory. Secondly, I explore the issues in theorising the science fiction genre in Japanese cinema and animation and then address the problem of defining science fiction in relation to the phenomenon of the cyborg's genre-crossing. Finally, I provide a contextualising discussion of gender politics and gender roles in Japan in order to justify my use of Western feminist theory as well as discuss the strengths and limitations of such an approach before moving, in the remainder of the thesis, to an examination of a number of case studies drawn from Japanese cinema and animation.

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Introduction

Mapping the Cyborg in Japanese 'Science Fiction' Cinema and Animation:

Key Concepts and Questions

1. Motivations and Overview

This research is driven by two starting points. The first is my awareness of and interest in the influx of Japanese popular culture into my homeland of Taiwan since the 1990s. The second is more theoretical: my fascination with the figure of the cyborg, a figure which populates technologically mediated societies and cultural imaginations. In contemporary societies the cyborg operates as a metaphorical and literal figure that crosses a myriad of cultural spaces: from the virtual spaces of the internet, cyberspace, video games, science fiction films and literature to its more literal uses in biometric identification chips, artificial intelligence, robotic and automation technologies, 'smart' warfare, space exploration, high-tech medicine, reproductive technologies, cloning, prosthetic enhancement, and bioengineering. Perhaps more important, the thesis is driven by the intersection of these two elements, for I find a significant interplay between these broader cyborg narratives and the discursive formations of Japanese popular culture. Since my observations suggest that Japanese popular culture, films and animations in particular, draw heavily upon the figure of the cyborg and since on the other hand the figure of the cyborg is usually conceptualised and interpreted within Western frameworks, I am motivated in this research to unravel the interconnections between these theoretical discourses around the cyborg and its popular representation within contemporary Japanese films and animations.

The first starting point is personal because Japanese culture has had a long-standing impact on Taiwanese society. Born in Taiwan during the mid nineteen seventies, I not only witnessed Taiwan's rapid economic growth culminating in the 1980s, a growth which has transformed Taiwan into a consumer society demanding Japanese cultural products, but also found myself to

be an absorbed consumer of those products. The consumption and circulation of Japanese cultural products began in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial occupation between 1895 and 1945, and Japanese cultural influences remained observable in the postcolonial era after the Kuomintang (KMT) took over Taiwan from the Japanese colonial government at the end of the Second World War in 1945.¹ Under the influence of the economic, political, and social liberalisation after the abolition of the thirty-eight-year period of martial law in 1987², Taiwan saw the growth of consumer culture. Due to the high speed growth of the economy since the 1980s³, the wave of globalisation initiated by the pressure of Taiwan's WTO (World Trade Organisation) accession since the 1990s⁴, and the rise of Taiwan's cable TV industry in the early 1990s⁵, Japanese cultural products have flooded into Taiwan since the early 1990s. These products range from consumer goods and their contexts – cars, scooters, household electrical appliances, food, fashion, cosmetics, restaurants, chain stores and supermarkets, 24-hour convenience stores, karaoke clubs, and pachinko shops (gambling shops) – to cultural products – pop music, TV drama and entertainment programmes, animations, comic books, films, video games, magazines, literature and pornography.

Japanese culture has influenced Taiwanese society since the Japanese occupation of Taiwan. More important, Japan's economy, media, and cultural globalisation have reinforced these postcolonial cultural influences on Taiwan since the end of the Japanese occupation. The

¹ Leo Ching, "Imaginations in the Empires of the Sun: Japanese Mass Culture in Asia," *Boundary* 2.21(1994): 198-219, and Koichi Iwabuchi, "Japanese Popular Culture and Postcolonial Desire for Asia," *Popular Culture, Globalization and Japan*, ed. Matthew Allen and Rumi Sakamoto (Abingdon, OX and New York, 2006) 15-35.

² Wei-Bin Zhang, *Taiwan's Modernization: Americanization and Modernizing Confucian Manifestations* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2003).

³ Ming-Yan Lai, *Nativism and Modernity: Cultural Contestations in China and Taiwan under Global Capitalism* (New York: New York UP, 2008).

⁴ Christopher M. Dent, *The Foreign Policies of Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan* (Cheltenham, Gloucestershire and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2002).

⁵ Antina Sharma and Sreemati Chakrabarti, eds., *Taiwan Today* (New Delhi: Anthem, 2010).

colonial legacy of Japan's assimilation policy left a strong imprint on Taiwanese society.⁶ The Japanese colonisers used the long term policy of 'assimilation' to transform the political, educational, economic and social fabrics of Taiwanese society by imposing Japanese as the only official language in order to make the 'Taiwanese people identify with 'Imperial Japan' and culturally identify themselves as 'Japanese', but without the civil, political, and economic rights of Japanese citizens.⁷ Thus, the older generation of Taiwanese who experienced the Japanese occupation have ambivalent attitudes towards Japan: they either see Japan as a vicious intruder or perceive the former coloniser with nostalgia, contrasting it to the repressive and authoritarian regime of the Kuomintang which followed, when the Kuomintang retreated to Taiwan in 1949 after their final military defeat on mainland China.⁸ The Kuomintang government tried to remove Japanese colonial influences by prohibiting the Japanese language, imposing the 'authentic' Chinese culture of mainland China on Taiwanese society, and forcing Taiwanese people to use Mandarin as the national language.⁹ In contrast to this older generation, younger generations of Taiwanese, who have neither the bitter memories of the Japanese colonial occupation nor memories of the Kuomintang government's repression, have embraced the influx of Japanese cultural products.¹⁰ Since the 1990s, the young 'Japanophiles' who eagerly consume Japanese popular culture have been described as 'Ha Ri Zu' (哈日族).¹¹ In general,

⁶ Xiaokun Song, "Taiwanese Nationalism under Colonial Rule," *Between Civic and Ethnic: The Transformation of Taiwanese Nationalist Ideologies (1895-2000)* (Brussels: VUBPRESS, 2009) 77-122.

⁷ Leo T. S. Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley, CA and London: California UP, 2001).

⁸ Alan Wachman, "Opposition and the Course of Reform", *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1994) 128-167.

⁹ Sandrine Marchand, "Silence in Postwar Taiwan," *Becoming Taiwan: From Colonialism to Democracy*, ed. Ann Heylen and Scott Sommers (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010) 165-180.

¹⁰ Koichi Iwabuchi, "Japan's Asian Dreamworld," *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke UP, 2002) 199-210.

¹¹ Yu-Fen Ko, "Japanese Idol Dramas in Taiwan," *Feeling Asian Modernities: Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas*, ed. Koichi Iwabuchi (Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2004) 107-154.

Japanese culture infiltrates the lives of Taiwanese people no matter what age group they belong to.

In my own family, these different relationships to the consumption of Japanese cultural commodities within Taiwan's post-colonial society are evident. Having no experience of Japanese occupation and the Kuomintang's repression, I have been an avid consumer of Japanese cultural products – including clothing, cosmetics, food, Japanese-style spa, TV programmes, pop music, comic books, animations, literature, and magazines – throughout my teenage and adult life. However, I do not define myself as a Japanophile or “*Ha Ri Zu*” (哈日族) – one who attempts to identify entirely with Japanese culture. Yet whereas I mostly saw the Japanese cultural commodities as different, advanced, and trendy, my grandparents viewed them as having very different implications. My maternal grandfather is nostalgic for Japanese culture. He was educated during the Japanese colonial period, can speak Japanese fluently, and likes using imported Japanese products and watching Japanese TV programmes. In contrast, my paternal grandmother, who was an illiterate farmer, knew only a few Japanese words. She kept her distance from the former coloniser and never bought Japanese products. Finally, my parents, who were born in the postcolonial era and experienced the Kuomintang's repressive governance, show little political concern about the influx of Japanese cultural products but use Japanese cars and household electronic appliances. For them the only considerations are high quality and a reasonable price.

The second starting point of my research is that I have been intrigued by the figure of the cyborg, a hybrid of machine and organism, since I did my postgraduate studies in Taiwan and the UK between the late 1990s and the early 2000s. In Donna Haraway's pioneering manifesto, the cyborg is posited as an empowering metaphor to deconstruct traditional dichotomies and social categories and uses technology to expand feminist traditions of liberating women from patriarchal oppression. It was, however, the distance between this vision and the symbolic realisations of this figure within the visual texts – both Western and non-Western – that I was

viewing that fascinated me. During this period I became particularly aware of the abundant cyborg imagery that appeared in Japanese films and animations that I had consumed. Yet the cyborgs portrayed in Japanese films and animations were remarkably loaded with connotations of gender, both exemplifying and, in respect of its utopian strain, contesting the notion of gender identity theorised by Haraway. Haraway in her cyborg manifesto argues that the cyborg can deconstruct gender essentialism, constituting a contribution to the feminist utopian agenda of “imagining a world without gender” and claims that all cyborgs can be “women of colour” (Haraway 1991: 150, 171).¹² In a later interview she adds that the cyborg she envisaged was gendered female, as “a polychromatic girl”.¹³ Such arguments raise critical questions. How do her arguments relate, for example, to the large number of male cyborgs portrayed in Japanese films and animations? And how do they work in relation to the female cyborgs that we actually see portrayed in film? As a result, I see a need to further investigate in my doctoral thesis the relationship between Haraway’s notion of the cyborg and gender, and the represented cyborg in Japanese popular culture. Since Japanese culture is conditioned by the fact that Japan was the first Asian country to be Westernised and modernised, becoming one of the richest countries in the world and specialising in developing cutting-edge technologies, the cultural fantasy of the cyborg, with its complex relationship to notions of gender, sexual difference, and sexuality, has never been absent from Japanese popular culture. Inspired by feminist critiques of gender constructions, psychoanalysis, technoscience, and popular culture during my postgraduate studies, I employed feminist approaches to the body, gender, and male spectatorship to examine

¹² Haraway argues that the post-gender world is created by cyborgs which deconstruct gender binaries. See Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminist in the Late Twentieth Century,” *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991) 149-181.

¹³ Haraway in the end of a 1991 interview mentioned that the cyborg “is a polychromatic girl. . . The cyborg is a bad girl, she is really not a boy. Maybe she is not so much bad as she is a shape-changer, whose dislocations are never free”. See Constance Penley and Andrew Ross, “Cyborg at Large: Interview with Donna Haraway,” *Technoculture*, ed. Penley and Ross (Minneapolis; Minnesota UP, 1991) 1-20.

the cyborgs represented in two contemporary Japanese science fiction films, *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* (1989) and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* (1992), for my master's thesis. Although feminist theoretical perspectives on the cyborg are rooted in the West's historical experiences and the development of capitalism, it seemed to me that similar perspectives could be deployed in the context of a Japanese culture that has also experienced capitalisation, industrialisation, and urbanisation. During this work, it seemed to me first that the representation of the cyborg in these two Japanese science fiction films, in contrast to optimistic theorisations about its capacity to challenge gender assumptions, in fact reaffirmed gender stereotypes in respect of male violence and sexual abuse of women. Second, I found that this was an under-researched area. Most academic work which has examined the representation of cyborgs in Japanese films has focused on questions of national identity rather than exploring the intersection between the cyborg and gender. This omission is particularly striking given the prominence of this figure not only in Japanese film but also in Japanese animation, which in this respect lines up with Japanese film to play a key role in popular visual culture in its contributions to the cultural imagination of the cyborg. My doctoral research, then, arises from the conjunction of elements which are at once personal – Japan's postcolonial influence on and cultural globalisation of contemporary Taiwanese society and my personal experiences of consuming Japanese cultural commodities – and academic – wanting to fill the gap which appears when the cyborg is considered solely or primarily in relation to questions of national identity.

I will discuss three issues in this introductory chapter in order to establish a background for my thesis and define my research questions. First, I will review the concept of the cyborg as it has been developed in relation to notions of gender, representation, and science fiction in Western theory; secondly, since the cyborg is a figure predominantly rooted in science fiction but also is a figure of such power and complexity that it in fact crosses genres, being found in horror, monster, disaster, and fantasy films, I shall give a brief account of Japanese science fiction cinema and animation since the 1950s in terms of its socio-historical contexts and then

address the problem of defining science fiction. Finally, I shall outline the approaches and structure of my thesis, before moving to a discussion of the usefulness, limitations, and justifications for applying Western theoretical approaches to Japanese film and animation.

2. The Cyborg and Gender

The notion of the cyborg, developed within Western cultural theory, and described as a fusion between machine and organism, provides a useful interpretation for our current living situation in its relation to technoculture. The word ‘cyborg’ is an abbreviation of the term ‘cybernetic organism’ and was first coined by Manfred Clynes and Nathan S. Kline in the 1960 academic conference paper called “Cyborgs and Space”, which claimed that a self-regulating human-machine system could benefit the outer space mission. Manfred Clynes also suggested in the Introduction to Daniel S. Halacy’s *Cyborg: Evolution of the Superman* (1965) that the cyborg would be able to bridge mind and matter to make a new frontier for humans who could easily travel between outer space and the inner space of the mind (Clynes 1965: 7). As well as the hypothetical figure constructed by those intellectuals, cyborgs also have their origins in cutting-edge technologies such as “nanocircuitry, computer-enhanced brain functions, artificial intelligence, genetic alternation, neuro-chemotherapeutics, mechano-electronic prostheses, and surgical techniques of body modification and perfection” which all tend to extend human bodily functions and allow us to control the world in which we live (Kern 2000: 95). In a looser sense, the concept of the cyborg can apply to everyday life in the common use of contact lenses, walkmans, pacemakers, mobile phones, and the interface of the human with the car, camera, or computer. Further, it is consistent with the description of media technology as the extension of the human sensorium as argued by Marshall McLuhan in the 1960s (Brooker 2003: 64). In all of these technologies, the distinction between the body and the machine is metaphysically problematic to locate.

Consequently, the cyborg has become an influential theoretical concept through which to analyse the relationships between nature, bodies and culture. Culturally, the concept of the cyborg can provide the opportunity for the creation of strategic identities in a technologically mediated society. In cyborg theory, technology is not regarded as a threat but accepted as a merger with the natural in order to argue that social and cultural boundaries are no longer fixed, and consequently to claim that those boundaries are instead constructed and agencies of domination that can be challenged and transformed. Generally speaking, the cyborg challenges the traditional concepts and values of social and cultural categories, particularly in the theorising of identity and difference, but it does not specifically demonstrate how power works through those categories and what kinds of ideologies are rooted in them. Especially, the notion of technology cannot be simply regarded as either a neutral instrument to progress civilisation or the extension of the human mind and body exerted on social relations and developments. Instead, politics and ideology should be put into any account of technology; technology is not only materialised but is also an aspect of the cultural imagination and unconscious.

Additionally, when it comes to discussing the technologically mediated cyborg, the central debates tend to focus on how technology affects the body and social representations. Such an analysis can neglect the complex relationship between technology and the human body when it is assumed that technology is the 'force' that exploits the 'natural' and 'docile' body. Such analyses presuppose the concepts of technology and the body to operate in a certain dichotomised and unequal position. For example, Ellul's *The Technological Society* (1965) sees technology as an independent factor or the force outside of society, arguing that changes in technology spontaneously cause social changes, thus expressing the technological determinists' pessimistic analysis of technology's decisive effects on society. Technology, Ellul argues, can be understood through the notion of technique as "the totality of methods rationally arrived at and (for a given stage of development) having absolute efficiency in every field of human activity" to transform society (Ellul 1965: xxv). From this perspective, technology's very essence has transformed

people's values into notions of efficiency or performance capability to the point where "spontaneous and unreflective behaviour [is converted] into behaviour that is deliberate and rationalized" (Ellul 1965: vi). This rationalised technique with its self-organising and autonomous characteristics thus comprehensively influences people's lifestyles into a homogenisation of world culture. This assumption about technology as rationalised instrument results in an attitude of either technophilia or technophobia, both of which follow the logic of social and cultural changes as being mainly triggered by technological changes. As far as the body is concerned, it is inevitably positioned as either/both the natural and that which is subject to social construction. Both imply that the body is merely flesh to be inscribed by cultural and social meanings. The body itself loses its feature of 'embodiment' whilst in the power of discourses of technology.

If the cyborg is a product of post-industrial society and is defined as the extension of the human sensorium, or the combination of humanity and technology, how is it distinguished from humans who have always used tools and increased their capabilities by means of mechanical gadgets or industrial machinery? It is argued that there is a cultural-historical and psychic difference between using a hammer and driving a car or between using a hammer and wearing an artificial limb that the body experiences through skin grafts or an implant (Brooker 2003: 65). Most important of all, it is argued that the latter directly changes the surface or internal functions of the body: new advanced technologies have an impact on humans physically and psychologically. For example, biotechnology can affect the construction of memory, aging and sex, often seen as the essences of humanity. Controlled by technology, the hand of nature is no longer dominant. The cyborg extends the debates around the possibility of the radically modified body and provokes a re-examination of identity construction, producing a hybrid whose partial features preserve human characteristics, in the blending of humanity with mechanical artefacts. In this situation, there is no chance of returning to an 'organic' or 'natural' humanity.

The cyborg “represents a radical version of what it means to be human in the Western world in the late 20th century” by shattering boundaries of dichotomised conceptions that Western people have long used to construct the world (Tomas 1995: 21). In particular, Haraway in her pioneering academic article “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century” (1991) takes postmodernist and feminist approaches to theorise the cyborg as a subversive concept that not only questions the traditional Western dichotomised concepts constructed since the Enlightenment, but also collapses boundary distinctions. This hybridised creature, Haraway argues, particularly informs a feminist cyborg politics in “the struggle for language and the struggle against perfect communication, against the one code that translates all meaning perfectly, the central dogma of phallogocentrism” (Haraway 1991: 176). Her purpose is to call into question ideologically troubling Western dualisms such as Self/Other, mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, civilised/primitive, reality/appearance, whole/part, truth/illusion, and God/man (Haraway 1991: 177). Those binary concepts are, Haraway argues, challenged by communication sciences and modern biology. Developments such as telephone technology, computer design, molecular genetics, ecology, socio-biological evolutionary theory, and immunobiology all translate information and organism into universal codes for producing simulacra, artificial counterpart organs or artificial reproduction, resulting in the reconfiguration of sex, the body, and social relations (Haraway 1991: 164).

Haraway’s most radical theorisation of the cyborg is to use the technologically-manipulated body to rewrite an identity construction dominated by Western ideologies embedded in history, religion, and the individual psyche. Haraway suggests that whilst the cyborg has its origins in the post Second World War and the post-industrial era, it problematises notions of a pure and authentic origin because it does not desire “its father to save it through a restoration of the garden”, does not “recognize the Garden of Eden”, does not “dream of community on the model of the organic family”, and is thus without an “Oedipal project” (Haraway 1991: 151). Haraway claims that as long as the cyborg has no biological father, and no linear historical

narrative about kinship and family, there is no need for any resolution of the Oedipus complex or for the religious salvation and purification of Christianity. Thus, Haraway describes the cyborg as an “illegitimate offspring” carrying an anti-historical, anti-psychoanalytic, and anti-religious politics that challenges the Western dualist, essentialist and patriarchal system (Haraway 1991: 151). As a socialist-feminist academic, Haraway takes the cyborg as an optimistic conceptualisation of the relationship between women and technology embodied through cyborg writing, feminist science fiction literature in particular. Such writing not only subverts, unsettles, and challenges Western patriarchal ideologies embedded in technologically determinist notions such as the idea that technology shapes society and technological rationality determines human agency, but also embraces ideas of difference, heterogeneity, and embodiment which have all characterised and been used to devalue women as defined in the West. However, Haraway’s pioneering theorisation of the cyborg raises questions about the cyborg as going beyond gendered power and social constructions. Questions such as: who can benefit from thinking of the cyborg? Who has the power to represent the cyborg? What does the cyborg mean for gender construction and representation? Finally, it raises the question of how such a concept might be usefully employed in relation to cyborg images that have abounded in a cinema that emerges from a non-Western cultural context.

In line with Haraway, Gedalof argues that the cyborg’s “impurity” is useful for positively re-examining woman’s identity in terms of space, community, race, and nation (Gedalof 2000:12). The cyborg, Gedalof argues, has two implications: first that woman/women can be provisionally positioned within a location where gendered, raced, and national identities are constructed in different contexts; and second, the cyborg challenges, questions, and reconstructs the identity/identities that traditionally has/have been seen as fixed and restrained. Gedalof agrees with Haraway’s discussion of some science fiction novels written by the black American Octavia Butler, who uses cyborg writing to demonstrate the heterogeneous and multiple construction of the cyborg identity in terms of sex, gender, race, and community, and concludes by suggesting

the cyborg as a model that refuses the binary separation into object and subject. Haraway's and Gedalof's analyses of the cyborg focus on mythical, symbolic and metaphysical interpretations, other critics, nevertheless, emphasise its social reality in relation to technology, bodies and embodiment in contemporary Western contexts. For example, David-Floyd (1998) in "From Technobirth to Cyborg Babies" argues that the caesarean operation and other medical and technological interventions in women's bodies which are often seen as 'natural' and as empowering women can actually mutilate and disempower them. In the case of birthing technologies, David-Floyd suggests that the forces of cyborgisation, in terms of techniques of visualisation of fetuses and expert management of the mother's body, rely powerfully on already dominant and hegemonic cultural forces. In similar fashion, Balsamo (1996) in *Technologies of the Gendered Body* offers a wide range of case studies on practices and representations of the gendered body in North American cyberculture, such as female bodybuilding, cosmetic surgery, reproductive technologies, and the cyborg imaginary in cyberspace and cyberpunk literature. Balsamo concludes that gender boundaries are in fact still carefully classified and monitored, that gender interests ideologically shape technology, and that traditional gendered power relations are reinforced. Contemporary discourses of technology still depend on dichotomised concepts of gender identity and sexuality as social institutional frameworks; therefore the positive prospects for cyborg technologies advocated by Haraway are limited. Similarly, Gonzalez (2000) in "Envisioning Cyborg Bodies" analyses 'The Mistress of Horology', an eighteenth century engraving of a watch with a female body figure, Hannah Hoch's 1920 photomontage entitled *Das schöne Mädchen*, and Robert Longo's installation work, *All You Zombies: Truth before God* (1990), suggesting that the imaginary of the human-machine hybrid has been present throughout history in myth, literature, art, and craft, so that the cyborg is a historical production which still draws on traditional power relations and fails to transcend the constraints of class, gender, race and ethnicity in its representations within popular culture. Except for Gedalof, these critics share the

37same doubts about Haraway's radical theorisation and positive valuation of the cyborg when it comes to representations and embodiments of the cyborg rather than a metaphysical dialectic.

This doubt also occurs in Western cyborg cinema studies. Doane (1990) in "Technophilia: Technology, Representation and the Feminine" analyses the representation of techno-femininity in *Metropolis* (1927), *The Stepford Wives* (1975), *Alien* (1979), *Aliens* (1986), and *Blade Runner* (1982) and argues that there is a tendency to use technology to reinforce gendered stereotypes in relation to maternity, nature, and history rather than destabilise the essentialised relationship between woman and reproduction. Short (2005) in *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity* observes that the iconographic representation of the cyborg produced by the North American film industry, Hollywood in particular, is "far from threatening humanity's uniqueness" and reaffirms "the apparent universality of benign humanity" rather than representing the radical version presumed by more theoretical writing (Short 2005: 192). These case studies re-examine the limitation and compatibility of the cyborg in terms of Western social and film industrial contexts, and it is not surprising that critical theories deriving from a North American context are tested in relation to cinematic texts from that context. In spite the fact that Short makes an analytical survey of Western cyborg film by applying cyborg theory and suggests that cyborg cinema has emerged as a sub-genre of science fiction cinema since *Alien* (1979), neither the general survey of cyborg representation nor the methods and approaches used seek to access the ubiquitous images of the cyborg in Japanese science fiction cinema and animation.

3. Japanese Cinema and Science Fiction Film

This section aims to articulate the relationship between Japanese cinema and science fiction, and position Japanese science fiction film in terms of the Japanese film industry, Hollywood's influence, and historical-social contexts. The introduction of cinema to Japan came in the late nineteenth century when the Cinématographe Lumière made its debut and the first motion-picture camera was imported to Japan in 1897 by photographer Asano Shim of the Konishi

Camera Shop (Richie 2005: 17). Komatsu (1996) observes that once sound films began to replace silent cinema in Japan from the mid-1930s, the Japanese studios such as Toho, Toei, Nikkatsu, and Shochiku established themselves according to the Hollywood model by creating the studio-director-star-genre system. For example, during the 1950s, Kido Shiro at Shochiku, and Akira Kurosawa and Mikio Naruse at Toho established the model of the director system (Russell 2008: 228). The Japanese directors were required to follow not only the norms of generic conventions, but also the cinematic techniques that served to tell a story and elicit particular emotions (Komatsu 1996: 714, 715). The Japanese film industry, Dessser and Nolletti (1992) suggest, like Hollywood considers genre as the backbone and lifeblood of the industry. Richie (1965) in his pioneering English-language book on Japanese cinema, *The Japanese Movie: An Illustrated History*, suggests that Japanese cinema can be divided into two broad genre classifications: the contemporary era films (the *gendai-geki*) and the period films (the *jidai-geki* in which films are usually set in the Tokugawa Era [1615-1868]). Japanese film genres developed from the *gendai-geki* by portraying the lives of ordinary people. Dessser and Nolletti (1992) further elaborate seven major subgenres embedded within the two categories according to historical and aesthetic criteria: the Samurai film; swordplay films (the *chambara*); films dealing with the everyday lives of the common people (the *shomin-geki*); farce and slapstick films (the *nansensu* comedy); films concerning motherly sacrifice and suffering (the *haha mono*); “National Policy Films” of the Second World War; and gangster films (the *yakuza eiga*) (Dessser and Nolletti 1992: xvi). A number of foreign films from Hollywood and Europe were imported to Japan after 1915 which not only provided new perspectives to the Japanese audiences, but also led to the adaptation, appropriation, and reconfiguration of specific genres from Western films as Japanese cinema further developed (Richie 2005: 27). For example, after the Blue Bird production company films, which were originally produced for the American market and exported by Universal to Japan, became popular in Japan, the 103 imported films were remade into Japanese versions roughly

classified into seven variations or subgenres of melodrama between the 1910s and the 1920s¹⁴ (Wada-Marciano 2008: 54). Meanwhile, specific genre films were also closely linked with the star system. For example, Toei, one of the major Japanese film studios, used actresses Hibari Misora, Fujiko Yamamoto, and Michoko Saga to play in the female *yakuza* (gangster) films between the 1960s and the 1970s (Desjardins 2005: 221). Seeing Japanese cinema as the result of the encounter with the hegemony of Hollywood and the dominant presence of American culture, leading to the development of a genre-driven industry with a continuity of studio style, makes Japanese cinema look like the counterpart of Hollywood. However, the appropriation of Hollywood genre films by the Japanese film industry produces different sets of meanings because of the localisation or domestication of Hollywood films into a Japanese social context and domestic film market (Wada-Marciano 2008: 53-54). The Japanese melodrama films produced by Shochiku such as *The Katsura Tree of Love* (Nomura Hiromasa 1938) and *What Is Your Name?* (Oba Hideo 1953-1954) invented a suspended narrative pattern, which was derived from the Japanese weekly radio serials and different from the linear narrative of the Hollywood melodrama (Wada-Marciano 2008: 54).

The relationship between the Japanese film industry and genre was subject to the impact of the decline and reintegration of studios after the Second World War. Before the war, Japanese film industries were dominated by the Big Three studios: Toho, Toei, and Shochiku. As the studios collapsed under falling audience figures during the 1970s, the 1980s' film market was dominated by American exports (Bordwell and Thompson 2003; Cook 2004). As studios had suffered from a hard time since the 1960s, the emergence of independent production and distribution was associated with smaller Japanese companies' financial aid to non-studio projects which gained international export (Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 645). For example, Art

¹⁴ The remake films can be divided into seven subgenres of melodrama: (1) a dancer/orphan story, (2) everyday domestic life, (3) pastoral/mountain romance, (4) married couple/mother story, (5) moral/religious redemption story, (6) hypnosis-based comedy, and (7) war story.

Theatre Guide (ATG), which was established in 1961, owned art-house theatres for distribution, and funded Nagisa Oshima, Susumu Hani, Yoshishige Yoshida, Kaneto Shindo, and other new wave directors. During this decade from the 1960s to the 1970s, bigger independent production companies financed by department stores and television companies began to produce films, resulting in competition with big studio companies (Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 645). Both export revenues and audience attendance at American films gradually surpassed those of Japanese films from the 1970s to the 1980s. By the late 1970s, the Japanese film industry stably produced about 250 films per year and half of the releases were the low-budget films and soft-core pornography that were usually aimed at young audiences (Bordwell and Thompson 2003). By the end of the 1980s, American films occupied the top-grossing profit slots in Japan and Japanese films were only one third of all films exhibited (Bordwell and Thompson 2003: 646). In 2000, Shochiku, one of the Big Three studios, had to sell its long-term studio, Ofuna Studio, in order to prevent collapse. Meanwhile, Toei, a second big studio, had to alter its industrial strategy of releasing gangster films identified as the studio's signature genre and move into the release of video films (V-Cine) or original videos (OVs) in the gangster genre and the television production of animation (Cook 2004: 766).

Although Desser and Nolletti argue that Japanese cinema continues to rely on genre production and has developed generic hybridisation, transformation, and intertextuality, neither Desser and Nolletti's nor Riche's classification of Japanese genre films discuss the large number of science fiction films produced by Japanese film studios. Academic and general research on Japanese cinematic genres in English-language studies tends to respond to the general classification of Japanese genre films and mainly concentrates on erotic, gangster, horror, melodrama, outlaw, and samurai films.¹⁵ Along the lines of Riche's substantial research on

¹⁵ In particular, the erotic, gangster, horror, and samurai films have consistently appeared in genre criticism such as David Desser's *The Samurai Films of Akira Kurosawa* (1983); Arthur Nolletti and David Desser's edited book, *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History* (1992); Jack Hunter's *Eros in Hell:*

Japanese cinema history, Standish (2005) in *A New History of Japanese Cinema: A Century of Narrative Film* takes a historical approach to Japanese cinema. Standish covers the time span between the end of the nineteenth century and the end of the twentieth century and discusses Japanese auteur and genre cinema in relation to their cultural, social, political, and economic contexts. Nevertheless, science fiction films and the science fiction genre remain unexplored within this study, despite the fact that Toho's making of the Godzilla nuclear monster franchise, beginning in 1954 and extending to twenty-eight sequels over fifty years, has important historical, industrial, and generic associations: Japan was the first and so far the only nation that has responded to and been transformed by the atomic bomb. In a similar way, Desser and Nolletti's classification of Japanese generic cinema excludes science fiction as one of the popular genres in Japanese domestic and international film markets and science fiction films are neglected in relation to genre criticism within Richie's general introduction to Japanese cinema. Science fiction films are lightly mentioned in his later books, but he does not elaborate this genre and has the same bias as Desser and Nolletti in favour of Japanese 'classical' or 'art' cinema, arguing that most Japanese directors who are only interested in the profit of making popular films create "a plethora of nudity, teenage heroes, *science-fiction monsters*, animated cartoons, and pictures about cute animals" which devalues the artistic quality of cinema (Richie 1990: 80; my emphasis). This attitude remains in his latest updated Japanese cinema book, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* in 2005: Richie still only devotes a half page to the Godzilla monster films. What this means is that the importance within the Japanese cultural imagination of these 'science fiction monsters',

Sex, Blood and Madness in Japanese Cinema (1998); Yoshida Kiju's *Ozu's Anti-Cinema* (2003); Chris Desjardins' *Outlaw Masters of Japanese Film* (2005); Patrick Galloway's *Stray Dogs and Lone Wolves* (2005); Jay McRoy's edited book, *Japanese Horror Cinema* (2005) and his updated academic research, *Nightmare Japan: Contemporary Japanese Horror Cinema* (2008); Alain Silver's *The Samurai Film* (2006); Patrick Galloway's *Asia Shock: Horror and Dark Cinema from Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Thailand* (2006); Jerry White's *The Films of Kiyoshi Kurosawa: Master of Fear* (2007); Mark Schilling's *No Borders, No Limits: Nikkatsu Action Cinema* (2007); Jin Harper's *Flowers from Hell: The Modern Japanese Horror Film* (2008); Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano's *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the 1920s and 1930s* (2008).

created from the fusion of the technological and the organic, remains under-explored. I argue that the Godzilla franchise films should be understood through the notion of the cyborg because the Godzilla monster can be identified as what Haraway calls the hybrid creature, blurring the distinction between animal and machine. Godzilla's boundary-crossing nature is also evident in the way in which the films cross genre boundaries between monster, disaster, horror, science fiction, and fantasy. More important, the Godzilla franchise films can be recognised as the exemplary forerunner of the Japanese cinematic cyborg which I will elaborate in the third section of the chapter.

Komatsu (1996) contests Richie's classification and argues that the Godzilla monster films have their particular historical, cultural, and aesthetic qualities, and should be categorised as a genre of science fiction because since *Godzilla* (1954) became a box-office success, the Toho studio began to release a large number of monster franchises every year in Japan. It can be argued that the Japanese film industry is a latecomer onto the scene of science fiction cinema since Western national film industries began making science fiction film in the early twentieth century. Georges Méliès's *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), *The Impossible Voyage* (1904), and *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1907) manipulate images to create the spectacle of an 'imaginary voyage', a milestone in the evolution of science fiction cinema (Telotte 2001:79-80). Méliès's films establish a close affiliation between science fiction, special effects, and set design which has become a trademark of the genre ever since (Neale 2007: 344). Since the 1920s, the rise of science fiction film has crossed North America and Europe in response to an increasingly industrialised and automated society (Telotte 2001: 81). The films made in that period often envision futurist cities or contemplate a civilisation driven by technology. For example, *Aelita* (1924) and *The Death Ray* (1925) made in the Soviet Union; *Metropolis* (1927) and *Der Tunnel* (1933) made in Germany; *Transatlantic Tunnel* (1935) and *Things to Come* (1936); *The Crazy Ray* (1925) made in France; and *The Mysterious Island* (1929) and *Just Imagine* (1930) made in the United States (Telotte 2001: 83-87). In particular, during the 1950s the boom of science fiction cinema in the United States

featured alien invasion, nuclear threat, and monster attack in response to anxieties resulting from the aftermath of the Second World War and the atomic competition initiated by the cold-war ideology. Films produced included *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Thing from Another World* (1951), *Invaders from Mars* (1953), *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), *The War of the Worlds* (1953), *Them!* (1954), *The Day the World Ended* (1956), *The Black Scorpion* (1957), *The Deadly Mantis* (1957), *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957), and *On the Beach* (1959) (Jancovich 1996: 16, Telotte 2001: 95). *Godzilla* (1954), then, is clearly influenced by the American science fiction film, *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1953), which features an atomic-mutated dinosaur causing civilian casualties and eventually being eliminated by high-tech weapons. The burgeoning of Toho's nuclear monster franchise from the 1950s was thus shaped not only by the atomic and Second World War trauma suffered by Japan but also by the sustained boom in Hollywood science fiction. With a strong tradition of franchising since the silent cinema era, the recycling of science fiction monster films with identical plots and yearly repeating spectacles not only ensured box-office success but also constructed distinctive generic conventions (Komatsu 1996: 719). Bordwell and Thompson (2003) and Cook (2004) indicate that the revival of Japanese science fiction film in the 1970s was once again under the impact of Hollywood's successful science fiction blockbusters such as Fox's *Star Wars* (1977) and Columbia's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977).

Although the studios floundered after the 1970s, Cook (2004) observes that during the 1980s and the 1990s Toho successfully revived the Godzilla monster film. *Godzilla 1985* was released in 1984; *Godzilla vs. Biollante* followed in 1989; and a new Godzilla version was released in every New Year's holiday season from 1991 to 1995. After making *Godzilla vs. Destroyah* in 1995, Toho sold the international rights of the Godzilla character to Tristar Pictures which produced Roland Emmerich's CGI-intensive Hollywood version of *Godzilla* (1998). From 1999 to 2004, Toho continued to release the Godzilla series. *Godzilla: Final Wars* was the last of the Toho's monster production in 2004.

The scholars I have mentioned above either ignore the generic existence and specificity of science fiction in Japanese cinema or see the Godzilla monster franchise produced by the Toho studio as the ‘sole representative’ of Japanese science fiction cinema. Yet between 1900 and 2004¹⁶, a huge number of films which can be also seen as part of a science fiction lineage were produced, featuring androids, aliens, artificial intelligence, robots, space exploration, time travel, scientists, scientific experiments, disaster, and a futuristic imagination. These too relied on the studio system, which from the 1950s established a specific marketing and production mode called *tokusatsu*, or special effects (Allison 2006: 47). *Tokusatsu* refers to specific live-action genre films, including science fiction film, horror film, fantasy film, and war film, mostly produced by the Japanese film studios. The *tokusatsu* films heavily rely on special effects such as rubber costumes, miniature cities, optical printers, and computer programmes to produce cinematic spectacle (Macias 2001: 16). The films often feature monsters or superheroes, acted by stuntmen wearing plastic suits, who fight with each other, trampling miniature metropolitan or rural scenes (Allison 2006: 47). Toho, the first studio to make the science fiction monster *tokusatsu* film with *Godzilla*, also created other popular monster films featuring monsters which were either mythical creatures from Japanese legend or nuclear mutants produced by warfare and scientific experiments.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the Daiei studio also created its own nuclear turtle monster called

¹⁶ The survey is based on the books: Thomas Weisser and Yuko Mihara Weisser, *Japanese Cinema Encyclopedia: Horror, Fantasy, Science Fiction* (Miami: Vital, 1999); Patrick Macias, *Tokyoscope: The Japanese Cult Film Companion* (San Francisco: Cadence, 2001); Chunk Stephens, Tetsuya Masuda, and Kairakutei Black, *Japanese Movies Posters: Yakuza, Monster, Pink and Horror* (Tokyo: Cocoro, 2002); Buratsuku Ando Buru, *Japanese SF Movies: Nihon Tokusatsu Meikan Neko Shinema Butsuku* (Tokyo: NEKO, 1999); Akihiro Kitajima, *Sekai Esuefu Eiga Zenshi: A History of Science Fiction Films* (Tokyo: Aiikusha, 2006).

¹⁷ The Snowman monster in *Monster Snowman* (1955); the Mothra monster in *Mothra* (1961); the Rodan monster in *Rodan* (1964); the Dagora monster in *Dagora, the Space Monster* (1964); the Ghidorah monster in *Ghidorah, the Three Hand Monster* (1964); the Gezora monster and Ganime monster in *Space Amoeba* (1970); and the Biollante monster in *Godzilla vs. Biollante* (1989).

Gamera to rival Toho's Godzilla, making twelve franchise films between 1965 and 2006.¹⁸ In addition to these monster films, Toho and Daiei also created superheroes in science fiction *tokusatsu* film which highlighted the male superhero's bodily metamorphosis from a normal human into a powerful, invincible, and armed warrior and his combat with vicious, monstrous, and demonic criminals. Whereas Daiei produced only seven superhero Moonlight Mask franchises between 1959 and 1981, Toho featured the superhero, Ultraman, in sixteen franchises between 1967 and 2004.¹⁹

Other themes apart from monsters and superheroes were also created by the studios for the science fiction *tokusatsu* film. They can be classified into seven categories according to narrative and iconographic conventions. The first category is the alien invasion narrative in which alien forces threaten destruction of Earth and the human race.²⁰ The second category concerns the battle between robots. In particular, Toei specialised in robotic policing in films such as the Kamen Rider franchises between 1971 and 2007, the O Rangers series between 1995 and 1996, *Getting Any?* (1995), *Juukou B-Fighter* (1995), and *Mechanical Violator Hakaider* (1995). The third category concerns the technological threat when scientific experiments are out of control or go wrong by creating horrific and dangerous mutants.²¹ The fourth category features scientists who

¹⁸ The Gamera monster appears in *Gamera* (1965), *Gamera vs. Barugon* (1966), *Gamera vs. Gyaos* (1967), *Gamera vs. Guiron* (1969), *Gamera vs. Jiger* (1970), *Gamera vs. Zigra* (1971), *Gamera: Super Monster* (1980), *Gamera: Guardian of the Universe* (1995), *Gamera 2: Attack of Legion* (1996), *Gamera 3: Awakening of Irys* (1999), and *Gamera the Brave* (2006).

¹⁹ *Moonlight Mask* (1958), *Moonlight Mask: Duel to the Death in Dangerous Waters* (1958), *Moonlight Mask: The Claw of Satan* (1958), *Moonlight Mask: The Monster Kong* (1959), *Moonlight Mask: The Ghost Party Strikes Back* (1959), and *Moonlight Mask: The Last of the Devil* (1959).

²⁰ For example, *The Misterians* (1957), *Battle in Outer Space* (1959), *Invasion of the Neptune Man* (1961), *Attack of the Mushroom People* (1963), *Dagora, the Space Monster* (1964), *Konto 55: Grand Outer Space Adventure* (1969), *Yog: Monster from Space* (1970), and *Parasite Eve* (1997).

²¹ The films are such as *The Invisible Appears* (1949), *The Invisible Man vs. The Fly Man* (1957), *The H-Man* (1958), *The Secret of the Telegian* (1960), *The Human Vapor* (1960), and *The Face of the Other* (1966).

spawn monsters²²; the fifth concerns disaster²³; the sixth is about the exploration of time or time travel²⁴; and the final category concerns the survival of an apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic society²⁵.

Since the decline in the production of Japanese studio films, Japanese independent filmmakers and independent production companies have emerged since the 1980s to make science fiction films which often portray capitalised, industrialised, and urban society as dirty, bleak and grim to highlight the ambivalent relationship between technology and society, the tension between order and control, and the anxiety over the dissolution and disembodiment of stable, coherent, unified identity. Those films made between the 1980s and the early 2000s can be classified into four categories. The first category focuses on female disembodiment and embodiment in cyberspace or virtual reality such as *Monster Woman 88* (1988), *Video Girl Love* (1991), and *Avalon* (2001). The second category concerns adverse side effects when technology alters the human psychological state, including *Hunting Ash* (1992), *964 Pinocchio* (1991), *Splatter: Naked Blood* (1996), and *Rubber's Lover* (1997). The third category is about the conflict between humanity and technology caused by hybrid creatures composed of human and machine, in films such as *Tetsuo: Iron Man* (1989), *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* (1992), *Full Metal Yakuza* (1997), *Electric Dragon 80.000V* (2001), and *Dead or Alive: Final* (2002). The last category depicts the anarchic society caused by rebels against state authority and nuclear power plants, such as *Crazy Thunder Road* (1980) and *Burst City* (1982).

²² The films include *Frankenstein Conquers the World* (1965), *Terror beneath the Sea* (1966), *Horror of a Malformed Man* (1972), and *Robokill beneath Disco Club Layla* (1993).

²³ Films are *Last War* (1961), *Gorath* (1962), *Great Insect War* (1968), *Submersion of Japan* (1973), *Last Days of Planet Earth* (1974), *Prophecies of Nostradamus* (1974), and *Deathquake* (1980).

²⁴ For example, *Message from Space* (1978), *Girl Who Travelled beyond the Time Barrier* (1983), *Adventure in the Parallel World* (1986), *Drifting Classroom* (1987), *Time of the Apes* (1987), *Ambitious Student* (1991), *Space Cargo: Remunanto 6* (1996), and *Returner* (2002).

²⁵ The films are *Time of Madness* (1967), *Virus* (1980), *Tokyo Crisis Wars* (1991), *Nostradamus: Fearful Prediction* (1995), *Casshern* (2004), and *After the Apocalypse* (2004).

Academic criticism, however, does not reflect the range or thematic concerns of this body of films. In particular, the historical mapping of Japanese science fiction cinema produced by English-speaking scholars does not provide the kind of detailed research on the variations of Japanese science fiction films that we find in discussions of the cyborg in Hollywood science fiction. From general introductions to Hollywood cinema to works on specific subgenres within Hollywood science fiction cinema, science fiction is treated as a valuable generic form and the cyborg narrative within the Hollywood film industry and American society has been extensively investigated.²⁶ While such Western scholarship provides comprehensive and systematic frameworks for analysing Hollywood cinematic cyborgs in terms of historical, industrial, generic, and social approaches, we find either fragmented literature or uncritical references in Western criticism of Japanese science fiction film in relation to the cyborg. Within the English-language research literature concerning Japanese science fiction cinema I have found, the literature can be classified into three types: research on the Godzilla monster franchise, science fiction film critique, and the encyclopaedia of Japanese science fiction films. In particular, the Godzilla films have become the representative of Japanese science fiction cinema, in books like *A Critical History and Filmography of Toho's Godzilla® Series* (1997) by David Kalat, *Godzilla on My Mind: Fifty Years of the King of Monsters* (2004) by William Tsutsui, *In Godzilla®'s Footsteps: Japanese Pop Culture Icons on the Global Age* (2006) edited by William Tsutsui and Michiko Ito. Those works neither intellectually articulate the relationship between Japanese science fiction and the notion of the cyborg, nor use critical theory to analyse the Godzilla monster. Whereas the Godzilla studies

²⁶ Those can be seen in volumes such as *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema* (1990) and *Alien Zone II: The Spaces of Science Fiction Cinema* (1999) edited by Kuhn; Frentz and Rushing's *Projecting the Shadow: The Cyborg Hero in American Film* (1995); King and Krzywinska's *Science Fiction Cinema: From the Outerspace to Cyberspace* (2000); Telotte's *Science Fiction Film* (2001); Graham's *Representations of the Post/Human: Monsters, Aliens and Other in Popular Culture* (2002); Sobchack's *Screening Space: The American Science Fiction Film* (2004); Short's *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity* (2005); *Liquid Metal: The Science Fiction Film Reader* (2004) edited by Redmond; Melzer's *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought* (2006); and Cornea's *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality* (2007).

include Kalat, Tsutsui, and Ito's academic research which locate the Godzilla films within historical, economic, social contexts to examine the monster's 'Japaneseness' or national identity, the literature on Japanese science fiction film is mostly found within the non-academic film encyclopaedia and criticism.²⁷

3.1 *Anime*, Animation, and Science Fiction

Although the quantity of Japanese science fiction film studies is smaller than the publications on American science fiction cinema, academic research on Japanese science fiction animation in recent years has been increasing since I began my own research in 2004.²⁸ This scholarship reflects the phenomenon that *anime* (which borrows the English word 'animation'), has become one of the most popular and successful exported Japanese visual media commodities in the world. It also reveals that the generic conventions and narratives of science fiction are apparent in Japanese animation. In contrast to the academic discussion which draws attention to the national identity or 'Japaneseness' of the Godzilla franchise films, however, academic assessment of Japanese *mecha* animation primarily highlights the abundant presence of female cyborgs as

²⁷ Critics such as Stuart Galbraith IV, Yukari Fuji, and Atsushi Sakahara's edited book, *Monsters Are Attacking Tokyo!: The Incredible World of Japanese Fantasy Films* (1987); Stuart Galbraith IV's *Japanese Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films: A Critical Analysis of 103 Features Released in the United States, 1950-1992* (1994); *Japanese Cinema Encyclopaedia: The Horror, Fantasy and Science Fiction Films* (1997) by Thomas Weisser and Yuko Mihara Weisser; and August Ragone's *Eiji Tsuburaya: Master of Monsters: Defining the Earth with Ultraman, Godzilla, and Friends in the Golden Age of Japanese Science Fiction Film* (2007).

²⁸ Examples are Antonia Levi's *Samurai from Outer Space: Understanding Japanese Animation* (1996); Susan J. Napier's *Anime: From Akira to Howl's Moving Castle* (2001, 2005); Helen McCarthy's *Hayao Miyazaki: Master of Japanese Animation: Films, Themes, Artistry* (2003); *Cinema Anime: Critical Engagements with Japanese Animation* (2006) edited by Steven T. Brown; *Robot Ghosts and Wired Dreams: Japanese Science Fiction from Origins to Anime* (2007) edited by Christopher Bolton, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay JR., and Takayuki Tatsumi; *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* (2008) edited by Mark W. MacWilliams; and Frenchy Lunning edits the *Mechaemia* series: *Mechademia 1: Emerging Worlds of Anime and Manga* (2006), *Mechademia 2: Networks of Desire* (2007), *Mechademia 3: The Limits of Human* (2008), and *Mechademia 5: Fanthropologies* (2010).

major connotations or symbols of technology (Giresunlu 2009: 158). However, these scholarly analyses often neglect the Japanese historical and cultural context in reading the gendered cyborgs in *mecha anime*, concluding that the sexy, beautiful, agile, intelligent, powerful, independent, and armoured female cyborgs signify female empowerment without contextualising them within the gender politics of Japanese society.

Although animation is often characterised by the graphic visual style which differentiates it from live-action film, animation also embraces narrative, generic, and iconographic structures which have been predominantly defined by live-action cinema. In general, science fiction cinema and animation are discussed separately, often because academic scholars see Western science fiction film as aimed at adult audiences whilst Western science fiction animation is aimed at children. In contrast, Japanese science fiction animation targets adult audiences. In this respect, when Japanese science fiction animation as well as Japanese live-action science fiction film constitutes a representational apparatus which focuses on the negotiation between ‘real’ and imaginary worlds in order to facilitate the audience’s psychological identification or viewing pleasure, and produce specific ideological predispositions, I suggest that we need to look at Japanese live-action film and animation together in any analysis of issues related to gender, technology, and representation because both specifically engage with science fiction fantasy and draw on the cultural imagination of the cyborg.

Animation can be seen as “one of the most prominent film-making practices”, developing in parallel with the development of cinema since the twentieth century (Wells 2003: 214). In cinema’s early days it could be achieved by shooting inanimate objects such as drawings, clay, cutouts, puppets, or plasticine models frame by frame in stop-motion photography on film and then projecting the film on screen (Hayward 2006: 19, Subotnik 2003: 86-88). Animation and cinema both operate to create the pictorial illusion of movement when a sequence of images recorded on the film is projected quickly enough that human eyes misrecognise as a single motion (Subotnik 2003: 3). Although both provide graphic representation by producing a series

of manipulations of images and the illusion of movement, animation has often been marginalised or excluded from the canons of cinema and academic debates in the West (Gadassik 2010: 225). This phenomenon is linked to the fact that live-action feature films have dominated the motion picture industry since the late nineteenth century, to the tension between realism and fantasy in motion pictures, and to the fact that animation is often seen as the popular debased form of commercial entertainment targeted at children (Klein 2010: 94, Ashbee 2003: 3, Wells and Hardstaff 2008: 60). With the development of the motion picture camera and projector which can automatically record live and project the stored images on screen, the longer forms of live-action narrative drama emerged in Europe and the United States, and animation became much more costly and labour-intensive compared to live-action film, so that the exhibition of live-action films gradually surpassed that of animation (Klein 2010: 94, Cavallaro 2009: 11).

Accordingly, there is a discourse that always draws a line between live-action film and animation. Animation does not share the approach and method of the live-action film because the latter assumes that it can capture 'reality' or 'the real' by using real-time recordings and real-life performance or actors to make viewers believe in the simulation of original events as real events and produce photographic images which give viewers a sense of the real, whereas the former does not make viewers believe in the moving images as 'real' in terms of the manual construction of graphic images made by paintings, drawings, or sculptures which clearly draw a line between the real and the non-real (Wells 1998: 25, Johnston 2000: 442, MaMahan 2005: 111). The live-action film combines narrative structures and film techniques such as lighting, colour, sound, and editing working together not only to create the 'reality effect' but also to make filming methods and artifice seem as 'transparent' as possible (Hayward 2006: 334). In contrast, animation does not use the camera to 'naturally' record or photograph 'reality' but artificially produces and records its animated fantasy (Wells 1998: 25). Western scholars often see this animated fantasy as 'low culture' in terms of its commercial 'mass' or 'popular' entertainment characteristics. Although Disney, as a global animation industry and player in the entertainment

business, for example, has achieved an advanced technical and artistic development of the animation industry since the 1930s, intellectual discussion about animation was neglected until the 1980s when on the one hand, digital filmmaking began to burgeon, blurring the distinction between the realism of live-action film and the artificiality of animation, and on the other hand, Japanese animation became part of the globalisation of popular culture (Ashbee 2003: 3, Iwabuchi 2002: 268).

However, the notion of the real or reality in the discussion of cinema becomes problematic when it comes to definitions of realism. Not only is any definition of reality subjective, but also any definition of realism that works within an image-making practice is necessarily open to interpretation (Wells 1998: 24). The audience learns to expect the ‘reality effect’ of the film or the representation of ‘reality’ which relies heavily on the filming techniques and filmic artifices. The more ‘realistic’ the representation constructed in the film, the more believable the audience perceives it to be. The process of ‘representing reality’ has been argued to be dependent on two types of verisimilitude: generic verisimilitude and cultural verisimilitude. Through these means, according to Neale (1990), the film is made intelligible to audiences in terms of the plausibility created by generic conventions on the one hand, and by the degree of cultural consent within the film on the other hand. In this regard, cinema is a medium producing a ‘representational reality’ rather than a ‘mirror of reality’. The cinematic apparatus including narratives, material artifices, and filming techniques works to persuade the audience psychologically or emotionally to believe the cinematic representation, and make the audience ‘feel’ as if it is ‘real’. In contrast, animation does not strive for verisimilitude or the representation of the ‘reality’ which is strongly underlined by live-action film, but rather is characterised by the mobility and plasticity of its graphic form that reflects the medium’s flexibility (Harrison and Stabile 2003: 5). Nevertheless, animation as much as live-action film can still be said to be determined by ‘cultural verisimilitude’, in that it, too, conforms to our cultural expectations, norms, and values.

Since cinema is technological mimesis lying between the real and the artificial, producing an illusion of unmediated ‘reality’ and offering this ‘reality’ which does not exist outside of the film image, drawing a line between live-action film and animation also becomes difficult. Manovich (2002) argues that by defining animation as the artificial construction of moving images, cinema studies seek to proclaim the ‘realistic’ nature of cinema by cutting off the reference to its origin in artifice whilst foregrounding animation’s artificial character. Manovich explains that the manual construction of images, like the early pre-cinematic zoetrope or praxinoscope which are made of painted image sequences, and techniques such as frame by frame slicing and matting, can still be found in the live-action film of the twentieth century (Gadassik 2010: 227). The emergence of digital media and technology, Manovich also suggests, challenges us to rethink notions of the real, the realistic, and realism which are traditionally based on the photo-realistic principle and the recording of physical reality. In particular, CGI (Computer-Generated-Imagery) or computer animation, which provides an evolutionary process of verisimilitude or the believable representation of ‘reality’, has gradually become the central technique of a filmmaking which seeks to make viewers believe in the fictional or the hybrid fiction-real world, and subsequently the viewers consequently become emotionally involved in the animated representation (Landon 2002: 62). In this respect, the notion of the real or reality is not the main concern for either science fiction live-action film or science fiction animation because they so often, on the one hand, rely on special effects to realise things which do not exist or are simply impossible to photograph in reality. On the other hand, both can be said to combine the realistic and fictional worlds to construct their own forms of generic and cultural verisimilitude.

Japanese animation or *anime* has become a major visual form in the Japanese motion picture industry in terms of the distinctive Japanese cultural heritage represented by the dependent relationship between *manga* and *anime*, but also of the lucrative business of *anime* in the domestic and global market (Napier 2005: 5). The popularity of *anime* is predominantly linked to the development of ‘*manga*’, namely ‘comics’ in English translation. Schodt (1996) argues that the

origin of *manga* can be traced back to the two types of Japanese picture books which were popular in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, called '*toba-e*' ('Toba-pictures', lightly satirical graphic scrolls) and '*kibyoshi*' ('yellow-jacket books', which consist of texts and images with satirical commentary on Japanese urban society). The modern form of *manga* first appeared in the 1930s in the style of slim magazines called 'comic books' that compiled 'comic strips' from newspapers and this format has continued until today. Individual *manga* stories are often serialised with other stories in the omnibus-format as *manga* magazines, and later individual *manga* works would be compiled into their own paperback and hardback books. On the one hand, Schodt argues that *manga*, seen as a popular and affordable cultural commodity in Japan, is linked with the cheap selling price of *manga* magazines: he compares the selling price of *manga* between Japan and the U.S. in late 1995, in which a 400-page *manga* magazine is relatively cheap with its cost under \$3-\$4 in comparison to the typical 32-page American comic magazine which cost over \$2 (Schodt 1996: 23). On the other hand, the diversity of form and content of *manga* also contributes to its popularity. Different from the mainstream American and European comics that are often coloured and adopt Western aesthetics, Schodt points out that *manga* presents far more visual diversity by combining the traditional Japanese brush painting, cinematic aesthetics, and a monochromatic colour format to recreate both realistic and non-realistic representations. The diversity of *manga* is also broadened by its various narrative subjects, ranging from the literary approach to soft-core and hard-core pornography, and targeting nearly every age group and any taste. *Manga* has become a major mass medium in Japan, seen as an artistic form and commercial entertainment, and therefore its visual form is often converted into the animated film with sound and motion to recreate its artistic and commercial potential. A large number of *anime* are based on stories that have been published in *manga*, as part of the *manga* industry policy that creates *manga* series and the animated version at the same time (Napier 2005: 20).

In terms of economic factors, animation's position as one of the most important aspects of the Japanese popular culture industry is linked to the popularity of the television broadcast, the

cinematic version often made from the long running television series, and the development of OVAs (Original Video Animation) made for direct sale by rental shops (Gresh and Weinberg 2005: 27). Whereas Disney's animation, for example, under American broadcasting censorship is defined as children's cartoon or subculture, *anime* has become mainstream popular culture for children, teens, and adults in Japan since the Second World War when censorship in Japan was less strict than in the United States²⁹ (Napier 2005: 7, Gresh and Weinberg 2005: 12). After the first Japanese animation studio, Toei Animation Co., was established in 1956 and produced several animated films for cinema, TV animation studios began to burgeon in response to the rise of the TV industry (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 20-21).

Osamu Tezuka is identified as 'the God of *manga*' in Japan because of his productivity in drawing huge quantities of *manga*, his versatility in producing diverse subjects in *manga* for young and adult readers, and the founding of his TV animation studio that turned his *manga* into *anime*, a move which transformed the Japanese manga and animation industry into a mainstream popular cultural phenomenon since the 1960s (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 14-17). Japanese animation grew even more popular between the 1980s and the 1990s when *anime* became a global sensation through the efforts of several artists such as Hayao Miyazaki, Isao Takahata, Katsuhiro Otomo, Masamune Shirow, and Hideaki Anno, who developed animated films into a significant aspect of cinema (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 25-27).

These Japanese animators and animation studios share one thing in common: they all became involved in making science fiction stories in *anime*. Science fiction is a major genre in *anime* which can be observed from the *anime* titles released overseas (Poitras 2001: 34). In 1963, Japanese Fuji Television broadcasted two important science fiction animation television series: *Tetsuwan Atom* (*Astro Boy*, the English release title) and *Tetsujin 28 go* (*Iron Man No. 28*, the English release title).

²⁹ The Japanese Constitution, Article 21, allows Japan to have looser censorship standards that tolerate nudity, violence, and mature themes shown on TV animation. See Eddith A. Dashiell, "Law and Regulation," *Mass Communication in Japan*, ed. Anne Cooper-Chen and Miiko Kodama (Ames, IA: Iowa UP, 1997) 175-192.

Osamu Tezuka adopted his manga *Astro Boy* into an *anime* which can be identified as the first Japanese science fiction animation series. It concerns the adventures of a robot with human intelligence made by a male scientist to look like a little boy as a replacement for his dead son. Later in the same year Mitsuteru Yokoyama also adopted his manga *Iron Man No. 28* into *anime*, featuring the adventures of a young boy who controls a giant robot called Tetsujin 28 built by his father. The human-friendly robot portrayed in *Astro Boy* and the giant robot controlled by a boy in *Iron Man No. 28* became the most favourite theme in Japanese animation, inspiring the generic development of Japanese science fiction animation called *mecha* (Levi 1996: 85).

Mecha is drawn from the English word ‘mechanical’, referring to all forms of machinery in *anime*. However, *mecha* predominantly features robotic machinery and often shows ‘good’ robots battling with the ‘bad’ robots threatening humanity. In general, there are four types of futuristic or imaginary robots portrayed in *mecha*. The first type is the humanoid robot as in *Astro Boy* (1963-1966, TV series), *The Humanoid* (1986, OVA), *A.D Police Files* (1990, OVA), *Armitage III* (1995, OVA), and *Ghost in the Shell* (1995, animated film). The second is the armoured human, and includes *Bubblegum Crisis* (1987-1991, OVA), *Bubblegum Crash* (1991, OVA), *Gall Force: Eternal Story* (1986, OVA), and *Sol Bianca* (1990-1992, OVA). The third type features gigantic armoured robots often piloted by children or teenagers, as in *Mazinger Z* (1972-1974, TV series), *Mobile Suit Gundam* (1979-1980, TV series), *The Super Dimension Fortress Macross* (1982-1983, TV series), *Gunbuster* (1988-1989, OVA), *Patlabor* (1989, OVA), *Dangaio* (1987-1989, OVA), and *Giant Robo: The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1992-1998, OVA). The last type features the merging of the organic body and robotic machinery, as in *8 Man* (1963-1964, TV series), *Ai City* (1986, animated film), *Akira* (1988, animated film), *Hades Project Zeorymer* (1988-1990, OVA), *The Guyver: Bio-Booster Armor* (1989-1992, OVA), *Genocyber* (1994, OVA), *Roujin Z* (1991, animated film), *Battle Angel* (1993, OVA), and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (1995-1996, TV series).

As mentioned earlier, the burgeoning of the Japanese science fiction monster film is not only linked to the trauma of the atom bomb attack in the Second World War, but is also inspired by

the American science fiction monster films of the early 1950s. However, the flourishing and popularity of Japanese science fiction animation, *mecha anime* in particular, whilst is closely connected to the influence of Western science fiction culture, also draws on the nation's long fascination with the 'humanisation' of the automaton and its impact on society since the eighteenth century, and the progressive development of Japanese robotics which has contributed to the nation's postwar economic growth since the 1960s. The word *robot* was first introduced in Japan in the early 1920s by the Czech writer, Karel Čapek, who staged the play *RUR* (*Rossum's Universal Robots*) in Prague in 1921.³⁰ Čapek's play tells the story of a scientist called Rossum who creates humanoid robots that revolt against their human masters and take control of the world. Čapek coined the word 'robot' from the Czech word, '*robota*', referring to the forced labour, but the word has become a term that is generally associated with smart machines or automatons (Angelo 2007: 6). *RUR* created a sensation, its humanoid characters appearing in hundreds of novels, plays, and films. After *RUR* was translated and staged in Tokyo in 1923,³¹ Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) was released in Japan in 1929, featuring a dangerous female humanoid threatening society (Nakamura 2007: 6). Moreover, American science fiction writer Isaac Asimov's short story "Runaround",³² published in 1942, featured a robot which was different from the threatening robots depicted in *RUR* and *Metropolis*. The robot portrayed in "Runaround" is beneficial and friendly to humanity, following three principles known as 'three laws of Robotics' that have inspired the development of modern robotics³³ (Angelo 2007: 18).

³⁰ Karel Čapek, *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots): A Fantastic Melodrama*, trans. Paul Selver (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1923).

³¹ William Jefferson Tyler, Introduction, *Modanizumu: Modernist Fiction from Japan, 1913-1938*, ed. Tyler (Honolulu: Hawai'i UP, 2008).

³² Isaac Asimov, "Runaround," *Robot Visions* (New York: ROC, 1991) 113-134.

³³ The First Law is that "A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm. The Second is that "A robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law. The Third Law is that "A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

As a result, the popular representation of the lovable, friendly, and humanised robot in media can be argued as Asimov's legacy.³⁴ The Western popular culture listed above created a general spread of the concept of the robot in the Japanese popular culture from the late 1920s: for example, the Japanese media featured robots in comic strips, pop songs, and advertisements (Hornyak 2006: 38). Japan produced toy robots since the 1950s which adopted the robots portrayed in the American science fiction films, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) and *Forbidden Planet* (1956).³⁵ Meanwhile, a number of Japanese science fiction writers also published robot stories such as Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke's *Jinzōningen* (*The Man-Made Man*) in 1928, Kizu Tora's *Haiiro Ni Bokasareta Kekkō* (*The Wedding Clouded in Grey*) in 1928, Naoki Sanjugo's *Robotto To Beddo No Juryo* (*The Robot and the Weight of the Bed*) in 1931, Unno Juza's *Jubachiji No Ongakuyoku* (*The Music Bath at 6 P.M.*) in 1937, and *Jinzōningen Sensha No Kimitsu* (*The Secret of the Robot Tank*) in 1941 (Orbaugh 2005: 65). In this respect, the pioneering animation work on the humanoid robot of Tezuka's 1952 *manga* and 1963 *anime*, *Astro Boy*, and Yokoyama's 1956 *manga* and 1963 *anime*, *Iron Man No. 28*, were strongly influenced by Western and Japanese popular culture at the same time.

The boom of *mecha anime* began in the 1980s, with a large number of *anime* based on the story of *Mobile Suit Gundam* being franchised over the past thirty years.³⁶ Before *Mobile Suit Gundam*,

³⁴ Charles Gregory, "Asimov, Issac 1920-," *Makers of Modern Culture Volume 1*, ed. Justin Wintle (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) 21.

³⁵ William H. Yong and Nancy K. Yong, *The 1950s* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2004) 121; Rebecca Stefoff, *Robots* (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2008) 92.

³⁶ The franchises are *Gundam I* (1981, animated film), *Gundam II: Solders of Sorrow* (1981, animated film), *Gundam III: Encounters in Space* (1982, animated film), *Mobile Suit Zeta Gundam* (1985, TV series), *Mobile Suit Gundam ZZ* (1986-1987, TV series), *Gundam: Char's Counterattack* (1988, animated film), *Gundam 0080: War in the Pocket* (1989, OVA), *Mobile Suit Gundam F91* (1991, animated film), *Gundam 0083: Stardust Memory* (1991, OVA), *Gundam 0083: Last Blitz of Zeon* (1992, animated film), *Mobile Suit Victory Gundam* (1993, TV series), *Mobile Fighter G Gundam* (1994-1995, TV series), *New Mobile Report Gundam W* (1995, TV series), *Gundam M.S.: The 08th Team* (1996, TV series), *After War Gundam X* (1996, TV series), *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing: Endless Waltz* (1997, TV series), *Gundam M.S.: The 08th Team: Miller's Report* (1998, animated film),

mecha anime such as *Iron Man No. 28* and *Mazinger Z* featured giant robots fighting alone against aliens from outer space and one heroic pilot controlling a giant robot and trying to save a humanity threatened by invasions from outer space (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 39). In addition to portraying the heroic human pilots controlling the armoured robots, *Mobile Suit Gundam* adds a more complex and sophisticated narrative in which human space colonies trigger a vast war of independence by using mass-produced military robots which are able to transform themselves into another form of robotic machinery (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 39).

Meanwhile, the 1980s boom of *mecha anime* can also be seen as responding to the development of Japanese robot technology. The history of Japanese robot technology can be traced back to the mechanised dolls developed in the 18th and 19th centuries named ‘*Karakuri Ningyo*’ which could serve tea and do archery.³⁷ In 1928, the Japanese scientist, Nishimura Makoto, created Japan’s first robot named ‘*Gakutensoku*’, meaning ‘learning from the rules of Nature’, displayed at an engineering exhibition in Kyoto.³⁸ Nishimura’s robot was a huge golden-coloured male figure which was controlled by an air pressure mechanism to change facial expression, open the mouth, turn the head, and hold a pen (Hornyak 2006: 38, Nakamura 2007: 7). However advanced, sophisticated, and functional robots arrived in Japan forty years later after Nishimura’s invention. In 1968, the American company, Unimation, the world’s first industrial robot company, licensed hydraulic robot technology to Japanese Kawasaki Heavy Industries, signifying a remarkable burst

Gundam Wing: Endless Waltz (1998, animated film), *Gundam* (1999, TV series), *G-Saviour* (2000, animated film), *Gundam Evolve* (2001-2005, TV series), *Gundam Divers* (2001, animated film), *Gundam: Earth Light* (2002, animated film), *Gundam: Moonlight Butterfly* (2002, animated film), *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED* (2002-2003, TV series), *Gundam SEED Special Edition* (2004, TV series), *Gundam SEED Destiny* (2004-2005, TV series), *Zeta Gundam I: Heirs to the Stars* (2004, animated film), *Zeta Gundam II* (2005, animated film), *Zeta Gundam III* (2006, animated film), *Mobile Suit Gundam MS IGLOO: Apocalypse 0079* (2006, OVA), and *Mobile Suit Gundam 00* (2007-2008, TV series).

³⁷ Charles C. Kemp et al., “Humanoids,” *Springer Handbook of Robotics*, ed. Bruno Siciliano and Oussama Khatib (Berlin: Springer, 2008) 1310.

³⁸ Lisa Rocks, *The Robot: The Life Story of a Technology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2007) 56.

of Japanese robotic research and development.³⁹ When the world's first robot association was formed in Japan in 1971, the Japanese automobile industry also began to introduce robots on its assembly lines.⁴⁰ In 1973, Atsuo Takanishi Laboratory at Waseda University released the first humanoid robot called 'Wabot-1' which could not walk but could shift weight from one leg to the other (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 39). By the 1980s, Japan had more industrial robots than any other country and became the world leader in robot use.⁴¹

Since the 1990s, Japan has made entertainment and service robots (Ndalianis 2006: 57). In 1999, Sony showed 'AIBO', a domestic robot which is designed in the shape of a dog, responding to voice commands, exhibiting a range of 'emotions', and imitating different kinds of dog behaviours.⁴² In 2001, Japan introduced the therapeutic robot named 'Paro', in the shape of the baby harp seal which is used to create a calming effect and elicit emotional responses to patients in hospitals and nursing homes.⁴³ Meanwhile, Honda, the Japanese motor company, has been developing humanoid robots since 1986.⁴⁴ In 1993 Honda released the first humanoid autonomous robot, 'P-2', which can perform realistic movement. Seven years later, Honda further introduced a more advanced humanoid robot called 'ASIMO' which is more compact

³⁹ Charles C. Kemp et al., "Humanoids," *Springer Handbook of Robotics*, ed. Bruno Siciliano and Oussama Khatib (Berlin: Springer, 2008) 1309.

⁴⁰ V. Daniel Hunt, *Industrial Robotics Handbook* (New York: Industrial, 1983) 299.

⁴¹ Kenneth A. Reinert, *An Introduction to International Economics: New Perspectives on the World Economy* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2012) 25.

⁴² N. Timothy Hornyak, *Loving the Machine: The Art and Science of Japanese Robots* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha, 2006).

⁴³ Takanori Shibata, "Robot Therapy at Elder Care Institutions: Effects of Long-Term Interaction with Seal Robots," *The Engineering Handbook of Smart Technology for Aging, Disability, and Independence*, ed. Abdelsalam A. Helal, Mounir Mokhtari, and Bessam Abdulrazak (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Interscience, 2008) 405-418.

⁴⁴ Charles C. Kemp et al, "Humanoids," *Springer Handbook of Robotics*, ed. Bruno Siciliano and Oussama Khatib (Berlin: Springer, 2008) 1307-1334.

and lightweight compared to ‘P-2’.⁴⁵ ASIMO is built with the concept of being ‘human-friendly’, benefiting people in their daily environment by interpreting their gestures and postures or doing simple tasks such as turning light switches and door knobs, and delivering objects on a tray to specific destinations (Hornyak 2006: 38). In 2009, the female humanoid robot called ‘HRP-4C’ was released by the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology: it not only has a realistic female face and the average figure of a young Japanese woman, but also can mimic human facial and head movement to talk, sing, and dance.⁴⁶

Since *Astray Boy* and *Iron Man No. 28* were shown on Japanese TV in 1963, not only has *anime* favoured science fiction by making references to science, technology, and the futuristic imagination, but also science fiction has become a thriving genre in Japanese animation in the production of TV series, OVAs, and theatrical films (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 33-83). Since the 1980s, the feature length science fiction animation film began to burgeon following the boom of *mecha anime* (Gresh and Weiberg 2005: 39). In particular, the animated science fiction film has produced a large number of franchise animations based on the popular TV *mecha* animation, *Mobile Suit Gundam*.⁴⁷ In addition to the Gundam franchise films, a number of *mecha anime* films have been released including *Project A-Ko* (1986), *Venus War* (1989), *A Wind Named Amnesia* (1990), *Patlabor: The Movie 2* (1993), *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), *Memories* (1995), *The End of Evangelion* (1997), *Akira* (1988), *Spriggan* (1998), *A.Li.Ce* (1999), *WXIII: Patlabor the Movie 3* (2002), *Appleseed* (2004), and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004).

⁴⁵ Roland Siegwart and Illah Reza Nourbakhsh, *Introduction to Autonomous Mobile Robots* (Cambridge: MIT, 2004) 25.

⁴⁶ Mark Peterson, “Electric Snakes and Mechanical Ladders?: Social Presence, Domestic Spaces, and Human-Robot Interactions,” *New Technologies and Emerging Spaces of Care*, ed. Michael W. J. Schillmeier and Miquel Domenech (Farnham, Surrey, Eng. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010) 112.

⁴⁷ The franchise includes *Gundam I* (1981), *Gundam II: Soldiers of Sorrow* (1981), *Gundam III: Encounters in Space* (1982), *Gundam: Char’s Counterattack* (1988), *Mobile Suit Gundam F91* (1991), *Gundam 0083: Last Blitz of Zeon* (1992), *Gundam M.S.: The 08th Team: Miller’s Report* (1998), *Gundam Wing: Endless Waltz* (1998), *G-Saviour* (2000), *Gundam Divers* (2001), *Gundam: Earth Light* (2002), *Gundam: Moonlight Butterfly* (2002), *Zeta Gundam I: Heirs to the Stars* (2004), *Zeta Gundam II* (2005), and *Zeta Gundam III* (2006).

The (re)mapping of Japanese science fiction cinema and animation above reveals that both representational media are populated with the figure of the cyborg, defined here as the amalgamation of organism and machine, the mixture of the natural and the artificial, or the combination of the human and the non-human. Japanese science fiction film and *mecha* animation portray a large number of cyborgs in the form of android, artificial intelligence, humanoid, and robot. The imagery of the cyborg represented in Japanese science fiction film and animation revolves around fascination and anxiety in response to intimate interactions between humanity and technology. Whilst the cultural fascination with cyborgs can be seen as related to a fascination with the extension and enhancement of the human body, the cyborg figure also instils anxiety. Its hybridised character not only challenges the superiority of human beings over machines but also, in violating the distinction between human and machine, puts into question aspects of human identity assumed to be foundational, in particular those identified with gender distinctions. In order to decode the layers of meaning of the cinematic cyborg might have, the next section will therefore proceed to set out and justify research methods and theoretical approaches.

4. Methods and Approaches

This thesis neither sets out to construct a history of Japanese science fiction cinema and animation nor aims to produce a mapping history of cyborgs in these fields. My concern is more specific: placing Japanese film and animation within a broader social context to critically explore the representation of the cyborg. My focus will therefore be on how the selected Japanese science fiction films and animations, and the cyborgs which populate them, serve as a contested battleground on which to encode identities based on gender, sexuality, and nationality, as well as an arena through which the ideological concerns of the represented cyborgs might be explored in Japanese popular visual culture. Accordingly, this research will adopt a cultural studies standpoint which sees media and popular culture as social practices and cultural representations

contextualised within fields of socioeconomic and political power.⁴⁸ For this reason, I shall treat the cyborg portrayed in Japanese film and animation as a social production thoroughly imbued with power relations and constructed within specific historical and cultural contexts. My thesis argues that popular representations of the cyborg cannot be simply characterised as radical, utopian or post-gender as outlined by Haraway, but that the represented cyborgs are strongly subject to gender implications and national sentiment regulated by a popular culture which is a site for both the expression and production of anxieties, fears, desires and fantasies about historical, economic, and social changes. I will offer five case studies in my thesis according to different types of gendered cyborg bodies, within a range of generically hybrid science fiction texts. In this respect, the method of this thesis will use Japanese cinematic and animation texts as a site through which to examine cultural issues and debates raised by the imagery of cyborgs. Thus, in contrast to Haraway's rejection of theoretical 'grand narratives' including psychoanalysis, religion, and linear historical discourse in her reading of the cyborg, I will refer to those narratives, using them where they seem helpful in the analysis of the represented cyborgs, and arguing that they can provide valuable theoretical tools for understanding the interplay between representation, gender identity, and male domination.

My approach will therefore draw on feminist theory. In this I follow Japanese and Taiwanese scholars who have adopted a feminist approach to illuminate gender-related issues such as the body, femininity, masculinity, sexuality, and representation in Japanese and Taiwanese popular culture.⁴⁹ These scholars have found feminist theory a vital intellectual tool for interrogating

⁴⁸ Douglas Kellner, "Toward a Critical Media/Cultural Studies," *Media/Cultural Studies: Critical Approaches*, ed. Rhonda Hammer and Douglas Kellner (New York: Peter Lang, 2009) 5-24.

⁴⁹ For example, Japanese feminist scholarship on popular culture includes Kanako Shiokawa, "Cute but Deadly: Women and Violence in Japanese Comics," *Themes and Issues in Asian Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 93-126; Setsu Shigematsu, "Dimensions of Desire: Sex, Fantasy, and Fetish," *Themes and Issues in Asian Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 127-164; Mitsuyo Wada-Marciano, "Imaging Modern Girls in the Japanese Woman's Film," *Nippon Modern: Japanese Cinema of the*

popular culture, providing useful insights in analysing gender construction, linked to systems of power, inequality, and stereotypes, within Japanese and Taiwanese socio-cultural contexts. Although much feminist theory has been developed by Western feminist scholars, the research done by Japanese and Taiwanese scholars not only explores gender issues from a feminist perspective but also tests the assumptions and conceptualisations of Western feminist theory. Such non-Western feminist scholarship can be seen as a contribution to the theoretical field. Inspired by third wave feminism's demand of self-reflexivity⁵⁰ and the relational-contextual nature of feminist thought⁵¹, I therefore seek to explore the gap between Haraway's celebration of a cyborg that subverts existing dualistic categories of gender in feminist science fiction novels and the feminist critique of popular culture as a site where traditional gender roles are

1920s and 1930s (Honolulu: Hawai'i UP, 2008) 76-110; Yuko Hasegawa, "Post-Identity Kawaii: Commerce, Gender and Contemporary Japanese Art," *Consuming Bodies: Sex and Contemporary Japanese Art*, ed. Fran Lloyd (London: Reaktion, 2002) 127-141; and Hikari Hori, "Aging, Gender, and Sexuality in Japanese Popular Cultural Discourse: Pornographer Sachi Hamano and Her Rebellious Film *Lily Festival* (*Yurisa*)," *Faces of Aging: The Lived Experiences of the Elderly Japan*, ed. Yoshiko Matsumoto (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2011) 129-136; and Hikari Hori, "Migration and Transgression: Female Pioneers of Documentary Filmmaking in Japan," *Asian Cinema* 16.1 (2005): 89-97; Hikari Hori, "Oshima Nagisa's *Ai No Korida* Reconsidered: Law, Gender, and Sexually Explicit Film in Japanese," *Cinema, Law, and the State in Asia*, ed. Corey K. Creekmur and Mark Sidel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 123-140. Moreover, the Taiwanese feminist scholarship includes, Yi-Ping Chan, "A Study on Social Phenomena of Feminine Issues in Li-Ang's Novels," MA Thesis (Tamkang University, 2008); Ken-Fang Lee, "Translation and Gender Representation of Self-Help Bestsellers for Improving Relationships in Taiwan," *Lingual, Literary, and Cultural Translation* 3 (2010) 21-42; Tingyu Chen, "Women's Adult Movie Viewing and Interpretation: A Reception Analysis," *Formosa Journal Sexology* 15.2 (2009) 17-33; Ying-Ru Pan and Xing Zhen Yang, "Young Women's Body experiences in the Spring Scream: The Body Performance and Meaning of Whitening, Dieting and Dressing," *Tamkang Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 40 (2009) 91-114; and Wen-Ru Lee, "Colonization, War and Women: A Study of Masugi Shizue's Work Written during the Period of Colonial Taiwan," *Bulletin of Taiwanese Literature* 12 (2008) 63-80; I-Pei Tu, "The Feminist Camp in Tasi Ming-Liang's *The Hole* and *The Wayward Cloud*," MA Thesis (National Cheng Kung University, 2008).

⁵⁰ Angela Calabrese Barton, *Feminist Science Fiction Education* (New York: Teachers College, 1998).

⁵¹ Patricia Melzer, "Introduction: Science Fiction's Alien Constructions," *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought* (Austin: Texas UP, 2006) 1-34.

constructed. More important, I recognise the urgent need to examine the cyborg imagery in Japanese films and animations from a feminist perspective in order to address issues such as sexuality, national identity, violence, and representation. My aim is to explore the ways in which Japanese film and animation, the most popular forms of Japanese popular culture, shape and reflect gender norms and gender ideology. As a result, I specifically use aspects of Anglo-Saxon American and Australasian feminist psychoanalytic theory within my theoretical framework because they offer a valuable analytical tool for shedding light on how the unconscious is expressed through the popular representation of the cyborg. At the same time, however, I will be alert to the need to contextualise these concepts within a specifically Japanese cultural reality.

For this reason, three theoretical approaches will be taken in my thesis, and the justifications for and limitations in using those approaches will be further elaborated in the next chapter. Since the cyborg is a hybrid creature, mixing material reality and imaginative fiction, and playing out tensions between social norms and unconscious desires, the first approach will be psychoanalytic theory.⁵² I will focus on Freud's concept of the unconscious and Lacan's notion of the Symbolic Order in order to articulate ways in which processes of identification, desire, and anxiety operate in relation to visual representation. The second approach will adopt a feminist critique of gender identity and patriarchal ideology in order to expand the scope of Freud's and Lacan's theoretical concerns to take in ideas of the monstrous feminine and masculinity in crisis. In using these approaches, I am aware that feminist-psychoanalytic perspectives have Western origins. Not only is psychoanalysis accused of making ahistorical and universal claims about human subjectivity which deny its own very specific cultural origins, but feminism too has been charged with producing a monolithic discourse about women's oppression constructed by Western white

⁵² Annette Kuhn, "Introduction: Cultural Theory and Science Fiction Cinema," *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Kuhn (London and New York: VERSO, 1990) 1-12.

middle-class feminists.⁵³ In applying these approaches in my thesis, however, I am not making universal, ahistorical, and asocial analytical claims about the gendered cyborg in Japanese cultural texts. Rather, I am suggesting that such theoretical frameworks are worth re-thinking cross-culturally because they can provide insights into the mechanisms by which the discursively constructed subject is positioned through fantasy and desire and in relation to a historically, socially, and culturally specific context. Thus, I shall locate my psychoanalytic readings of the represented cyborg in relation to social anxieties over gender, sexuality, and national identity within a specifically historical, social, and historical context. Accordingly, my final approach is social and cultural: postwar Japanese society will be analysed in its political, economic, and social aspects, with particular concern for issues of gender, including the influence of Western feminism on postwar Japanese culture.

4.1 The Cyborg

Before moving to discuss the thesis structure, it is worth outlining a little further how I am defining the cyborg here, since I expand Haraway's theoretical definition of the cyborg to address a wider range of cyborgs portrayed in Japanese films and animations. According to Haraway, the cyborg is "a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction" (Haraway 1991: 149). Her main argument is that modern technology plays a crucial role in creating a cyborg that literally and metaphysically exists at the interface between organism and machine. Haraway argues that there is no specific distinction between human and animal because the scientific discourse of modern biology and evolutionary theory has produced the notion of organism as an object of knowledge which results in the erosion of difference between human and animal (Haraway 1991: 152). Thus Haraway's cyborg figure can be found at

⁵³ Chilla Bulbeck, "National Development Feminism: India, Indonesia, China and Vietnam," *Sex, Love and Feminism in Asia Pacific: A Cross-Cultural Study of Young People's Attitudes* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009) 84-115.

the interface between human and machine, between animal and machine, and between animal-human and machine. I expand her definition by suggesting that the cyborg is the hybrid of the organic and the technological. In a context in which modern technology has become a symbiotic component of organic life, Japanese film and animation have dramatised and visualised the deepest cultural desires and fears in relation to the interface between humanity and technology. As a result, Japanese film and animation is full of cyborgs which cross multiple genre categories such as disaster, fantasy, horror, monster, and science fiction films, and take a range of different forms such as robot, android, mutant, and monster within those popular cultural texts.

In order to focus on the ways in which the gendered cyborgs portrayed in Japanese film and animation deal with anxieties about specific social changes, I shall offer case studies of selected Japanese films and animations between the 1980s and the early 2000s. These texts can be seen as a response to the era in which Japan sought to transform itself from “a nation built on trade” into “a nation built on technology”, becoming a world leader in various fields of high technology, including bio-technology, semiconductors, nanotechnology, robotics technology, and computer technology (DiFilippo 1990: 33, Hemmert and Oberländer 1998: 1-19, Inoue 1998: 194-211, Morris-Suzuki 1994:211, Oberländer 1998: 173-193, Flamm 1988: 172-202).

Due to restrictions of space, the number of possible case studies is limited and selective. The films and animations I choose are selected according to their popularity in the Japanese domestic market, and the cyborgs portrayed in those films and animations typically cross over genre boundaries between action, disaster, fantasy, horror, monster, and science fiction. In this way it can be argued that the fantasies and anxieties they display are historically and culturally specific.

My first case study, the Godzilla franchise films, steps outside this timeline, for two reasons. First, I use the 1954 Godzilla film to argue that Godzilla is a monster which can be seen as the forerunner of the cinematic cyborg in Japanese cinema in term of the monster's hybridity, that

of dinosaur and nuclear technology, and a synthesis of the organic and the technological.⁵⁴ Second, the 1954 Godzilla film is also the forerunner of a Japanese cinematic cyborg which crosses genre boundaries between disaster, horror, monster, fantasy, and science fiction film.

However, the notion of cinematic genre, like the nature of the cyborg, is inevitably involved in boundary-crossing and hybridisation (Grant 2007: 23). The classification and definition of genre has been problematic in genre criticism because genre is “what we collectively believe it to be”, the product of “a common cultural consensus” across the film industry, film critics, and audiences (Tudor 1974: 135-9). The criteria for classifying genres often rely on elements of conventions, narrative, setting, iconography, stars, or audience responses but all have their limitations (Grant 2007: 9-22). The notion of genre helps to identify groups of films which share common elements to illuminate certain values, meanings, and impacts in context, but it is also important to recognise genre-crossing and genre-hybridising (Grant 2007: 4-6). In particular, science fiction has been considered a problematic genre because its conventions, narrative, setting, and iconography overlap and intermix with fantasy, horror, and monster films.⁵⁵ In this sense, it is hard to draw a clear line between science fiction, fantasy, horror, and monster films. Thus the Godzilla franchise films analysed in the first case study and most of the other films and

⁵⁴ More important, I want to point out that the intellectual discussions of the represented cyborg in cinema primarily focus on the hybrid creature of human and machine rather than that of animal and machine. For example, the intellectual discussions of the cyborg in films, Hollywood films in particular, often centre on the hybrid of human and machine such as the police officer, Murphy, in *RoboCop*; the powerful assassin, the T-800 and the T-1000, in *The Terminator* and *Terminator 2*; the android, Data, in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*; the robot, Andrew, in *The Bicentennial Man*; the android wife, Bobbie, in *The Stepford Wives*; the artificial intelligence, David, in *AI: Artificial Intelligence*. See Sue Short, *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁵⁵ Geoff King and Tanya Krzywinska, “Defining Science Fiction: Narrative Themes,” *Science Fiction Cinema: From Outerspace to Cyberspace* (London: Wallflower, 2000) 9-57; King Newman, *Science Fiction/Horror* (London: BFI, 2002); James Walters, *Fantasy Film: A Critical Introduction* (London and New York: Berg, 2011); Katherine A. Fowkes, *The Fantasy Film* (Chichester, Eng. and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); and Keith M. Johnston, *Science Fiction Film: An Critical Introduction* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2011).

animated films I choose for my case studies are characterised as science fiction according to the Japanese film industry and critics.⁵⁶ However, many of these texts also significantly cross over the boundaries between fantasy, horror, and monster film, and one case study, that centring on the Ring film series, is more often characterised as a ghost horror film. The significance and meaning of the represented cyborg in the Japanese ghost horror franchise film is an area which has been ignored by scholars.⁵⁷

5. Thesis Structure

Although a number of specific Japanese films and animations – the Godzilla monster franchises for instance, a handful of cyborg figures in Shinya Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* (1989) and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* (1992), Hideaki Anno's *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (TV series, 1995-1996), and Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (animated film, 1995) and *Ghost in the Shell: Innocence* (animated film, 2004) – have been among the most popular texts examined in English-language academic scholarship, those analyses lack not only critical reflexivity but also a contextualisation of the represented cyborgs within Japanese culture. They simply point out that

⁵⁶ Buratsuku Ando Buru, *Japanese SF Movies: Nihon Tokusatsu Meikan Neko Shinema Butsuku* (Tokyo: NEKO, 1999), and Akihiro Kitajima, *Sekai Esuefu Eiga Zenshi: A History of Science Fiction Films* (Tokyo: Aikusha, 2006)

⁵⁷ For example, some argue that the female ghost, Sadako, is a cyborg or a posthuman, but the discussions neither have the critical references in relation to the cyborg and the posthuman, nor examine the ghost cyborg from a gender perspective. See Eric White, "Case Study: Nakata Hideo's *Ringu* and *Ringu 2*," *Japanese Horror Cinema*, ed. Jay McRoy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2005) 38-50, and Steve Rawle, "Video Killed the Movie: Cultural Translation in *Ringu* and *The Ring*," *The Scary Screen: Media Anxiety in The Ring* (Farnham, Eng. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010) 97-114. Moreover, the analyses of the Ring franchise films often emphasise the cultural anxiety in relation to capitalisation, industrialisation, and modernisation in postwar Japan. See Jay McRoy, "Ghosts of the Present, Spectres of the Past: The Kaidan and the Haunted Family in the Cinema of Nakata Hideo and Shimizu Takashi," *Nightmare Japan: Contemporary Japanese Horror Cinema*, ed. McRoy (Amsterdam and New York, 2008) 75-102, and Colette Balmain, "Techno-Horror and Urban Alienation," *Introduction to Japanese Horror Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008) 168-187.

the hybrid creatures represented in those films are cyborgs which blur the boundary between human and machine, without critically examining their gender identities in relation to the Japanese social context. Therefore Chapter 1, “Gender, Feminism, and Popular Culture in Postwar Japan”, will elaborate my justifications for using Anglo-Saxon American and Australasian feminist psychoanalytic and provide a contextualisation of gender norms, feminism, and popular culture in postwar Japan. I will then outline further those aspects of feminist psychoanalytic theory, including the notions of masculinity in crisis, hysteria, the monstrous feminine, and the abject, which are relevant to the representation of the cyborg in Japanese film and animation.

The case studies which follow, from Chapter 2 to Chapter 6, will explore the complex ways in which the figure of the cyborg has functioned within Japanese-specific social-cultural contexts, and operating through the generic conventions of the texts I have selected. The case studies are therefore divided into five sections according to the ways in which the figure of the cyborg functions within different gendered and generic contexts: the cyborg in the science fiction monster films (Chapter 1), the male cyborg in the cyberpunk horror films (Chapters 3), the cyborg in the ghost horror films (Chapter 4), the female cyborg in the science fiction horror animations (Chapter 5), and the cyborg in the science fiction fantasy film and animation (Chapter 6).

Chapter 2, “Toho’s Immortal Godzilla: Re-imaging Japanese Postwar National Identity through the Gigantic Monster’s Otherness”, traces the Godzilla monster films, the science fiction sub-genre most acknowledged by the West in relation to the Hollywood monster genre. In addition to remapping the Japanese historical and political context that grounds the distinctive Japanese monster film genre, this chapter pays more attention to investigating the monster’s body and gender in relation to Japanese postwar concepts of national identity, fatherhood, and masculinity that respond to the specific social-political environment. Chapter 3, “Hysterical, Metamorphic, and Abject Male Cyborg Bodies in Japanese Cyberpunk Films”, examines

independent filmmakers' cyberpunk films: Shinya Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo: I: Iron Man* (1989) and *Tetsuo: II: Body Hammer* (1991), and Shozin Fukui's *Rubber's Lover* (1996), in order to understand 'male hysteria' caused by the cyborgisation of the 'natural' male body when men are deprived of their patriarchal gender roles or socially and sexually repressed by hegemonic masculinity. Chapter 4, "Women Ghosts in Black Boxes: Psychic Power, the Curse, and Technology", takes the Ring series to examine the generic relationship between science fiction, horror, and body genres to explore female embodiment in relation to modern technological imaginations, Japanese ghost folk tales, and psychic power. Chapter 5, "Phallic, Sexualised, and Violent Female Cyborg Bodies", explores the representation of the violent female cyborg in selected Japanese science fiction animations in terms of the notion of the phallic woman and the monstrous feminine in order to understand the female cyborg that kills and is killed. Chapter 6, "Transcendence, Apocalypse, and Posthumanity", revisits Haraway's notion of the cyborg to investigate the implications of the 'posthuman' and 'posthumanity' in the science fiction fantasy film. Although Haraway envisions a cyborg utopia that transcends the dualism that has been profoundly rooted in Western ideology, the cyborg imaginary in Japanese science fiction film (*Casshern* 2004), and animated film (*Neo Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* 1997) reflects the difficulties and dilemmas of abandoning patriarchal ideology in the imagining of posthumanity. If posthumanity is a new or alternative form of transcending the limitations of humanity, what is the prospect for the posthuman world in relation to existing social relations, communities, races, and nation-states? Haraway in her cyborg manifesto does not elaborate this issue. In contrast to her notion that the cyborg transcends the restrictions produced by dualism, the two texts studied represent an anxiety about humanity's deconstruction by cyborgs and fears that the posthumanity constructed by cyborgs will coexist with and confront humanity. This anxiety, according to the patriarchal ideology embedded in the narrative, needs religious salvation and transcendence to reconfigure and re-order the apocalyptic world inhabited by the anti-human cyborgs. The Conclusion provides a final evaluation of the Western metaphysical idea of the cyborg in relation

to these non-Western social contexts and cultural texts in which gendered cyborgs are significantly represented. This thesis will contribute, first, to providing a broader interpretation of the cyborg and its meanings than has been produced in previous studies. Second, it will fill a gap in the academic and intellectual discussions of national identity and 'posthuman' identity, which so often ignore genre implications and questions of gendered power.

Chapter 1

Gender, Feminism, and Popular Culture in Postwar Japan

My thesis aims to analyse Japanese films and animations through the lens of a feminist theory whose origins are Western. In this opening chapter I shall therefore discuss the strengths and limitations of such an approach, providing the contextualisation of gender politics and gender roles in Japan in order to establish the rationale for my approach. Accordingly, the first section of the chapter will explore the relationship between Japanese popular culture, globalisation, and the cyborg; the second and third section will look at gender politics in Japan from the prewar era (1868-1945) when feminist and suffrage movements began to burgeon, to the early 2000s when Japanese feminists' efforts significantly influenced the legal development of women's human rights⁵⁸; the final section will review feminist theory and other approaches which will be employed in the following case studies.

1. The Cyborg, Local Identity, and Global Market

From the perspective of Western second wave feminism, popular culture can be seen as a broadly patriarchal form of cultural construction, working to negotiate or challenge dominant ideas about gender roles.⁵⁹ Popular culture thus not only reflects but also produces people's view

⁵⁸ There were eight laws concerning women's and children's human rights which were passed in Japan between 1997 and 2001: the revised Equal Employment Opportunity Law that prohibits sexual harassment at the workplace (1997); the legislation of the conception pill (1999); the Basic Law for a Gender Equal Society (1999); the Child Prostitution and Pornography Law (1999); the Child Abuse Prevention Law (2000); the Anti-stalking Law (2000); the Law to Promote Human Right Education (2000); the Anti-Domestic Violence Law (2001). See Jennifer Chan-Fiberghien, *Gender and Human Rights Politics in Japan: Global Norms and Domestic Networks* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004) 137.

⁵⁹ Joanne Hollows and Rachel Moseley, "Popularity Contests: The Meanings of Popular Feminism," *Feminism in Popular Culture*, ed. Hollows and Moseley (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2006) 1-22.

of what constitute ‘appropriate’ as well as ‘inappropriate’ gender roles⁶⁰ according to a hegemonic cultural framework which is patriarchal and heterosexist.⁶¹ From such a perspective, it can be argued that the cyborg as a cultural icon in popular culture provides the perfect arena for representing (in)appropriate gender roles as a response to social changes as well as an expression of social anxieties. For example, in contrast to Haraway’s vision of a post-gender cyborg depicted in American feminist science fiction novels which challenges, troubles, and subverts gender roles in high-tech post-industrial society⁶², a number of Western film scholars observe that the female as well as male cyborgs portrayed in contemporary Hollywood science fiction/monster/horror films still largely cling to conventional gender norms along the lines of male/masculine/ dominant/control/subject/mind and female/feminine/submissive/danger /other/ body, in order to resist the cultural pressure for change which comes with a rapidly changing economic, social, political, and technological world.⁶³ In the context of considerable economic, social, and political changes in postwar Japan, it can be argued that the cyborg, as a significant

⁶⁰ Gender roles can be understood as the set of attitudes, activities, and behaviours which specify what is socially appropriate and normative. See Diana Elizabeth Kendall, “Sex and Gender,” *Sociology in Our Times: The Essentials* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2008) 316-321.

⁶¹ Nelson Rodriguez, “(Queer) Youth as Political and Pedagogical,” *Queer Theory in Education*, ed. William Pinar (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1998) 146-182.

⁶² Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,” *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991) 149-181.

⁶³ Mary Ann Doane, “Technophilia: Technology, Representation, and the Feminine,” *The Gendered Cyborg: A Reader*, ed. Gill Kirkup et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 50-57; Barbara Creed, “Alien and the Monstrous-Feminine,” *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Annette Kuhn (London and New York: Verso, 1990) 128-144; Christine Cornea, “The Masculine Subject of Science Fiction in the 1980s Blockbuster Era,” *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2007) 111-144; Doran Larson, “Machine as Messiah; Cyborgs, Morphs and the American Body Politics,” *Liquid Metal: The Science Fiction Film Reader*, ed. Sean Redmond (London and New York: Wallflower, 2004) 191-204; Daniel Dinello, “Rampaging Cyborgs: Bionics,” *Technophobia!: Science Fiction Versions of Posthuman Technology* (Austin: Texas UP, 2005) 115-146.

representational and discursive figuration in Japanese film and animation, emerges here too as one of the key sites for the (re)production of gender norms.

The interplay between the cyborg and gender norms is complex in relation to the production and consumption of Japanese popular culture, because the cyborg thus produced is intersected by the discourses of 'Japaneseness' and 'de-Japanisation'. Two strategies, Iwabuchi (2002) argues, are often employed in the production and promotion of Japanese popular culture in response to the transnational market: one is to uphold the Japanese national cultural heritage, whilst the other, in contrast, seeks to erase national traits in exporting popular culture. Despite the "high-profile presence" of its trade goods and cultural products exported to and consumed by the West, Japanese culture, argues Gary Needham, still remains "distant and unknowable in this era of mass media saturation and local and global formations".⁶⁴ One response is the production of a self-orientalising discourse to construct a non-Western identity in the narrative of modernity, whilst the other is a form of 'de-Japanised' cultural production. As an outcome of the Meiji Restoration in the imperial period and the American occupation in the postwar era, Japan has developed a complex Orientalist relationship with the West. The construction of Japan's own image of itself, it has been argued⁶⁵, is according to the notion of cultural Otherness in relation to the imagined 'West' through the process of orientalisation.⁶⁶ Ignoring the demographic and cultural heterogeneity of the West, this process results in underlining Japan's culture as unique and unknowable in a way that distinctively divides Japan from the West to construct a notionally homogeneous national identity.⁶⁷ Japanese art cinema in particular, Freiberg (1998) argues, was a

⁶⁴ Gary Needham, "Japanese Cinema and Orientalism," *Asian Cinemas: A Reader and Guide*, ed. Dimitris Eleftheriotis and Gary Needham (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006) 10.

⁶⁵ Needham 10.

⁶⁶ Koichi Iwabuchi, "Introduction: The 1990s—Japan's Return to Asia in the Age of Globalization," *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002) 1-23.

⁶⁷ Koichi Iwabuchi, "Trans/Nationalism: Discourses on Japan in the Global Cultural Flow," *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002) 51-84.

source of fascination to Western film critics and film scholars between the 1950s and the end of the 1980s, due both to attitudes toward Japanese culture which saw it as the exotic and oriental, and to the rise of auteurism in Western film studies.⁶⁸ Likewise, Japanese distributors also promote Japanese live-action films in the West based on the appeal of its cultural difference.⁶⁹ For example, Western distributor Metro-Tartan uses ‘Tartan Asia Extreme’ as a promotion slogan to tag contemporary Japanese fantasy/horror films.⁷⁰ The slogan characterises Japanese cinema with the implications of danger and the unexpected cinematic narrative in order to feed into “fantasies of the ‘Orient’ characterised by exoticism, mystery and danger”.⁷¹ The language of Tartan Asia Extreme’s promotional slogan manifests its own oriental implication and fantasy: “If the weird, the wonderful and the dangerous is your thing, then you really don’t want to miss this chance to take a walk on the wild side”.⁷² Thus Japanese live-action films both represent cultural exotica and are considered as a national cinema that presumably represents a coherent and united Japanese national identity and Japanese cultural-social heritage and specificity.

On the other hand, Tsunoyama (1995) points out that the success of exporting Japanese popular culture to the West also relies on the strategy of ‘*mukokuseki*’, which means ‘stateless’ and implies the erasure of visible national, ethical, and cultural traits.⁷³ Taking *anime* as an example, *anime* has become an international entertainment culture since the 1980s in terms of its

⁶⁸ Freda Freiberg, “Japanese Cinema,” *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998) 562-568.

⁶⁹ David Desser, “Filming “Difference”,” *The Routledge Companion to Film History*, ed. William Guynn (Abingdon, OX and New York: Routledge, 2011) 103.

⁷⁰ Gary Needham, “Japanese Cinema and Orientalism,” *Asian Cinemas: A Reader and Guide*, ed. Dimitris Eleftheriotis and Gary Needham (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006) 9.

⁷¹ Needham 9.

⁷² Needham 9.

⁷³ Koichi Iwabuchi, “Introduction: The 1990s—Japan’s Return to Asia in the Age of Globalization,” *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002) 24.

diverse themes in contrast to its American counterpart.⁷⁴ *Anime* ignores visual realism to feature de-Japanised characters. For example, the characters in *anime* often have bizarre hair colourings such as blue, pink, or green; comedy *anime* draws grotesque characters with “shrunk torsos and oversize heads”; romance and adventure *anime* focus on “elongated figures with huge eyes and endless flowing hair”.⁷⁵ Japanese animators privilege ‘*mukokuseki*’ design to produce ambiguous phenotypes and vague national origins⁷⁶ because the medium of *anime*, Napier argues, with its “flexibility, creativity and freedom” recreates a fantasy and surrogate world to have a transnational appeal in a global market.⁷⁷

Nevertheless, the cyborg figurations offered by Japanese live-action film and animation neither represent the ‘purity’ of Japaneseness nor exemplify a de-Japanisation of popular culture. On the contrary, one of the major mechanisms of producing cyborg imagery in Japanese film and animation is the adaptation of Western popular culture to suit local contexts. The production of the cyborg in Japanese popular culture therefore can be understood not through concepts of self-orientalisation or ‘de-Japanisation’ but through notions of hybridisation and indigenisation. Kato Shuichi (1955) argues not only that Japan has been actively adopting Western cultures and absorbing Western cultural influences as a response to modernisation, but

⁷⁴ Hirofumi Katsuno and Jeffery Maret, “Localizing Pokémon TV Series for the American Market,” *Pikachu’s Global Adventure: The Rise and Fall of Pokémon*, ed. Joseph Jay Tobin (Durham: Duke UP, 2004). 108-140.

⁷⁵ Susan J. Napier, *Anime: From Arkira to Howl’s Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2005) 25.

⁷⁶ Rebecca Carlos and Jonathan Corliss, “Coding Culture: Video Game Localization and the Practices of Mediating Cultural Difference,” *Utopic Dreams and Apocalyptic Fantasies: Critical Approaches to Researching Video Game Play*, ed. J. Talmadge Wright, David G. Embrick, and András Lukács (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010) 161-184.

⁷⁷ Susan J. Napier, *Anime: From Arkira to Howl’s Moving Castle: Experiencing Contemporary Japanese Animation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2005) 26.

also that this has led to the hybridity of Japanese culture.⁷⁸ Such a perspective can be usefully applied to the case of the cyborg represented in Japanese film and animation. Although Japan has been long fascinated with automata, Japanese cinema and animation are also influenced by the genre of Western science fiction, both in literary and cinematic forms, which greatly contributes to the fascination with cyborgs. The Japanese have been enthusiastic consumers of Western technoscience and Western science fiction since the mid-1800s.⁷⁹ Japanese gender roles, too, have been significantly influenced by contemporary Western thinking throughout the late nineteenth century and the twentieth century as a result of the Meiji Restoration and the American occupation. In this sense, it can be argued that the Japanese popular cultural images of the cyborg not only contribute to the reproduction of Japanese gender roles but also are influenced by Western science fiction which transmits Western gender norms and ideologies. The figuration of Japanese gendered cyborgs therefore shares many elements with that of its Western counterparts, but the gender coding of the cyborg in Japanese film and animation also needs to be understood in relation to the specific historical, political, economic, and social currents of Japanese modernisation. Japanese scholars have employed feminist theory to examine the cyborg in Japanese science fiction and *anime*. For example, Kotani Mari (2007) explores the monstrous feminine in Japanese women's science fiction novels;⁸⁰ Kumiko Sato (2004) discusses the relationship between feminism and Japanese cyberpunk;⁸¹ Tamaki Saito

⁷⁸ Koichi Iwabuchi, "Introduction: The 1990s—Japan's Return to Asia in the Age of Globalization," *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 2002) 57-58

⁷⁹ Sharalyn Orbaugh, "The Genealogy of the Cyborg in Japanese Popular Culture," *World Weavers: Globalization, Science Fiction, and the Cybernetic Revolution*, ed. Kin-Yuen Wong, Gary Westfahl, and Amy Kitsze Chan (Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2005) 71.

⁸⁰ Kotani Mari, "Alien Spaces and Alien Bodies in Japanese Women's Science Fiction," *Robot Ghosts Wired Dreams: Japanese Science Fiction from Origins to Anime*, ed. Christopher Bolton, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay JR., and Takayuki Tatsumi (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2007) 47-74.

⁸¹ Kumiko Sato, "How Information Technology Has (Not) Changed Feminism and Japanism: Cyberpunk in the Japanese Context," *Comparative Literature Studies* 41.3 (2004) 335-354.

(2011) uses a feminist psychoanalytic approach to deliver insightful analysis of the powerful, violent, and sexy female characters in *anime*.⁸² Therefore, I follow those Japanese scholars who have employed Western feminist theory to reveal and deconstruct gender norms embedded in cyborg imagery in Japanese film and animation. Accordingly, in the following sections, I will provide a socio-cultural contextualisation of gender roles in relation to the gendered cyborgs produced by Japanese film and animation. I shall argue that whereas Japanese myths of motherhood and Japanese *kawaii* and *rorikon* cultures are linked to female cyborg images, the representation of the male cyborg has been engaged with Japanese nationalism and the Japanese hegemonic masculine ideal of the salaryman.

2. Motherhood, Gender Politics, and Feminism in Postwar Japan

During the imperial period between 1868 and 1945, Japan had become a modernised, industrialised, capitalised, and urbanised nation-state which functioned to institutionalise patriarchy.⁸³ The role of father-husband, under the Meiji Civil Code of 1898, was defined as the head of household and the authority on family issues from marriage to inheritance.⁸⁴ Women's rights were strongly restrained by the Meiji Civil Code in relation to marriage, children, divorce, and property.⁸⁵ Women's education in the imperial period was strongly associated with mothering and housekeeping in order to achieve the state-promoted notion of femininity, characterised by the popular catchphrase, 'good wife, wise mother' (*ryosai kenbo*).⁸⁶ Meanwhile, Article Five of the Peace Preservation Law in 1887 explicitly barred women from organising, joining political

⁸² Tamaki Saito, *Beautiful Fighting Girl*, trans. J. Keith Vincent and Dawn Lawson (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2011)

⁸³ Muto Ichiya, "The Birth of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1970s" *The Other Japan: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance since 1945*, ed. Joe Moore (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997) 147-175.

⁸⁴ Ichiya 151.

⁸⁵ Ichiya 151.

⁸⁶ Keiko Hirao, "Mothers as the Best Teachers: Japanese Motherhood and Early Childhood Education," *Women's Working Lives in East Asia*, ed. Mary C. Brinton (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2001) 180-203.

organisations, or even attending meetings where political issues were discussed.⁸⁷ In sum, Imperial Japan had set “less fluid notions of biologically based feminine and masculine social orders” as Japanese gender and cultural norms.⁸⁸

The American occupation in postwar Japan significantly transformed gender relations through the legal and constitutional changes initiated by the American occupation authority.⁸⁹ General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces (SACAP) drafted the equal-rights amendment (ERA) and revised Constitution to endow Japanese women with more equal rights.⁹⁰ The constitutional revision gave Japanese women equality in domestic, educational, economic, political, and social spheres. Consequently, more Japanese women entered the labour force. By 1991, 26.5 million Japanese women were in the labour market, constituting 40.8 percent of the total Japanese workforce and eroding the prewar traditional gender division, ‘women at home and men at work’.⁹¹ However, the proportion of women taking part-time jobs with long working hours and low pay has been rapidly increasing.⁹²

Since Japanese women’s primary task was associated with child-rearing and housekeeping, Japanese working women had been seen as secondary breadwinners in the household and

⁸⁷ E. Patricia Tsurumi, “Visions of Women and the New Society in Conflict: Yamakawa Kikue versus Takamure Itsue,” *Japan’s Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy, 1900-1930*, ed. Sharon Minichiello (Honolulu: Hawai’i UP, 1998) 335-357.

⁸⁸ William Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur E. Tiedemann, “Gender Politics and Feminism,” *Sources of Japanese Tradition: 1600-2000, Part Two: 1868-2000*, ed. de Bary, Gluck, and Tiedemann (New York: Columbia UP, 2006) 474.

⁸⁹ Mire Koikari, “Feminism, Nationalism, and Colonial Genealogy: Women’s Enfranchisement and Constitutional Revision,” *Pedagogy of Democracy: Feminism and the Cold War in the U.S. Occupation of Japan* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2008) 32-74.

⁹⁰ Koikari 89.

⁹¹ Yoko Kawashima, “Female Workers: An Overview of Past and Current Trends,” *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda (New York: Feminists, 1995) 289.

⁹² Susan D. Holloway, “Balancing Work and Family Life,” *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2010) 171-195.

secondary or supplementary workers in the workplace, with low wages in comparison with men.⁹³ Accordingly, the peak of women's employment occurred before marriage and after child-care.⁹⁴ The rapid postwar economic growth and the emergence of the nuclear family had created a large middle class in Japan.⁹⁵ Middle-class families were largely structured by the full-time housewife/salaried husband relationship.⁹⁶ Promoted by the state, the middle-class full-time housewife (*sengyo shufu*) was defined as an ideal femininity since the 1960s in terms of her feminine complementarity to the salary man (*sarari man*) husband.⁹⁷ In order to build the nation in an effective form of capitalism without class divisions, the Japanese government articulated the full-time housewife/salaried husband relationship with national economic growth and a desirable class status.⁹⁸ The government claimed that the housewife-mother is the foundation of the Japanese family as well as the key contributor to national economic success.⁹⁹ In this sense, the dominant imagery of middle-class full-time housewife-mother was a culturally specific construction with which Japan sought to, on the one hand, differentiate itself from a Western capitalism negatively characterised by its class divisions, and on the other hand, regulate domestic identities within the nationalistic discourse.¹⁰⁰ Due to the economic recession in the late 1980s in

⁹³ Yoko Kawashima, "Female Workers: An Overview of Past and Current Trends," *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda (New York: Feminists, 1995) 289.

⁹⁴ Kanai Yoshiko, "Issues for Japanese Feminism," *Voices from the Japanese Women's Movement*, ed. AMPO-Japanese Asia Quarterly Review (Armonk, NY and London: East Gate, 1996) 3-22.

⁹⁵ Kazuo Kawai, "Labor, Agriculture and Economy Recovery," *Japan's American Interlude* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1960) 160-182.

⁹⁶ Aya Ezawa, "The Changing Patterns of Marriage and Motherhood," *Transforming Japan: How Feminism and Diversity Are Making a Difference*, ed. Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow (New York: Feminist, 2011) 105-120.

⁹⁷ Margaret M. Lock, "The Pathology of Modernity," *Encounters with Aging: Mythologies of Menopause in Japan and North America* (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1993) 78-106.

⁹⁸ Joanna Liddle and Sachiko Nakajima, "Women in the New Heisei Era," *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters: Gender, Class, and Power in Japan* (London and New York: Zed, 2000) 311-324.

⁹⁹ Liddle and Nakajima 322.

¹⁰⁰ Liddle and Nakajima 322.

association with the burgeoning of the anti-working mother discourse, more Japanese young women chose to become full-time housewives. The prewar ideal of femininity, 'good wife, wise mother' (*ryosai kenbo*), not only persisted in postwar society but also had an impact on women's educational and occupational achievement. Although Japanese girl's participation in secondary education had reached 98 percent in 1990, a majority of Japanese women pursued higher education in two-year junior colleges rather than four-year universities.¹⁰¹ This phenomenon reflected conditions in which the labour participation of female university graduates was much lower than that of female upper secondary school graduates, few female managers were in the workplace, and Japanese employers reluctantly recruited female university graduates who were expected to quit after marriage for their family duties.¹⁰²

This domestic role assigned to Japanese women has consequently affected their political participation. Although having the rights to vote and be engaged with political movements and decision-making processes since the postwar era, Japanese women have played a limited role in bureaucratic structures.¹⁰³ According to a survey conducted by the Interparliamentary Union in Geneva in June 1991, Japanese women's political consciousness and representation in the political decision-making sphere still remained low in comparison with the other democratic industrialised nations.¹⁰⁴ According to the survey, Japan ranked the lowest among industrialised nations, in 110th position in terms of national parliamentary representation in the Lower

¹⁰¹ Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow, "College Women Today: Options and Dilemmas," *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Feminist, 1995) 127.

¹⁰² Millie R. Creighton, "Marriage, Motherhood, and Career Management in a Japanese 'Counter Culture'," *Re-Imaging Japanese Women*, ed. Anne E. Imamura (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1996) 192-220; Christian Berggren and Masami Nomura, "Employment Practices: A Critical Analysis of the 'Three Pillars'," *The Resilience of Corporate Japan: New Strategies and Personnel Practices* (London: P. Chapman, 1997) 66-93.

¹⁰³ Kimiko Kubo and Joyce Gelb, "Obstacles and Opportunities: Women and Political Participation in Japan," *Women of Japan and Korea: Continuity and Change*, ed. Joyce Gelb and Marian Lief Palley (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1994) 120-149.

¹⁰⁴ Kubo and Gelb 120.

House.¹⁰⁵ By contrast, a majority of Japanese middle-class housewives strongly engaged with grassroots and community politics in the 1980s such as peace, anti-nuclear, environment, consumer awareness, and children rights movements.¹⁰⁶ However, their politics primarily focused on the improvement of their middle-class lifestyles rather than challenging gendered power relations, the implication of class in creating gendered power structures, and the traditional gender roles assigned to them within the patriarchal economic, political, and family frameworks.¹⁰⁷

The changes in Japanese women's civil and social status were not only the result of the democratisation of Japanese women under the American occupation, but are also linked to two waves of Japanese feminist movements which have been influenced by the West, the United States in particular.¹⁰⁸ The term, *feminisuto* (feminist) has two definitions in the Japanese language: one refers to a chivalrous man who treats women with courtesy, and the other to a person who advocates women's liberation and equal rights for women.¹⁰⁹ The first meaning is the original definition in the Japanese language, and the second is equivalent to the English definition in relation to the 1970s' Western second wave feminism.¹¹⁰ Since the 1970s, words such as *unman ribu* (women's liberation) and *feminizumu* (feminism) have begun to appear in Japanese culture and

¹⁰⁵ Kubo and Gelb 120.

¹⁰⁶ Yukiko Matsukawa and Kaoru Tachi, "Women's Suffrage and Gender Politics in Japan," *Suffrage and Beyond: International Feminist Perspectives*, ed. Caroline Daley and Melanie Nolan (New York: New York UP, 1994) 171-183; Joanna Liddle and Sachiko Nakajima, "Women and the Global Political Economy," *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters: Gender, Class, and Power in Japan* (London and New York: Zed, 2000) 5-16.

¹⁰⁷ Joanna Liddle and Sachiko Nakajima, "Women and the Global Political Economy," *Rising Suns, Rising Daughters: Gender, Class, and Power in Japan* (London and New York: Zed, 2000) 5-16.

¹⁰⁸ Kazuko Watanabe, "Feminism: Japan," *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Education: Health to Hypertension*, ed. Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender (New York: Routledge, 2000) 769-774.

¹⁰⁹ Naoko Takemaru, "Feminism in Japan," *Women in the Language and Society of Japan: The Linguistic Roots of Bias* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010) 72-86.

¹¹⁰ Takemaru 79.

language.¹¹¹ The first wave burgeoned in the late nineteenth century and continued until the outbreak of the Second World War. The notions of women's rights or equality were drawn from indigenous as well as Western-imported ideas after the Meiji Restoration.¹¹² When the Meiji government abolished the traditional class system, the indigenous ideas were derived from the notion of being a respected civilian in the emerging modern nation-state through educational accomplishment and ethical cultivation.¹¹³ The education reforms made in the early 1870s were the key to the modern Japanese women's movement: the public elementary schooling was introduced as a nation-wide education system for all children regardless of gender and three girls were funded by the state to study in the United States for ten years.¹¹⁴ Under Western suffragist influence, Japanese women began to form different organisations in Japan for raising political awareness of women's issues and seeking power in domestic and public spheres.¹¹⁵ The second wave of women's liberation movements began in the 1970s under the influence of Western second wave feminism and has continued today to challenge the sexual division of labour, the dichotomy between the public and private spheres, and as well as promoting sexual liberation.¹¹⁶

In spite of the fact that the passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOL) in 1985, the revision of the Eugenic Protection Law in 1996, and the passage of the law for the Protection against Spousal Violence and the Protection of Women in 2001 were the result of

¹¹¹ Takemaru 79.

¹¹² Barbara Molony, "Women's Rights, Feminism, and Suffragism in Japan, 1870-1925," *Pacific Historical Review* 69.4 (2000) 640.

¹¹³ Molony 640.

¹¹⁴ Benjamin C. Duke, "The Modern Education of Japanese Girls: Georgetown, Bryn Mawr, Vassar, 1872," *The History of Modern Japanese Education: Constructing the National School System, 1872-1890* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2009) 97.

¹¹⁵ Sheldon Garon, "Integrating Women into Public Life: Women's Groups and the State," *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1997) 115-146.

¹¹⁶ Kazuko Watanabe, "Feminism: Japan," *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women: Education: Health to Hypertension*, ed. Cheris Kramarae and Dale Spender (New York: Routledge, 2000) 769-774.

feminist activists' efforts,¹¹⁷ Japanese feminists still saw a significant gap between theory and reality. For example, the scale of feminist mobilisation and social impact has been less than that of its Western counterparts in terms of unequal gendered public policies and employment practices.¹¹⁸ Japanese feminist movements did not appeal to a majority of Japanese women, feminist organisations did not have significant numbers, and feminist activities had little significant impact outside feminist circles.¹¹⁹ These phenomena are linked to anti-feminist sentiment in Japan and the uneasy relationship between Japanese feminists and Western feminism. For example, feminism in Japan is often seen as a remote scholarly exercise or academic discipline¹²⁰; Japanese media's negative interpretations of the 1970s' Japanese women's liberation movements have strongly affected the perceptions of feminism even today¹²¹; a

¹¹⁷ Yumiko Mikanagi, "The Japanese Conception of Citizenship," *The Routledge Handbook of Japanese Politics*, ed. Alisa Gaunder (London and New York: Routledge, 2011) 129-139; Joyce Gelb, "The Politics of Backlash in the United States and Japan," *Women's Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance?*, ed. Sandra Grey and Marian Sawer (London and New York: Routledge, 2008) 79-88.

¹¹⁸ Yumiko Mikanagi, "The Japanese Conception of Citizenship," *The Routledge Handbook of Japanese Politics*, ed. Alisa Gaunder (London and New York: Routledge, 2011) 129-139; Yoko Tokuhiko, "The Impact of Feminist Discourses on Marriage and Fertility," *Marriage in Contemporary Japan* (Milton Park, Abingdon, OX and New York: Routledge, 2010) 28-53.

¹¹⁹ Mikiko Eto, "Community-Based Movements of Japanese Women: How Mothers Infiltrate Political Sphere from Below," *Gender Politics in Asia: Women Manoeuvring within Dominant Gender Orders*, ed. Wil Burghoorn et al. (Copenhagen: NIAS, 2008) 43-68.

¹²⁰ Laura Dales, "Feminist Features in Japan: Exploring the Work of Haruka Yōko and Kitahara Minori," *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, ed. Mark J. McLelland and Romit Dasgupta (London and New York: Routledge, 2005) 183-199.

¹²¹ Yoko Tokuhiko, "The Impact of Feminist Discourses on Marriage and Fertility," *Marriage in Contemporary Japan* (Abingdon, OX and New York: Routledge, 2010) 40; Yukiko Tanaku, "Wūman Ribū and the Women's Movement in Japan," *Contemporary Portraits of Japanese Women* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995) 141-154.

backlash against feminism has been evident in the Japanese political landscape¹²². Media and politicians have highlighted the negative impact of feminist discourses which have threatened Japanese family values and social norms when working mothers struggle to balance family and work, women delay marriage and childbearing, and fertility rates have fallen sharply.¹²³ Accordingly, whilst the majority of Japanese men still cling to conventional gender norms, mainstream middle-class Japanese women also tend to distance themselves from feminism due to its agenda to deconstruct or oppose patriarchy.¹²⁴

Meanwhile, Japanese feminists attempted to characterise the identity of ‘Japanese feminism’ in relation to ‘Western feminism’. Under the influence of the *nihonjinron* (theory of being Japanese) discourse which emphasises Japanese culture’s uniqueness and superiority, distinctive from any other cultures, Japanese feminists underlined the national-cultural identity of Japanese feminism. Some Japanese feminist scholars showed ambivalence towards Western feminism by suggesting the limitations of Western feminism. Japanese feminists such as Takamure Itsue, Hiratsuka Raicho, and Yamashita Etsuko refuted the idea that feminism in Japan is a Western import and argued that the value of motherhood is the cultural specificity in Japanese feminism

¹²² Masako Ishii-Kuntz, “Working-Class Fatherhood and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan,” *Handbook of Feminist Family Studies*, ed. Sally A. Lloyd, April L. Few, and Katherine R. Allen (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009) 192-204; Joyce Gelb, “The Politics of Backlash in the United States and Japan,” *Women’s Movements: Flourishing or in Abeyance?*, ed. Sandra Grey and Marian Sawyer (London and New York: Routledge, 2008) 79-88.

¹²³ Laura Dales, “Feminist Features in Japan: Exploring the Work of Haruka Yōko and Kitahara Minori,” *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, ed. Mark J. McLelland and Romit Dasgupta (London and New York: Routledge, 2005) 183-199; Sandra Buckley, “A Short History of the Feminist Movement in Japan,” *Women of Japan and Korea Continuity and Change*, ed. Joyce Gelb and Marian Lief (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1994) 150-188.

¹²⁴ Laura Dales, “Feminist Features in Japan: Exploring the Work of Haruka Yōko and Kitahara Minori,” *Genders, Transgenders and Sexualities in Japan*, ed. Mark J. McLelland and Romit Dasgupta (London and New York: Routledge, 2005) 185; Amy Beth Borovoy, “Good Wives: Negotiating Marital Relationships,” *The Too-Good Wife: Alcohol, Codependency, and the Politics of Nurturance in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 2005) 86-114.

in contrast to Western feminism's endorsement of individualism. They claimed that the Western value of individualism does not fit well with Japanese society where an individual's identity is bound within cultural contexts including family, company, community, and nation.¹²⁵ Ueno, a leading feminist scholar-activist in Japan, points out that the emphasis on national-cultural differences of Japanese feminism can be seen as a response to the dominance of Western feminist paradigms that produce "a universal category of women" and "global forms of women's oppression caused by an undifferentiated global patriarchy" (Luke 2001: 72).¹²⁶

Ueno argues that this particularist approach to Japanese feminism on the one hand presumes contemporary Japanese socio-cultural homogeneity without considering historical, social, economic, and political interactions with the West, and on the other hand, reinforces the Orientalist dichotomy between Japan and the West.¹²⁷ This particularist approach has affected the understanding and critique of patriarchy in Japanese feminism. Yoshiko (1996) points out that the notion of patriarchy has not gained enough critical attention amongst Japanese feminists, in comparison to that of gender, because the concept of Japanese patriarchy is often linked to the premodern, prewar, and obsolete family structure, named '*ie*'.¹²⁸ Since the patriarchal '*ie*' system as an institution was abolished by the postwar reforms, the Japanese particularist feminists had difficulties in accepting the idea of patriarchy as the primary cause of women's oppression which was introduced by Western radical feminists.

¹²⁵ Sonia Ryang, "Love and Colonialism in Takamure Itsue's Feminism," *Feminist Ethics and the Politics of Love*, ed. Feminist Review (London: Routledge, 1998) 1-32; Ueno Chizuko, "Are the Japanese Feminine? Some Problems of Japanese Feminism in Its Cultural Context," *Sources of East Asian Tradition: Volume 2: The Modern Period*, ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia UP, 2008) 903-909.

¹²⁶ Carmen Luke, "Western Feminism, Globalization, and Local Standpoints," *Globalization and Women in Academia: North/West-South/East* (Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum, 2001) 72-96.

¹²⁷ Ueno Chizuko, "Are the Japanese Feminine? Some Problems of Japanese Feminism in Its Cultural Context," *Sources of East Asian Tradition: Volume 2: The Modern Period*, ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary (New York: Columbia UP, 2008) 903-909.

¹²⁸ Kanai Yoshiko, "Issues for Japanese Feminism," *Voices from the Japanese Women's Movement*, ed. AMPO-Japanese Asia Quarterly Review (Armonk, NY and London: M.E. Sharpe, 1996) 3-22.

Moreover, radical feminism has not taken root in Japan where Japanese mainstream middle-class women are not attracted to the radical feminist deconstruction of motherhood and domesticity.¹²⁹ In particular, the middle-class full-time housewives who actively engaged with grassroots movements in the 1980s had developed distinctively Japanese form of feminism which Shiota Sakiko defined as ‘housewife feminism’.¹³⁰ For example, the nation-wide network called ‘Seiatsu Clun Seikyo’ was founded in 1965 to help housewives improve their middle-class consuming lifestyle through cooperatives which provide organically grown food. Since the late 1970s, a number of housewives have begun to run for political office and some of them were elected as local politicians. However, the housewife activists were involved with voluntary community activities and concerned with consumer and environmental issues such as promoting the use of soap instead of chemical detergents, protecting the community’s source of water, regulating the sale of food contaminated by radiation, and ensuring safety in the transport of nuclear fuel. They did not critically evaluate their domestic role as a gender norm within the Japanese patriarchal framework characterised by the nuclear family structure and the corporate-state control of the labour market.¹³¹

Accordingly, since the roles of wife and mother are often conflated and seen as a gender norm in Japan, the dominant discourse on motherhood plays a significant role in Japanese popular culture. In particular, the selected films and animations in my case studies highlight the trope of the absent mother in the making of cyborgs which lends itself to feminist critique. For example, the Ring franchise films demonstrate an ambivalence about motherhood by fusing Japanese mythology, superstition, and technology to create a sharp contrast between the absent

¹²⁹ Yoshiko 13.

¹³⁰ Yoshiko 13

¹³¹ Muto Ichiya, “The Birth of the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1970s” *The Other Japan: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance since 1945*, ed. Joe Moore (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997) 147-175; Ki-Young Shin, “The Women’s Movements,” *The Routledge Handbook of Japanese Politics*, ed. Alisa Gaunder (London and New York: Routledge, 2011) 175-186.

mother and the devoted mother to play out the unconscious conflicts and contradictions between 'Japanese tradition' and 'Western modernity'.

2.1 *Kawaii*, *Rorikon*, and Imagined Femininity

The representative figuration of female cyborgs in Japanese animation is strongly engaged in the discursive construction of femininity in relation to *kawaii* (cute) culture and *rorikon* (the Lolita Complex). It can be argued that female cyborg images produced in Japanese animation resemble nothing we could have known in everyday life, but they can be identified as objects of (heterosexual) male fantasy. The original meaning of *kawaii* came from Lady Murasaki's *Story of Genji* in the early eleventh century which referred to the sentiment of pity and empathy as well as persons and objects which arouse such sentiments.¹³² The metaphorical expressions of *kawaii* have changed through time. During the Shogunate period between the 12th and 19th, *kawaii* referred to the helpless state of infants and children and then expanded this implication to girls and women. As a result, this word was associated with the idea of female virtue, indicating women who are docile, dependent, demure, delicate, fragile, and sensitive.¹³³ However, *kawaii* did not connote 'cuteness' until the late 1960s and the early 1970s. The concept began to dominate Japanese popular culture, especially since the 1980s, through the establishment of the girl-child subculture such as the 'cute' handwriting initiated by Japanese teenage girls, children's 'cute' merchandise industry, 'cute' fashion, 'cute' food, 'cute' dolls, comics, and animation.¹³⁴ *Kawaii* has evolved into an inclusive expression which is essentially childlike and connotes "sweet, adorable,

¹³² Kanako Shiokawa, "Cute but Deadly: Women and Violence in Japanese Comics," *Themes and Issues in Asia Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 95.

¹³³ Shiokawa 95.

¹³⁴ Sharon Kinsella, "Cuties in Japan," *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, ed. Lise Skov and Brian Moeran (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1995) 220-254; Kanako Shiokawa, "Cute but Deadly: Women and Violence in Japanese Comics," *Themes and Issues in Asia Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 93-126.

innocent, pure, simple, genuine, vulnerable, weak, and inexperienced” (Kinsella 1995: 220). The commercial aesthetic of *kawaii* deliberately designs the size and shape of merchandise to be rounded, simple, smooth, safe, harmless, and unthreatening in order to arouse feelings of affection, cuddling, and protection.¹³⁵ Saturated with the *kawaii* consumer culture, Japanese young people are encouraged to have “infantile behaviour, frivolous mannerisms, and a superficial attitude toward profundity and values”.¹³⁶ More important, *kawaii* culture is gendered as feminine¹³⁷ and this feminine subcultural expression has been absorbed by Japanese mainstream popular culture to become established as a socio-cultural norm.¹³⁸

When it comes to female representation, the relationship between the notions of *kawaii* and *manga* is complex. Japanese *manga* publishers use gender and age to classify *manga* into five demographic groups used for commercial promotions: *shojo* (girls), *shonen* (boys), *redisu* or *redikomi* (young women), *seinen* (young men), and *seijin* (adult erotica).¹³⁹ In particular, *shojo manga* and *shonen manga* adopt the notion of *kawaii* to disseminate complex representations of femininity. *Shojo manga* primarily depicts physically infantilised female characters with smooth rounded facial features, disproportionally larger eyes, and prepubescent bodies. Under the influence of *kawaii*

¹³⁵ Boye De Mente, “Kawaii: The Incredible “Cute” Syndrome,” *Elements of Japanese Design: Key Terms for Understanding & Using Japan’s Classic Wabi-Aabi-Shibui Concepts* (Tokyo and Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 2006) 82-83; Adrian David Cheok, “Kawaii: Cute Interactive Media,” *Imagery in the 21st Century*, ed. Oliver Grau and Thomas Veigl (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2011) 245-267.

¹³⁶ Adrian David Cheok, “Kawaii: Cute Interactive Media,” *Imagery in the 21st century*, ed. Oliver Grau, Thomas Veigl (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2011) 249.

¹³⁷ Marilyn Ivy, “The Art of Cute Little Things: Nara Yoshimoto’s Parapolitics,” *Mechademia 5: Fantbropologies*, ed. Frenchy Lunning (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2010) 3-29.

¹³⁸ Kanako Shiokawa, “Cute but Deadly: Women and Violence in Japanese Comics,” *Themes and Issues in Asia Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 94.

¹³⁹ Federico Zanetin, “Comics,” *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 2nd ed, ed. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha (London and New York: Routledge, 2009) 37-40.

culture, *shonen manga* also features the hero's girlfriend as a significant role in boys' action *manga* by combining a young girl's *kawaii* face with an adult female body with large breasts.¹⁴⁰

Since the 1980s, explicit sexual scenes burgeoned remarkably in *redisu* or *redikomi manga* (young women's *manga*), *seinen manga* (young men's *manga*), and *seijin manga* (adult erotica *manga*).¹⁴¹ At the same time, animated pornography has flourished in Japan, following the advent of home video and the direct-to-video industry. Violent and pornographic narratives were highlighted in adult *manga* and *anime*. As a result, the heroines shown in *manga* and *anime* are not only cute, pretty, and adorable but also active, aggressive, and sexually attractive. There is no doubt that they are produced for men's fantasy and exploited as sex objects.¹⁴²

Accordingly, the sexualised cute heroine has become a norm in the pornographic adult *manga* industry which was mass-produced and marketed for male viewers (Shigematsu 1999: 129). While the asexual cute heroines have developed as a subgenre of *shojo manga* since the 1980s, the sexualised cute heroines at the same time have evolved into a subgenre of *seijin manga* (adult erotica *manga*) which is strongly linked to the Japanese subculture called *rorikon* produced by armature manga artists.¹⁴³ *Rorikon*, is the Japanese abbreviation for 'Lolita Complex' which is

¹⁴⁰ Christine R. Yano, "Kitty Litter: Japanese Cute at Home and Abroad," *Toys, Games, and Media*, ed. Jeffrey Goldstein, David Buckingham, and Gilles Brougère (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004) 55-72.

¹⁴¹ Kanako Shiokawa, "Cute but Deadly: Women and Violence in Japanese Comics," *Themes and Issues in Asia Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 110.

¹⁴² Yumiko Lida, "Japan in the 1990s and Beyond: Identity Crisis in the Late Modern Conditions," *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism as Aesthetics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) 209-258.

¹⁴³ Thomas LaMarre, "Otaku Movement," *Japan after Japan: Social and Cultural Life from the Recessionary 1990s to the Present*, ed. Tomiko Yoda and Harry D. Harootunian (Durham: Duke UP, 2006) 358-394.

often shortened to 'lolicom', 'lolicon' or just 'loli'.¹⁴⁴ *Rorikon* or Lolita Complex is derived from a reference to Vladimir Nabokov's novel *Lolita* (1955) which tells the story of a middle-aged man who becomes sexually obsessed with a twelve-year-old girl, and it is widely used to refer to a psychological complex about the sexual obsession with or fetishisation of prepubescent girls (Winge 2008: 52, Zank 2010: 212).¹⁴⁵ *Rorikon manga* primarily feature heroines with "large eyes and a body that is both voluptuous and child-like" involved in all manner of sexual activity (Kinsella 1998: 305, Gravett 2004: 136).¹⁴⁶

The burgeoning and popularity of *rorikon manga* has been seen as occurring in response to the changing roles of women in society (Kinsella 1998: 306). As mentioned earlier, on the one hand Japanese women have gained more rights in the educational, marital, economic, and political spheres since the postwar era, and on the other hand, the increase in women's participation in higher education and the labour force participation has resulted in Japanese young women increasingly delaying marriage and childbearing. Accordingly, Japanese men have developed ambivalent attitudes towards women's changing gender roles in society. In particular, when *rorikon manga* is written by and for men, the *rorikon* heroines are portrayed as tough and clever, which demonstrates, writes Theresa Winge, Japanese men's "awareness of the increasing power and centrality of young women in society" and "reactive desires to see those young women disarmed, infantilized, and subordinated".¹⁴⁷ Accordingly, it can be argued that female

¹⁴⁴ Sarah D. Goode, "Paedophiles Online," *Understanding and Addressing Adult Sexual Attraction to Children: A Study of Paedophiles in Contemporary Society* (New York: Routledge, 2009) 28; Ashish Pandey, "Lolicon," *Dictionary of Fiction* (Delhi: Chawala Offset, 2005) 149.

¹⁴⁵ Theresa Winge, "Undressing and Dressing Loli: A Search for the Identity of the Japanese Lolita", *Mechademia 3: Limits of the Human*, ed. Frenchy Lunning (Minneapolis and London: Minnesota UP, 2008) 47-64.

¹⁴⁶ Paul Gravett, "Personal Agendas," *Manga: Sixty Years of Japanese Comics* (London and New York: Laurence King, 2004) 136.

¹⁴⁷ Sharon Kinsella, "Japanese Subculture in the 1990s: Otaku and the Amateur Manga Movement," *Japanese Studies* 24:2 (1998) 306.

cyborg images in Japanese animation which is still a male-dominated industry¹⁴⁸ provide the perfect platform to on the one hand, embody the Japanese idea of *kawaii* by representing non-threatening, sexless, and manageable femininity¹⁴⁹, and on the other hand, exploit *rorikon* fantasies by sexualising machines, aliens, robots, androids, and monsters “that are normally not explicitly sexual”.¹⁵⁰

3. Nationalism and Masculinity in Postwar Japan

To turn now to the figure of the *male* cyborg in Japanese film and animation, I argue similarly that this figure – that portrayed in Godzilla franchise films and Japanese cyberpunk films for example – can be best contextualised within the complex of values around Japanese postwar nationalism and masculinity. The making of the Godzilla films is best situated within the economic, political, and social context of the relationship with the United States after the Second World War, and Japanese cyberpunk’s male cyborgs are associated with the crisis of Japanese masculinity in relation to the economic resection since the late 1980s.

3.1 National Identity and Nationalism in Postwar Japan

Historically, Japan was the target of American atomic bomb attack in the Second World War, formed an anti-Communist alliance with the U.S. during the Cold War, and was socio-politically overshadowed by the American occupation for seven years in the postwar era. Japanese post-war national identity is thus constructed through anti-American and anti-nuclear sentiments. Whilst

¹⁴⁸ Thomas LaMarre, *The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation* (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 2009) 318.

¹⁴⁹ Susan J. Napier, “Vampires, Psychic Girls, Flying Women and Sailor Scouts: Four Faces of the Young Female in Japanese Popular Culture,” *The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture: Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Cultures*, ed. D. P. Martinez (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 91-109.

¹⁵⁰ Setsu Shigematsu, “Dimensions of Desire: Sex, Fantasy, and Fetish in Japanese Comics,” *Themes and Issues in Asia Cartooning: Cute, Cheap, Mad, and Sexy*, ed. John A. Lent (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green UP, 1999) 130.

franchised films which use Godzilla as part of a narrative to develop each individual story for the following twenty-seven series, it is not hard to trace the cinematic construction of Godzilla's national identity over time. Godzilla's character has oscillated between the identity of national protector and that of national destroyer. This shifting character represents Japan's ambivalent attitude towards militarism, nationalism, technological-capitalism, and the political relationship with the US in the postwar era, which is conditioned by the dismantling of the Japanese Empire, the Japanese constitutionalised disarmament of the military at the end of the Second World War, and the rapid growth of the Japanese economy since the 1960s.

The ambiguity of Godzilla's 'Otherness' is associated with Japan's postwar anxiety in relation to a national identity situated within historical interpretations of the Second World War, political debates about the legitimacy of the SDF (the Self Defence Forces)¹⁵¹, and increasing economic power in the global market. Godzilla is born among unresolved dilemmas in which Japanese society has never been able to reach a 'nationalist' consensus on interpreting the historical incidents of the Second World War as well as on constructing Japan's foreign policy according to Japan's controversial Article 9¹⁵² in relation to the legitimacy of the military. While Godzilla's

¹⁵¹ After the Second World War, the Japanese imperial military was abolished and consequently the Self Defence Forces (the SDF) were established to replace the imperial military system. The name, Self Defence Forces, is used to respond to the Article 9 of the postwar constitution that renounces war and the military forces for the international affairs. Different from the imperial military that was responsible for the Emperor, the SDF is controlled by the Prime Minister. The SDF are comprised of Ground, Air, and Maritime forces, but under the Three Non-nuclear Principles announced by Prime Minister Sato Eisaku in 1968 and approved by the Diet in 1972, the SDF have never been equipped with nuclear weapons. Although the SDF are employed to defend Japan's security, the forces are always controversial in terms of that the Supreme Court has never explicitly stated that the SDF are either constitutional or unconstitutional. See Timothy S. George, "Self -Defence Forces," *Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Japanese Culture*, ed. Sandra Buckley (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁵² Article 9 is part of Japan's postwar constitution that took effect on 3 May 1947. This Article declares that Japan forever renounces war and prohibits the maintenance of military forces. However, in reality, the military forces are conditionally permitted to establish and go under the name of the Self Defence

'birth' is conditioned by the domination of Hollywood, the trauma of the Second World War, and anxiety about the Cold War, understanding the monster must engage with the two-fold pleasures of *the return of the repressed*. Godzilla is the uncanny embodiment of what is repressed: Japan is overshadowed by the national trauma of being a victim and a perpetrator of the Second World War. The repetitive appearance of the monster in the franchised narrative exposes the repressed national trauma in relation to the ethical guilt of being a sadistic war perpetrator and a masochistic war victim.

Consequently, the notion of nation/state is called into question, since Japan in the postwar era has replaced the military-imperialism between 1895 and 1945 with the democratic-capitalist system conditioned by the constraints on the military establishment. The resurrection of Godzilla at the beginning of the narrative in each film represents, on the one hand, the pleasure that is derived from Japan's guilty and dangerous pleasure in playing a sadistic-masochistic role in the Second World War, and on the other hand, the superego pleasure of controlling or repressing those desires by eliminating Godzilla at the end of the film. In this respect, Japanese audiences enjoy the pleasures of identifying with and expelling the monstrous in re-imaging Japan's postwar national identity through the continual eruption and repression of the repressed.

The struggle over the national narrative in relation to Japanese identity formation begins from the controversies caused by the fact that accounts of the Second World War are dominated by the Japanese government's censorship of history textbooks in secondary education since the end of the American occupation in 1952.¹⁵³ In particular, between the 1980s and 1990s, the government revised the textbooks to reinforce a patriotic ideology which provides a Japanese postwar generation with a 'positive' image and 'victimised' role for Japan during the Second

Forces. See Carl F. Goodman, "Article 9-Renunciation of War-Military Power and Responsibility," *The Rule of Law in Japan: A Comparative Analysis* (London and New York: Kluwer, 2003) 145-166.

¹⁵³ Inokuchi Hiromitsu and Nozaki Yoshiko, "Japanese Education, Nationalism, and Ienaga Saburo's Textbook Lawsuit," *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, ed. Laura Elizabeth Hein and Mark Selden (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000) 96-126.

World War. For example, the Ministry of Education suggested that the word, ‘aggression’ (*shinryaku*) should be replaced by ‘advancement’ (*shinshutsu*) in explaining foreign relations, or if the word ‘aggression’ needs to be mentioned, the textbooks should explain the small number of victims in Nanjing, Singapore, and Okinawa during the Second World War. The Tsukurukai textbook has triggered domestic and international protests over this biased re-construction of the national narrative through education, in relation to the Japanese government-approved view of the justification and legitimacy of the Nanjing Massacre, of the annexation of Korea, of women’s conformity, and of the Pacific War.¹⁵⁴ In this respect, Godzilla can be seen as a national nostalgic signification of war victimisation rather than a critique of Japanese nationalism. Whereas Godzilla represents the trauma of the nuclear war for the Japanese people who had suffered in 1945, this monster is constructed for the postwar young generation as a nostalgic legend and minor threat to Japan’s security that needs to be eliminated without concern for the moral implications of the Second World War.

The prewar orthodox nationalist discourse of emperor-state centred militarism that emphasises the importance of military solutions to foreign and domestic problems has been transformed into a postwar liberal, democratic, and economic nationalism shaped by the dismantling of the Japanese monarchy, the disarmament of the Japanese military, and the democratisation of the Japanese economy and politics during the American occupation period.¹⁵⁵ The legacy of the American occupation leaves three distinctive characteristics of Japanese foreign policy: firstly, the requirement for a minimal military establishment for Japan’s defence by investing only one percent of GDP in Japan’s military and denouncing war in Japan’s

¹⁵⁴ John Nathan, *Japan Unbound: A Volatile Nation’s Quest for Pride and Purpose* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004) 139; Ryo Oshiba, “Globalization and Education in Japan: The Case of Junior High School History Textbooks,” *Fairness, Globalization, and Public Institution: East Asia and Beyond*, ed. James Dator, Allen, Richard Pratt, and Yongseok Seo (Honolulu: Hawai’i UP, 2006) 286-299.

¹⁵⁵ Sandra Wilson, “Rethinking Nation and Nationalism in Japan,” *Nation and Nationalism in Japan*, ed. Wilson (London: Routledge, 2002) 1-20.

Constitution; secondly, the Japanese military's reliance on the U.S., which restrains Japan's foreign policy; and thirdly, the intensive focus on economic development since the American occupation era.¹⁵⁶ Although Japan's anti-war and anti-nuclear culture has been established since the end of the Second World War, the Japanese nationalists' advocacy of the constitutional revision of Article 9 has never been out of sight in the public sphere.¹⁵⁷ This nationalist view reflects Japan's dramatic changes in the postwar era. The first change is that Japan's military budget has been formally controlled as under one percent of GDP since the 1970s, but Japan's rapid economic growth has in fact made the military budget significantly more than one percent of GDP, so that Japan has the third largest defence budget in the world.¹⁵⁸ Despite Japan's parliament in 1968 declaring its three non-nuclear principles to be the banning of production, possession, and introduction of nuclear weapons, those principles have never been institutionalised.

However, the development of nuclear weapons in the postwar era has remained a taboo, even though Japan is the third largest nuclear power user and has the technological competence and sufficient plutonium to develop destructive weaponry.¹⁵⁹ The second change is in Japan's foreign relations with the world. The political campaign of supporting nuclear weaponry has become intense because of anxieties about the nation's security caused by North Korea's Taepo Dong missile flying over Japan's territory and the nuclear test competition between India and Pakistan

¹⁵⁶ Tsuchiyama Jitsuo, "Ironies in Japanese Defense and Disarmament Policy," *Japanese Foreign Policy Today: A Reader*, ed. Takashi Inoguchi and Purnendra Jain (New York: St. Martin, 2000) 142.

¹⁵⁷ Anthony DiFilippo, *The Challenges of the U.S.-Japan Military Arrangement: Competing Security Transitions in a Changing International Environment* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2000) 114.

¹⁵⁸ Jeffrey Kingston, *Japan in Transformation, 1952-2000* (New York: Longman, 2001) 66.

¹⁵⁹ James Irving Matray, *Japan's Emergence as a Global Power* (Westport, CT: Green, 2001) 175; OECD, *Economic Surveys: Japan 2009* (Paris: OECD, 2009) 143; Kurt M. Campbell and Tsuyoshi Sunohara, "Japan: Thinking the Unthinkable," *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, Robert J. Einhorn, and Mitchell Reiss (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2004) 218-253.

in 1998.¹⁶⁰ In this respect, the constitutional Article 9, associated with the legitimacy and renunciation of war and the U.S.-Japan military alliance, is not compatible with the changing role of the Self Defence Forces (the SDF), which has been expanded into international affairs in the 1990s' Gulf War and the post-9/11 era.¹⁶¹ In particular, the arguments linked to the revision of Article 9 and the SDF reveal the anxiety that Japan is not seen as a 'normal' state in the absence of a full complement of state power caused by its military dependence on the American alliance.¹⁶²

With the high growth of Japan's economy, the country's nationalists have demanded discussions over redefining the concept of 'state' in Japan: in order to become a 'real' nation, Japan should, they argued, alter its Constitution to give the SDF an autonomous power of defence and attack. Dobson (2003) points out that the role of the SDF has changed during the past fifty years.¹⁶³ Initially, Japan's military was constrained by Article 9 of the Constitution and its function was based on a defence-oriented policy. However, the SDF has been actively involved in international affairs. Since the 1990s, the SDF has played a peacekeeping role in the world with the United Nations' agreement. After the Gulf War, the SDF participated in activities such as medical aid, transportation, refugee aid, policing aid, and infrastructure repair in Cambodia (1992), Angola (1992), Mozambique (1993), El Salvador (1994) and the Golan Heights between Israel and Syria (1996). After September 11, 2001, the Japanese government passed a new Anti-Terrorist law to approve of the SDF's alliance with American operations in

¹⁶⁰ Kurt M. Campbell and Tsuyoshi Sunohara, "Japan: Thinking the Unthinkable," *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices*, ed. Kurt M. Campbell, Robert J. Einhorn, and Mitchell Reiss (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2004) 228.

¹⁶¹ Daniel M. Kliman, *Japan's Security Strategy in the Post-9/11 World: Embracing a New Realpolitik* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006) 68-72.

¹⁶² Glenn D. Hook and Anthony Payne, "Introduction: Thinking about Global Governance and Japan," *Global Governance and Japan: the Institutional Architecture*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Hugo Dobson (Milton Park, Abingdon, OX and New York: Routledge, 2007) 1-22.

¹⁶³ Hugo Dobson, *Japan and United Nations Peacekeeping: New Pressures, New Responses* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

Afghanistan. In 2004 the government sent Japanese troops to Iraq at the request of the U.S. for the reconstruction of Iraq. This employment was controversial in terms of its legality, in that the military is forbidden to use armed forces under the Constitution's regulations. Article 9 has been a controversial issue in Japan and has involved different interpretations as the Japanese military only has the function of self-defence. The use of the armed forces in overseas capability is limited; there is a lack of long-range offensive armed force. Under Yasuhiro Nakasone's term as the prime minister between 1982 and 1987, the public opinion about the role of the SDF has shifted into the concept of self-defence not only applied to Japanese domestic security, but also expanded "beyond the immediate area of Japan itself".¹⁶⁴ Through the process of re-interpreting self-defence and expanding its military activity, Japan re-defines itself not only as an autonomous state but also as a significant world-leader in the international stage.

Japan's economic, social, and political changes in the postwar era have made understanding Japan's national identity ever more complex, in the face of repeated dilemmas and conflicts in integrating the traumatic past of the Japanese imperial-militant nationalist ideology with postwar capitalist and democratic nationalism under the influence of the American occupation. Japan has reconstructed its national identity in the postwar era not only through intensive economic development, but also through controversial interpretations of the traumatic past in the Second World War. However, while Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution and the parliamentary statement about the three non-nuclear principles are the embodiment and reminder of the war trauma, the political campaign for revising Article 9 and the educational indoctrination of the young generation through government-approved textbooks both re-construct Japanese postwar national identity through political-educational discursive practices. Consequently, the process of constructing Japanese postwar national identity both inevitably encounters the undesirable and uncomfortable trauma associated with ideological interpretations of the Second World War and,

¹⁶⁴ Duncan McCargo, *Contemporary Japan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 185.

on the other hand, is compensated by its status as economic superpower and excellence in technological development.

In this sense, the pleasure of watching cinematic horror in relation to the Japanese military and scientists' hunting of Godzilla, and Godzilla's destruction of urban landscapes and of the other monsters, must, then, be situated in relation to Japan's complex political and economic contexts. The Godzilla monster in the franchised films represents the return of the repressed that engages with the traumatic experiences of the Second World War and the dilemma of being caught between the institutionalisation of war renunciation, the controversial role of the SDF in foreign affairs, and the rapid growth of the economy. Godzilla represents not only the social-psychological repression of the traumatic experiences of being the victim and the perpetrator at the same time in the Second World War, but also Japan's postwar anxiety in relation to the contradiction between the ongoing political-economic changes in Japan's international role and the unchanged constitutional law related to the constraints on the military. The first Godzilla film in 1954 portrays Japan as the victim of nuclear war but does not express a critical attitude towards the role Japan played during the Second World War. The franchised sequels, particularly the films made since the 1990s, sought to represent the possibilities and tensions about how Japan re-situates itself on the international stage when the nation has not only gradually recovered from the war but also suffered a prolonged economic recession at the same time.

3.2 Hegemonic Masculinity and the Crisis of Masculinity in Postwar Japan

Japanese films create the spectacle of aggressive, violent, heterosexual, and hypermasculine cyborg bodies in order to symbolically compensate masculinity in crisis when hegemonic masculinity is under threat from social, economic, and political changes in a specific space at a specific time which can be identified as the decline of male power or the "moments of

incoherence or powerlessness in the male body”.¹⁶⁵ The formation of a national identity legitimises the nation/state to allow ideological discourses to work on the notion of the nation in order to be identified by and identify different groups of people as its ‘imagined community’. The imaged nation is strongly linked with the masculinised imagination in terms of constructing not only the dominant view of the nation/state but also the socio-political order which is produced in the image of men and represented in specific forms of masculinity such as politics and warfare.¹⁶⁶ The imagination/construction of the nation can be seen as a male fantasy/construction that is predominantly determined by ‘hegemonic masculinity’. The hegemonic masculinity is particularly constructed in relation to subordinated masculinities such as the ‘effeminate’ or the ‘unassertive’ homosexual, when it has been seen as a heterosexual form which is socially accepted, honoured, idealised, and privileged in various social structures.¹⁶⁷ This

¹⁶⁵ Samantha Holland, “Descartes Goes to Hollywood: Mind, Body and Gender in Contemporary Cyborg Cinema,” *Cyberspace/ Cyberbodies/ Cyberpunk: Cultures of Technological Embodiment*, ed. Mike Featherstone and Roger Burrows (London: SAGE, 1995) 166; Frank J. Barrett and Stephen M. Whitehead, “The Sociology of Masculinity,” *The Masculinities Reader*, ed. Barrett and Whitehead (Cambridge: Polity, 2001) 8; Ken Browne, *An Introduction of Sociology*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Polity, 2005) 94; Paul Smith, “Eastwood Bound,” *Constructing Masculinity*, ed. Maurice Berger et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 1995) 92.

¹⁶⁶ John Horne, “Masculinity in Politics and War in the Age of Nation-States and World Wars, 1850-1950,” *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh (Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2004) 27; Sikata Banerjee, *Make Me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India* (New York: New York State UP, 2006) 6; John Tosh, “Hegemonic Masculinity and the History of Gender,” *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh (Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2004) 42.

¹⁶⁷ James W. Messerschmidt, “Masculinities, Crime, and Prison,” *Prison Masculinities*, ed. Donald F. Sabo, Terry Allen Kupers, and Willie James London (Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2001) 70; Thomas K. Nakayama and Garry L. Rolison, “Defensive Discourse: Blacks and Gays in the U.S. Military,” *Gays and Lesbians in the Military: Issues, Concerns, and Contrasts*, ed. Wilbur J. Scott and Sandra Carson Stanley (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1994) 125.

gendered structure of a society can be maintained by cultural means such as education and mass media that naturalise the assumptions of hegemonic masculinity as ‘common sense’.¹⁶⁸

Accordingly, as I shall argue in more detail in the next chapter, Godzilla embodies a Japanese male fantasy of postwar nationhood built on myths of Godzilla’s offence and defence against the enemies outside and within Japan in response to the struggle for national identity. Godzilla is an ideological agency to sustain Japan’s hegemonic masculinity, which merges divergent economic, political, and moral interests in order to establish a national hegemony over Japanese postwar identity. On the one hand, Japan’s hegemonic masculinity can be characterised by the human heroic figures who are not only courageous, clever, loyal, and resourceful, but also the representatives of social order such as governmental officers, military leaders, and scientists. On the other hand, nationalistic sentiments are inscribed into Godzilla’s invulnerable body in relation to his regenerative cells that can heal his wounds immediately and resist most conventional weaponry. The national political and military spheres are a source of masculine authority and a privileged arena of male activity, and the female characters follow this gendered structure to fulfil the mission of eliminating the monster.¹⁶⁹ Godzilla and the Japanese authorities use the performance of hypermasculinity, as the ideological performance of an ideal manhood through the exercise of force and physical strength to dominate Others, to form a dynamic and interdependent relationship for preserving Japanese hegemonic masculinity.¹⁷⁰

The imagery of male cyborgs produced in Japanese cyberpunk films can similarly be seen as a “defensive sign” for the crisis of Japanese masculinity in relation to the 1990s’ economic

¹⁶⁸ John Tosh, “Hegemonic Masculinity and the History of Gender,” *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh (Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2004) 42.

¹⁶⁹ John Horne, “Masculinity in Politics and War in the Age of Nation-States and World Wars, 1850-1950,” *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and John Tosh (Manchester and New York: Manchester UP, 2004) 31.

¹⁷⁰ Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport* (Toronto: Toronto UP, 1999) 192.

recession in Japan. ‘Salaryman masculinity’ which had been formed as a hegemonic masculinity since the beginning of postwar economic growth in the 1950s in Japan¹⁷¹ and “required men’s psychological and physical commitment to work”,¹⁷² was characterised by ideal, respectable, middle class, full time, life-time employment, and white-collar male workers.¹⁷³ The recession not only resulted in high unemployment as well as the collapse of lifetime employment and seniority-based payments and promotions, but also caused an increasing number of men’s suicides motivated by economic and occupational issues.¹⁷⁴ Consequently, the late 1980s’ and the 1990s’ Japanese cyberpunk films, I argue, function as a cultural text representing symptoms of a crisis of Japanese masculinity which can be found in abject, deformed, and metamorphic male cyborg bodies constructed by unsophisticated or unadvanced technology loaded with sexual connotation, and manifest through crimes towards the destructive and nihilistic trajectory of apocalypse in urban decay and human degradation of the post-industrial city.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki, Introduction, *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa*, ed. Roberson and Suzuki (New York and London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) 7.

¹⁷² Masako Ishii-Kuntz, “Working-Class Fatherhood and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan,” *Handbook of Feminist Family Studies*, ed. Sally A. Lloyd, April L. Few, and Katherine R. Allen (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009) 196.

¹⁷³ Christine Cornea, *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2007) 121; James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki, Introduction, *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa*, ed. Roberson and Suzuki (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) 7; Romit Dasgupta, “Masculinities and the Internet in Japan,” *Japanese Cybercultures*, ed. Nanette Gottlieb and Mark McLelland (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) 111.

¹⁷⁴ Futoshi Taga, “East Asian Masculinities,” *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, ed. Michael S. Kimmel and Jeff Hearn (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005) 134; Romit Dasgupta, “Masculinities and the Internet in Japan,” *Japanese Cybercultures*, ed. Nanette Gottlieb and Mark McLelland (London and New York: Routledge, 2003) 111.

¹⁷⁵ Tatiani G. Rapatzikou, *Gothic Motifs in the Fiction of William Gibson* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004) 35; Fred Botting, “Romanticism, Repetition, Reiteration (Sublimity, Modernity, In-Humanity),” *Inhuman Reflections: Thinking the Limits of the Human*, ed. Scott Brewster et al. (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000) 100; Catherine Constable, “Baudrillardian Revolutions: Repetition and Radical Intervention in the *Matrix*

4. Theoretical Concepts

The following sections will introduce key concepts in feminist theory and the relevant theoretical notions in relation to the representation of the cyborg: current feminist agendas such as Williams' idea of 'body genres' (1991); Kristeva's concept of 'the abject' (1982); Creed's notions of the 'monstrous-feminine' (1990) and 'phallic woman' (1993); feminist critiques of dualism, uncanny, hysteria, and masculinity.

4.1 The Cyborg and Body Genres

In order to offer a much more comprehensive view of the gendered cyborg represented in Japanese film and animation in my thesis, I shall use Linda Williams' feminist investigation of what she calls 'body genres'. Williams in "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess" observes that the cinematic genres of pornography, horror, and melodrama in particular, share the distinctive characteristic of focusing on the spectacle of 'excessiveness' or over-exposure of sensational bodily expressions such as the sexual pleasure of pornography, the screams of fear and terror of horror films, and the sobs of anguish and sadness of melodrama.¹⁷⁶ Williams argues that the circularity and repetition of the over emotional and sensational spectacle produces a non-linear narrative and the uncanny display of the human body, which can be seen as a new system or structure for reading those genres in relation to gender construction and sexual fantasies. Moreover, this excessiveness of bodily expression, Williams suggests, is a way of producing ecstasies of sexual excitement or rapture in visual pleasure and identification. On the one hand, aligning with Mulvey's theory of spectatorship, Williams agrees that the female bodies have traditionally operated as "the primary *embodiments* of pleasure, fear, and pain" to produce a visual pleasure for male audiences from a safe distance in engaging with the bodies displayed on

Trilogy," *The Matrix Trilogy: Cyberpunk Reloaded*, ed. Stacy Gillis (London and New York: Wallflower, 2005) 156.

¹⁷⁶ Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess," *Film Quarterly* 44.4 (1991) 3.

the screen (author's emphasis).¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, Williams uses studies of masochism to search for the female gaze in pornography, horror, and melodrama by arguing that those body genres actually provide the unfixed gaze and a mixture of visual identification between the masculine and the feminine. More important, they also have "roots in the originary fantasies of primal seduction, castration and the mystery of sexual difference, and the loss of origin".¹⁷⁸ Her discussion of body genres is useful in exploring the representation of the cyborg in Japanese film and animation because Japanese cyborgs not only play a remarkable role in the "gratuitous excesses" of the body but also have represented an ongoing transformation and hybridisation of the generic establishment.¹⁷⁹ These Japanese cultural texts continually portray the sexual, sensational, and emotional excesses of technological cyborgs bodies, and inevitably respond to the male masochism and the monstrous feminine produced by the increasing feminisation of technology.

4.2 Otherness, the Abject, and the Uncanny

Since the cyborg's hybrid identity highlights the construction of otherness,¹⁸⁰ cyborg imagery represents our current anxieties in relation to specific socio-cultural issues. The representation of 'Otherness' embodied through various forms of cyborg can be further explored through theoretical accounts which, according to Stuart Hall, seek to explain 'difference' in cultural-social contexts: without difference, meaning could not exist and we could not make any sense of the world in which we live.¹⁸¹ Just as meaning is seen to arise from difference produced by

¹⁷⁷ Williams 4.

¹⁷⁸ Carl. R. Plantinga, "Pleasures, Desires, Fantasies," *American Film and the Spectator's Experience* (Berkeley, CA and London: California UP, 2009) 41.

¹⁷⁹ Linda Williams, "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess," *Film Quarterly* 44.4 (1991) 3.

¹⁸⁰ Anne Balsamo, "Reading Cyborgs Writing Feminism," *The Gendered Cyborg: A Reader*, ed. Gill Kirkup et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 155.

¹⁸¹ Stuart Hall, "The Spectacle of the 'Other'," *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Hall (London: SAGE, 1997) 234-238.

comparison with the Other and by the participants in the process of dialogue¹⁸², so from an anthropological perspective, difference is important to cultural meaning set up through cultural classification into a symbolic system.¹⁸³ Structural anthropology builds on these insights that difference marks symbolic boundaries and orders that construct what we call 'culture'. On the one hand, the process of making cultural meaning through difference symbolically sustains culture, and on the other hand, culture stigmatises and expels anything that is defined as impure or abnormal. Therefore, cultural meaning makes difference powerful as it classifies difference that is outside the symbolic system such as the forbidden, taboos, and threats to cultural order.¹⁸⁴

The concept of difference is also associated with psychological development, as a fundamental process of constructing the Self and sexual identity. The construction of self-identification is based on encountering the 'Other', as in Freud's theory of the Oedipus Complex that structures the process of identification with Others like the power of the father as Phallus, or Lacan's theory of the Mirror Stage in which the subject looks from the place of the Other and (mis)recognises itself as unified subject in relation to the 'Other'. The emergence of the sense of the Self and subjectivity is through unconscious and symbolic relations that the subject establishes with a significant 'Other' that is outside the subject or different from the subject itself. It can be argued that difference is a crucial concept for the formation of culture and language, for social identities, and for the sexed/gendered subject with its own subjective sense of the Self on the linguistic, the social, the cultural and the psychological levels.

Accordingly, difference is ambivalent in that it might create positive and negative effects in which it is a threat, "a site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards the 'Other'".¹⁸⁵ This phenomenon is often found in a situation where the division of Self

¹⁸² Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: Texas UP, 1986) 72.

¹⁸³ Hall 236.

¹⁸⁴ Hall 236-237.

¹⁸⁵ Hall 238.

and Other cannot be achieved by distinguishing, identifying, and recognising difference, so that feelings of anxiety, fear and frightening arise. This psychological response can be understood through the notion of the uncanny. In his essay “The Uncanny” (“*Das Unheimliche*”) (1919), Freud argues that the uncanny is involved in the feeling of horror when something is familiar but alienated.¹⁸⁶ He traces the meaning of the uncanny (*das unheimliche*) through different languages to explain the interrelation between uncanny and frightening. He observes that the uncanny has the ambivalent nature of its double and opposite meanings: homely/unhomely; clear/obscure; familiar/unfamiliar; knowable/unknowable.¹⁸⁷ The double meaning of the uncanny for Freud is related to what is frightening and what arouses dread and horror.¹⁸⁸ More important, this type of fear, Freud argues, leads back to “what is known of old and long familiar” in relation to the return of repressed castration anxiety.¹⁸⁹ Freud uses Hoffman’s story of “The Sandman” to establish several categories in relation to the notion of the uncanny such as the castration anxiety represented through dismembered limbs, a severed head or hand, the stolen eyes, a fear of the female genitalia; the fantasy of the double or animate objects such as dolls, demons, ghosts, and automata.¹⁹⁰ All of them blur the boundary between subject/object, Self/Other, organic/inorganic, and living/dead. As a result, the uncanny engages with the “peculiar emotional response to the challenging of one’s notions of identity”.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ Bruce Grenville, “The Uncanny: Experiments in Cyborg Culture,” *The Uncanny: Experiments in Cyborg Culture*, ed. Grenville (Vancouver, BC: Vancouver Art Gallery and Arsenal Pulp, 2001) 20.

¹⁸⁷ Barbara Creed, *Phallic Panic: Film, Horror and the Primal Uncanny* (Victoria, Aus.: Melbourne UP, 2005) 5.

¹⁸⁸ Sigmund Freud, “The Uncanny,” *The Uncanny: Experiments in Cyborg Culture*, ed. Bruce Grenville (Vancouver, BC: Vancouver Art Gallery and Arsenal Pulp, 2001) 61.

¹⁸⁹ Freud 62.

¹⁹⁰ Freud, 59-94.

¹⁹¹ Cathy S. Gelbin, Introduction, *The Golem Returns: From German Romantic Literature to Global Jewish Culture, 1808-2008* (Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan UP, 2011) 4.

Kristeva (1982) draws on Freud's notion of the uncanny to elaborate the horror of abjection.¹⁹² The abject is used to describe the construction of socially acceptable forms of the Self. The subject, Kristeva explains, obtains its own identity through the process of expelling the abject as inadequate, disorderly, unclean, and anti-social elements such as blood, excrement, urine, tears, and vomits which remind the subject of its fusion with the maternal body. She defines the abject as "the jettisoned object" whose ambiguity draws the subject to "the place where meaning collapses".¹⁹³ From such a perspective, in addition to bodily fluids, the abject can be a corpse, bodily wastes, or anything which foregrounds psychological fear and social disorder. When the subject cannot differentiate or separate from any form of the abject such as bodily fluids, the maternal body, or the sexual perversion which arouses sexual desires and forms cultural taboos at the same time, the abjection appears to threaten the unity and identity of the subject and society. It also confuses the boundary between the clean and the unclean, the inside and the outside of the body, the living and the dead, the human and the non-human, the pre-Oedipal and the Oedipal, and the civilised and uncivilised.¹⁹⁴

If the formation of subjectivity encounters obstacles, the abject in particular, where the subject neither fully identifies with nor excludes the 'Other', then psychic problems could arise from the failed separation between the 'good' and 'bad' parts of the Self and the subject might internalise the 'bad' aspects into itself or project on to Others the 'bad' feelings that the subject could not handle. In this instance, the subject is not only horrified but also fascinated by the abject which culture defines as the uncivilised, the immoral, the non-human, or the Other. I argue that this psychoanalytic perspective can explain why the cyborg largely represents those

¹⁹² Julia Kristeva, "Approaching Abjection," *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1982).

¹⁹³ Kristeva 4.

¹⁹⁴ Peter Brooker, "Abjection," *A Glossary of Cultural Theory* (London and New York: Arnold, 2003) 1.

psychological responses to “a confrontation between a mixture of those images to which we respond as ‘alien’ and those we know to be familiar”.¹⁹⁵

Accordingly, this psychoanalytic perspective of otherness can be applied to the representation of the cyborg in Japanese film and animation in which the understanding of humanity and the nature of the human is not based on what we know of the ‘essence’ of humanity but by working through its difference from its Others: we can define the human in its difference from alien, android, artificial intelligence, robot, clone, replicant, or monster. Moreover, the notions of the uncanny and the abject are useful to examine cyborg imagery as an ambiguous entity that “plays out the power struggles over gender and sexuality, race and national identity, opening up potential space of resistance and opposition to masculine and feminine norms, and notions of Otherness that circulate in ‘culture’ more widely”.¹⁹⁶

4.3 The Phallic Woman and the Monstrous Feminine

Woman’s ‘Otherness’ is often represented through the imagery of aliens and monsters that signify a sexist difference in order to reconfirm the ‘normality’ of the male experience and the deviance of the woman’s body. Freud argues in the castration complex that women are terrifying because their genitals appear to be castrated: “Because the penis and the phallus are (albeit illusionary) identified, women are regarded as castrated”.¹⁹⁷ It implies that she is defined by ‘lack’ in regard to the Symbolic relational order, as man inherits the right to represent this order.¹⁹⁸ According to Freud’s castration theory, woman can only become a castrator when she is endowed with the penis or phallus as a representation of masculinity. Freud (1922) takes the

¹⁹⁵ Steve Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000) 101.

¹⁹⁶ Sean Redmond, “Liquid Metal: The Cyborg in Science Fiction,” *Liquid Metal: The Science Fiction Film Reader*, ed. Redmond (London and New York: Wallflower, 2004) 156-157.

¹⁹⁷ Elizabeth A. Grosz, *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990) 116.

¹⁹⁸ Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1993) 110.

myth of Medusa and Perseus to illustrate his theory that woman is castrated.¹⁹⁹ In his essay, *Medusa's Head*, he argues that the decapitated head of Medusa represents the castrated genitalia of the mother figure. The head with its hair of writhing snakes serves as a fetish object as it demonstrates the absence and presence of the mother's penis. Furthermore, anyone who looks at the Medusa's head will turn to stone. This is why Perseus looks at the Medusa's reflection in his shield in order to cut off her head. Freud interprets the notion of turning to stone as a metaphor for having an erect penis, which reassures men of the fact that they still possess the phallus.

Creed argues that Freud's castration theory misses some important elements for the story of the Medusa because woman can be literally a castrator: the '*vagina dentata*'.²⁰⁰ She explains that the Medusa myth as analysed by historians operates rather differently. For example, Erich Neumann argues that the Gorgons symbolise the mother goddess in terms of her 'devouring aspect', her genitals or womb-gullet being represented as dreadful faces with gnashing teeth.²⁰¹ In historical terms the Medusa as goddess is characterised by her aggressive behaviour, her genitals or womb-gullet represented by the terrible head with its "writhing snakes, huge mouth, lolling tongue and boar's tusks".²⁰² Moreover, the snake with its open mouth and pointed fangs has a sexual implication. As Creed suggests, in classical culture the snake is represented as a symbol of bisexuality, its tail or phallus being put in its mouth or vagina enabling it to coil in to a circle. Therefore, the Medusa embodies 'the monstrous feminine' and becomes a 'phallic woman' who represents the castrated female genitalia with her toothed vagina that is poised and waiting to strike, demonstrating her castrating ability.

Accordingly, patriarchal anxieties towards this 'lack' are represented in a way that either eroticises the female body with a high heel shoe, a leather bustier, or a gun as a phallic substitute,

¹⁹⁹ Sigmund Freud, "Medusa's Head," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1960) 18: 273-4.

²⁰⁰ Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1993) 110-111.

²⁰¹ Creed 111.

²⁰² Creed 111.

or creates the imagery of the ‘monstrous’ feminine’ to show the horror of the castrating and castrated woman. In addition to Kristeva’s notion of the abject for arguing the maternal as a primary arena of cultural and social contestation in patriarchal systems, Creed (1990) takes Freud’s idea of the primal scene of copulation and procreation to argue for the ‘archaic mother’ as the source of all life that is seen as a cultural threat embodied by this kind of powerful woman.²⁰³ Creed (1990) in “Aliens and the Monstrous-Feminine”, explains how *Alien* (1979) represents the anarchic, phallic, and castrated mothers through the aliens as the male’s sexual anxieties, and thus the way in which the solution to alleviate those anxieties is to represent Ripley’s body, the female human body, to provide reassurance for the male, and to insist that the monstrous feminine alien has to be destroyed. Creed points out that the representation of Ripley is constructed with her female body and the feminine behaviour of caressing a cat in order to contrast with the monstrous-feminine manifested by the betrayer Mother as the computer/life-support system on the spaceship and the Alien who is the uncontrollable, generative and cannibalistic mother. Thus, the representation of the monstrous feminine is controversial in the film for it challenges the notion that woman is born as castrated/passive/looked at and man as a castrator/active/looking.

4.4 The Gendered Construction of Dualisms

Haraway uses the cyborg’s hybrid identity to deconstruct Western patriarchal culture which is rooted in Cartesian mind-body dualism.²⁰⁴ She argues that the pervasive mind-body dichotomy is

²⁰³ Barbara Creed, “Alien and the Monstrous-Feminine,” *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema*, ed. Annette Kuhn (London and New York: Verso, 1990) 128-141.

²⁰⁴ Cartesian dualism refers to René Descartes’ dualist notion of mind-body and the relationship between the mind and the body. Descartes argues that the human is composed of mind and body. Whilst the mind is immaterial substance, the body is material substance. The mind and the body form the casual relation: the mind and the body interact with each other. See Francesc Forn i Argimon, Introduction, *Social Brain Matters: Stances on the Neurobiology of Social Cognition*, ed. Oscar Vilarroya and Francesc Forn i Argimon (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007) 1-2; Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science,

correlated with hierarchal binary pairs like male/female, mind/body, self/other, active/passive, and culture/nature.²⁰⁵ More important, those dualistic pairs, according to feminism, are imbued with power relations. Feminism argues that man is often aligned with words such as mind, Self, active, and culture, terms which are clustered together to be ranked as superior to the cluster of words including body, other, passive, and nature which is aligned with woman.²⁰⁶ As a result, this hierarchical dualism leads to “a logic of domination” which underpins the oppression of women.²⁰⁷

4.5 Masculinity in Crisis

Women are often represented in mainstream or commercial cinema as either the fetishised object of male desire and gaze or the threatening monstrous feminine which is a product of male anxiety. In general, the narrative of science fiction both equates the term ‘man’ with ‘humanity’ as an uncontested and universal notion, and reinforces the ‘normality’ of the male experience rather than articulating the discourse of difference in relation to woman. Aliens, Barr argues, are used to encode the female experience, constructing the female as a non-human in patriarchal society in which the ideology is “to be human is to be male”.²⁰⁸ Science fiction operates man as both “the universal body” and “the gendered male”, whose body and gender determines men’s destiny and the functioning of the female body for the male spectator.²⁰⁹ Creed’s theory of the

Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,” *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association, 1991) 149-181.

²⁰⁵ Haraway 177.

²⁰⁶ Deborah Weiner, “Dualism,” *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literary Theory*, ed. Elizabeth Kowalewski-Wallace (New York: Routledge, 2009) 175-177.

²⁰⁷ Anna Case-Winters, “Beyond the Dualisms, Rethinking Relations: Insights from Ecofeminist Source,” *Reconstructing a Christian Theology of Nature: Down to Earth* (Aldershot, Eng. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007) 63.

²⁰⁸ Marleen Barr, *Alien to Femininity: Speculative Fiction and Feminist Theory* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1987) 31.

²⁰⁹ Linda Badley, *Body, Horror, and the Body Fantastic* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995) 126.

monstrous feminine suggests that the patriarchal unconscious works on the representation of the female alien and constitutes the gendered stereotype in relation to female horror.

Silverman (1992) in *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* engages with Lacanian psychoanalysis and Althusser's theory of ideology, arguing that feminist theory sees traditional or universal masculinity as an ideological construction and a historically-theoretically problematic notion.²¹⁰ Her book suggests that masculinity, like femininity, is constantly constructed and reconstructed within specific ideological contexts rather than being a 'natural' category. In contrast to Lacan who sees the phallus as the universal signifier of lack that marks the human subject's entry into the Symbolic Order by accessing language, Silverman reads the phallus as a cultural symbol of lack which is "the variable metaphor of the irreducible lack"²¹¹ with "a range of possible representatives"²¹² and suggests that the connection between the phallus and the Symbolic Order is not inevitable but ideological. Silverman believes that masculinity is constructed through the ideological 'misrecognition' of the penis as the phallus, as a way of maintaining and stabilising society, family, and nation. While the phallus is equivalent to the Symbolic Order and encourages men to have 'normative' and 'regulative' identifications and desires, conflicts often arise where the perfect-omnipotent Symbolic Father/phallus meets the flawed-defective father/penis. The crisis of masculinity or the loss of belief in normative masculinity is caused by the disconnection between the penis and the phallus in terms of historical and socio-cultural traumas and upheavals such as wars, feminist development, and gay movements.

Silverman refutes Mulvey's notion of the dominance of the male gaze by arguing that there is no inevitable binary distinction between the male as the bearer of the look and the female as the object to be looked at because both of them can be the object of the gaze and have the power to look. However, this power of looking, Silverman insists, is never fully grasped by man and

²¹⁰ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

²¹¹ Silverman 38.

²¹² Shohini Chaudhuri, *Feminist Film Theorists: Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Teresa de Lauretis, Barbara Creed* (London: Routledge, 2006) 114.

woman because “the spectator is simultaneously part of the spectacle”, which constantly creates the flowing and interwoven relationship between the spectator and the spectacle.²¹³ Silverman offers a useful method to analyse non-normative representations of femininity and masculinity on screen. In particular, marginal, deviant, or non-phallic masculinities, Silverman observes, have been regulated, oppressed, excluded by a patriarchal society, or often associated with the feminine. For example, Silverman explores deviant masculinities in relation to male masochism. According to Freud’s notions of masochism, in addition to sexual difference, pleasure in pain also structures both male and female subjectivity.²¹⁴ Freud defines ‘pleasure in pain’ as ‘erotogenic masochism’ that is divided into ‘moral masochism’ as “a desire to be punished for ‘sins’” and ‘feminine masochism’ as a fantasy of “being bound and beaten”.²¹⁵ Silverman argues that Freud’s definition of female masochism in particular ideologically constructs the sufferer who takes or fantasises the pain as the feminine that is socially acknowledged and accepted. Male masochism, consequently, appears a transgression of social boundaries of gender/sex and visual pleasure, and disowns phallic identifications in the realm of the Symbolic Order/Father. From this perspective, Silverman’s critiques are useful in analysing the imagery of hypermasculinity of the armored male bodies and the feminisation of male cyborg bodies which both question conventional definitions of masculinity.

The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man written by McLuhan (1951) might be seen as the first example of feminist or gendered media studies, arguing that popular culture is pervaded by the mixture of technology and sex – the representation of technology is either feminised or masculinised. The imagery of the cyborg in science fiction film is not only “the passionate celebration of technological objects of desire” through the feminisation of technology, but also the foreground to re-examine masculinity which has been taken for granted as an unmarked and

²¹³ Chaudhuri 114.

²¹⁴ Mas’ud Zavarzadeh, *Seeing Films Politically* (New York: New York UP, 1991) 44.

²¹⁵ Shohini Chaudhuri, *Feminist Film Theorists: Laura Mulvey, Kaja Silverman, Teresa de Lauretis, Barbara Creed* (London: Routledge, 2006) 117.

universal concept.²¹⁶ Whereas technology has been radically transformed from “the massive industrial machines to tiny microelectronic circuitry” during the twentieth century, Springer argues that the representation of the cyborg remains within a patriarchal ideology that sees the male body as ‘hard’, with “the invincible armored man of steel”.²¹⁷ However, while issues in relation to male masochism, pleasure in pain, and male uncanny or monstrous bodies repeatedly appear in the process of cyborgisation represented in science fiction/monster/horror films, the feminisation of the male body inevitably challenges normative and conventional masculinity. The purpose of depicting the armored male body, Springer suggests, is to avoid or resist the “mystery and miniaturization of technology and feminist changes in society” which trigger the feminisation of technology as well as the feminisation of the male body.²¹⁸ Meanwhile, muscle-bound cyborgs are particularly highlighted in their ultra-violent acts. Neale (1983) in “Masculinity as Spectacle” argues that the displacement of male homosexuality through the representation of male violence in war, Westerns, and gangster films is a defense against the cultural taboo of the homoerotic gaze.²¹⁹ The cyborg’s hypermasculinity can be seen as a substitution for sexual anxieties. The camera and gaze can objectify or feminise the male body because “the spectacle of the passive and desirable male body is typically undermined by a narrative that intervenes to make him the object or the perpetrator of violence”.²²⁰ Scenes of violence and combat can be seen as a means of stopping the narrative “in order to recognise the pleasure of display” and to displace the look from the male body.²²¹

²¹⁶ Claudia Springer, *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age* (Austin: Texas UP, 1996) 3.

²¹⁷ Springer 10.

²¹⁸ Springer 12.

²¹⁹ Steve Neale, “Masculinity as Spectacle,” *Screen* 24.6 (1983): 2-16.

²²⁰ Claudia Springer, *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age* (Austin: Texas UP, 1996) 99.

²²¹ Steve Neale, “Masculinity as Spectacle: Reflections on Men and Mainstream Cinema,” *Screening the Male: Exploring Masculinities in Hollywood Cinema*, ed. Steve Cohan and Ina Rae Hark (London: Routledge, 1993) 17.

Whilst the male cyborg is portrayed as violent in order to defuse the sexual anxiety on the screen, the representation of technology inherits the dichotomised concept of the masculine and the feminine, in which “masculine metaphors oppose feminine metaphors” and the masculine dominates the feminine.²²² In general, technology is represented as the masculine and the male cyborg is aggressive and muscular. The erotic appeal of muscle-bound cyborgs is the reassurance of power they embody in the cinematic representation. For example, male cyborgs in The Terminator films and *RoboCop* (1987) display the “hypermasculine”, in that the Terminator and RoboCop are equipped with technological armored bodies and weapons to kill humans or offenders. They play out an extreme version of masculinity and the dichotomised sexual model, rejecting feminine characteristics and reinforcing the masculine through violence, attack, and aggression.

As the representation of masculinity in science fiction film can be analysed in terms of the psychological concept of sexual difference, the analysis of representations of masculinity can be extended into the issue of broader socio-cultural anxieties. Sobchack argues that the family cannot conform to the standard set by bourgeois myth when patriarchy is challenged by social change.²²³ The crises and anxieties played out in cinema are responses to the paternity that is denied by the economic and political benefits of patriarchal power. For instance, *Starman* (1984) and *The Terminator* (1984), Sobchack argues, rationalise the loss of a father through the “transportation and transformation of the adult male body, through their figural work of alienating its traditional patriarchal meanings”, so that both films are “able to deny the existence of their single-parent family – even as they project it”.²²⁴ In relation to the representation of patriarchal crisis in the science fiction genre, Rehling (1995) in *Parenting, Masculinity and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema* further elaborates that the difficulty in upholding the ‘normal’

²²² Claudia Springer, *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age* (Austin: Texas UP, 1996) 104.

²²³ Vivian Sobchack, “Child/Alien/Father: Patriarchal Crisis and Generic Exchange,” *Close Encounters: Film, Feminism, and Science Fiction*, ed. Constance Penley et al. (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1991) 10.

²²⁴ Sobchack 25.

father figure in science fiction film is due to the de-centered and fragmented socio-cultural structures of modernity such as the technological dominations and invasions of our daily life, a technological workforce with a growing female labour, and the breakdown of the nuclear family: all of which result in a decline in the valuation of a physical masculinity and the separation of paternity and patriarchy.²²⁵

4.6 Male Hysteria and the ‘Feminisation’ of Male Bodies

Masculinity in crisis can be embodied and represented through male hysteria. Hysteria is often defined as a psychological disorder: “an affliction of the mind that was expressed through the disturbance of the body”.²²⁶ The term hysteria originates from the Greek *‘hysteros’*, meaning womb, the first medical reference to hysteria coming from Egypt around 1900 B.C.²²⁷ It was claimed by the Egyptians that the womb would wander around the woman’s body if she was sexually frustrated, her sexual deprivation causing her body’s fluids to dry up, so the womb would move around in search of moisture.²²⁸ Hysteria in the modern era has been constructed within a medical discourse. In the seventeenth century, the site of hysteria was identified in the brain and the spinal cord.²²⁹ It implies “the type of neurosis in which psychical conflict is either expressed symbolically, through bodily symptoms, or as a phobia, through anxiety attached to a specific object”.²³⁰ Thomas Sydeham (1624-89), one of the most important theorists, established the first neuropsychological model of hysteria and his research indicated that the disease was no

²²⁵ Nicola Rehling, “Masculinity and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema,” Diss. (Sussex University, 1995) 4.

²²⁶ Barbara Wallace Grossman, *A Spectacle of Suffering: Clara Morris on the American Stage* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2009) 91.

²²⁷ Barbara Creed, *Phallic Panic: Film, Horror and the Primal Uncanny* (Melbourne: Melbourne UP, 2005) 43.

²²⁸ Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1993) 56.

²²⁹ Marlene Goldman, “Madness, Masculinity, and Magic in Robertson Davis’ *Fifth Business*: A Tale of Hysteria; or ‘the Suffocating of the Mother,’” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 78.4 (2009) 993.

²³⁰ Robert Burgoyne, Robert Stam, and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis, *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics: Structuralism, Post-structuralism and Beyond* (London: Routledge, 1992) 177.

longer linked to the womb.²³¹ In the nineteenth century, the neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot began to collect data on male hysteria in Paris at the Salpêtrière psychiatric centre and then published sixty-one case studies of male hysteria in boys and men.²³² Meanwhile, Freud also studied with Charcot and the debate about male hysteria was heated in the Parisian medical community.²³³ Freud acknowledged the existence of male hysteria but his work on hysteria in Vienna only focused on women.²³⁴ As a result, Freud's published case studies, *Studies of Hysteria* (1895) and "Fragments of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria" (1905), had split the definition of hysteria from its affiliation to female anatomy and redefined it as a psychological disease, implying that women suffer from psychological trauma.²³⁵

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, feminist scholars began to re-examine hysteria in relation to social control and gender roles.²³⁶ Feminist scholarship shows that the medical and psychoanalytic discourses have not only constructed hysteria as feminine, but also defined women as disadvantaged and inferior.²³⁷ However, feminist scholars interpret hysteria as "a legitimate form of femininity" through "a female body language addressed to patriarchal

²³¹ Marlene Goldman, "Madness, Masculinity, and Magic in Robertson Davis' *Fifth Business*: A Tale of Hysteria; or 'the Suffocating of the Mother,'" *University of Toronto Quarterly* 78.4 (2009) 993.

²³² Goldman 993.

²³³ Goldman 993.

²³⁴ Elaine Showalter, "Hysteria, Feminism, and Gender," *Hysteria beyond Freud*, ed. Sander L. Gilman et al. (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1993) 315.

²³⁵ Showalter 315; Pamela Thurschwell, "Early Theories," *Sigmund Freud*, 2nd ed. (Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2009) 16; Sigmund Freud, "Fragments of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1953) 7: 1-122.

²³⁶ Christopher Lukinbeal and Stuart C. Aitken, "Sex, Violence and the Weather: Male Hysteria, Scale and the Fractal Geographies of Patriarchy," *Places through the Body*, ed. Heidi J. Nast and Steve Pile (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 359.

²³⁷ Elaine Showalter, "Hysteria, Feminism, and Gender," *Hysteria beyond Freud*, ed. Sander L. Gilman et al. (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1993) 287.

thought”.²³⁸ For example, the feminist historian Carroll Smith-Rosenburg (1972) considers female hysteria as a protest or ambivalent response to the feminine gender role assigned by society.²³⁹ Hunter, Herndl, Mitchell, and Showalter see hysteria as a proto-feminist expression in patriarchal society.²⁴⁰

Whereas male hysteria has been identified at least since the seventeenth century, the cultural denial of male hysteria is evident.²⁴¹ It is because hysteria has been almost exclusively in women and been traditionally associated with the feminine.²⁴² Thus, “physicians have hidden it under such euphemistic diagnoses as neurasthenia, hypochondria, shell shock or, more recently PTSD”.²⁴³ From this perspective, male hysteria, Mitchell argues, means that a man expresses his ‘effeminate’ emotion through his body²⁴⁴; he acts like a woman when he cries, sobs, screams, faints, cowers or any number of other ‘feminine’ behaviours.²⁴⁵ Irigaray, however, sees male hysteria as the ‘emasculatation’ of men rather than the feminisation of men because male hysterics

²³⁸ Dianne Hunter, “Hysteria,” *Encyclopedia of Feminist Literary Theory*, ed. Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace (London and New York: Routledge, 2009) 288.

²³⁹ Christopher Lukinbeal and Stuart C. Aitken, “Sex, Violence and the Weather: Male Hysteria, Scale and the Fractal Geographies of Patriarchy,” *Places through the Body*, ed. Heidi J. Nast and Steve Pile (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 359.

²⁴⁰ Elaine Showalter, “Hysteria, Feminism, and Gender,” *Hysteria beyond Freud*, ed. Sander L. Gilman et al. (Berkeley, CA: California UP, 1993) 287.

²⁴¹ Marlene Goldman, “Madness, Masculinity, and Magic in Robertson Davis’ *Fifth Business*: A Tale of Hysteria; or ‘the Suffocating of the Mother,’” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 78.4 (2009) 993.

²⁴² Patricia Gherovici, “Genecology of Hysteria,” *Please Select Your Gender: From the Invention of Hysteria to the Democratizing of Transgenderism* (New York: Routledge and Taylor & Francis, 2010) 48.

²⁴³ Marlene Goldman, “Madness, Masculinity, and Magic in Robertson Davis’ *Fifth Business*: A Tale of Hysteria; or ‘the Suffocating of the Mother,’” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 78.4 (2009) 993.

²⁴⁴ Juliet Mitchell, “Siblings and Psychoanalysis: An Overview,” *Siblings: Sex and Violence* (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity, 2003) 7.

²⁴⁵ Linda Badley, *Body, Horror, and the Body Fantastic* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995) 106.

excessively imitate or perform masculinity to compensate a lack of phallic power.²⁴⁶ Therefore, male hysteria is represented in films as “the displacement of male-engendered anxieties or phobias onto images of the body, male or female”.²⁴⁷ In sum, in these circumstances men are forced to express their distress and internal conflict through the body, and incapable of taking up proper masculine roles that are regulated by the Symbolic.

4.7 Hard/Soft Bodies and Masculinity

In the light of critical commentaries on masculinity, the hard/soft binary is also beneficial to understand the interplay between the male body and masculinity in crisis. The male body is the key to the construction of men’s masculine identity. Since social forces play a vital role in structuring identity, the socially constructed notions of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ are predominantly associated with the male body and masculinity. The hierarchical binary opposition between hard and soft, Penner (2011) argues, is crucial in the construction of male identity because ‘hardness’ is not only a phallic fantasy but also culturally and psychologically operates as “a powerful structuring mechanism that shapes and influence male behaviour and masculine gender norms”.²⁴⁸ In this sense, when the hard body is “tacitly encouraged and understood as a social ideal while [the] softness of [the male body] is overtly stigmatized,”²⁴⁹ the hard male body can be identified a masculine idea to be celebrated and emulated.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁶ Christopher Lukinbeal and Stuart C. Aitken, “Sex, Violence and the Weather: Male Hysteria, Scale and the Fractal Geographies of Patriarchy,” *Places through the Body*, ed. Heidi J. Nast and Steve Pile (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 359.

²⁴⁷ Linda Badley, *Body, Horror, and the Body Fantastic* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1995) 106.

²⁴⁸ James Penner, *Pinks, Pansies, and Punks: The Rhetoric of Masculinity in American Literary Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2011) 15.

²⁴⁹ Penner 15.

²⁵⁰ Joanne Turkey, “Knitting: A Gendered Pursuit?,” *The Culture of Knitting* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2009) 34.

Accordingly, in Western culture, the sportsman is seen as an example of prowess which proves the ability of the mind to discipline the body and the harmonious cooperation of the mind and the body.²⁵¹ More important, the bodybuilder's body is highly self-disciplined and rejects the soft and weak body.²⁵² Those bodies are hard by showing taut skins and rippling muscles and implying discipline, strength, power, dominance, and superiority.²⁵³ On the contrary, if a man's physical appearance or a set of traits or behaviours fail to perform those ideal attributes, the man will become the mark of subordinated masculinity. Subordinate masculinity is often aligned with the soft body when the physical capability, the body size, age, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation is 'different' or 'deviant' from the dominant or ideal masculinity.²⁵⁴

Susan Jeffords in *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (1994) uses the hard/soft binary to examine Hollywood's representations of masculinity in the 1980s.²⁵⁵ The distinction between the hard body and the soft body, Jeffords argues, is constructed by the political, economic, and ideological discourses which are strongly underpinned by Reagan's presidential administration. The soft body refers to "the errant body containing sexually transmitted disease, immorality, illegal chemicals, "laziness," and endangered fetuses" represented by women, the homosexual, and African Americans.²⁵⁶ However, the hard body is not subject to disease, fatigue, and aging but brave, determined, individualistic, loyal, authoritative, and powerful: all qualities

²⁵¹ Thomas Johansson, "What's behind the Mask? Bodybuilding and Masculinity," *Bending Bodies: Moulding Masculinities, Volume 2*, ed. Søren Ervø and Thomas Johansson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003) 97.

²⁵² Johansson, 97.

²⁵³ Joanne Turkey, "Knitting: A Gendered Pursuit?," *The Culture of Knitting* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2009) 34.

²⁵⁴ Travis S. K. Kong, "Sexualizing Asian Male Bodies," *Handbook of the New Sexuality Studies*, ed. Steven Seidman, Nancy Fischer, and Chet Meeks (London and New York: Routledge, 2006) 98.

²⁵⁵ Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1994).

²⁵⁶ Jeffords 24.

are associated with white men whom are represented by Reagan and the on-screen Stallone, for example.²⁵⁷

In particular, whereas Hollywood constructs the hard body not only as a heroic figure but also an idealisation of American masculinity, the cinematic representation of hard bodies, Jeffords argues, becomes tropes for the symbolic resolution of social and political conflicts and exposes the crisis in masculinity²⁵⁸ in relation to the American defeat in Vietnam which was perceived as the failure of the 'soft' presidential administration of Jimmy Carter, the social movements for civil rights, women's liberation and gay liberation, and the decline of heavy industry.²⁵⁹ Following Jeffords' analyses of the hard body in Hollywood films, I find the hard/soft body binary can provide an insightful analytical tool to investigate the male cyborg portrayed in Japanese film and animation because the cyborg's hybridity not only creates various forms of hard and soft bodies but also makes the configuration of masculinity complex.

Conclusion

In this chapter, firstly, I have provided a contextualisation of gender politics and gender roles in Japan in order to justify my intention to use a feminist approach. Although Western feminism has been accused of theorising a universal category of women as well as universal forms of women's oppression caused by an undifferentiated universal patriarchy, I would argue that Western feminist theory provides a useful analytical tool to examine the representation of the gendered cyborg in Japanese film and animation because since the late nineteenth century Japan

²⁵⁷ Jeffords 25, 28.

²⁵⁸ Tim Edwards, "The Spectacle of the Male: Masculinity and the Cinema," *Cultures of Masculinity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006) 127.

²⁵⁹ Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1994) 138-139; Karen Boyle, "The Male Body," *Media and Violence: Gendering the Debates* (London and Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005) 146.

has been Westernised to become an industrialised, capitalised, and patriarchal society, has been impacted by Western feminism in the development of Japanese feminism, and most important has been influenced by Western popular cybercultures to produce cyborg images in Japanese film and animation. Secondly, I have drawn on feminist literature and the other relevant theoretical literature to articulate the theorisation of gender, the body, and technology with the configuration of the cyborg in ways that are directly relevant to and underpin the case studies that will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 2

Toho's Immortal Godzilla:

Re-imagining Japanese Postwar National Identity through the Monstrous Body

In 1954, Godzilla was created as a furious monster killing Japanese civilians and destroying Tokyo city. Over the next fifty years, however, the Godzilla franchise developed a rather different formulaic narrative, one in which Godzilla fights repeatedly with a number of other threatening monsters. In each film, Godzilla plays an ambivalent role: not only the protector who saves Japan from the other monsters' attacks, but also the destroyer who punishes Japan for the technological and economic exploitation of nature which results from its development of nuclear weaponry or energy. Godzilla fights, then, with two groups of monsters: those which protect Japan from Godzilla's threat, and those which threaten Japan's security. In contrast to Godzilla's origin, whose context is the traumatic past of the Second World War, the vicious monsters appearing between the 1990s and 2000s are generally the product of economic-technological exploitation of nature, in a context of economic recession.²⁶⁰ Through this repeated narrative, in which Godzilla is always fiercest and strongest, I argue that a number of ideological conflicts are played out. These conflicts – between the natural and the technological, the modern and the premodern, the Japanese and the non-Japanese, and the heroic and the villainous – underpin the cinematic spectacle of the violent fights between Godzilla and the other gigantic monsters, and between monsters and the military. I shall also argue that as Godzilla's forceful and impervious body is highlighted in its battles with the other monsters and the Japanese military, the display of masculinity plays a pivotal role in the cinematic construction

²⁶⁰ Examples are Biollante in *Godzilla vs. Biollante* (1989), King Ghidorah in *Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah* (1991), Spacegodzilla in *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* (1994), Destoroyah in *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah* (1995), and Megaguirus in *Godzilla vs. Megaguirus* (2000).

of gendered national identity in relation to Japan as the ‘imagined community’ of the nation-state.²⁶¹ Godzilla’s uncanny body, I argue, serves as an arena for re-imaging Japanese postwar national identity, re-narrating national history, and even as a contested space between monstrosity and masculinity for playing out male Oedipal anxieties. Through cinematic violence, Godzilla is constructed as a national myth to become a signifier of national identity, but the spectacle of violence in the creation and elimination of Godzilla is also ideologically gendered as hypermasculine, effecting an imaginary restoration of masculinity in response to Japan’s defeat in 1945. However, when ambivalence towards the war trauma and economic recession is projected onto Godzilla’s forceful and impervious body, the Godzilla franchise films reveal “the ideological contradictions within the notion of masculinity and the gap between social experience and ideological norms” (Joyrich 1996: 79). Accordingly, this chapter is divided into three sections to examine Godzilla’s uncanny monstrosity in relation to the anxiety that hovers over Japanese masculinity and national identity. Firstly, I use the first Godzilla film, *Godzilla* (1954), to explore Godzilla’s uncanny otherness as a site for the expression of Japan’s postwar national identity; secondly, I investigate Godzilla’s hypermasculinity in relation to the representation of fatherhood in *Son of Godzilla* (1967), *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* (1994), and *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah* (1995); and finally, I examine Mechagodzilla as the uncanny double of Godzilla which embodies contradictions of masculinity in the form of the abject in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002) and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2003).

²⁶¹ Benedict Anderson argues that nation is an imagined community because most of the community members never know most of the other members in terms of the physical separation and yet they share the same sense of nationhood. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

1. Godzilla's Postcolonial Otherness and Postwar National Identity

The 1954 *Godzilla* can be defined as a science fictional, horrific, and fantastic monster that is involved in multiple layers of meaning production. Following a psychoanalytic approach to 'Otherness', *Godzilla's* otherness can be seen as emerging as an uncanny reminder of repressed past experiences. The monster is not completely excluded as an outsider to or outcast from Japanese society, because its origins lie within Japanese cultural history. Within the film the monster's identity is contextualised within the Japanese folklore of Odo Island, as a 'sea-god', but is at the same time defined by 'science' as a radioactively mutated prehistoric dinosaur. *Godzilla's* identity thus mixes the supernatural and the technological, the natural and the unnatural, the past and the present, the premodern and the modern, and the primitive and the civilised. *Godzilla* is 'born' with a Japanese kinship tie within the Japanese postwar era and is as a result endowed with a national meaning which emanates from a specific set of historical, cultural and social references. Possessing physical and supernatural qualities and standing on the uncanny border between the Japanese and the non-Japanese, the known and the unknown, and the familiar and the unfamiliar, however, *Godzilla* also exists in between the real and the imaginary. The figure of *Godzilla* not only engages with supernatural or mythical discourses in relation to the imagination of the 'monstrous', but also the scientific discourse of 'monstrosity' in relation to natural laws. *Godzilla* has become a spectacle where the supernatural and scientific discourses operate together in reconstructing the myth of the monster.

For the Japanese, interpretations of war trauma and memories have been problematic and complex since Japan's dual role of oppressor and oppressed, or perpetrator and victim, played in the war (Yamazaki 2006: 76). This is the dual role that defines *Godzilla's* monstrosity for the civilians, the governmental officers, the military, and the scientists who throughout the film project such 'repressed', or 'unspeakable' national trauma onto *Godzilla's* monstrous form. This, then, is a monster that shows fearsome and unpredictable aggression, but which has no voice.

Throughout the 1954 film as well as the twenty seven franchise films, Godzilla never speaks in any kind of language to express any feeling in relation to its uncanny birth.

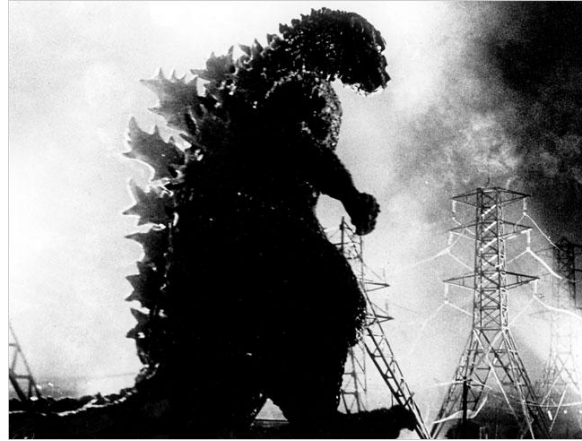


Figure 1: Godzilla rampages over the power grids in Tokyo in *Godzilla* (1954).

The beginning of the film elaborately constructs the various steps in this symbolic narrative of the return of the repressed. The opening scene shows Japanese sailors near Odo Island, a part of Japanese territory, witnessing extremely bright flashes of light that imply American nuclear testing; we then see the unknown creature's sudden emergence from the sea and rampage around a remote Odo island. This is followed by the island villagers holding a religious ceremony to summon or worship the sea-god known as 'Godzilla', before we are shown a Japanese palaeontologist in a public hearing in Tokyo defining the beast as a 'hibernating' prehistoric dinosaur that has radioactively mutated into a gigantic and uncontrollable monster. The final scene of this opening sequence, the scene of Godzilla's trampling the centre of Tokyo, makes explicit these links with the Japanese experience of war.

Godzilla is linked with Japan's war memories in relation to the Japanese soldiers who died in the Pacific War, the Japanese civilians who died in the American atomic bombing of Hiroshima

and Nagasaki, and Japan's military alliance with Nazi Germany during the war²⁶². For example, a key scene shows a hospital in Tokyo packed with the people injured by Godzilla's destruction of the buildings whilst a doctor tries to detect radiation in the injured children; another shows a woman inside the commuter train attacked by Godzilla describing herself as surviving the H-bomb attack in Nagasaki but as being unable to avoid Godzilla's attack. In particular, the palaeontologist, Dr. Yamane, is the key figure linking Godzilla to nuclear testing with distinct anti-nuclear war and anti-American connotations. In the final scene of the film, Dr. Yamane, witnessing Godzilla's death, concludes: "I cannot believe Godzilla was the last survivor of its species. If we continue nuclear testing, others of Godzilla's kind will appear again somewhere in the world." Moreover, the film's dialogue, such as "Back to the shelters again!" shouted by a man who tries to avoid the collapsing buildings, and "We're going to join daddy in a moment!" murmured by a mother who speaks to her children when all of them face the fire, can be seen as inspiring what Mary Bernstein has called "the thrilling nostalgia of recognition, or déjà vu, contribut[ing] to a mood of the uncanny" (2010: 185). Finally, the film implicitly recalls Japan's military alliance with Nazi Germany in the scene in which a Japanese journalist interviews Dr. Serizawa about the technological invention of the Oxygen Destroyer. The journalist says that he hears from Dr. Serizawa's German colleagues that the possible solution to Godzilla lies in the use of Dr. Serizawa's research about the Oxygen Destroyer, but Dr. Serizawa strenuously denies the journalist's claim and then terminates the interview. The scene provides no context for the relationship between Dr. Serizawa and his German colleagues but seems to function simply to

²⁶² In 27 September 1940, Imperial Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Nazis Germany and Fascist Italy to form the military alliance during the Second World War. See Stephen S. Large, "The Emperor and War, 1937-1940," *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan: A Political Biography* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 100.

represent postwar Japan's ambivalent attitude towards the military alliance with Nazi Germany during World War Two.²⁶³

To a nation which has experienced nuclear war at first hand, Godzilla is projected as not only a hostile Other unleashed by the American superpower in making nuclear war but also a sympathetic Other who is victim of American nuclear dominance. Both the Odo villagers, in the scene where they worship the sea-god Godzilla, and Dr. Yamane, in the scene of the public meeting about Godzilla's destruction of Odo Island, invite the audience to sympathise with Godzilla through the villagers' respect for Godzilla's supernatural power and Dr. Yamane's wish to keep the victimised monster alive.

Since the public panic in *Godzilla* is heavily associated with the 'national' concern, emphasising the possible destruction of a nation, the Japanese government and military which are responsible for eliminating Godzilla in order to restore national security can be seen as attempting to contain the return of the repressed. However, when the cinematic narrative proceeds to show that the army forces continually fail to eliminate Godzilla, the military emerges as itself a reminder of the ambiguity of the nature of the SDF.²⁶⁴ In the scenes in which soldiers are deployed to respond to Godzilla's rampage in the centre of Tokyo, and advanced weapons such as tanks, missiles, and electronic wires are used in order to destroy the monster, the military

²⁶³ W. Donald Smith, "Japanese Empire," *Colonialism: An International Social, Cultural, and Political Encyclopedia*, ed. Melvin E. Page (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003) 297-300.

²⁶⁴ The Japanese military was extremely constrained by the United States after the Second World War and then re-established in an independent form called the SDF (the Self Defence Forces). The debates over remilitarisation or legitimacy of the SDF have been carried on within Japan for years and affected the Japanese sense of identity. On the one hand, the SDF are generally considered as the Japanese military forces but can act only on or near Japan's territory including its territorial waters and air space. On the other hand, the Japan-American security alliance reminds the Japanese that Japan is subordinate to the United States. See Asahi Shimbun, "International Cooperation and the Constitution," *Japan's Contested Constitution: Documents and Analysis*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Gryan McCormack (London and New York: Routledge, 2001) 140 and Bruce Stronach, "Nationalism and the State," *Beyond the Rising Sun: Nationalism in Contemporary Japan* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995) 111.

forces are reminders of a repressed past in relation to militarism. However, the failure to penetrate Godzilla's invincible and impervious body implies the defeat once more of a militarised Japan, and operates as a reminder of the constrained postwar military role represented by the SDF. This ambivalence towards the Japanese military forces represented in *Godzilla* leads to the search for an alternative weapon, the Oxygen Destroyer, created by Serizawa, an independent scientist.



Figure 2: Dr. Serizawa carries the Oxygen Destroyer and prepares to dive into the sea to kill Godzilla in *Godzilla* (1954).

The Oxygen Destroyer is linked to Japan's war memories and the imperial militant nationalist rhetoric in a number of key scenes. In the first scene, as we have seen, Serizawa denies a journalist's accusation that the Oxygen Destroyer research has been developed in affiliation with German scientists; in the second scene, Serizawa expresses concern that the Oxygen Destroyer will be manipulated for expanding militarism and causing war, when Lieutenant Ogata seeks to persuade him to use his invention to kill Godzilla. In this sense, it can be argued that *Godzilla* represents the constant repetition of these repressed or masked memories and anxieties, in the form not only of the monster, but also of the military and even the Oxygen Destroyer. In the scenes in which Serizawa is visited by Emiko Yamane and Lieutenant Ogata, the scientist shows his dilemma in having to choose between the immediate security of Japan and the possibility of

future world wars. In this respect the Godzilla monster and the Oxygen Destroyer can be seen as equivalent, both representing ways in which postwar Japan is haunted by ambivalence towards militant nationalism. After watching a television broadcast of young Japanese school students singing for peace, Serizawa decides to use his invention to kill Godzilla as well as himself in order to save Japan and destroy all knowledge about the invention. Serizawa's sacrificial or patriotic suicide in association with Godzilla's death thus brings about not only narrative resolution but also the restoration of repression. Since Serizawa is constructed as a patriot, a sacrificial and tragic hero at the end of the film, his death effectively displaces the unresolved dilemmas of the war trauma within postwar Japan which the film has compulsively re-enacted.

Accordingly, the death of Godzilla and Serizawa at the end of *Godzilla* can be understood as a mechanism of "re-suppression, containment and restoration" of the return of the repressed (Langford 2005: 159).²⁶⁵ Because suicide in Japan has been a national ritual, historically embodying nationalist ideologies and symbolising the dignity and honour of a nation, loyalty to a nation, and sacrifice for a nation, Dr. Serizawa's death is linked to Japanese national honour and eternal glory.²⁶⁶ Dr. Serizawa, carrying his device, dives with Lieutenant Ogata to the bottom of the sea to look for Godzilla. When they see the monster resting at the corner of the rocks,

²⁶⁵ The return of the repressed is derived from Freud's 1915 essay of "Repression". The ego's defence mechanism is based on the repression of events or memories in order to find gratification and avoid social disapproval. The repressed surfaces when the defence mechanism fails to operate. The return of the repressed therefore occurs, and then the repression repeatedly reconstructs the moment of the failure. See Sigmund Freud, "Repression," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1957) 14: 141-158.

²⁶⁶ The notion that a dignified death is better than living without achieving one's goal dominates in Japan. In particular, ritual suicide (*harakiri* or *seppuku*, namely stomach cutting) has become culturally specific in the Japanese culture. See Alexander Prasol, *Modern Japan: Origins of the Mind: Japanese Traditions and Approaches to Contemporary Life* (Singapore, Hackensack, NJ and London: World Scientific, 2010) 283-300; Dan Reiter, "Nationalism and Military Effectiveness: Post-Meiji Japan," *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness*, ed. Risa Brooks and Elizabeth A. Stanley (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2007) 36; Adriana Cavarero, "Suicidal Horrorism," *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence* (New York: Columbia UP, 2009) 90.

Serizawa asks Ogata to ascend to the surface first and then he will launch the device alone. The following scenes of the death of Godzilla and Serizawa proceed at very slow pace, constructing dream-like images. In the scene in which Godzilla walks slowly towards Serizawa and looks directly into Serizawa's eyes, we can see the uncanny moment when the repressed memories embodied by the monster are accessible to the consciousness of Serizawa's moral and nationalist figure. After launching the device, Serizawa immediately cuts off the rope attached to his diving suit in order not to be pulled back to the ship. Simultaneously, we see the sea water emits a large amount of air bubbles which represents the explosion of the Oxygen Destroyer. Meanwhile, Godzilla suddenly rises to the surface of the sea, roaring and writhing in the agony caused by the explosion, and eventually sinking into the sea. At the bottom of the sea, Godzilla's body gradually decomposes and eventually dissolves into nothing. Shocked by Serizawa's suicide attempt, Lieutenant Ogata pulls on the rope rather than diving into the sea again to rescue Serizawa. Ogata and the others on the military ship who witness Serizawa's suicide show their tacit approval with a sorrowful and respectful salute. Both the repressed memories and trauma that Godzilla represents are re-suppressed and returned to where they came from, the edges of Japanese territory through Dr. Serizawa, the national tragic hero.

2. The Monstrous Family: Masquerades of Masculinity and Adoptive Fatherhood

Whereas Godzilla in the 1954 film represents the repressed national trauma primarily in terms of being a war victim, in the later franchise films the monster is more strongly linked to this trauma in terms of the tension between being an aggressive perpetrator during the Second World War and having a desire for remilitarisation in the postwar period. Since the 1960s, economic success has triggered the revival of nationalistic sentiment about remilitarisation; however, this sentiment has not yet been embodied and has always evoked the militarist past within a demilitarised, democratic, and capitalist postwar Japan (Stronach 1995: 111). Thus the franchise films particularly engage with the ambivalent notion of remilitarisation by showing the

repetitive resurrection of Godzilla as well as the repetitive fights between Godzilla and the other monsters. In this respect, the franchise films can be understood as operating on three levels: the first is a cinematic pleasure associated with Godzilla's repeated resurrection which is derived from the repressed war memories; the second concerns the spectacle of violence as a form of pleasurable display of the masculine fantasy of militarisation and patriotism; the final level is the superego pleasure of controlling or repressing those desires by eliminating Godzilla at the end of each franchise film. It can thus be suggested that Japanese audiences enjoy, or are invited to enjoy, the pleasures of both identifying with and expelling the monstrous in re-imaging Japan's postwar national identity through the continual eruption and re-containment of the repressed.

From the 1960s, Godzilla's character was elaborately transformed from that of destroyer of Japan into that of Japanese national hero who eliminates other, malicious monsters. Such a transformation can be seen partly as a result of the need to attract younger audiences in response to the declining audience for Japanese cinema and Japan's recovery from the Second World War (Hollings 1997: 249-250; Desser 2000: 18; Noriega 2006: 50). In particular, *Son of Godzilla* (1967), *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* (1994), and *Godzilla vs. Destroyah* (1995), merge Godzilla's heroic hypermasculinity with fatherhood to construct an exemplar of the cultural ideal of masculinity as well as rewriting Japan's postwar history through Godzilla's invincible body, violence, and parenting. According to Connell's definition, hegemonic masculinity is the ideological ascendancy of particular forms of masculinity that are embedded above all in "mass media content" and its creation of "fantasy figures", rather than corresponding to the actual character of the majority of men of that time (Connell 1987: 184). This ideal form of masculinity, Connell argues, is "culturally honoured, glorified, and extolled" in its "given historical setting" (Messerschmidt 1993: 82). Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity is valuable in decoding the cinematic representation of Godzilla's gendered monstrosity. Godzilla in these three films is no longer simply marked as the uncanny Other as he was in the first film, but now stands for an ideal manhood through his hypermasculine combats with the other

monsters as well as his representation of fatherhood in relation to a young dinosaur, Godzilla Junior. Godzilla's hypermasculinity in association with physical prowess, dominance, and violence is justified in the name of protecting his adopted son from the threats caused by the vicious monsters. Since Godzilla is now portrayed as a national hero, his invincible body can be seen as illustrating the state as the public form of Japanese patriarchy. Since, his body has been 'softened' or 'humanised' by his parenting in terms of his 'emotional' identification with Godzilla Junior. Godzilla's fatherhood can be characterised as a private form of patriarchy that is also ideologically incorporated into Japanese hegemonic masculinity as part of Godzilla's gendered national narrative.

Monsters in the Godzilla franchise are not biologically born but created by supernatural powers, radioactive mutation, or cyborgisation. Although the Godzilla franchise does not explicitly indicate the biological sex of each monster, including Godzilla and Godzilla Junior, Mothra portrayed in *Mothra vs. Godzilla* (1964), *Godzilla vs. Mothra* (1992) and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2003), is the only monster that can be identified as female by her production of two eggs. The monsters created in the films are otherwise gendered rather than sexed – their violent, aggressive, and destructive behaviours are highlighted, but their sexual or reproductive characteristics are deliberately omitted. Whereas *Godzilla* (1954) does not explicitly attribute sex to the Godzilla monster, the monster in the 1967 franchise, *Son of Godzilla*, can be seen as discovering 'his' gender or achieving 'his' self-consciousness: becoming the adoptive father of a young male dinosaur is a way of attributing maleness and patriarchy to Godzilla. Although the narrative does not specifically indicate the sex of the young dinosaur, the title of the film, *Son of Godzilla*, determines the young dinosaur's gender as male.

The 1967 franchise first introduces Godzilla's son, called 'Godzilla Junior', which hatches from an unknown gigantic egg on one of the Japanese islands, Solgell Island, occupied by three giant praying mantises and a giant spider. Simultaneously, Godzilla emerges from the sea and approaches Solgell Island because he 'hears' Godzilla Junior's crying when the infant is attacked

by the praying mantises. The scene elaborately constructs that Godzilla has an ‘innate’ tendency for fatherhood in the same way that the baby dinosaur ‘naturally’ identifies with Godzilla as a father. Godzilla’s resurfacing from the sea and Godzilla Junior’s birth do not connote the return of the war trauma of the first film but rather engage in the rewriting of Japan’s postwar history by using Godzilla Junior’s ‘youth’, ‘innocence’, and ‘naturalness’ to represent the united and recovered nation which replaces Godzilla’s burdened history, speaking to young Japanese audiences who were born after the war without the imprint of war trauma.

As a result, the film signifies Godzilla’s performing fatherhood as a rite of passage into patriarchal manhood, marking the transition from the traumatic past represented in the 1954 film to the prosperous present of the 1967 franchise. Godzilla not only rescues Godzilla Junior from the praying mantises and the spider’s attack, but also teaches the young to identify with the hypermasculine father figure, in order to construct the father-son hierarchical relationship. After Godzilla uses his radioactive fire breath to defeat the praying mantises, he teaches his son how to produce radioactive breath so that Godzilla Junior can protect himself from future attacks. In the scene where Godzilla Junior is frightened by his father’s power and refuses to try to make his own fire breath after seeing Godzilla’s powerful beams, Godzilla shows his patriarchal authority. He threatens Godzilla Junior with his fists to demonstrate that he would spank his son if Godzilla Junior does not obey his order. Godzilla Junior is afraid and tries to breathe out small smoke rings rather than the full fire. Godzilla also prevents his son from contacting or playing with the female human who always gives Godzilla Junior fresh fruits because he does not want his son to identify with the human/female/mother figure. Godzilla therefore uses his authority to suppress Godzilla Junior’s childish and naive behaviours to establish the father-son relationship in the form of submission to the will of the father: Godzilla Junior is deferential, obedient, and subordinate. After identifying with Godzilla’s authoritarian fathering, Godzilla Junior then constructs his own manhood by protecting his father and himself through using his fire breath to attack the vicious monsters. Hatching out from the egg, Godzilla Junior is

defenceless to the praying mantis' attack, but he gradually transforms his vulnerable and naive adolescence into adulthood through violence.



Figure 3: Godzilla teaches Godzilla Junior how to blow atomic breath in *Son of Godzilla* (1967).

The scene in which Godzilla Junior fights with the monsters indicates the transformative rites of passage that usher the young monster into manhood: protecting his father and himself from the danger produced by the other monsters. In the second encounter with the praying mantis and the first encounter with the giant spider, the son tries to use his fire beam to fight rather than as a cry for help from his father. Eventually, father and son co-operate to defeat the monsters. Godzilla Junior at the end of the film becomes more powerful, in that he can now breathe out a large fire beam to attack the giant spider in order to save his father trapped by the spider gossamer.

However, the monster's masculinity and masculine authority can be understood as denaturalised rather than 'naturally' or 'biologically' determined. Lacan and Freud both argue that the phallus is a social construction which operates as "a symbolic double for the penis" (Tuana 2002: 7). Although the phallus signifies power, authority, and superiority, Lacan (1982) suggests that no one possesses it because the phallus is the absolute signifier of power, authority, and superiority which transcends the material body. Masculinity can thereby be seen as a performance or masquerade which works through the male body in order to 'show' the possession of the phallus as well as veiling an actual lack (Tasker 1993: 242). For example, Lacan

explains that in ‘male parade’ – “the accoutrements of phallic power, the finery of authority, belie the very lack they display” (Tasker 1993: 242). In *Son of Godzilla*, it is hard to find the physical similarity or trace the biological kinship between Godzilla and Godzilla Junior in terms of their bodily features: Godzilla is a giant radioactive mutant dinosaur but Junior Godzilla is ‘naturally’ born from an egg and looks like a small lizard. Since their biological sex is not visible, it can be argued that the physicality of the two monsters’ bodies becomes the crucial medium through which to perform masculinity, concealing lack but showing “possession of the phallus” by staging the father-son scenario in order to represent Godzilla’s national-heroic masculinity and power (Studlar 1997: 122; Silverman 1999: 353).

The later films, *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* and *Godzilla vs. Destroyah*, link Godzilla’s heroic hypermasculinity to his sacrificial fatherhood and to patriarchal succession, focusing on Godzilla’s protective fatherhood rather than the educative mode shown in *Son of Godzilla*. At the same time, however, the loss of phallus enacted in these films suggests a response to the crisis of masculinity caused by the shifting position of Japan in the 1990s’, as it enters economic recession. Whereas *Son of Godzilla* highlights fatherhood in relation to the Law of the Father in constructing ‘good’ patriarchal kinship between Godzilla and Godzilla Junior, *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* represents a ‘bad’ kinship in which Godzilla’s cells are mutated in outer space to become Spacegodzilla. The physical features of Spacegodzilla are identical to Godzilla’s, except for Spacegodzilla’s jagged and bone-coloured dorsal fins made of white crystal and the crystals sprouting from Spacegodzilla’s shoulders. In this respect, Godzilla can be seen as the father of Spacegodzilla in terms of biological affiliation, and Godzilla Junior is Spacegodzilla’s older adopted brother. However, Spacegodzilla’s sameness and difference creates an uncanny double of Godzilla which threatens rather than perpetuates the structure of patriarchy, as Spacegodzilla acts out patricidal desire against his biological and symbolic father. According to Freud, the resolution of the Oedipus complex is the repression of the son’s desire to kill the father that entails the acquisition of moral and cultural values governing society, which can be defined as the

Law of the Father (Beattie 2002: 24). When the son 'literally' kills his father in order to appropriate power and fill his father's position, it is the violation of patriarchal law. Godzilla Junior 'performs' identification with Godzilla, Spacegodzilla is 'born' to kill his biological father. The Oedipal narrative enacted by Spacegodzilla is not only 'patricidal' in relation to the killing of Godzilla, but also 'fratricidal' in terms of imprisoning Godzilla Junior.

According to Freud's discussions in *Totem and Taboo* (1950), the social order is maintained through the patricidal guilt of the sons which is represented through three fundamental taboos: the prohibition of patricide which maintains the patriarchal order; the repression of incestuous desire in relation to the justification of the father's possession of the mother; the ban on fratricide as the father's power to maintain the social order between his sons. The father-son relationship is ambivalent and competitive. In contrast to Godzilla Junior, who successfully resolves the Oedipus complex by identifying with Godzilla's phallic power and repressing his infantile desires, Spacegodzilla's embodiment of the infantile wish to take the place of the father is also the motivation for fratricide by eliminating Godzilla Junior. In contrast to Godzilla Junior's small, short, and round body, and his childish qualities such as naïve curiosity and harmlessness, Spacegodzilla is a full grown dinosaur with violent, aggressive, and powerful characteristics. Spacegodzilla's hyperphallic power is signified by his fire breath and sharp crystallised dorsal fins and shoulders. When Spacegodzilla uses his crystals grown on his shoulders to trap Godzilla Junior under the ground and his fire beam to attack Godzilla, his monstrous body becomes the spectacle of a 'fetishised' masculinity which both displays phallic power and reveals the 'lack' of the phallus at the same time. Although Spacegodzilla imprisons Godzilla Junior and defeats Godzilla with his powerful fire breath and hard crystallised body, he still needs cyborgisation to reinforce his hypermasculine power in order to destroy Godzilla.

Whereas Godzilla's technologically mutated body is the result of nuclear weaponry, Spacegodzilla is 'born' from 'natural' forces in outer space, where the energy from star explosions triggers the mutation of Godzilla's cells. Spacegodzilla therefore lacks the 'idealised'

phallic masculinity represented by Godzilla because he is strongly dependent on nuclear technology. Consequently, Spacegodzilla does not celebrate his hyperphallic masculinity but instead enacts a quest for the lost phallus: he occupies the Fukuoka Tower, the tallest seaside tower (234 meters) in Japan, as his fortress, in order to strengthen his phallic power by cyborgising his body. When Spacegodzilla stands next to the Fukuoka Tower, enormous crystals erupt from the ground and surround both him and the Fukuoka Tower. Spacegodzilla, the tower, and crystals form an energy zone, with the tower acting as a lightning rod that accumulates the energy from the earth and transmits it to his crystallised shoulders. He absorbs the energy from the phallic props of crystals and tower to become a powerful techno-fetishised monster, allowing him to disavow his own lack.



Figure 4: Godzilla fights with Spacegodzilla to save Godzilla Junior
in *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* (1994).

Spacegodzilla utilises these phallic props to substitute for his lack of a masculine identity which ‘should have been given’ by Godzilla, and constructs an illusory power in order to stage Oedipal scenarios. He is then literally castrated by Godzilla as punishment for violating the patriarchal law. The final scenes of *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* display the spectacle of Godzilla’s destruction of Spacegodzilla’s fetishised phallic power with the help of the Japanese military: Godzilla knocks down the Fukuoka Tower to stop Spacegodzilla from absorbing energy, and uses his fire beams to burst Spacegodzilla’s chest, after Spacegodzilla’s crystallised shoulders are

ruptured by the missiles fired by the Japanese military force of the UNGCC. Finally, Spacegodzilla lies down in the middle of his phallic fortress and is burned by Godzilla's fire beams. As the fortress becomes an arena of devastation, Godzilla stands in the middle of Spacegodzilla's destroyed fortress and roars to assert his phallic potency.

These repeated associations of the Fukuoka Tower with phallic power suggest profound anxieties in the context of Japan's economic recession. The tower represents an ambivalent symbol of (masculine) economic power: located in Hakata Bay near Fukuoka City, which has been the economic centre in the south-eastern region of Japan, it was finished in 1989 when Japan's bubble economy began to collapse.²⁶⁷ Accordingly, the tower connotes both economic growth and collapse: the year of *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla*'s release, 1994, was the year in which Japan experienced its worst economic crisis.²⁶⁸ In the film, Spacegodzilla not only mistakenly identifies the tower as the idealised, stable, and coherent phallus but also maintains the illusion that he 'has' the phallus signified by the tower. Following this argument, Godzilla's reassertion of his phallic power can be seen as functioning to disavow the loss of masculine dominance and adequacy triggered by the economic recession.

Whilst Spacegodzilla's death enacts a literal castration as punishment for his phallic ambitions, Godzilla Junior in *Godzilla vs. Destroyah* acquires his manhood by deferring his repressed desire to kill his father until he takes over Godzilla's power. Whilst Spacegodzilla is punished for his Oedipal crimes, Godzilla Junior's repressed desires result in Godzilla's sacrificial fatherhood in order that Godzilla Junior can be 'ethically' justified as Godzilla's heir. *Godzilla vs. Destroyah* is the only franchise showing Godzilla's 'death' and highlights Godzilla Junior's transformation from

²⁶⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *OECD Territorial Reviews: Trans-Border Urban Co-Operation in the Pan Yellow Sea Region* (Paris: OECD, 2009) 44; Kyoko Hatakeyama and Craig Freedman, *Snow on the Pine: Japan's Quest for a Leadership Role in Asia* (Singapore, Hackensack, NJ and London: World Scientific, 2010) 420.

²⁶⁸ Yuko Arayama and Panos Mourdoukoutas, *The Rise and Fall of Abacus Banking in Japan and China* (Westport, CT: Quorum, 2000) 68.

adolescence into manhood by juxtaposing his growing body with Godzilla's deterioration. This film begins from two crises: the Japanese military cannot tackle the attack of Destoroyah, a fossilised crab mutated by the remains of the Oxygen Destroyer; and the possible nuclear detonation of Godzilla's body caused by Godzilla's heart turning into an uncontrollable nuclear reactor. After his overstraining fights with Spacegodzilla in the previous film, Godzilla's heart has a nuclear meltdown that causes his impervious body to become blazing, glimmering, and burning red as well as his body temperature to rise exponentially. Godzilla's nuclear meltdown not only makes his body unstable, melting, and overheated, but also challenges his hypermasculinity – the hard and taut body that has ideologically reinforced Japanese national identity and patriarchal kinship, and embodied the ideal of phallic masculinity.

Thus, Godzilla, who in the first film was the result of nuclear warfare in the Second World War, comes in this film to represent the ambivalence and horror of masculinised technoscience. On the one hand, the nuclear monster born with a hypermasculine, regenerative, invincible and invulnerable body has been transformed during the franchise from an uncontrollable and incomprehensible monster into a Japanese national hero tackling various threats. Now, however, underneath his monstrous skin, Godzilla's heart is an uncontrollable and unstable nuclear reactor that will explode to destroy Japan. Whilst Godzilla once exposed the limits of science in relation to the nuclear annihilation caused by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he now embodies the irrationality of techno-science, in which nuclear technology cannot always be under control but is a reminder of chaotic, unpredictable, and dangerous possibilities.

Since the franchise has constructed Godzilla's idealised hypermasculinity through his impervious, invulnerable, and violent body, contradiction arises when, in *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah*, his hypermasculine body is involved in what we can read as a process of feminisation, together with the failure of masculinised techno-science. Godzilla's monstrosity now connotes both the hypermasculine and the feminine at the same time: the mixture of the 'hard' and 'soft' body. According to the narrative, Godzilla's overheating and melting body is a walking time bomb

which is a threat to Japan's security. His nuclear meltdown can be seen as the feminisation of his male body, while the melting body can be seen as the abject that transgresses the boundary between the corporeal inside and outside (Campbell 2004: 62). Nuclear technology not only creates the hard and taut skin that defines Godzilla's national heroic identity, but also triggers the abject horror that threatens Godzilla's identity when nuclear meltdown gradually dissolves his body from within. Godzilla's overheating and melting body is the site where we see enacting the struggle between (masculine) identity and the abject.

More important, the film does not provide a radical critique of masculinised techno-science via a feminised male body, but instead disavows Godzilla's feminised body by staging his sacrificial fatherhood as a rite of passage for Godzilla Junior's Oedipus complex, to reconfirm Godzilla's masculinity. The horror of Godzilla's uncontrollable abject body is only shown in the opening scene, where the monster violently stomps over Hong Kong. The feminisation of Godzilla's invincible body is scientifically explained, controlled, and monitored by the Japanese authorities, in order to keep the boundary between the inside and the outside of the male body under control. After discovering that Godzilla's overheating, steaming, and melting body is the result of the nuclear reaction in his heart, the Japanese military uses an anti-nuclear weapon to 'freeze' Godzilla's abject body, in order to postpone the explosion and lure Godzilla to fight with Destoroyah. Accordingly, Godzilla's masculinity is reconfirmed through his once more invincible, impermeable, and aggressive body. In the meantime, the links between Godzilla's fatherhood and the hypermasculine invincible body are particularly underlined. The father-son relationship is intensified when Godzilla Junior is killed by Destoroyah.

In contrast to the childish figure shown in *Son of Godzilla* and *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla*, Godzilla Junior becomes identical to his father in *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah*, with a full-grown dinosaur figure but of a much smaller size. Unlike in previous films, where Godzilla Junior cries for help from his father, this time he emerges alone from the sea with his full grown dinosaur body, searches for his dying father, and initiates his first fight with Destoroyah. Godzilla Junior

gradually replaces his father and is no longer fathered. However, Godzilla Junior is not strong enough to defeat Destoroyah because he cannot be the adult male monster without the radioactive mutation that legitimately constructs Godzilla's hypermasculine phallic power and authority.

The ten-minute scene of Godzilla's rampage against Destoroyah is highlighted in the final part of the film after Godzilla witnesses Destoroyah's killing of Godzilla Junior. After a long shot showing that the mutant Destoroyah is much bigger than Godzilla, a series of close-ups amplify Godzilla's sympathetic character. Godzilla's emotion is represented by focusing on his face, together with his extended howling and the sombre orchestral background music. His howling is also identified within the film by the Japanese female reporter and the Japanese male science student as the father's crying at the loss of a family member. In addition to revolving around Godzilla's face, the camera also uses close-up shots of his feet and chest in order to represent Godzilla's soft or vulnerable body caused by the overheating nuclear meltdown of his heart. After the mutant Destoroyah knocks Godzilla to the ground, the camera immediately moves to Godzilla's face and his moving feet as he struggles to stand up, and then focuses on his face again after Destoroyah coils his tail around Godzilla's neck. The nuclear meltdown turns Godzilla's impervious body into an abject body that blurs the boundary between the hard and the soft. We see a large amount of yellow liquid or blood spill out of Godzilla's chest and belly when the mutant Destoroyah uses his fire beam to cut through Godzilla's body.

However, these scenes, which represent the spectacle of feminising Godzilla's invincible body, take up less than one minute in the ten-minute fight between Godzilla and the mutant Destoroyah. From the moment when Godzilla's impervious body leaking blood signifies the threat to his phallic power, the narrative immediately diverts into Godzilla's ultraviolent actions, thereby disavowing his passivity and feminisation. Instead, the rest of the fighting scene highlights the weakness of his son's killer. After the camera shows Godzilla's bleeding stomach and chest, we see Godzilla's phallic power reconfirmed: a close-up focuses on Godzilla's face

with his howl of anger, and then in a long shot we see Godzilla's radiant body, and finally a medium close-up shot shows powerful fire beams emitted from Godzilla's mouth to bleed and blow up the mutant Destoroyah. The spectacle of Godzilla's rampage against his son's killer reaffirms the mastery of Godzilla's phallic power and dominance.

In these films of the Godzilla franchise, then, we are presented with the spectacle of Godzilla's hypermasculinity as somehow natural, universal, and innate, with a form of masculine superiority evidenced in power, control, and fatherhood. Yet paradoxically each of the films reveals this power to be socially constructed, a product of the Japanese government, military, scientists, and journalists in the context of the Second World War. The genealogical narrative which runs through the films equates Godzilla's masculinity with power, superiority, and nationhood, and endows Godzilla's masculinity with phallic power as a 'naturally' given phenomenon. The dinosaur's gender is initially masculinised by his natural, violent, and wounded body as the sacrificial beast which will save the Japanese soldiers, but the later mutation sees the dinosaur's body radioactively transformed to become invincible, regenerative, and impenetrable, replacing its biological masculinity with technological phallic power. However, the equation of nuclear technology with phallic power creates an apocalyptic effect – the nuclear meltdown of Godzilla's previously impervious body. In particular, *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah* represents Godzilla's technological phallus as chaotic, unstable, and destructive, as opposed to the invincible, invulnerable, and regenerative connotations heavily promoted elsewhere in the Godzilla franchise.

In this respect, the Godzilla franchise can be seen as fetishising Godzilla, investing the prehistoric dinosaur with an anthropomorphised heroic character and with nuclear power within modern postwar Japanese society, to become a substitute for what appears to be lacking or a threat. Godzilla is given transcendental power through the radioactive mutation and is transformed from an incomprehensible monster into a Japanese tragic hero who alleviates Japanese postwar cultural anxieties, rather than disentangling the complex contextualisation of those anxieties in relation to social, political, and economic changes. Thus, this fetishised nuclear

monster always reveals ambivalence: on the one hand, he functions to disavow the lack, or symbolic loss of masculinity, caused by the trauma of the Second World War and the economic recession since the late 1980s, and on the other hand, this fetish object inevitably and ironically becomes the index of absence. According to Freud's psychoanalytic account of fetishism in which the fetishised object is a replacement to conceal the threat or loss, Godzilla, the nuclear monster, can be seen as the threat that becomes the fetish. The fetish functions as a two-fold disavowal: Godzilla disavows the foreign threat caused by nuclear warfare and the national threat of the economic bubble by fighting with a number of technologically mutated monsters. Paradoxically, the first Godzilla film recognises the nuclear threat by representing a monstrous Godzilla, but the following films turn Godzilla's threatening body into Japan's safeguard rather than focusing on the radioactive damage to Japanese civilians and urban environments caused by the fights between Godzilla and the other technologically mutated monsters.



Figure 5: Melting Godzilla fights with Destoroyah in *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah* (1995).

Godzilla's nuclear meltdown is dramatically portrayed in slow motion to construct a tragic hero's death in the ending of *Godzilla vs. Destoroyah*. When Godzilla's body temperature reaches 1200 degrees Celsius, indicating nuclear meltdown, the Japanese troops surround him and fire anti-nuclear weapons in order to cool down Godzilla's body and minimise the nuclear blast range in Tokyo. As the slow motion highlights Godzilla's struggle against the laser and missiles fired by the Japanese troops, the sombre music and the sympathetic gaze of the Japanese military leader,

scientist, and journalist are combined to intensify the identification with Godzilla's vulnerability. After the anti-nuclear weapons contain Godzilla's destructive explosion, the long shot of Godzilla's whole body shifts to a close-up that centres on the left side of Godzilla's face as his head movement slows, indicating the beginning of meltdown. The facial skin liquefies piece by piece and the bones under the skin are exposed. The final moment of Godzilla's death turns back to a long shot which displays the blurred and red outline of Godzilla's body and then the body's shape is completely dissolved with his last feeble howling. Simultaneously, the female journalist, Yukari, the daughter of Dr. Yamane who was the first scientist to study Godzilla, identifies Godzilla's death as mankind's punishment for misusing nuclear technology: "For science – playing with nuclear power for mankind's sake." Miki, the sympathetic female psychic reader of Godzilla, tearfully takes off her military cap to express her sorrow at Godzilla's death: "My duties are done." Whereas Yukari and Miki's comments reveal Godzilla's inability to maintain his hyperphallic power constructed by the unstable nuclear technology, however, the patriarchal disavowal mechanism functions once again, by ideologically staging Godzilla Junior's resurrection from the radiation caused by Godzilla's nuclear meltdown.

After Miki's 'sentimental' condolence, the camera turns to Meru, the new and powerful psychic reader of Godzilla, who is surprised by sensing Godzilla Junior's activity from the debris of the airport in Tokyo ruined by Godzilla and Destoroyah. The camera moves slowly towards the smoggy airport, revealing Godzilla Junior standing up straight with much bigger and sharper dorsal fins on his back: resurrected and mutated into a gigantic dinosaur. Not only is his mutated body figure identical to Godzilla's, but he also waves his two short arms with their sharp claws and aggressively howls to the sky to show his horrific and awful power – his father's iconic gestures. Before Godzilla's mutation, the patriarchal kinship between Godzilla and Godzilla Junior was formed by adoption, but after the resurrection, it can be argued that Godzilla literally gives birth to Godzilla Junior. Since Godzilla Junior identifies with Godzilla's patriarchal figure, the two seem to have formed a pact in which Godzilla Junior takes on Godzilla's attributes, as

represented in *Son of Godzilla* and *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla*, to guarantee his position as heir, and eventually transforms himself into the patriarchal successor both metaphorically and biologically. Godzilla's phallic power is transmitted by the line of physical descent from father to son through his sacrificial death, as the promise of not only a new physical life for Godzilla Junior but also the safeguard of Japan's security.

3. Mechagodzilla, the Uncanny Double, and Abject Subjectivity

Godzilla's gender, as we have seen, is constructed as masculine through both his invincible, impervious, and regenerative body as well as his aggressive, destructive, and forceful behaviour. The two films *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002) and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2003) feature Mechagodzilla as a doppelganger or double of Godzilla, with a hypermasculine body type, but also normalise, glorify, and glamorise violence in the battles with Godzilla. I would argue that both films offer the pleasurable fantasy of hypermasculine monsters as a way of responding to anxieties about Japanese manhood in relation to demilitarised Japan with its long economic recession.

Thus, this section will examine Mechagodzilla's uncanny body in relation to this crisis of masculinity. Mechagodzilla, created as the uncanny double of Godzilla, can be read on two levels. On the first, Mechagodzilla represents the reproduction of hegemonic national identity as well as the fantasy of remilitarisation in relation to postwar Japan's desire for enlarged economic power and obtaining of international recognition as a world power. Second, in contrast to the first Godzilla's strike in 1954, where unexpected and unprepared-for horror is emphasised by showing the anxiety of the government, the military, and the civilians, in the 2000s' sequels Godzilla's horror is portrayed as expected and prepared-for under the surveillance of social institutions. These films show disciplined and honoured soldiers, and organised co-ordination between governmental officers, military leaders, top scientists, and the civil evacuation service under the control of UNGCC, a special Japanese international institution set up to tackle

Godzilla's threat. The unexpected horror represented in the 1954 film is reinforced by the scenes of civilian casualties along with the fast and incessant rhythms of the symphonic music that is assigned to Godzilla's monstrosity, but these recent films use not only the spectacle of Japan's military facilities and weaponry accompanied by magnificent, glorifying, and cheerful background music, but also show the authorities and scientists constantly redefining, explaining, and speculating about Godzilla's body and behaviours to make predictable the horror of Godzilla.

Whereas the SDF in the franchise films is portrayed as a male-dominated institution and relies on the narrative of masculinist ideology to naturalise or glorify destructive or aggressive practices against Godzilla, the films made between 1955 and 1992 portray Japan's SDF as playing a necessary but ineffective role in the monster crisis because Godzilla is virtually immune to conventional weaponry. The SDF in the franchise has continually invented advanced weaponry, but those weapons only injure Godzilla but are not powerful enough to kill him. Instead, the elimination of Godzilla in *Mothra vs. Godzilla* (1964), *Godzilla vs. Mothra* (1992) and *Godzilla, Mothra and King Ghidorah: Giant Monsters All-Out Attack* (2001) is exclusively achieved by Japanese guardian monsters such as Mothra and King Ghidorah, whose mythical superpowers function as a displacement of modern technology in relation to militant nationalist rhetoric. The contrast between the effective supernatural monster and ineffective the SDF is never explicitly addressed because the cinematic narrative in the franchise focuses not on the ineffective military but on the cooperation between the military and the supernatural monsters, as well as on the use of advanced weapons to injure Godzilla. This linking of a restrained military with the continual development of advanced weapons can be seen as producing an external representation of phallic signifiers in relation to the reassertion of authority as well as masculinity.

From *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla II*, made in 1993, Japan's SDF in cooperation with the United Nations is represented as having established the Godzilla Countermeasures Centre (UNGCC) as an international armed agency set up to collaborate against Godzilla by creating the cyborg weapon Mechagodzilla. The opening scene of *Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla II* reveals the splendid

headquarters of UNGCC located in the suburbs of a Japanese city, equipped with high-tech gadgets, specially-trained soldiers who can pilot Mechagodzilla, and Japanese officers and scientists working together with their Western counterparts to develop the magnificent weapon, Mechagodzilla, as a mechanical doppelganger of Godzilla. Mechagodzilla is not only a hybrid of robot and the DNA of the alien monster, Mecha-King Ghidorah, but is also designed to resemble Godzilla's dinosaur-like body shape but with a gleaming, sharp, rigid, and metallic appearance.

This high-tech cyborg marks the Japanese transformation from war victim into a self-confident nation. Godzilla's threat has been displaced into an international security issue that symbolically legitimises Japan's remilitarisation embodied by Mechagodzilla, as well as reflecting the fact that Japan has become not only a significant player in the world economy but also the world's top robot consuming and manufacturing country (Nof and Rajan 1994: 260). From such a perspective, the return of Godzilla can be seen as an assessment of the military's power to generate a sense of nationalism and patriotism rather than a threat to national security. The cyborg weaponry is continually highlighted in the 2000s' sequels, *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002) and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2003), but in these films, unlike the 1993 film, Mechagodzilla is a hybrid of robot and Godzilla's own DNA. The 1993 cyborg weapon and those of the later films share one thing in common: all of them are the product of integrating political, social, economic, and military resources, constructing a straightforward link between national identity and remilitarisation to serve a political agenda. The Japanese-made cyborg weaponry is presented as a representative of national authority in the drive to eliminate Godzilla. It contributes to the project of strengthening the collective identity, national identity in particular, (re)creating a testament to Japanese hegemonic national identity. Mechagodzilla is represented as the first Japanese-invented bio-weapon or robotic weapon, symbolising national pride, democracy, and a guarantee of national security, and is the moral agent of the superego of the Japanese authorities and civilians. In particular, before having the first battle with Godzilla, the first part of *Godzilla*

against Mechagodzilla (2002) elaborately constructs Mechagodzilla as a national product arising from political, economic, and scientific cooperation. Japan's Prime Minister not only coordinates the parliament in order to gain a national consensus for funding the project of inventing a cyborg weapon against Godzilla, but also recruits the top Japanese scientists from the biological, physical, and robotics fields to use Godzilla's remains to create a bio-robot. In the scene in which the finished Mechagodzilla is shown to the public at an international press conference, the heroic hypermasculine traits of Mechagodzilla are represented through the detailed reports about its gigantic, hard, and metallic body equipped with powerful and high-tech weapons given by the male characters such as the prime minister and scientists.

The second level of meaning to Mechagodzilla's uncanny 'doubleness' represented in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* registers anxiety about masculine identity formation. What distinguishes the 2000s' Mechagodzilla from that of 1993 is that the 2000s' Mechagodzilla develops subjectivity. Whereas the 1993 Mechagodzilla, simply represented as a robot without consciousness or subjectivity, loyally carries out its national mission until it is destroyed by Godzilla, Mechagodzilla in the 2000s' franchise, now represented as a conscious monster-robot, challenges the ideal phallic identity constructed for it by Japan's technocracy. As a result, masculine anxiety arises from the hypermasculine fighting between Mechagodzilla and Godzilla which causes the abjection of Mechagodzilla's uncanny body as well as rendering ambivalent any moral discourse of the 'good' hero verses the 'bad' villain. Mechagodzilla's spectacular fights with Godzilla are the means by which the Japanese authorities sustain the social order, and represent a gendered politics in relation to the masculine competition between Godzilla's monstrosity and Mechagodzilla's technocracy. Similar to Godzilla's ambivalent identity, in these two films cyborgisation also makes Mechagodzilla's national heroic character problematic in terms of the hybridised body produced from technocracy and Godzilla's monstrosity. Mechagodzilla's body is a hybrid of the nuclear, the dinosaur, and to a certain degree dismantles the 'difference' between machine and monster, order and disorder, the past

and the present, the controlling and the controlled, and the rational and the irrational, rather than simply representing the authority of the rationalised social order in relation to Godzilla's monstrous disorder. The battle ground of Tokyo where Mechagodzilla meets Godzilla stages Mechagodzilla's experience of the abject: Mechagodzilla's uncanny body plays out the anxiety of the return of the repressed as well as the collapse of a masculine rhetoric of (national) identity, system, and order.

The scenes of Mechagodzilla's first battle with Godzilla in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* expose the fact that the cyborg's hybrid body violates the Japanese social order. In the first attack on Godzilla, Mechagodzilla, remotely piloted by the soldiers, fires laser beams and missiles towards Godzilla. However, when Godzilla roars towards Mechagodzilla, the cyborg weapon suddenly rejects the pilot's command to attack. A fast and fragmented montage appears to show the series of fleeting images that represent Mechagodzilla's repressed memories: the close-up of Mechagodzilla's face, the digital circuit, the cluster of cells, the mushroom cloud, the exploding device, the burning monster, and finally the bubbling and frothing of the sea all suggest Godzilla's archetypal birth created by the nuclear radiation and death caused by the Oxygen Destroyer in the 1954 Godzilla film. The montage produces a moment of uncanny affect which both involves the return of the repressed, as Mechagodzilla recognises its kinship to Godzilla, and also gives rise to the experience of abjection in relation to Mechagodzilla's rejection of the kin connection to the Japanese authorities.²⁶⁹ As a result, Mechagodzilla refuses to destroy Godzilla and attacks Japan.

²⁶⁹ According to Kristeva, what differentiates the abject from Freud's notion of the uncanny is that the abject rejects its kinship: "Essentially different from "uncanniness," more violent, too, abjection is elaborated through a failure to recognize its kin; nothing is familiar, not even the shadow of a memory. I imagine a child who has swallowed up its parents too soon, who frightens himself on that account, "all by himself," and, to save himself, rejects and throws up everything that is given to him—all gifts, all objects. He has, he could have, a sense of the abject." See Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia UP, 1982) 5-6.

When the pilot tries to retreat back to the dock with the malfunctioning cyborg weapon, we see that Mechagodzilla's mechanical hand move by itself and its eye colour changes from yellow to red, indicating that the cyborg gains its own abject subjectivity. The cyborg shifts identity from being a remote-controlled robot against Godzilla into an uncontrollable and unknowable monster against Japan. The red-eyed cyborg is the double of Godzilla, the failure of security, control, and reason, and the figure of an abject masculinity which falls between the acceptable and unacceptable: firing laser beams at the pilots, it ejects all of the missiles from its body into the sky, and rampages across the city of Tokyo. Mechagodzilla walks straight through a gigantic office building, leaving a huge hole, and then slowly shuts itself down in the middle of the road. The scene represents the encounter with the abject from within its uncanny body that takes Mechagodzilla to the threshold between "regression" and "renewal" (Roustang 2000: 144; Kristeva 1982: 2). Accordingly, the Prime Minister who initiated the project of Mechagodzilla to protect the nation has the dilemma of whether to re-dispatch the repaired Mechagodzilla against Godzilla when the cyborg has become an abject monster, what Japanese society must reject, sarcastically headlined by the Japanese newspapers as "Mechagodzilla Runs Wild".



Figure 6: Mechagodzilla is out of control and ejects the missiles from its body in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002).

The process of Mechagodzilla's abjection becomes more ambivalent in a dynamic interplay between repression and the return of the repressed triggered by the government's re-dispatching of Mechagodzilla in *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2002), set in the year 2003. This dynamics operates in

two stages: in the first the interplay between repression and the return of the repressed is masked by nostalgia, and in the second Mechagodzilla's experience of the abject leads to the dissolution of its identity. In the first stage we see two female fairies appear, asking the anthropologist Dr. Chujo, who in 1961 first discovered the Japanese supernatural monster Mothra, to tell the Japanese Prime Minister to stop using Mechagodzilla against Godzilla. The fairies argue that the guardian monster will appear to save Japan from Godzilla's threat if Japan's Prime Minister will scrap the defence project due to the 'unethical' cyborgisation of Mechagodzilla: "Remember, no human beings may touch the souls of the dead. Human beings should recognise their mistakes and correct them. It's the only way that they can redeem themselves!" The fairies warn that if the Prime Minister insists on use of the weapon, Mothra will appear to attack Japan as a punishment for its unethical behaviour.

The fairies define Mechagodzilla as 'unethical' because of its affiliation with "the souls of the dead", a phrase which refers to the Japanese who died in the Second World War as well as Godzilla's traumatic past and all that it represents. What the cyborg violates is the moral boundary between the living and the dead, the natural and the cultural, and the mechanical and the organic. Accordingly, the opening of the film links the compulsion to repeat to the return of the repressed. The reappearance in the 2003 franchise of Japanese guardian fairies, which has earlier appeared in *Mothra vs. Godzilla* (1964) and *Godzilla vs. Mothra* (1992) as Mothra's envoys, can be seen as operating in three ways. Firstly, they function as an agent of repression, seeking to prevent the repressed desire for remilitarisation arising from Japan's rapid economic growth from re-emerging. Secondly, they represent nostalgia for the expulsion of Godzilla executed by Mothra, Japan's most supernaturally powerful monster, an expulsion which displaces Japan's desire for remilitarisation. Finally, they represent the desire to return to the familiar time when postwar Japan experienced its prolonged period of economic growth from the 1950s until the 1980s.

As the narrative proceeds in the rest of the film, we see Japan's strongly nostalgic engagement with its past. The past becomes a time when Japan benefited from its pacifist, democratic, and capitalist society, and a refuge from the uncertainties caused by the economic recession in the present (Waldoff 2001: 94). However, the nostalgic engagement with the past does not ease uncertainty but instead reproduces anxiety in the present. In two scenes we see Igarashi, the Japanese Prime Minister, and Yoshito, a young technician repairing the seriously damaged Mechagodzilla, expressing doubts about the myth of Mothra, arguing that Mechagodzilla is the only reliable weapon to protect Japan, whilst Dr. Chujo seeks to dissuade them from using Mechagodzilla because of the fairies' moral criticism. It can be argued that the Prime Minister and the technician represent the young generation who are born after the Second World War and treat the supernatural guardian mother as a thing of the past, in contrast to the strong nostalgic sentiment shown by Dr. Chujo who discovered Mothra forty years ago. If Mothra, however, represents nostalgia for the past and a desire to renew the past in the present, her death from Godzilla's automatic beams suggests the failure to restore continuity between the past and the present. Whereas the present shown in *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S* is the year of 2003 when Japan's economic recession has lasted for ten years, the past represented by Mothra is the 1960s which is marked by Japan's rapid economic growth (Adams 2008: 9). After the death of Mothra, Mechagodzilla is dispatched by the Prime Minister to fight with Godzilla but cannot eliminate him and instead commits self-destruction. The Japanese masculine authorities represented by the Prime Minister, the military, and scientists have failed to reconnect the past and the present, bring the past into the present or rewrite Japan's postwar history – anxiety about masculine identity is the result.

The second stage of this interplay between past and present or repression and the return of the repressed is that in which Mechagodzilla experiences the destructive force of abjection when this dynamic interplay collapses. The final combat scenes with Godzilla in *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S* represent Mechagodzilla's experience of abjection, in which the boundaries between the original

and the copy, the past and the present, the subject and the object, and the monstrous and technological virtuosity all break down. In the first of these experiences, Mechagodzilla simply temporarily rampages through Tokyo's streets because the scientists immediately 're-programme' his bio-computer brain in order to repudiate the monstrous kin relationship with Godzilla. The difference between technocracy and monstrosity is once more redrawn and repression returns as an agency of social control. In contrast, the second experience results in Mechagodzilla's self-destruction when Mechagodzilla's subjectivity is dissolved by the repressed memories which surface to consciousness.



Figure 7: Godzilla fights with Mechagodzilla in *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S* (2004).

In the scene in which Godzilla's body is seriously penetrated and struck by Mechagodzilla's mechanical drill and laser beam, we see a close-up of Mechagodzilla's damaged face along with that of the unconscious Yoshito, face down on the floor of the chamber inside Mechagodzilla's body, indicating Yoshito's empathy towards and identification with Mechagodzilla's hesitation to eliminate Godzilla, as he shares Mechagodzilla's flashback to repressed memories. In the flashback's fast-paced montage sequences we see the explanation for Mechagodzilla's ambivalent subjectivity: images of Godzilla's horrific birth and death excerpted from *Godzilla* (1954) are juxtaposed with the images of Mechagodzilla's ambivalent fight with Godzilla and irrational rampage on the streets from *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002). According to the narrative,

Mechagodzilla cannot entirely re-experience in the present the traumatic memories of Godzilla's birth and death, the elimination of Godzilla, or even the destruction of Japan, but instead is trapped in the confusion and chaotic state which leads to its/his death. Mechagodzilla wraps itself and Godzilla together with cables and displays two words, 'Farewell, Yoshito', on the computer screen in order to tell Yoshito and the Japanese authorities that it will sink the injured Godzilla monster and itself in the deep sea of the Japan Trench. The scene represents the difference between Godzilla and Mechagodzilla: whereas Godzilla's return to the sea indicates the return of social order, repression, and the familiar, Mechagodzilla's self-destruction results in the production of the unfamiliar as well as the dissolution of subjectivity. Mechagodzilla becomes abject – neither the subject (the agency of national security) nor the object (the Godzilla monster).

Mechagodzilla's phallic hypermasculinity is not innate but constructed by Japan's technocracy: his hypermasculine body is literally hollow. Whereas Godzilla was initially linked to the war trauma, what Mechagodzilla represents is more complex. Mechagodzilla in *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* has been rebuilt into a more phallic looking weapon, equipped with a laser beam that can be emitted from its mouth and chest, missile launchers on the shoulders, and a mechanical drill arm. But in constructing Mechagodzilla's bio-computer brain, Japan's technocracy represses the memories of Godzilla's birth and death, as well as Mechagodzilla's previous fight with Godzilla. This cyborg weapon is constructed as an idealised, desirable, and phallic masculinity, an ideal weapon that can ward off anxiety around the loss of power, control, and dominance. The anxiety that is arguably compounded from a range of social and historical factors: Japan's defeat in the Second World War, dependence on the American military and prolonged economic recession. Although the cyborg weapon signifies phallic power, it does not embody a stable and unified masculinity. Instead, its cyborg body is constantly damaged, uncontrolled, and unpredictable. For example, in the combat scene with Godzilla in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla*, Mechagodzilla's behavioural regression is exemplified by its attack on the military and urban

landscape when repressed memories surface in its bio-computer brain. Mechagodzilla becomes an abject being that breaks down the boundaries between machine and monster, between the protector and the perpetrator, and between the past and the present. What makes Mechagodzilla's meaning ambivalent is that its identity shifts from representing social order into becoming an object which cannot be destroyed, expelled, or suppressed by the Japanese authorities. The Prime Minister, however, as the representative of the nation/state which has utilised parliament, scientists, and military to build the expensive weapon that is Mechagodzilla, refuses to admit the failure of the project, claiming that "We couldn't kill it [Godzilla]! But we did expel Godzilla. We have a weapon more powerful than Godzilla. That means a lot. We sacrificed plenty for it, but it represents a great victory!"

Conclusion

Godzilla, as a culturally produced cyborg-monster, carries multiple meanings which constantly replay particular masculine anxieties caused by the social changes in Japan since the end of the Second World War. The first Godzilla monster of 1954 is a hybrid of American atomic radiation and Japan's traumatic war experiences and represents the return of the repressed in connection to Japan's ambivalent role in playing both victim and perpetrator during the Second World War, as well as its defeat "on both socioeconomic and moral grounds" (Sakai 1989: 114). Since Godzilla's rampage across the urban landscape of Tokyo produces the uncanny moment when the repressed war memories surface to present consciousness, the elimination of Godzilla carried out by the Japanese male scientist signifies the rewriting of Japan's postwar history, the re-imagination of Japanese national identity, and equally important, the alleviation of male anxiety.

As Japan recovers from the war and becomes a major world economic power in the 1960s, Godzilla in *Son of Godzilla* (1967) is gendered as a national hero and devoted father rather than being a repressed 'Other'. Ironically, Godzilla's masculinity is not self-evident or biologically

determined but instead is performed or masqueraded through the father-son scenario and the hypermasculine spectacle of fights with the monster-villain in order to appropriate phallic power. The fragility of this masquerade is revealed in *Godzilla vs. Spacegodzilla* (1994) and *Godzilla vs. Destroyah* (1995), where Godzilla's devoted and sacrificial fatherhood exposes his lack of penis/phallus and a loss of masculine capability and mastery in response to Japan's changed status at the beginning of the 1990s. More important, the collapsing economy which ushered in the prolonged recession known as the 'lost decade' is in turn reflected in the ambivalent cyborg-monster figure of Mechagodzilla in *Godzilla against Mechagodzilla* (2002) and *Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S.* (2003). The hollow phallicism of this uncanny double or doppelganger of Godzilla comes to represent the accumulated anxiety about the return of war and economic trauma as well as the abject horror of losing control of meaning and power.

Chapter 3

Hysterical, Metamorphic, and Abject Male Cyborg Bodies in Japanese Cyberpunk Films

The Godzilla franchise, as we have seen, constructs Godzilla, with his hard, invulnerable, and monstrous cyborg body as a Japanese hero in order to reinforce the postwar Japanese hegemonic masculinity and nationalism. In this chapter I will investigate films produced by two Japanese independent filmmakers, Shinya Tsukamoto and Shozin Fukui, within the subgenre of science fiction called cyberpunk. Cyberpunk is often associated with a predominantly male authorship and audience, with a focus on heterosexual male characters and a central theme of the technological invasion of the body. Prosthetic limbs, implanted circuitry, cosmetic surgery, genetic alternation, brain-computer interfaces, artificial intelligence, and neurochemistry are used to explore what it means to be human in postindustrial and postmodern urban societies (O’Riordan 2005: 138, Wolmark 1994: 110). Cyberpunk criticises “the technological utopianism” of traditional science fiction by interrogating the technologically-mediated body – Haraway’s cyborg – as a way of reconfiguring humanity, destabilising the nature of the self, and highlighting contradictory relationships between humans and technology (Booker and Thomas 2009: 110). Whereas cyberpunk literature and cinema explore boundary breakdown between humans and machines, however, the gender boundary remains fixed: either masculine or feminine to an exaggerated degree (Springer 1996: 64). Examples of such bodies include the 1980s’ Hollywood cyberpunk films that often use the spectacle of inflated physiques with hard, muscular, and mechanical male bodies such as the cyborg warrior played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Terminator* (1984) and the human-robotic cop played by Peter Weller in *Robocop* (1987). These Hollywood versions see the elimination of villains, the upholding of male dominance, and the preservation of the patriarchal order, naturalising gender difference against the perceived erosion

of gender boundaries. They have been seen as a response to the decentred, fragmented, and fluid subject constructed by the cybernetic body in Western postmodern society, the decline of heavy industry in the American post-industrial era, and American social movements such as the civil rights movement and women's and gay liberation movements (Cornea 2007: 126, Boyles 2005: 146). However, the Japanese cyberpunk films made in the late 1980s and 1990, I would argue, specifically articulate male body horror via a hysterical and abject masculinity to question the Japanese hegemonic masculine ideal of the salaryman, in the context of an economic and political situation in which Japan's economic bubble burst in 1991 and the country suffered severe recession in the first half of the 1990s (Beasley 2000: 285). The configuration of the male cyborg body represented in Japanese cyberpunk is quite different from that in Hollywood cyberpunk, the result of very different cultural contexts. This chapter will be divided into three sections in arguing that the cinematic imagery of hysterical male cyborgs in Japanese cyberpunk registers the crisis of masculinity in contemporary Japan. I shall explore, first, the relationship between Japanese independent cinema and cyberpunk. Second, I shall investigate the hysterical representation of male cyborg bodies in cyberpunk films. Finally, I shall argue that these films also function as reassurance for masculinity through their narratives of callous and exploitative sexual abuse against women and hypermasculine aggression towards men.

1. Independent Filmmakers and Japanese Cyberpunk since the late 1980s

Since the 1980s, the Japanese film industry has experienced a series of declines: both a decrease in movie attendance and the curtailment of production by the major studios in this period of the Japanese bubble economy. As the Japanese economy crashed in May 1991, Nikkatsu became bankrupt in 1993, followed by the decision of Kadokawa, the major multimedia publishing company in Japan, to halt film production (McDonald 2006: 12). In 1999, the Shochiku Studio sold all of its production facilities (Nakata 2005: ix). The Japanese film industry entered a watershed from which the third wave of Japanese independent filmmaking

emerged (McDonald 2006: 12). Japanese independent filmmaking has had a long history, having appeared at key moments since the 1920s in response to the dominance of the big studios (Domenig 2003). In the 1920s directors and actors left the studios to establish small companies, motivated by either artistic or economic considerations. The first wave of Japanese independent cinema ended in 1941 when the government forced all movie companies to merge into three big studios: Daiei, Toho, and Shochiku. The second wave of independent cinema appeared between the late 1940s during the American occupation of Japan, and the 1950s of the Cold War (Domenig 2003). This wave followed the political move by General MacArthur to remove members and sympathisers of the Communist Party from the film trade unions, leading left-wing directors to establish their own production companies. However, these independent production companies could not compete with the studios when Japanese studios in the 1950s reached the 'Golden Age' of both Japanese cinema and Japanese studios: the domination of distribution and exhibition by the six studios, Toho, Shintoho, Shochiku, Daiei, Nikkatsu, and Toei (Gerow 2002: 70-72). During the 1960s, new independent filmmakers, as the third wave of independent cinema, emerged from the ATG (the Art Theatre Guild) which was founded in 1961 as an independent film distributor of foreign art films and Japanese films that were produced outside Japanese studios. After 1967, ATG began to produce its own films and became the most important producer of Japanese independent cinema. Until the mid-1980s, ATG greatly influenced Japanese cinema.

By the end of the 1970s, apart from Nikkatsu, Japanese film studios decided to stop employing assistant directors or providing apprentice training, which seemed to discourage young filmmakers from pursuing careers in the film industry (Domenig 2003, Sharp 2005). Meanwhile, the big studios such as Nikkatsu stepped into the lucrative sexploitation film market (*pinku eiga*). A number of directors began their career in *pinku eiga* as an alternative way into the film business. Most of the filmmakers had made independent works with friends or film clubs from high school or university. Student and amateur films, shot on 8mm or 16mm cameras,

became an important aspect of Japanese cinema during the 1970s (Domenig 2003). The film club of Nihon University played an influential role in initiating this film movement from the late 1950s. In addition to ATG's role in helping the development of Japanese cinema, in 1977 Japan's first film festival, PIA Film Festival (PFF), was established by Tokyo magazine *Pia* to discover and promote new talented filmmakers (Sharp 2005). Some of the young directors who were selected for screening in the festival had made feature films with large production companies. Donald Richie (2005), the Japanese cinema scholar, suggests that the collapse of the Japanese film industry from the 1970s does not mean the collapse of film as entertainment or art. Indeed, until the early 2000s, most of the films made outside the studios and with independent distributors have featured strongly in film distribution and exhibition. In particular, in the late 1980s Japanese independent films entered onto the international stage when Shinya Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* won the best film in the Fantastic Film Festival in Rome, Italy, in 1989. Tsukamoto was one of the winners in the PIA film festival in 1988 with his short film, *The Adventure of Denchu Kozō*. Since the beginning of the 1990s, a number of independent filmmakers such as Takashi Miike, Takeshi Kitano, Naomi Kawase, Hirokazu Kore-eda, Shinji Aoyama, Isao Yukisada, Nobuhiro Suwa, and Shunji Iwai have emerged through international film festivals.

Shinya Tsukamoto's two feature films, *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* (1989) and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* (1992), are often labelled cyberpunk films by Western film critics. Since the late 1980s, a number of independently-produced Japanese films within this sub-genre have emerged: apart from Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*, Shozin Fukui's *964 Pinocchio* (1991) and *Rubber's Lover* (1996) are classified as falling within a cyberpunk genre which inherits the radical social-political stance of the first wave of Japanese independent filmmakers, employing "extremes of violence, destruction and mutation to the human body" to investigate modern urban society (Gerow 2002: 71, Hunter 1998: 198). These two directors, born in the same generation of the late 1950s and the early 1960s, became independent filmmakers having developed through making 8mm films and via the experimental and underground theatre in

Japan (Mes 2005:31). After *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* respectively won in the Fantastic Film Festival in 1989 and in the Brussels International Festival of Fantasy Film in 1992, Tsukamoto reached the position of international independent filmmaker, winning another thirteen international film prizes with his subsequent films up to 2005.²⁷⁰ In contrast to Tsukamoto, Fukui made only two feature films, *964 Pinocchio* and *Rubber's Lover*, during the 1990s. *964 Pinocchio* won the special award in the Japanese Professional Movie Awards in 1991.²⁷¹

Tsukamoto's *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*, and Fukui's *964 Pinocchio* and *Rubber's Lover* share a number of characteristics: they are independent productions with a low budget, and focus on the technological invasion of the body, and the spectacle of male body horror. Hunter (1998) in *Eros in Hell: Sex, Blood and Madness in Japanese Cinema* suggests that the two directors' films have set a new trend of Japanese cult cinema which is derived from cyberpunk. Mes (2005) in *Iron Man: The Cinema of Shinya Tsukamoto* argues that the popularity of *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* relies on this film "fitt[ing] snugly into a pantheon of [cyberpunk] genre works that included Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), James Cameron's *The Terminator* (1984), David Lynch's *Eraserhead* (1977), and the work[s] of David Cronenberg" such as *Scanners* (1981), *Videodrome* (1983) and *The Fly* (1986) (Mes 2005: 59). Classifying the films made by Tsukamoto and Fukui as cyberpunk links them firmly to the Western cyberpunk cinema popularised during the 1980s. The terms cyberpunk, cyborg and cyberspace became prominent in the 1980s as televisual technology underwent revolutionary development (Wood 1999:218), integrating microprocessors with computer networking to "simulate environments within which humans can interact", and create 'cyberspace' (Wood 1999:218, Burrows and Featherstone 1995:5).

The term cyberpunk, as label for a subgenre of science fiction, is derived from the title of a short story by American science fiction writer Bruce Bethke (Bould 2005: 217). Cyberpunk

²⁷⁰ Awards for Shinya Tsukamoto, 24 March. 2011

< <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0875354/awards>>.

²⁷¹ Awards for Shozin Fukui, 24 March. 2011

< <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0298006/awards>>.

portrays a near-future apocalyptic world composed of a highly technologically-shaped society controlled by economic elite corporations (cyber), and the community or individual that is marginalised by the corporations as the underground (punk) (Luckhurst 2005:203, Bell, Loader, Pleace, and Schuler: 2004: 49). Society is divided into two groups: the small economic elite, who control information and dwell in the privileged space of skyscrapers, and the mass population, who are excluded by globalisation and live in the urban streets which are dirty, dark, polluted, and dangerous (Bell, Loader, Pleace, and Schuler 2004: 49).

Whilst this division is structured by race and social class, it is also gendered. Feminist theorists have argued that whereas man/masculine is identified with mind, hardness, reason, culture, self, and subject, woman/feminine is identified with body, softness, emotion, nature, other, and object (Weiner 2009: 175-177). Extreme versions of cyberpunk extend the capacities of masculine control over technology, leaving the body behind as cybernetics technology dissolves flesh into information (Woods 1999: 218), and uploading consciousness into cyberspace in an ultimate masculine dream (Bell 2001:141, Vint 2007: 9). The narrative of 'jacking-in' from the material world into virtual reality is a key motif in cyberpunk (Luckhurst 2005:213). In fact, however, the body never disappears within this narrative, but is consistently assessed, regulated, and governed by technology. Thus a second key theme of cyberpunk is technological body modification, in which the fusion of human and machine produces a techno-body: the cyborg (Burrows and Featherstone 1995:11).

Mainstream cyberpunk displays an ambivalent attitude towards the cyborgised body, both foregrounding technology's excessive modification of the body and highlighting the desire for a disembodiment within cyberspace which will transcend the limitations of the material body (Foster 2005: 50). Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984) is seen as an exemplar text of the cyberpunk genre in literature. It tells the story of Case, an out of work computer hacker, hired by an AI, Wintermute, to recruit an outlaw team to remove a hardware restriction set up by Wintermute's owner, a decadent family controlled corporation. Case yearns to escape the limitations of his

body, which he defines as ‘meat’ or ‘flesh’, by jacking into “the seeming infinity of cyberspace” (Willis 2005: 77). With Case’s help, Wintermute merges with another AI, Neuromancer, becoming an entity which is much more intelligent than scientific theory could predict. Gibson’s *Neuromancer* explores not only the issue of bodiless communication in cyberspace but also the dehumanising and ‘pathological’ effects of body modification in a postindustrial urban landscape which is dominated by cheap and ubiquitous technology.



Figure 8: The Salary Man transforms into a monstrous cyborg in *Tetsuo: Iron Man* (1989).

Tomas (2000) indicates that two reasons for performing body modification can be found in *Neuromancer*: the aesthetic desire to restyle the body through forms of cosmetic surgery, grafting and transplant, and the functional drive to enhance the body’s capabilities by using implant technology. Sterling (1986) argues that these technologies noted by Tomas are both ways of invading the body, a theme that repeatedly appears in this subgenre. In general, the body in cyberpunk is taken as a negative entity. Case, the computer hacker who lives only for the bodiless exultation of cyberspace, defines the body as ‘meat’ and describes himself as trapped “in the prison of his own flesh” (Gibson 1984:6). McCarron (1995) argues that cyberpunk’s contexts are puritanical dismissal of the body and Descartes’ philosophical concept of mind/body dualism. Cartesian dualism regards the mind, the pure substance which constitutes the Self, as separated from and privileged over the body which is seen as a kind of organic ensemble. The body is constructed by Cartesianism through the metaphor of “an instrument, a tool, or a machine”, a

metaphor which is literalised by cyberpunk writers who are fascinated by “enhancement” of the body (Grosz 2005: 50, McCarron 1995: 262).

Shinya Tsukamoto’s *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*, and Shozin Fukui’s *964*, *Pinocchio*, and *Rubber’s Lover* were all made in the period when 1980s’ cyberculture was manifested in literature, cinema, the Internet, medical discourse, and performance art in the West.²⁷² Influenced by Cartesianism, cybercultural art forms not only centre on technological control, transformation, and invasion of the body, but also restate the superiority of the ‘mind’ over the body. Like them, the Japanese films display a masculine fascination with the mutability of the male body and the technological construction of supernatural/psychic power. Here, however, the technologically-modified body is not disembodied in cyberspace but embodied as body horror within a Japanese postindustrial urban landscape. Badley (1995) argues that 1980s’ Western horror films treat the body as spectacle, highlighting “transcendence of the body” and “transcendence *through* the body” by using “shock, transposition of the senses, intense feeling, and special effects” in order to create “nauseating instead of “scary”” representations of body horror (Badley 1995: 9, author’s emphasis). Body horror underlines violence against the human body “as sacred image, unity, and site of the self” (Badley 1995: 10). Badley’s definition of body horror resonates with Gibson’s idea of the pathological effect which is derived from the technologically transformed body. This pathological body horror also has psychosexual connotations. The representation of the transformed body that is constantly re-imaged and re-constructed produces a hyper-hysterical and hyper-masculine effect when the male body is in the

²⁷² Mark Dery, *Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century* (New York: Grove, 1996); David Bell and Barbara M. Kennedy, eds., *The Cybercultures Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); David Bell, *An Introduction to Cybercultures* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001); Mike Michael, *Technoscience and Everyday Life: The Complex Simplicities of the Mundane* (Maidenhead, Eng. and New York: Open UP, 2006); Stanley Arnowitz, Barbara Martinsons, and Michael Menser, eds., *Technoscience and Cyberculture* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

violent, bloody, erotic, ecstatic, and maniacal process of transforming into a cyborg. Representing the excessive corporeality of the male cyborg reveals masculinity under threat and questions technology as the embodiment of Man's inborn capacity for rationality in face of the eroticisation, feminisation, and hystericalisation of the male body in the process of cyborgisation. The Japanese cyberpunk films suggest that technology both arouses the deepest fear that it will take over a humanity which is 'naturally' governed by men, and is at the same time a medium which can represent man's desires and embody man's fantasies (Gardiner 2005: 36, Nusselder 2009: 77). Thus, these films highlight hypermasculine hysteria in response to horrific body invasion and bodily metamorphosis as well as in response to gender anxieties in the hegemonic patriarchal society which was Japan in the 1990s.

In her discussion of the cyborg, Cornea (2007) writes of the difference between Western cybernetic society and the Hollywood cyborg films of the 1980s. She argues that society since the 1980s has shifted from a modern and industrial age into a postmodern age when information-technologies and biotechnologies penetrate a body which is literally and metaphorically denaturalised and decentralised. A scientific model in which the rational brain controls an 'essentialised' and 'naturalised' body has been replaced by a cybernetic model that focuses on "reciprocity in the exchange of information and the operations of control" (Cornea 2007: 124). Thus, the body is redefined as genetic code and structure within a cybernetic society equipped with information networks. The body becomes a literal cyborg, not only altered with prosthetic arms, electronic pace-makers, or genetic therapy, but also immersed in communication technologies, to produce a decentred, fragmented, and fluid subject with a body "decentralised from within and from without" (Cornea 2007: 124). Applying this definition to *Terminator* and *Robocop*, Cornea argues that both central characters are marked as cyborgs but visually represented through an old-fashioned masculinity in association with hyperphysical strength, in an industrial age (Cornea 2007: 124, 126). Just as the Terminator is surrounded by industrial imagery and has the body of a robot, Robocop represents machinery in terms of his movement

as “an articulated truck” (Cornea 2007: 127). Cornea concludes that the 1980s’ popular cyborg films do not break down gendered division through their hypermasculine male cyborgs but instead uphold gender stereotypes constructed by patriarchal ideology. Fuchs (1993), however, argues that these hypermasculine cyborgs in fact disguise hysterical symptoms through an excessive bodily display that exposes rather than mitigates gender anxiety. The films I shall discuss resonate with Cornea’s critique that the representation of the hypermasculine and machinery-like body in the Hollywood cyborg films reaffirms male-dominance and compensates for the nostalgic loss of masculinity that the cyborg figure threatens to undermine. However, they also echo Fuchs’ analysis of the male cyborg’s gender crisis in relation to the breakdown of his subjectivity manifested in hypermasculine hysteria. The Japanese cyberpunk films do not tell the story of male cyborg heroes with a hard and muscular body but portray anti-heroic male protagonists with monstrous bodies and exhibiting sadomasochistic violence. Male hysteria as represented in these films is caused by psychological and physical traumas and produces the abject body, which in turn poses a threat to hegemonic masculinity.

2. Hysterical Male Cyborg Bodies

The Japanese cyberpunk films articulate the monstrous hysteria of male cyborgs with uncanny Otherness in the process of cyborgisation. In theoretical terms, monstrosity, argues Shildrick (2002), is the ‘Other’ that implies bodily imperfection and an improper and immoral being. Shildrick argues that such a monstrous and improper body has gendered implications. Traditionally, as the male body is seen as norm, the female body is considered as a deviation. Because women’s bodies are seen not only as “limitless” in terms of their capacity for bodily change, but also as “out of control, uncontained, unpredictable, leaky” in “menstruation, pregnancy, lactation, and such supposedly characteristic disorders as hysteria, and more commonly today, anorexia and bulimia”, women are defined as monstrous (Shildrick 2002: 31). Cyborg monsters in cyberpunk films, then, are constituted in paradoxical manner since this film

genre, I argue, produces a representation of male cyborgs as the ‘monstrous feminine’: these male cyborg bodies are not the masculine norm but the deviant feminine. The imagery of cyborg monsters is linked with the connotation of the hysterical effeminate – expressed through excessive emotional expression and bodily metamorphosis.

The male cyborgs like ‘The Salary Man’ and ‘The Fetishist’ in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, the two brothers, Tommo and Yatsu in *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*, Pinocchio in *964 Pinocchio*, and Shimika in *Rubber’s Lover*, are, then, represented as male hysterics in association with feminised cyborg bodies. The male body becomes the object of spectacle through bodily transformation and this bodily metamorphosis makes the male subject hysterical because of his “failure to take up the designated gender role” when cyborgisation challenges a coherent masculine subjectivity (Creed 2005: 15). Men are no longer represented as the rational human subject but depicted as the ‘hysterical cyborg’ subject, constantly compelled to respond to the Otherness of this subject’s hybrid and unmanageable body. Since hysteria is traditionally identified with the feminine, to apply the connotation of hysteria to man means that a man expresses his ‘effeminate’ emotion through his body; he acts like a woman when he cries, sobs, screams, faints, cowers or any number of other ‘feminine’ behaviours (Badley 1995:106). Male hysteria is represented in films as “the displacement of male-engendered anxieties or phobias onto images of the body, male or female” (Badley 1995:106). In sum, in these circumstances men are forced to express their distress and internal conflicts through the body, and are incapable of taking up proper masculine roles that are regulated by the Symbolic.

Throughout the films, the male protagonists constantly display their hysteria, the disturbance of the balance between rationality and emotion, on their bodies. Hysteria occurs in the process of becoming cyborg monsters when the body is uncontrollable and indefinable. The male subject is unable to expel the undesirable part of the cyborg body, but instead the subject is compelled to absorb the Other. The Fetishist in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* is obsessed with transforming himself into a cyborg by constantly inserting a metal conduit into a gash of his thigh, in order to

compensate for the childhood trauma that he suffers after being sexually or physically attacked by a tramp. His compensation is realised through the destruction of Tokyo after he literally becomes a metal weapon. In the meantime, The Salary Man, the second protagonist, is involved in a hit-and-run accident with The Fetishist, causing The Fetishist's brutal revenge. The Salary Man experiences hysteria when his bodily cyborgisation is caused by a monstrous female cyborg's slashing his face. Finally, in the revenge fight scene, The Fetishist and The Salary Man transform their bodies into metal and fuse together into a huge metal tank. They move through the streets to demonstrate their determination of destroy the world, their aim to create an apocalyptic version of the 'metal' world that leaves civilisation behind.



Figure 9: The Salary Man hysterically looks at his penis which is transformed into an automatic drill in *Tetsuo: Iron Man* (1989).

The process of cyborgisation is physically and psychologically painful as the human body gradually fuses with the metal gadgets, pipes, and wires. When The Salary Man spots a small piece of metal attached to his face, he assumes that it does not belong to *his* body and pulls it out of his face. In fact, the metal is part of his body and is growing out of it: blood comes out of the spot where he pulls off the metal. The spot becomes a 'wound' which rapidly grows metal

around his face and limbs, recognisable as industrial products such as mechanical gadgets, pipes, screws, wires, and circuit boards. The metal grows excessively to replace his human body parts: an automatically rolling metal drill replaces his penis and his human form can hardly be recognised when his body metamorphoses into a piece of giant, clumsy, and disordered metal. In addition, his body becomes a super magnet attracting other metals to his cyborg body: his fingers attach to forks and his head to the TV set. His response to his cyborgisation is shock, shame, and denial, played out by screaming, groaning, embarrassment, fright, and panic, while his human subjectivity is disrupted by the metal invasion to the body. Rationality in the cyborg metamorphosis degenerates into emotional regression. The Salary Man feels ashamed to expose his monstrous body to his girlfriend because he cannot explain his metamorphosis, and he regresses to a child-like state, begging her not to leave him alone. In the key scene that he accidentally pierces his girlfriend's vagina with his mechanical drill penis during intercourse, he reaches the peak of his psychological breakdown. Death for him is an impossible wish after his organic body is replaced by metal. Guilt at the killing of his girlfriend and the hit-and-run car accident with *The Fetishist* triggers his masochistic destruction as he inserts his fork-fingers into a socket to receive an electric shock. He seeks non-existence, death, the total relief from conflicts caused by his crimes, mixed with the horror of his uncontrollable body. This hysterical response to the monstrous body is based on the excessive and limitless growth of the body where the boundaries that define the rational male subject are disrupted.

The setting of *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* is the city centre of Tokyo where skyscrapers occupy the horizon. The film begins with the windows of the high buildings reflecting numerous faces 'salarymen': Japanese male white-collar workers in suit and tie identified as Japan's emerging new middle class and constituting Japanese hegemonic masculinity since the 1960s (Robertson and Suzuki 2003: 1, Dasgupta 2003: 128). The film uses these reflections to highlight the instability and contradiction of this form of Japanese hegemonic masculinity, and the two male protagonists, Tommo and Yatsu, then struggle to repress their hysterical bodies caused by trauma

instituted by Tsukamoto's version of the Freudian primal scene. Tommo's and Yatsu's working-class father is a phallic fetishist who not only makes animated animal cyborgs such as cat-kettle and fish-pliers, but also uses a gun to touch his wife's naked body and insert into it his wife's mouth during their intercourse. After he accidentally discovers that his sons can use their will to merge a gun with their hands and bodies, when he shows them how to use a gun in order to prevent bullying, he becomes obsessive in training his two sons to master the ability to transform their hands into guns. His fetishistic mastery of the bodies of his wife and sons is provoked by his subordination as a working class man: in the scenes in which he teaches his sons how to use the mind/will to control the guns growing out of their hands, he constantly mutters that he will be the only person in the world to make a human weapon, and will compel the 'important' people to believe his invention which will also make him rich. However, his fetishistic impulses not only traumatise his sons but also destroy his family. Both sons witness their father's accidental shooting of their mother when he reaches orgasm, and then the elder brother shoots the father by transforming his hand into a gun through his anger. The brothers grow up with two different forms of male hysteria caused by the father's sadistic fetishism: the younger brother, Yatsu, becomes a gang leader whose aim is to train young men to become hypermasculine cyborg weapons through physical training and genetic engineering in order to destroy the world, and the elder brother, Tommo, who carries the guilt of patricide, tries his whole life to control or repress the anger which is the key factor in triggering him to become a powerful cyborg weapon.

Tommo's sadomasochistic characteristics can be seen in relation to a male hysteria reinforced by and embodied through cyborgisation. Since childhood, Tommo is represented as taking on a masochistic role in which he is often bullied by his male peers and is reluctant to be aggressive – for example when his father asks him to use his will to transform his hand into a gun and shoot the family dog. However, when Tommo's anger reaches an extreme level, he will transform his masochistic passivity into a hyper-sadistic aggression – in a version of the Oedipus complex, he kills the boys who bully him and his father, in order to reclaim his masculinity. However, this

reclaiming of masculinity and phallic power through hypermasculine violence recreates Tommo's sadomasochistic traumas by inflicting destruction on himself and his family, resulting in an apocalyptic destruction of society. Although as an adult Tommo represses the traumas he suffers in childhood, cyborgisation in this film works as the embodiment of 'the return of the repressed' and reinforces the monstrous aspect of the unconscious, rather than alleviating traumatic anxieties about a failure of masculinity. Tommo's body is transformed from that of a salary-family-man with a soft or feminine body into a monstrous cyborg. Despite the fact that he is troubled by his repetitive dream and his lost memory of his biological family and childhood tragedy, he is a devoted husband and father and has an office job. However, after the first attempted kidnap of his son conducted by his younger brother, his timid and caring personality coupled with a non-athletic body makes Tommo want to build up his body in order to protect his family. However, the second kidnap makes his traumatic memories surface as male hysteria, and eventually his body is completely taken over by his unconscious to become a monstrous cyborg. As in childhood, his hysterical anger breaks down the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, the moral and the immoral, and threatens the patriarchal order. His uncontrollable anger causes him to kill his son with the gun grown from his hand and he becomes an experimental subject in his brother's underground laboratory, retrieving his repressed memories in relation to the patricide. Anger now controls his consciousness to make him a sinister cyborg monster. The return of Tommo's patricidal trauma thus results in his cyborgisation and the collapse of his subjectivity: his feminine personality and body are transformed into a hard, gigantic, grotesque, and deformed body mixed with a number of guns, wires, pipes and metal bulk, and the only human features that can be recognised are his left eye and his teeth.

Tommo's cyborg body and the destructive power derived from sadomasochistic hysteria are adored by his father, his younger brother, and the gangsters. He now embodies a fetishised masculinity that threatens an ordered patriarchal society and exposes the crisis of male-gendered

identity. This fetishised phallic power suggests that neither the natural male body nor the male cyborg body can fulfil the ideals of a patriarchal Symbolic Order. Tommo's father kills his wife and is killed by his son, and Tommo and Yatsu suffer from hysterical symptoms caused by sexual and patricidal traumas. The most extreme male hysteria is represented in the scene in which Tommo's wife shifts from her fear and anger towards her husband's filicide to identification with his traumatic past and sadomasochistic hysteria. Instead of following Tommo's wish to die, she decides not to inject the lethal liquid which will terminate his life, and we follow her gaze at the effect of cyborgisation in which Tommo's body merges with his younger brother's hand and the other gangsters' bodies to form a cyborg tank – *a form of living phallus*. When Tommo's status as heterosexual father, husband, and salaryman is threatened by his hysteria, his response is to seek to destroy rather than restore patriarchal society. His hysteria disrupts the boundary between the feminine and the masculine, the inside and the outside, the conscious and the unconscious, the Oedipal and the pre-Oedipal, and the subject and the object. But the resulting fusion is exclusively phallic – Tommo's wife remains excluded from this fusion of male bodies. Instead, she subordinates herself to and identifies with the hysterical cyborg phallus by standing on the cyborg tank to support her cyborg husband's apocalyptic violence against the repressions enforced by patriarchal society.

3. The Uncanny Hysterical Womb

Jeffords (1994), in *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era*, uses the hard/soft binary to examine the representation of the body and masculinity in the Hollywood films – the Rambo series for example – released during the Reagan presidency between 1981 and 1989. Jeffords argues that the hard body is constructed as the normative, heterosexual, male, and white body whose connotations – indefatigable, muscular, invincible, loyal, determined, strenuous, labouring, and courageous – represent an 'ideal' masculinity in 1980s America. The soft body, Jeffords argues, is identified with the feminine and associated with sexually transmitted disease,

the immoral, the lazy, the emotional, the weak, and the passive, producing an intersection of discourses of sexism, racism, and classism in the United States. As a result, the imagery of the hard-bodied masculine produced in the 1980s' Hollywood films can be seen as a cinematic affirmation of Reagan's tough economic and militaristic foreign policies: a privileging of white males and resulting oppression of women, African American, immigrants, the poor, and the homosexual. Whilst the Hollywood films use the hard male body to represent the American ideal of masculinity, Jeffords also argues that these films also expose a crisis of masculinity in the United States, the result of constant challenges to the hegemonic ideal arising from the social changes during Reagan's eight-year administration: defeat in Vietnam, the civil rights movement, women's liberation and gay liberation movements, and the decline of heavy industries (Jeffords 1994: 138, Boyle 2005: 146).

Jeffords' use of the hard/soft binary to discuss the interplay between representation, masculinity, and social changes provides a useful analytical tool for decoding the male cyborg bodies in the Japanese cyberpunk films of the 1980s and 1990s. Notably, in her discussion of representations of the hard body in the Rambo series and *Terminator* (1984), Jeffords does not differentiate between Rambo's human or organic body and the Terminator's technological body, seeing both as embodying 'hard-bodied' masculinity. Whilst Jeffords argues that this hard masculine body functions cinematically to represent male heroism in Hollywood's blockbuster films, however, I would argue that Japanese independent cyberpunk films use the male cyborg's hard-bodied masculinity to represent an ambivalent anti-heroism. Such anti-heroism has to be seen in relation to anxieties about the economic recession which threatens the Japanese ideal of hegemonic masculinity – the salaryman – in the 1990s. The four cyberpunk films demonstrate that the human body is soft, weak, and vulnerable, whilst the technological body is hard, powerful, and invincible. Accordingly, the films feature male protagonists who are motivated to transform their soft human bodies into hard cyborg bodies as a means of asserting power and control. Jeffords links the hard to the American heroic ideal: a 'real' man is strong, aggressive,

powerful, unemotional, and decisive, but not feminine, emotional, weak, and passive (Jeffords 1994: 35). Ideal manhood is attached to the hard and impenetrable body. However, in these four Japanese cyberpunk films, none of the male protagonists is a hero: they are anti-heroes who lack the 'traditional' attributes of "duty, loyalty, self-sacrifice, and mental and physical endurance" of Japanese salaryman masculinity (Dasgupta 2003: 120). These anti-heroes not only blur the boundary between hero, victim, and villain; their cyborg bodies are a 'hybrid' of hard and soft bodies. For example, Tommo has no ambition and his only distinctive characteristic is his preference for having sex with his girlfriend which is contrary to the collective and monotonous Japanese hegemonic masculine identity constructed by capitalist corporations (Roberson and Suzuki 2003: 8). His counterpart character is The Fetishist whose background is not revealed but who simply indulges in constant bodily mutilation in a rundown traditional wooden house. Following the narrative that reveals the Fetishist's vicious retaliation against The Salary Man for the hit-and-run desertion, the distinction between the role of victim played by The Salary Man and that of villain by The Fetishist becomes blurred.

The soft body is also associated with the uncanny womb in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, which constructs a mise-en-scène that consists of warm, mucous, moist, dark, and enclosed space, with winding lines that represent the umbilical cord. This space is a product of cyborgisation, composed of the half-organic body of The Fetishist and the half-metal substances in a rundown room. This room with its winding metal wires, machinery, and warm steam and liquid, is the site of cyborg transformation, artificially imitating the womb and the process of pregnancy. The factory, with all its metal and machinery, is now a place of 'reproduction'. This artificial and self-created womb implies that there is now no need for women: men can produce life. Creed suggests that "Man's desire to create life – to give birth – suggests a more profound desire at work – to become woman" (Creed 1993: 57). As represented in this film, to become woman means giving birth without the biological womb, needing it only as a metaphorical space of

protection whilst giving birth independently; the act of birth does not need the period of pregnancy and the offspring is the creator himself or his combination with other male bodies.

By staying in a moist, warm, dark, and closed space that symbolises the womb, however, the male cyborg comes to represent the vulnerable and feminised body. The male body needs the protection of the womb in order to receive nutrition. After the car accident, The Fetishist goes back to the room, waiting for further transformation and integration of his organic body with the machine. After a painful and confusing transformation, he develops an ability to heal over the wound and conceal his mechanical parts, becoming a re-born cyborg. Birth is shown three times in the two films, but does not need the period of pregnancy. The woman and the womb are separated; the woman no longer possesses the womb, which can now be created artificially. In *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, The Fetishist needs the womb in order to blur the boundary between his organic body and the mechanical one. But the creation of a womb-like room full of wires is not only used to develop his first transformation to a cyborg, but also designed for him and The Salary Man to merge their bodies together. The two penetrate each other's bodies and form a metal-like womb that contains them both. Once inside, their hands merge and they grow into a huge metal tank with wheels, and only their human heads on top of the tank. Since the two men grow wires to penetrate their own bodies, the dichotomised boundaries of sexuality, humanity, and machinery all gradually break down. Cyborg birth challenges human biology through parthenogenesis: the body, the skin, and the organ becoming one in cyborgisation.



Figure 10: The Fetishist is born as a cyborg in the mechanical womb in *Tetsuo: Iron Man* (1989).

The endings of both films see that patriarchal civilisation and morality are degenerated through the male cyborgs' use of hypermasculine violence to display their hysterical bodies. The collapse of social relationships and the family unit are underlined when The Salary Man hysterically kills his girlfriend during intercourse in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, and his son in *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*. This collapse not only leads to man's failure to maintain his gender role as a salaryman, a father or a boyfriend, but also the demise of civilisation or humanity by creating an abject body with the "uncanny uterine" that threatens the patriarchal order (Creed 2005: 54). The combat between The Salary Man and the outlaw also produces an eroticisation of their cyborg body fusion, with hysterical symptoms expressed by their extreme emotional and bodily reactions such as agony, cowering, panting, screams, and trance. The body fusion in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* becomes a huge human-tank that spontaneously marches on the urban streets to demolish Japanese society. The tank in *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* merges with other muscular male bodies by using its numerous metal tentacles to penetrate into a number of gangsters' heads. The gigantic hypermasculine cyborg creates a hysterical apocalypse in response to masculinity seen as in crisis throughout the films.



Figure 11: The Salary Man's girlfriend dances with her metallic tail in

Tetsuo: Iron Man (1989).

4. Homosexual Phallic Fetish and *Vagina Dentata*

Whilst the cyberpunk films maintain gendered stereotypes to a certain degree, the male subject in cyborgisation is feminised when his body is a spectacle of eroticisation and

fetishisation. According to Freudian theory, whilst the Medusa's writhing snakes and open mouth represent both the power of the castrator and the horror of being castrated in heterosexual discourse, her monstrous phallic characteristics also trigger male masochistic homosexual fantasy (Easthope 1999: 87). In *The Salary Man's* erotic dream or hallucination, we see just such a phallic woman as his girlfriend, wearing a fake snake-like suit on her waist that identifies her as the phallic woman, seductively dancing alone and indulging in anal sex with him. She plays a dominant and sadistic castrator by inverting the power relationship between man and woman – she uses her snake-like tail to penetrate her boyfriend. A metal snake with its own teeth that can move around surrounds her genitalia; like the Medusa figure, she is active, seductive, and aggressive towards her lover. When *The Salary Man* performs the masochistic role in which his hands are glued to the ground by the snake's secretions and his anus is penetrated by it, his girlfriend symbolically challenges the heterosexual norm. In response, his repressed castration complex surfaces from the unconscious, in a blurring of the real and the hallucinatory. Whilst he hallucinates being penetrated, he performs heterosexual intercourse with his girlfriend, during which his body is slowly transformed into a cyborg, with a penis which becomes a giant mechanical drill. His girlfriend is thus punished for his homosexual fantasy whilst also being subject to objectification in relation to his heterosexual desire (Hensley 2003: 80, Mask 2009: 68). The doubled effect – of emasculation through homosexual fantasy and hypermasculation in heterosexual intercourse – can be identified as a form of male hysteria which once again suggests a crisis of hegemonic salaryman masculinity in this period of Japan's social and economic crisis (Weber 1999: 86).

5. Male Hysteria, the Abject, and Sadomasochism

Male hysteria manifest in cyborgisation is thereby associated with sadomasochistic eroticisation and motivated by traumatic memories.²⁷³ Cyborgisation of these male bodies is used to reinforce and represent their traumatic memories in order to seek tranquillity, death, and relief from the tensions that occur in life. Neale (1983) argues that Western cinematic representation of masculinity is articulated with a sadomasochistic pleasure in which male heroes are marked as the object of an erotic gaze for male and female viewers. These Japanese cyberpunk films, however, produce the spectacle of the monstrous and deformed bodies of their anti-heroes or male losers, representing the horror of male hysterical sadomasochism. For example, The Fetishist in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and Yatsu in *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer* intend to use masochistic modifications to their bodies to seek alleviation of anxiety, but cyborgisation instead reinforces the post-traumatic anxiety which takes the subject to the edge of physical and psychological breakdown.

In a third narrative, *964 Pinocchio* tells of a failed model of the male cyborg, Pinocchio, who is made for illegal sexual service and thrown out on the streets by his sex-crazed and sadistic female owner. The corporation that manufactures and sells Pinocchio plans to kill him because of his sexual malfunction and fear of the exposure of their illegal production of sex cyborg slaves.

²⁷³ Trauma is when the subject is unable to assimilate unexpected experience and represses its traumatic memory into the realm of the unconscious so that neurosis may appear in the form of stereotyped actions or dreams that repeatedly occur as a desire to re-establish a state of being that is disturbed by the living lifetime. See Sara Flanders, *The Dream Discourse Today* (Now York and London: Routledge, 1993) 110; Nigel C. Hunt, *Memory, War and Trauma* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 77. Moreover, whereas one part of the psyche searches for gratification, another part is triggered to look for a return to the tranquillity of non-existence: the subject has a tendency towards destruction, including self-destruction as a form of masochism that reacts to trauma by behaving destructively towards herself or himself and others. See Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley, CA and London: California UP, 2004) 45; Franco De Masi, *The Sadomasochism Perversion: The Entity and the Theories* (London: Karnac, 2003) 106.

Meanwhile, Himiko is released from hospital and lives in a small basement of a rundown factory in the suburbs. Pinocchio and Himiko are portrayed as the outcasts of society because their lack of memory is related to their repressed traumatic past. When Himiko takes care of the boy-like Pinocchio and teaches him how to pronounce his name, Pinocchio begins to develop his awareness of the external world and develops a sadomasochistic relationship with Himiko. After Pinocchio has sex with Himiko, he recalls his traumatic memories about being a sexual toy, thus causing a hysteria manifested in a body that spouts yellow and red fluids and screams in agony. His hysteria also triggers Himiko's traumatic memories and she too demonstrates hysterical behaviour such as vomiting, shivering, shouting, slurring, choking, and laughing. These hysterical symptoms reveal her mysterious past which is represented by a series of flashback montages that show bloody mutilated body parts as she constantly stabs an unknown body covered by a white cloth. When Himiko remembers her horrific crimes which once were repressed by medical treatment, her caring personality is taken over by her sadistic perversion towards Pinocchio. Pinocchio's feminine traits of childishness, innocence, and submissiveness arouse Himiko's sadistic violence. She treats him as a domestic pet, with a metal collar on his neck and a metal chain controlling his body, and then drags him from the scrap yards in the suburbs to the city centre. The more Pinocchio screams with pain and behaves submissively, the more Himiko becomes dominant and excited. Pinocchio's masochistic submission reverses the sexual dynamics of power and powerlessness or dominance and subordination: the spectacle of his male Otherness and feminised masculinity is monstrous, destructive, and powerful. During Himiko's sadistic torture and the gangsters' attacks, Pinocchio remembers all of his past and goes back to find his creator to take revenge. He inserts his hand into his creator's stomach while at the same time crying for help to his creator to end his life. His sadomasochistic behaviour in turn induces hysteria in the male gangster, the female secretary, and Himiko. Himiko removes her facial skin, her head transforming into a gigantic deformed skull that shows only empty eyes and an open mouth an image of monstrous femininity. At the end of the film, Pinocchio's sadomasochistic

hysteria completely deconstructs his masculine subjectivity: he pulls off Himiko's stone-like head and then inserts her head into his own. As a result, Pinocchio becomes a monstrous hybrid of the feminine and the masculine, the female and the male, the organic and the technological, the sadistic and the masochistic, and the dominant and the submissive.



Figure 12: 964 Pinocchio hysterically screams in *964 Pinocchio* (1991).

This emasculation or hysteria of the male cyborg body is also represented in *Rubber's Lover*, which begins with three scientists who aim to create psychic power through a combination of drugs and extreme sound wave testing on their experimental subjects. However, these treatments are not only designed to torture the subjects into an unbearable mental state in order to create psychic power, but also cause death through the bloody explosion of the body. When the corporation sends a finance employee, Kiku, to tell the three scientists to cancel the experiment, two of the scientists decide to kidnap Kiku and the third scientist, Shimika, in order to continue the tests. Shimika, wearing a 'rubber suit' to prevent the danger of blood exploding from his body and receiving the extreme sound wave which is generated from Kiku's screaming, gradually surpasses his normal mental endurance – he is successfully imbued with psychic power. Shimika, it is revealed, was once the test subject in this project, the object of a series of sadomasochistic experiments conducted by his colleagues. As he gains psychic power, the repressed memory of

the experiment re-emerges. The film ends with his psychological breakdown and revenge on his colleagues through his psychic power.

The scientists are without ethics in creating psychic power through torturing experimental subjects in secret. Faced with a shortage of experimental subjects, they even take one of their colleagues as an experimental guinea pig in order to continue mental and sexual abuse. This disregard for ethics in the development of technology also appears in *1964 Pinocchio* where the flawed male cyborg, Pinocchio, failing to fulfil the customer as a sexual toy, experiences a series of psychological breakdowns caused by his creator and rescuer. The protagonists in the four films are anti-heroes who do not act out of glorious and righteous motives, but are portrayed sometimes as ordinary office workers who comply with the capitalist framework, like *The Salary Man* and *Tommo*, before becoming vicious cyborgs. Alternatively, they can be outsiders, like the man who uses low-tech machinery to transform himself into a cyborg, the outlaw Yatsu who seeks to demolish society with his cyborg gang, or Pinocchio, a failed sexual-toy cyborg, who tries to escape a hostile society. A final group of male figures are the scientists who are punished by their horrific technological experiments.

Unlike in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, male hysteria in *Rubber's Lover* does not rely on the horror of an excessive growth of the male body. Instead, *Rubber's Lover* represents its crisis of masculinity through the body of a man born with psychic power. The mechanism through which this power operates is both mysterious and feminised: its horror is characterised not only by the invisible and intangible, but also the biologically inherent. The film represents the confrontation between a 'naturally born' and a 'technologically created' psychic power, played out on the hyper-hysterical and hyper-masculine male body through sadomasochistic violence. The technological version of this power, in which the eyeballs fixate on one point and stop rotation during the experiment, is given a quasi-scientific explanation, based on the medical science of anaesthesia. It produces what Badley calls "transcendence of the body" and "transcendence *through* the body" (Badley 1995: 9, author's emphasis), through masochistic cyborgisation as the symptom of male hysteria.

This cyborgisation is used not only to repress the horror of a psychic power that is natural, but also to repress the body in order to recreate this power through technology; both technological invasions of the body, however, simply reinforce male hysteria and the breakdown of male subjectivity. Most of the male test subjects suffer from physical and mental degeneration after receiving an overdose of ether mixed with another sedative – screaming, murmuring, cowering, and shivering, before eventually dying from internal haemorrhage in which blood explodes from the body. These subjects fail to provide the evidence of psychic power because their bodies cannot endure physical torture before completely losing consciousness. The only test subject who survives is Shimika, the only one to have been born with psychic power. Although he at first suffers from the excessive bodily reaction of shivering, he later becomes calm and quiet – the sign of psychic power.



Figure 13: Shimika wears a black rubber suit in *Rubber's Lover* (1996).

Transcendence of/through the male body is represented through the feminisation identified with cyborgisation. Shimika's body is wrapped in a tight rubber suit and his head is covered with a metal helmet. The body is completely sealed and the only body parts that can be seen are the eyeballs projected on screens. Unlike the failed test subjects who display hysterical symptoms in response to the technological invasion of the body, Shimika's response is only eyeball movement. The cessation of this movement indicates the repression of consciousness. According to Freudian theory, the eye is the source of the uncanny as a horrific and eerie object between the

familiar and unfamiliar, and Freud (1919) relates anxiety about one's eyes to the infantile complexes. In the case study of the Sand-Man, Freud argues that the child's fear of having the eyes torn out and being blinded is a substitute for the dread of being castrated. Thus the uncanny is the metamorphosis of the familiar into the unfamiliar, the exposure of the hidden and the repressed, and the collapse of boundaries between the real and the imagined (Creed 2005: 7). The eyes are represented as a threshold between the conscious and the unconscious. In terms of the quasi-scientific explanation in the film's narrative, eyeball movement is the way of monitoring the process of physical and mental activity. In the case of Shimika, the movement from rolling to stopping indicates his consciousness and subjectivity being blocked by the drug. However, at the peak level of hysteria Shimika's eyes are fixated, and the peak level of consciousness is marked by re-rotation of the eyes with their dilated pupils: it is the moment of emergence of psychic power, the moment of blurring between the conscious and the unconscious, the return of his repressed memories.

As a result, Shimika shifts from feminised masochism into hypermasculine sadism. His hypermasculine sadistic violence is sexualised, blurring the boundary between heterosexual and homosexual. When he regains psychic power, he uses it to control Akari, who is the female victim abducted by the scientists to be part of their crime, and Motomiya, who is the female project assistant, to perform masturbation, and then uses Akari to strangle Motomiya to death. Then he begins to inflict pain and humiliation on the male scientists Hitotsubashi and Kiku. When Shimika invades Akari's subjectivity, she too becomes monstrous, a mix of feminine and masculine. Hitotsubashi cannot resist Shimika's use of Akari's naked body to seductively caress his own. Eventually, Shimika holds Hitotsubashi's head with his hands to transmit his power to Hitotsubashi's body, whose intestines are exposed. Like Tommo's wife in *Tetsuo II: Body Hammer*, at the end of the film Akari is represented as identifying with Shimika's emasculation by comforting and taking care of him when he suffers panic attacks in relation to his traumatic memories of his sadomasochistic crime. Unlike the endings in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, *Tetsuo II: Body*

Hammer, and *964 Pinocchio* in which the female protagonists either are killed by the hysterical male cyborgs or support them to create a nihilistic apocalypse, the final scene in *Rubber's Lover* shows Akari left alone on the streets without Shimika.

Conclusion

These Japanese cyberpunk films articulate cyborgisation with male hysteria to represent a crisis of masculinity for their anti-heroes – the salaryman, the family man, the cyborg, and the scientist, a crisis which results in the collapse of male subjectivity and patriarchal society. Their hysteria is engaged with traumatic memories and represented through the technological fetishist who attempts to use cyborgisation to reconfigure his masculinity in the “continually fragmenting, decentred, chaotic” era of the 1990s (Fernbach 2002: 141). The films thus present a technofetishism of masculinity in which the male protagonists use cyborgisation to disavow their lack or loss of social and familial privilege in Japanese urban society. However, the strategy of disavowal serves to expose the horror of the male cyborg body that becomes deformed, monstrous, and hysterical when the male subject’s repressed traumatic memories return to produce emasculation or feminisation of his body and causes nihilistic apocalypse. Cyborgisation destabilises rather than reinforces the socially constructed relationship between masculinity, phallic power, and the male body. The resulting fetishised masculinity traps the male subject in a horrific and hysterical situation in which his body becomes abject, rendering him unable to distinguish between the Self and the Other, the real and the unreal, the conscious and the unconscious, as he projects his lack or anxiety onto his own body.

Chapter 4

Women Ghosts in Black Boxes: Psychic Power, the Curse, and Technology

This chapter explores the representation of the ‘monstrous feminine’ as manifested in the abject, hysterical, and maternal body, and its connections with the feminisation of technology, in mainstream Japanese science fiction/horror films made since the late 1990s. To do this I shall examine the *Ring* sequels, including *Ring* (1998) by Hideo Nakata, *The Spiral* (1998) by Joji Iida, and *Ring 2* (2000) by Hideo Nakata. I select those films because of their commercial success with the consequent franchise and remake in the global film market. After *The Ring* (2002), the Hollywood remake of *Ring*, became a big hit in the American market, American film producers began to remake Japanese horror films including *The Ring Two* (2005), *The Grudge* (2004), *The Grudge 2* (2006), *The Grudge 3* (2009), *Dark Water* (2005), *Pulse* (2006), and *One Missed Call* (2008) which have helped Japanese horror cinema earn global popularity (Pintak 2010: 314, Choi and Wada-Marcciano 2009: 1). Of these, *The Ring* was the most profitable in the American market; the remake has created worldwide revenue worth more than \$230million which is six times the remake cost (Pintak 2010: 314). Based on the plot of *Ring*, each sequel develops its own narrative. *Ring* recounts how the single mother and journalist, Reiko, investigates the death of a group of high school students linked with a psychic message embedded in a videocassette made by a vengeful female ghost, Sadako. Sadako transmits a curse to the video which means that viewers will die from myocardial infarction on the seventh day after watching the video. After watching the video, the viewers will immediately receive a phone call telling them of their impending death. The only way to survive is to make a copy of the video and have another person watch the copied version in order to pass on Sadako’s curse to someone else. The content of the video is associated with a myth that appears in Oshima Island, to the south of Izu peninsula, in the 1950s. The myth begins from a mother from the island, Shizuko, who possesses

the psychic power of telepathy and predicts the time of a volcanic eruption in Oshima Island. She is taken by Dr. Ikuma to a scientific institution and takes part in a public demonstration to exhibit her telepathy. She has a daughter, Sadako, who inherits her psychic power and whose biological father is not specified in the film. Shizuko commits suicide after Sadako uses her psychic power to kill a male journalist who questions the authenticity of her mother's telepathy at the press exhibition. Dr. Ikuma, who has become Sadako's adoptive father, pushes Sadako, now a young woman, into a well just under the hotel room where the videotape is being recorded from TV channels in Izu Province where Sadako grows up and dies. Sadako does not die immediately after Dr. Ikuma pitches her down into the well. By using her psychic power, Sadako's anger and despair lasting for thirty years is manifested through the video images to operate her vengeful curse on the video viewers. However, the killing of innocent video viewers, the expose of Sadako's miserable life to the public, and the excavation of Sadako's body from the well neither pacify Sadako's resentment nor lift the curse. Instead, Sadako's ghostly spirit with her anger and curse is repeatedly recreated through video copies that become destructive simulacra detaching from the referent of Sadako's life and amplifying the horror of her curse in contemporary Japanese urban society. The cinematic imagery of the monstrous feminine is thus constructed and represented by Sadako whose embodiment is technologically mediated through videotape, telephone, and TV screen to wreak revenge on innocent technological appliance users in urban Japanese society. The narrative can be understood as a modern manifestation of patriarchal-misogynistic fantasies.

The boom of the Japanese ghost genre was in the 1950s and the 1960s when the *kaidan* genre (ghost genre), representing female ghosts who take revenge on the people who wrong or harm them, was dominated by the *onryou* (vengeful spirit) and adopted religious traditions such as Shintoism and Christianity together with narrative conventions from Noh theatre's *shunen-* (revenge-) and *shuramono-* (ghost-plays), and Kabuki's theatre's stories about the *kaidan* (McRoy 2005: 175). Since the 1990s, Japanese ghost films have re-emerged as Norio Tsuruta, Hideo

Nakata, Hiroshi Takahashi, Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Takashi Shimizu, and Takashi Miike transformed the conventional bloody spectacle of the Japanese horror genre into an “intense atmospheric” style (McRoy 2008: 9). These directors create a mounting tension as protagonists tackle the conflict between the supernatural and the psychological and reveal the horrific uncanny space to be that of bedrooms, the hall corridor, and the kindergarten, instead of showing excessive “bright streaks of red, spurting from gashing wounds and blood intestinal spillings”, thus establishing a distinctive contemporary form of Japanese horror film (McRoy 2008: 9). This in turn reaches a global market with its characteristic narrative and iconography (McRoy 2008: 8-9, Brown 2006: 362, Harper 2008: 7, Harper 2010: 180). Consequently, the popularity in the West of these films resulted in a boom in Hollywood remakes of Japanese horror films. Roy Lee, a Korean-American producer, starts a new Japanese horror remake movement in the U.S., establishing the Hollywood remakes as a viable business by playing the role of intermediary between Hollywood and Japanese filmmakers (Heianna 2005). Lee bought the remake rights of Japanese horror films and sold them to American studios to produce the remakes. Lee sees the boom in the contemporary Japanese horror film remake as a result not of a shortage of creativity in the Hollywood horror genre, but rather of the cultural and cinematic differences in the Japanese horror film which provide a freshness in horror films for American audiences. He argues that Japanese horror films focus on narratives that gradually heighten the level of psychological fear as they unfold, unlike American horror films that are full of shocking images. Thus, the scenarios of the films are re-written and the plots are simplified into more logical narratives for the American audiences in order to help the American audiences understand the remake films without knowledge of Japanese culture.

What distinguishes the Ring series is the theme of ‘the ghost in the machine’. The distinction between the non-physical mind or spirit and the physical body is emphasised in the Ring franchise in which Sadako’s ghost or spirit not only is cyborgised and embodied in VHS cassettes, but also controls household gadgets including the Internet, computer, mobile phone,

television, video-recorder, and videocassette. Whereas the male cyberpunk characters discussed in Chapter 3 seek to cyborgise their bodies in order to gain the psychic power that can help them to escape embodiment, Sadako, a cyborgised ghost, reconfigures the notion of the disembodied mind that is traditionally identified with the male subject. Sadako reverses the norm of male disembodiment by reclaiming her subjectivity through her cyborg body, dispersing her subjectivity through the technologies of simulation, and feminising technological gadgets in order for them to become her agency for communication and attack.

The Ring sequels represent modern horror in relation to what Wells (2000) defines as “urban myths” whose narrative flattens the boundary between the real and the fictional, the past and the present, and the pre-modern and the modern, utilising the oral tradition as the historic continuum to produce plausibility. The films suggest that the collapse, isolation, and dislocation of private and public spheres, including the individual, the familial, and the institutional, not only trigger the cyborgisation of the living and dead body, but also produce the uncanny cyborg body. The franchise highlights modern technological imaginations in association with Japanese ghost stories rooted in folklore (Rubin 2000). Traditional Japanese belief has it that the world is surrounded by the spirits of the dead and that these spirits are impure and need to be purified and pacified through rituals of prayer. The non-purified spirits of the dead that do not deliver their negative emotions such as anger, envy, and jealousy through prayer would return to the space of the living in the guise of a ghost. The ghost could haunt the place where they had lived and would take revenge on those who are responsible for their miserable life. The ghost will return to being a spirit after the prayer releases their suffering. In particular, most Japanese folklore depicts the unfortunate spirits as women. The more misery the woman endures during her lifetime, the more she becomes a vicious and vengeful ghost after she dies. The Ring franchise films are highly gender-orientated within a heterosexual matrix. The female protagonists can be classified into three categories: the woman who suffers from the patriarchal accusation of being a ‘monster’ and ‘murderer’ because she has inherited and used psychic

power; the wronged woman with psychic power who turns into a vengeful ghost, haunting from within mass media technology; and the maternal figure who sacrifices her life to save her children from danger. The woman who possesses psychic power dies through either suicide or brutal murder and consequently her spirit transforms into a ghost and interfaces with technology. Therefore, the female ghost becomes more horrific and powerful when her spirit or ghost is no longer restrained by the haunted place where she has lived or died, but can instead dwell in videotape, TV signals, and telephone to take revenge randomly on the innocent people who use the mass media at the same time.

An understanding of the female cyborgised ghost represented in the sequels can be drawn from feminist readings of technology, the postmodern notion of the denatured and decentred body, and the horror of the monstrous feminine in terms of the abject maternal body. Technoscience is historically, socially, and culturally constructed as patriarchal by aligning with men and the masculine so that technological applications such as the workforce, reproductive technology, or information technology often either exclude or control women (Toffoletti 2007: 22). The imagery of the cyborg pervades postmodern society, with cybernetics either extending the capacities of the body or causing its metaphysical disappearance. Since the body is denatured by technological prosthetics and decentred by information technologies and biotechnologies, the patriarchal dualisms of Self/Other, nature/artifice, organism/technology, and human/machine have been seen to be eroded by the figure of the cyborg (Cornea 2007: 124, Woods 1999: 218). Simultaneously, as the form of technology transforms from the massive industrial machine into the minimisation and internalisation of cybernetics or electronic technology in the twentieth century, the gendered implications of technology accordingly shift from the phallic, masculine, and invincible imagery of industrial technology into the mysterious, invisible, or feminised of information technology (Springer 1996: 10). Gender division is the basis of patriarchal social order and embedded in the Self/Other dualism where the Self is connoted with the masculine and the Other with the feminine. The representation of the female cyborg in popular culture, I

would argue, often reinforces rather than contests the linkage between the feminine, the monstrous, and the technological in terms of the pleasures of spectatorship in mainstream cinema. Technophobic anxiety concerns the return of what has been repressed by the instrumental or technological view of the world, and the autonomous, uncontrollable, and mysterious technology threatens rather than is mastered by the human subject (Rutsky 1999: 130). It is no coincidence that this anxiety is projected onto women or the feminine to create a double threat to the patriarchal (Toffoletti 2007: 23). This patriarchal anxiety towards the woman-technology can be identified with the notion of the monstrous feminine, identified as the archetypal imagery of woman. Woman's monstrosity articulates the horror of her biological and sexual identity with the unstable, fluid, and uncontrollable characteristics of the feminine body where patriarchal ideology defines woman as the abject, monstrous, and hysterical Other which is seen as a threat to and excluded from the Symbolic Order of law, civilisation, and language (Creed 2005: 16).

The woman-feminine-technology triad reinforces the archetypal images of women in relation to monstrosity and forms an unknown, uncontrollable, and mysterious arena which replays the patriarchal Oedipus complex and re-establishes the patriarchal order by legitimating man's mastery of domination over the female cyborg's dangerous, threatening, and erogenous body (Toffoletti 2007: 23). In this manner, I would like to argue that the Ring franchise films play out contemporary Japanese social anxieties over gender and sexuality in the representation of the female ghost cyborg in terms of her monstrous embodiment produced by the abjection of psychic power and a 'feminised' technology, and her destructive and ominous power seen as a threat or an apocalypse to Japanese patriarchal society. This chapter is divided into three sections to illustrate how the patriarchal apparatus constructs Sadako's monstrous feminine with her psychic power and vengeful curse, and how Sadako's monstrosity reinforces the misogynistic representation of the monstrous feminine. The first section analyses Sadako's victimisation and demonisation by the patriarchal discursive construction of psychic power, the second section

examines the relationship between Sadako's cursed video and the horror and seduction of technological simulacra, and the final section explores the ways that the different forms of the primal scene function as Sadako uses cyborgisation to operate her rebirth.

1. Constructing the Monstrous Feminine and Technology of Psychic Power

Psychic power is highlighted in the Ring series: destructive, invisible, powerful, unpredictable, and connoting the feminine. This power cannot only be classified as the supernatural – the entity which transcends the laws of nature and goes beyond the human's intellectual understanding of the world – but is also identified as 'hysterical' in relation to the social construction of gender identity and bodily rebellion (Abbott 2002: 34). Psychic power is characterised by the Ring franchise as a biologically random inheritance in which parents transmit the power to their children through birth and only a minority inherits this power. The power is manifested in several forms: the ability to predict the future, generate visions, transmit thought to people, and read people's minds through telepathy. The power cannot exist when the person dies or has no biological inheritance. Throughout the three sequels, only five characters, Shizuko, Sadako, Mai, Ryuji, and Yoichi, are identified with psychic power. Sadako's power is distinct from that of the other four because her power can kill and heal people at the same time when she is alive and is amplified when she becomes a vengeful ghost, making it pervasive, destructive, and apocalyptic.

The Ring series articulates psychic power with the monstrous feminine. Shizuko is a single parent living with her elder brother's family from a working class fishing village. Her psychic power is constructed as monstrous and then exploited by Dr. Ikuma in the name of scientific research. Due to Dr. Ikuma who believes in the existence of psychic power, she receives attention in the public sphere, through public demonstration and the press, because of her precise prediction of a volcanic eruption on Oshima Island in her hometown in the 1950s. She is praised by the press for her power in the beginning, but ends up committing suicide because of press abuse. When a crowd of intimidating journalists accuses Shizuko of manipulating the

demonstration, her daughter Sadako telepathically kills one of the journalists to death during the extrasensory experiment. The press assumes that Shizuko has used her power to kill the male journalist and starts abusing Shizuko by calling the demonstration a scandal and labelling her as a monster. Thereafter, the university fires Dr. Ikuma because of the journalist's death and his affair with Shizuko. After Shizuko jumps into the volcano in Oshima Island to end her life, Dr. Ikuma adopts Sadako and withdraws from Tokyo and his family to the remote area of Izu Island, in order to restart his life by opening a small clinic and taking care of Sadako. Although no reason is given in the film for Dr. Ikuma's subsequent murder of Sadako, it can be argued that she is killed by patriarchal pressures. The patriarchal figures, including Dr. Ikuma, the male journalists, and Shizuko's brother, appropriate the discourse of psychic power by excluding and marginalising Shizuko from both the private and public spheres. Takashi as the 'head' of Shizuko's family seeks to make money by publicising his sister to Dr. Ikuma; Dr. Ikuma is the scientific 'expert' in psychic power; and the chiefly male press demands information about the supernatural phenomenon. The press does not know that it is Sadako who has killed the journalist when she hides behind the stage and witnesses how the press demonises her mother, but instead blames Shizuko for the horrific incident. Shizuko and Sadako fail to be controlled within accepted limits, and are subject to punishment and discipline. What begins as a scientific project thus ends as a horrific urban myth associated with the out-of-control, and hence monstrous feminine.

Psychic power, then, is seen as a force which cannot be classified within the ordered realm of linguistic communication and knowledge; it is defined as the irrational, hysterical, and sensory feminine. Within the three films, only five characters have this power, so that it remains unspeakable and mysterious. After the 1950s and the failure of the public scientific experiment on Shizuko, Sadako's power is never exposed in public: it remains the exclusive possession of the working class women, Shizuko and Sadako, who are portrayed by the journalists in the public experiment as the monstrous, mysterious, and powerful Other. In the later narratives of *Ring*,

Ring 2, and *The Spiral* set in the 1990s, however, the characters with psychic power are not limited to the working class female but extended to the white-collar middle class male and female. Ryuji is a mathematics professor and Yoichi, Ryuji's young son, inherits the power from his father. Mai, who is Ryuji's research assistant and girlfriend, also has the power. In contrast to Shizuko's and Sadako's situations, none of them has been subject to research in the public sphere; instead, Ryuji, Mai, and Yoichi keep their power secret and remain silent or marginalised in society with their Otherness kept invisible. Ryuji never discusses the power with his son but instead leaves his ex-wife to deal with this issue alone. In contrast to Reiko, who shows her ambivalence about her ex-husband's and her son's psychic power, Ryuji's and Yoichi's 'marginalised' characteristics are sympathised and identified with by Mai who also has the same power. After Reiko sacrifices her life to save her son from Sadako's curse, Mai plays the maternal role to continue protecting Yoichi from Sadako's second attack. Being a father, Ryuji feels guilty about passing the power to his son. Dr. Ikuma feels a similar guilt towards Sadako because society rejects the existence of psychic power and he cannot use his medical knowledge and drugs to control Sadako's hysteria – the result of her psychic power is manifested in her uncontrollable emotions and excessive bodily reactions.

The representative of this minority which is subject to public display is female. It is a display which identifies Shizuko's 'otherness' with sexual difference: a female identity associated with nature – mysterious and powerful. Shizuko is constructed as the 'monster' by the patriarchal society because of her behaviour, because she speaks an unknown language, and because of her powers of reproduction. The male journalists in the demonstration claim that, "It is a fraud! It is a trick! Dr. Ikuma, you are fooled by her! She is a monster!" when she correctly writes down all the answers through her powers of telepathy. The small community in Oshima Island is scared of Shizuko because she can communicate with the sea and read people's minds, and the fishermen hate her when she keeps communicating with the sea. The motto in Oshima Island, 'Frolic in brine, goblins be thine', or, 'If you keep playing with water, the monster will come',

indicates that Shizuko will bring disaster to the community if she continues to communicate with the sea. Depending on fishing for a living, the community of Oshima Island perceives the sea not only as food provider but also as the monster that kills people. In contrast to the Oshima residents' perception of the sea as 'ominous', Shizuko has a close relationship with it. She stays on the seashore all day and mumbles in a language defined as 'strange' by Shizuko's brother, and gives birth to Sadako alone in a cave at the seashore. Throughout the sequels, Sadako's biological father is never specified, but Sadako's uncle and Ryuji imply that he is non-human – the sea monster. The representation of the female with psychic power is different from that of the male. Both women and men undergo social oppression for possession of the unspeakable power, but women are constructed as the monster, subject to scientific discourse, and displayed in the public sphere. However, scientific discourse fails to provide the explanation for this power, and instead amplifies its construction as mysterious and threatening. A similar process applies to the discourse of the curse video.

2. Sadako's Curse Videotapes and the Seduction of Simulacra

The origin of the cursed video in *Ring* is the female vengeful ghost represented in Japanese folklore, but *Ring 2* and *The Spiral* foreground the scientific explanation that a virus is embedded in the video cassette. Expanding the ideas derived from Japanese traditional folklore in which ghosts haunt the places where they have lived and take revenge on people who are responsible for their suffering, the Ring franchise blurs the boundary between the living and the dead, and associates the curse with technological reproduction. The curse video originates in the Izu peninsula and spreads all over Japan. It is clear that Sadako intends to use video to tell her story and release her anger by killing people who watch the video. The police officer in *Ring 2* confirms that Sadako has been alive for thirty years in the well, yet the autopsy shows that the time of Sadako's death is just one or two years before Reiko discovers her body. Thus, it is

impossible to tell whether the curse video is made of her psychic power when she is alive trapped in the well or by her ghostly power after she dies.



Figure 14: Dr. Ikuma pushes Sadako into the well in *Ring* (1998).

The discourse of the video is constructed from three different directions: the circulation of rumours among high school students, Reiko's investigation of Sadako's family, and scientific research. None of these fully explain the relationship between the curse and the deaths, but the different explanations reproduce the myth of the video. The circulation of the curse video among high school students results in the continual reproduction of the story. In *Ring*, the myth of the video has a number of aspects: the viewer will die one week after watching a ghost appearing on the video, and a phone will ring to pronounce the viewers' death sentence after they have watched a video clip that interrupts the late-night TV programme from a local channel in Izu. In *Ring 2*, the story is that students keep the video recording but are afraid of watching and the only way to prevent death is to let another person watch the copied version of the video. Being a journalist, Reiko discovers that the original video is a recording from a local channel in a hotel room located on the Izu peninsula in the west of Tokyo. However, there is no evidence to prove who records the video from the TV in the hotel room. Nevertheless, she realises that the well where Sadako dies is just under the hotel room and claims that Sadako's curse is transmitted to the TV in this hotel room.

In *Ring 2*, the scientific explanation includes the social context of Sadako's tragedy and the psychic power, and underlines the cause-effect relationship between the psychological and the material. The psychiatrist Dr. Kawajiri theorises the videotape in association with energy and thought. He claims: "There's no such thing as ghosts or the other world", and argues that thought as well as energy can become substantial. The contention is that the energy of thought can be realised, as in the case of Sadako who wills the journalist to death. Thought-waves can be detected and visualised through technology such as spirit photography and video. The images on the video are then Sadako's fury materialised as the curse which she has accumulated for thirty years when she has been trapped in the well. Moreover, the body as the vessel and the medium receives and transfers the energy. In the case of Yoichi, Dr. Kawajiri argues that Yoichi is manipulated by his anger which summons Sadako's curse. He emphasises that the video itself cannot kill but human fear will: to eliminate the energy is to free fear. The method of releasing the fear is to conduct its energy into water that will release and dissipate the energy.

These explanations are produced by journalists, scientists, the police, and the high school students. Through them the figure of Sadako is produced in different ways. The journalist Reiko focuses on the historical context in relation to Sadako's tragedy and the psychic power; the scientists interpret the video from psychological and pathological perspectives; the police investigate the death in relation to criminal motivation; the high school students associate the video with the rumour circulating in school. All construct Sadako as the monster that owns and misuses psychic power, but they also construct the video viewer as a haunted subject who is caught in the horror of waiting for an inevitable death.

Sadako is not only discursively constructed in this way, but also acts as a subject by expressing her miserable suffering and emotional distress through the visualisation of her thought. She tells her story and resentment through images not language – a feminine form of pre- or anti-linguistic expression. Lacanian theory positions the female as 'Other' to an inevitably patriarchal linguistic system (Hayward 2006: 194-195). Here, the linguistic representation in the construction

of Sadako's self-identity is dysfunctional because she has been excluded from society since her birth because of her monstrous and hysterical psychic power. Sadako in *Ring* and *Ring 2* does not speak a word, but expresses herself through hysterical symptoms embodied in the video images.

The video is black and white, with a non-linear narrative, and a montage of images: it is made from Sadako's subjective standpoint. The images are encoded by Sadako's psychic power as a one-minute video clip that can only be decoded through slow motion and sound amplification by a TV editing machine. The content of the video can be divided into three sections that I shall characterise as: social anxiety towards the psychic power, the mother-daughter relationship, and the murder of Sadako. These images document not only Sadako's life but also her hysterical response to the society that oppresses her. The first section includes images in which we see Japanese characters float around on the screen, a man with a big white cloth covering his face and one hand pointing to the water, and a group of people crawling and shuffling on the ground. The Japanese characters refer to the news about the warning of the volcanic eruption on Oshima Island during the 1950s. The editing machine detects the indistinct murmuring sound in the images of the man and a group of people. The sound is amplified into the chanting of the motto derived from Sadako's hometown: 'If you keep playing with water, the monster will come'. In contrast to the Oshima community's literal interpretation of the motto, Sadako encodes this phrase in the video to refer to social anxiety about psychic power. Thus, it can be read that the monster constitutes the repressed desires of society that trigger her mother's suicide and her murder by Dr. Ikuma. Accordingly, this oppression will rebound back on society like the monster.

In the second section, a mirror reflects two images, of a young woman brushing her hair and of a girl whose long hair covers her face with the Japanese characters that spell the name Sadako overlain on her left eye. It seems to represent the unstable mother-daughter relationship between Sadako and her mother. Shizuko's relation to her daughter is ambivalent: at first she does not want to raise Sadako as the child of the sea monster but she still keeps Sadako alive. The

journalist's death highlights the troubled mother-daughter relationship, revealing that the daughter's power surpasses the mother's. The mother is furious, accusing Sadako of killing the journalist and unable to take the accusation of being the monster made by the press. Thus it can be argued that the scene in which Sadako continually uses her psychic power to move the mirror in front of her mother from the left side of the wall to the right side, so that it is in front of Sadako, represents the relationship of rivalry between Sadako and her mother.

The mirror scene exposes Sadako's ambivalent relationship with her mother. Sadako does not fully identify with her mother: she both loves and hates her. Her traumatic childhood results in Sadako's problematic self-identification. In Sadako's and her mother's reflections in the mirror we can find what Lacan calls the 'mirror phase', in which we might expect the daughter's identification with the mother as 'whole' (Barker 2003: 108). Here, the two women have two things in common: female identity and psychic power. What makes them different is that Shizuko's power is inferior to Sadako's and Shizuko's kimono wearing and submissive behaviour make her more feminine or beautiful than Sadako, whose dress is plain white and whose behaviour is rigid, dull, and emotionless. Thus, it is difficult for Sadako to either identify with or distinguish herself from her mother's reflection in the mirror because the mirror reflects the two uncanny faces: her mother's 'attractive' face and Sadako's 'featureless' face covered with her long black hair. The two reflections in the mirror suggest a conflict between Sadako's ideal ego (her mother's face) and Sadako's un-desired ego (her featureless face covered with hair) in a "doubling, dividing and interchanging" relationship between mother and daughter (Badley 1995: 69). The lines between familiar and unfamiliar, same and different, and recognised and misrecognised are all blurred. Sadako's monstrosity reflected in the mirror is Shizuko's shadow image, and a reminder of the abject body. Shizuko's beautiful face suggests that Sadako is unable to fully identify with her mother at the same time that she cannot expel the abject of psychic power from her body that is given by her mother's maternal body.

The third section of the video illustrates Sadako's murder in relation to her confusion, frustration, and anger triggered by her oppression. The video clip begins with Sadako's subjective viewpoint to show the images that she sees: the clouds scudding across the moon within a narrow round circle in the dark night. Then, the camera uses an objective long shot to show a well situated in the middle of open bushes. We see that the round circle refers to the well in which she is trapped and from which she constantly looks up. The metallic screech in the video is the sound of Sadako's nails scratching the well when she tries to crawl out. We learn how Sadako has been murdered by her adoptive father and trapped in the well for thirty years. Sadako's video thereby uses a non-linear, acoustic, and visual narrative to construct a language of femininity that is denied and excluded from the patriarchal order.



Figure 15: Shizuko combs her hair in front of a mirror in *Ring* (1998).

The three sections of the curse video thus demonstrate that Sadako rejects external constructions of her monstrosity and produces her own feminine narrative through the technology of television and video, in response to the oppression she suffers. However, the horror of her monstrosity is reinforced rather than undermined when her femininity is mediated by television and videotapes. Television has been seen by postmodern theorists as a feminised medium, capable of emasculating, absorbing, and drawing viewers into a masochistic relationship with the TV screen, whose interminable flow of images and sounds, endlessly disappearing

present, and explosion of messages, signs, and meanings – all work to dissolve the boundary between the real and the artificial (Joyrich 1996: 69, Thornham 2007: 120, Baudrillard 1994: 6). According to Baudrillard's notion of technological simulation, television makes the relationship between the signifier and the signified, the real and the imaginary, and the true and the false irrelevant. Technology triggers three orders of simulation according to Baudrillard's theory (1983). Whereas the first-order simulation is the imitation or reflection of the real, the second-order simulation blurs the boundary between reality and representation and creates the illusion of reality. The third order produces a hyperreality that lacks a referent without a real origin and is detached from both the real and the representational (Silverstone 1994: 113, Lane 2000: 86). In these terms, Sadako's curse video can be identified as a simulation that first duplicates and then replaces Sadako's 'original' and 'real' ordeal.

The curse video consequently embodies Sadako's monstrosity, and transforms her monstrous femininity from the traditional representation of Japanese folklore into a postmodern urban myth. Her revenge becomes a series of copies or hyperreal signs without reference to her original resentment that impose on random people who are not responsible for her suffering. Traditional Japanese customs suggest that the vengeful spirits can be appeased either by taking revenge on the ones who are responsible, or by enshrining those spirits as gods (*kami*) with appropriate religious ceremonies. The films demonstrate the failure of traditional rituals in dealing with Sadako's spirit, and represent the feminine as rebellious against the Japanese male-dominated society (Ravina 2004: 11). Reiko tries to reveal Sadako's untold tragedy to the public by interviewing Sadako's uncle, excavating Sadako's dead body from the well, and performing a formal religious ceremony to bury Sadako at sea near her birthplace. However, the curse cannot be lifted by Reiko's efforts but instead forms a panic chain reaction in *Ring*, *Ring 2*, and *The Spiral*. In this, not only do Reiko, Reiko's ex-husband, Reiko's son, Reiko's father, and other people die after they watch different copies of the curse video, but the video is also continually reproduced to kill innocent viewers.

Baudrillard's (1983) notion of the simulacrum and Freud's (1919) theorisation of the uncanny can thus be used to explain Sadako's ambiguous and dispersed subjectivity that floats between disembodiment and embodiment. Sadako's monstrosity in *Ring* and *Ring 2* is represented as uncanny in its erosion of the distinction between the present and the past, the present and the absent, the organic and the technological, the body and the spirit, the embodied and the disembodied, and the real and the artificial. As I have argued, it is hard to tell whether the curse video is made before or after Sadako dies in the well. *Ring* simply begins from when the curse video kills several high school students, who die after they watch a video recorded in the hotel room under which the well lies, but does not reveal the specific time when the original videotape is made. *Ring* and *Ring 2* portray an ambiguous situation in which it is not clear whether Sadako is alive or dead whilst the video begins to kill innocent viewers. Whereas *Ring* implies that she is already dead long before Reiko excavates her corpse from the well, *Ring 2* changes the story so that Sadako dies just before Reiko excavates her body. Whilst Sadako's vengeful spirit can perhaps be alleviated by a religious ceremony when Reiko buries Sadako's body at sea, the curse video continues to kill. Sadako is uncanny when she hovers between the dead and the undead, mixing her psychic power when she is alive and her vengeful power when she is a ghost. The video, originally the signifier of Sadako's resentful thoughts, has become a simulation blurring the relationship between signifier and signified. The simulation created by the video replaces Sadako's subjective experiences of repression and reproduces the curse without the context of Sadako's historical background. The form and content of the video are therefore continually reproduced as hyperreality. Moreover, Sadako's fragmented and nonlinear feminine narrative as represented in the video, and the hyperreality without origin, together turn the history of Sadako's tragic life into a collection of montage images which erase the cause-effect relationship and collapse the boundary between the public and private spheres. Whilst the video represents Sadako's fragmented and decentred subjective viewpoint on her tragic life and resentment, her

history and the viewer's life are collapsed into the video images shown on the TV screen: the boundary between subject and the object is dissolved by videotape and screen.

The power of simulation, Baudrillard argues, lies in its “seductive force” that “extracts meaning from discourse and detracts it from its truth” by making the artifice more attractive and fascinating than the real as well as generating self-referential simulation that creates “a real without origin or reality” (Baudrillard 2001: 152, Baudrillard 1994: 1, Gemünden 1998: 172). Baudrillard uses the feminine connotations of the word ‘seduction’ to characterise the electronic mass-media culture dominated by simulation which destabilises the relationship between the real and the hyperreal and causes the power of ‘feminine’ reproduction of the hyperreal to take over that of ‘masculine’ production of the real (Thornham 2007: 46, Baudrillard 1990: 178, 216, 243). Consequently, Baudrillard argues that an apocalyptic version of postmodern society has emerged in which “the real has imploded and the subject has disappeared; history, culture, and truth are absorbed by simulated images” (Heffernan 1995: 171). Applying Baudrillard’s notion of the depthless surface and appearance of simulation to the curse video in the Ring franchise films, the hyperreality of the video can be divided into two levels: the feminised form of the video in terms of its attraction and seduction to the innocent viewers, and its feminised content in terms of the images of Sadako’s monstrosity. The form and content of the video creates an apocalyptic vision of contemporary Japanese urban society and reinforces the horror of the monstrous feminine because Sadako’s curse and psychic power are endlessly reproduced to kill without any specific reason, threatening the patriarchal order through what Baudrillard calls mass culture as a feminine threat to society (Gemünden 1998: 172). The curse video neither constructs a voyeuristic narrative focusing on the look of Sadako’s feminine body in order to grant the spectator power over the images, nor provides a sadistic viewing pleasure. Instead, the simulated images position the viewer in a masochistic and powerless position in order to make the viewer participate in the horror of a “presence-yet-absence” situation, in which we find a mixture of the simulation of Sadako’s tragic past and the embodiment of Sadako’s vengeful spirit. After

watching the video, the diegetic viewer in *Ring* immediately receives a phone call from Sadako. Learning that they will die within seven days, the viewer has a haunting hallucination in relation to the fragmented images from the curse video until they die from a heart attack when Sadako's ghostly body appears before them. Sadako's vengeful spirit cannot only be embodied on the seventh day to kill the viewer, but can also be embodied through the TV screen.

At the end of *Ring*, Sadako activates the TV and the video cassette player in Ryuji's university accommodation by connecting the simulated and the real, the past and the present, and the dead and the undead in order to kill Ryuji. The TV screen first shows the well in the middle of the bushes in a black-and-white image, and then Sadako slowly crawls out of the well. She stands in front of the well and then slowly approaches the TV screen. Suddenly her head, covered with her long black hair, pierces through the TV screen and then her two hands penetrate the screen. The two-dimensional image of Sadako turns into a three-dimensional coloured figure: she wears a pure white long dress and crawls into Ryuji's room by using her hands with broken red nails. As Sadako crawls towards Ryuji, Ryuji retreats in fear to the corner of the room. The horror of Sadako's uncanny body reaches its peak to scare Ryuji to death when Sadako stands up from the floor to show her wide-open bloodshot eye staring at Ryuji.



Figure 16: Sadako crawls out of the television screen in *Ring* (1998).

In *Ring 2*, Sadako crosses the boundary between the psychic and the physical in a similar way. Here, the attempt to negate Sadako's power is scientific, not religious. Wires are used to connect Yoichi's body with technological equipment that can channel his negative energy into the fresh water of a swimming pool as a scientific method of using fresh water to negate Sadako's vicious energy. However, Sadako's curse video, as destructive feminine simulation, can be broken neither by the religious ceremony shown in *Ring* nor the application of science in *Ring 2*. Instead, the mediation between the technological and the simulated reinforces the horror of Sadako's monstrous feminine: Yoichi, the scientific equipment, and the curse video become a channel which lets Sadako cross between the realm of the dead and the living. In particular, after Yoichi is haunted by Sadako's curse and loses the ability to talk after he watches the curse video by accident, his mother makes a copy for him to let his grandfather watch in order to save his life. When the scientific experiment proceeds next to the swimming pool, Yoichi, Mai, Sadako's uncle, the scientist, and the assistant are drawn into Sadako's psychic world after Yoichi's body is connected with the machines. It is hard to tell whether it is Sadako or Yoichi that connects the real world with the psychic world because Sadako works through Yoichi's psychic power. Meanwhile, the five people next to the swimming pool have different visions created by Sadako. Sadako's uncle sees her coffin with her long hair stretching out of it at the bottom of the swimming pool and swims towards it: he drowns while shouting "Sadako! Take me! Kill me! And put an end to all this!" The scientist is controlled by Sadako to throw a machine into the swimming pool in order to kill himself and the assistant by electrocution. Mai and Yoichi wake up in the middle of the well where Sadako was trapped and try to climb up to the entrance of the well. Eventually, they both jump into the bottom of the well. Suddenly, Yoichi's father, who has died because of Sadako's curse and become a ghost, appears in the well. Ryuji asks Yoichi to transfer his fear to him and asks Mai to carry Yoichi and climb up with a rope that Ryuji prepares. While Mai climbs up, Sadako appears in the bottom of the well and also climbs up. After catching Mai and Yoichi, she appears with her extreme pale face and says, "Why is it only

you were saved?” and then jumps back to the well. Mai and Yoichi emerge from the well and find themselves in the swimming pool.

“Why is it only you were saved?” are Sadako’s only spoken words in *Ring 2*. In spite of the fact that Sadako and Yoichi both possess psychic power and are from single-parent families, Sadako is rejected not only by society but also by her mother. Yoichi, however, as a boy is both privileged and protected. Although he has psychic power which is inherited from his father, his father and mother sacrifice their lives in order to let Yoichi live, in contrast to Sadako who is abandoned by her mother and murdered by her adoptive father. Yoichi’s psychic power is kept secret by his parents and guided by Mai. Reiko in *Ring* and *Ring 2* is represented as a ‘good’ mother who sacrifices her life to save her son and appeases Sadako’s resentment by excavating and burying Sadako’s body. Shizuko, however, is represented as a bad, castrating ‘archaic’ mother who is excluded from the Symbolic Order and rendered monstrous because of her possession of psychic power. She abandons her daughter by committing suicide because she cannot bear the pressure of society when it mistakenly assumes that she has killed the journalist in the conference. Reiko is portrayed as a heroine in contrast to the horrific imagery of Shizuko, and it can be argued that the representation of her motherhood *without* psychic power functions, in the words of Barbara Creed, to reassure patriarchal ideology of “the acceptable form and shape of woman” (Creed 1990: 140).

3. The Horror of the Primal Scene and the Apocalyptic Rebirth

The imagery of the well where Sadako is trapped for thirty years and the imagery of the ring in relation to what Sadako sees from the bottom of the well are highlighted in the franchise films. They are images that suggest the womb or the primal scene in relation to fantasies and fears about a maternal figure that blurs distinctions between the Self and the Other, the inside and the outside, and the living and the dead. Creed’s theorisation of the monstrous feminine relates it not only to the abject maternal body but also to the fantasy of the primal scene and the

archaic mother's power of giving birth and causing death (Creed 1990: 128). The monstrosity of Shizuko and Sadako, as I have discussed, is correlated with their uncontrollable hysterical bodies. Here, I will examine the primal scene in relation to the horror of separating and uniting with the maternal body. If the inevitable separation from the maternal body represents life, then subsequent re-union with the maternal body indicates the death of the subject (Britton 2003: 42). The first half of *Ring* uses the imagery of the volcano and the well to represent repulsion towards the hysterical bodies of Shizuko and Sadako in relation to the horror of the primal scene. Shizuko jumps into a volcano to kill herself in response to the oppression she suffers, whilst Sadako is pushed into a well by her adoptive father, who cannot use medication to control her psychic power. The volcano, the well, and the ring are all associated with the womb, mother earth, or Mother Nature, all of which connote maternal power over life and death. Shizuko cannot control her daughter's destructive psychic power and its threat to patriarchal society. Jumping into the crater of the volcano, whose eruption she has predicted, she returns in death to a state of the original and the non-differentiated. In contrast to her mother's death, Sadako hovers between the dead and the undead in the womb-like well characterised as deep, dark, and watery. Although Sadako is murdered by her adoptive father, it is after she has already grown up as a young woman. Thus, it can be argued that Sadako transforms herself in the womb-like well from a girl into a young woman with reproductive capacity and capable of becoming a monstrous maternal figure, to be reborn with her psychic power and vengeful spirit. Again and again throughout the franchise films, Sadako climbs out of the well, to perform an uncanny birth that excludes the father figure. We have seen that Shizuko's fishing village creates a myth about Sadako's monstrous birth: she is conceived when her mother gets pregnant by an unknown sea-god or demon and is thus born as a monster that never dies. Sadako's adoptive father, then, cannot end Sadako's life; rather, her return to the well and re-emergence from it is a replay of the primal scene and a monstrous reproduction: Sadako returns to the uncanny womb in order to create a parthenogenetic reproduction mediated through the videotape and TV screen. As long as

someone watches the curse video without making another copy, Sadako will be reborn again and again by climbing out of the well and crawling out of the TV screen to kill the viewers. The films thus create a womb-matrix by uniting the well, Sadako's psychic power, her vengeful spirit, videotapes, TV screens, and telephones to dissolve the distinction between the virtual and the physical, the technological and the organic, the psychic and the real, and the living and the dead. The primal scene in *Ring* and *Ring 2* is represented as endless, vicious, destructive, incestuous, and grotesque.



Figure 17: Mai dies after she gives birth to Sadako-Mai in *The Spiral* (1998).

Whereas Sadako in *Ring* and *Ring 2* uses the mass media to reproduce herself as a ghostly cyborg hovering in between the spiritual and the material, the virtual and the physical, and the simulated and the original, in *The Spiral* she transforms from a simulated-ghostly entity into a biological-technological cyborg. She is once again reborn, now not only in association with the curse video, the medium of feminine writing about her own perceptions, bodily experiences, and sexual desires, but also through cloning technology. In this film the curse video is interpreted not through the discourse of religious folklore as in *Ring* or the scientific discourse of physics as in *Ring 2*, but through the medical discourse of pathology. *The Spiral* constructs the cause of Sadako's monstrosity in two ways: through the curse videos copied by the viewers and through the journal about her investigation written by Reiko. The film highlights a cause-effect

relationship between 'gaze' and 'infection' – the victims die not only from watching the video but also from reading Reiko's journal. The deaths represented in the film are now not directly the result of Sadako's curse but linked to a low-infection virus caused by watching the video images and reading words.

The scientific discourse of DNA is predominantly used to construct the relationship between the virus and the video. *The Spiral* develops a scientific explanation of Sadako's curse in relation to three elements: the smallpox virus embedded in the video, Sadako's DNA embedded in the video, and a mutant virus embedded in Reiko's journal. The film draws on the role of DNA in storing the long-term information of an organism's genetic structure, proposing that the organism can revive when its DNA interfaces with the human body. Accordingly, the video is seen to carry the DNA of both the smallpox virus and Sadako. In the beginning of *The Spiral*, the pathologist Mitsuo Andou discovers that the videotape carries the smallpox virus that causes the video viewer's death. There is a geographical relationship between the video, the virus, and Sadako. The place of the origin of the video and the virus is once again identified as Izu peninsula where Sadako's adoptive father's clinic was established thirty years ago. *Ring* and *Ring 2* link the deadly power of the video to Sadako's vengeful curse and psychic power. *The Spiral* underlines that the destructive power of the video comes from the smallpox virus and Sadako's DNA in association with the horror of Reiko's journal, which is characterised as the encoded form of an unknown mutant virus and the linguistic expression of Sadako's oppression by Japanese society. Mitsuo argues that the DNA of the smallpox virus is embedded in the video and argues that the retinas of the viewer's eyes are contaminated by both the virus and Sadako, so that two kinds of DNA can replicate in the human body at the same time. Most viewers in the film die from the smallpox virus rather than from Sadako's DNA, which is seen as an encoded form of the instructions of Sadako's life cycle that functions to reproduce her. Moreover, Mitsuo discovers that Reiko's journal is an infectious and encoded medium that can spread the virus and Sadako's fear to society. After reading the journal, the reader will cough continually, have purple

and green spots spreading on the neck, constantly have nightmares about the cracked well where Sadako is trapped, and then eventually die from a heart attack.

Whereas Reiko's character in *Ring* and *Ring 2* is a heterosexual, loving single mother and an intelligent, middle class, working woman, in *The Spiral* she becomes an accomplice in Sadako's conspiracy to destroy society through spreading the unknown mutant virus and Sadako's fear. Reiko's journal thus becomes an embodiment of the horror of a feminising language, rendering Sadako's tragic history through Reiko's feminine perceptions and words. When Reiko uses her profession as journalist to record the process of investigating the curse video in relation to Sadako's tragic life, the journal was presented as a neutral and objective observation of Sadako's curse video. However, in this film the journal carries not only the virus but also Sadako's fear, so that the corporeal aspects of Sadako's experiences, hitherto repressed and unspoken, can be represented through its linguistic structure. Whereas the curse video in *Ring* and *Ring 2* is feminised through its non-linear and montage-like narrative, the journal in *The Spiral* becomes a second medium used by Sadako to reconstruct her story, this time within patriarchal language.

In addition to Reiko who writes the journal, the other main characters in *The Spiral* are represented as accomplices in recreating Sadako's monstrous rebirth. Whereas pathology fails to provide solutions to the deaths caused by the video and the journal, the pathological discourse does provide a scientific explanation of Sadako's uncanny rebirth in relation to the reconstruction of the primal scene. Mitsuo is used by Sadako to watch the video and read the journal in order to infect him with her DNA and the two different viruses at the same time. Mitsuo survives the viral infection because not only the viruses but also Sadako's DNA embedded in Mitsuo's semen is transmitted into Mai's vagina during sexual intercourse. The horror of the primal scene comes after Mai has sex with Mitsuo: Mai is infected by the fatal viruses and gets pregnant at the same time. While Mai coughs constantly and has purple and green spots on her body, her embryo mixed with Sadako's DNA begins to grow rapidly. Thus heterosexual intercourse and the uncanny womb produce Sadako's rebirth. After giving birth to

Sadako alone in the bottom of a metal chimney on an industrial building in a harbour city, Mai dies of the viral infection. The monstrous rebirth is situated once more in the uncanny womb, this time in relation to Mai's biological uterus and the chimney whose shape resembles the deep and dark well in Oshima Island which is the origin of Sadako's monstrous rebirth. The reborn version of Sadako grows in a few days to become an adult woman between the ages of 18 and 25 when she dies in the well. This female figure is neither Sadako nor Mai, but is identified as Sadako-Mai. The horror of Sadako-Mai's femininity is thus seen not only in relation to Mai's abject maternal body but also, this time, to heterosexual reproduction, through Mitsuo's formless and contaminated semen which fertilises Mai's egg. This figure is an uncanny hybrid because she does not look like the dead Sadako but has Mai's physical appearance. At the same time her subjectivity is uncanny because her memories are a mixture of Sadako's past and Mai's present memories. However, there are some differences between Sadako-Mai, Sadako, and Mai. Before the rebirth represented in *The Spiral*, the ghostly Sadako appears in Mitsuo's room after he watches the video: she wears a long white dress and seductively kisses and caresses him. In contrast, Mai always wears a black coat and behaves in a shy and serious manner that hides her feminine body and sexuality. Sadako-Mai is a mixture of Sadako's seductive and Mai's serious personality: Sadako-Mai wears a sexy red dress with a big red coat and heavy makeup but acts as a mature woman.

The ending of the film reveals the purpose of Sadako's monstrous rebirth. Sadako-Mai seeks to create her own monstrous nuclear family in order to enact the sexual and marital relationships that Sadako could not have when she is alive. Sadako-Mai asks Mitsuo, who specialises in clone technology, to recreate Mitsuo's son, Takanori, who drowned in the sea, and Ryuji, who was killed by Sadako's curse. Sadako-Mai then fulfils her 'monstrous motherhood' through giving uncanny birth to Ryuji and Takanori. Like her, they rapidly grow to the moment of their deaths, and then the tempo of growth returns back to normal. The relationships between Sadako-Mai, Ryuji, and Takanori are a mixture of the mother-son and the girlfriend-boyfriend, yet both are

reborn from Sadako-Mai's womb. Sadako-Mai and Ryuji at the end of the film reveal their vision that this new monstrous society will replace the existing one when they publish Reiko's journal as a novel. The published journal becomes a simulation that allows the readers to understand and circulate Sadako's fear, which can be identified as the hysterical repression of woman in patriarchal society, but also transmits the mutant virus and Sadako's DNA into the bodies of its readers. The novel will thus either kill the readers or reproduce Sadako through the readers' heterosexual intercourse with others. The present society and humanity will evolve into an apocalyptic society and posthumanity: the Sadako-psychic-ghostly-cyborgs will replace the natural, biological, and heterosexual humans.

Conclusion

The Ring franchise films represent a postmodern horror version of the Japanese female vengeful ghost folklore in transforming the mythic, premodern, or traditional ghost into a technological phantom that hovers between past and present, dead and undead, organic and technological, and spiritual and material. The ghost in the machine is a hybrid of the monstrous feminine figure and the feminisation of technology, including televisions, videocassettes, video players, telephones, and cloning technology. These simulated ghost cyborgs replace not only the original ghost but also the organic, natural, and biological humans. Sadako's abject, hysterical, and maternal body as well as the feminisation of technology not only destabilise the patriarchal scientific discourse which cannot manage the monstrous feminine, but also intensify the horror when the monstrous feminine is embodied through technological reproduction. Both primal scene and technological simulation are mediated or interfaced by people who use mass media on a daily basis. This phenomenon can be characterised as what Tudor calls 'paranoid horror' in relation to a cinematic narrative without closure or with an open ending. This horror dismantles the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious, the normal and the abnormal, order and disorder, and sanity and insanity, producing a collapse of expertise and authority, an

“ultimate disintegration of human order” and an “apocalyptic despair” (Tudor 1989: 215-216).

The Ring films all finish with an open ending and the horror of Sadako’s curse and resentment is escalated throughout the narratives in the franchise to create an apocalyptic version of a patriarchal society threatened and subverted by Sadako’s uncanny cyborg body.

Chapter 5

Phallic, Sexualised, and Violent Female Cyborg Bodies

This chapter explores the representation of the violent and sexualised female cyborg in three Japanese animations: *AD Police Files* (1990), *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004). Before commencing the analysis, it is necessary to clarify the interplay between animation, violence, gender, and the cyborg. Accordingly I shall first demonstrate the specificity of animation in contrast to the ‘live-action’ film; second, I shall differentiate *anime* from American animation; finally, I shall reconsider the intersection between the cyborg, gender, and violence.

1. Animation, Violence, and Gender

In relation to the representation of fantasy, the live-action film is still inevitably subject to “the conventional physical laws of the ‘real’ world” (Wells 1998: 25). However, animation is a medium which can embody the invisible, the abstract, and the conceptual by circumventing or exaggerating physical laws or “the confinements of time and space” (Besen 2008: 18, Brackett and Gaydosik 2006: 394). Although the imagery of the cyborg is pervasive in live-action cinema, as I have discussed in the previous chapters, I would argue that animation provides the perfect platform to represent a fantasised cyborg which cannot be completely realised by “costly and dangerous stunts and special effects” in live-action film (Musburger and Kindem 2009: 389). For example, James Cameron’s *Terminator 2* (1991), *Avatar* (2009) and *Tron: Legacy* (2010), as well as the Matrix series including *The Matrix* (1999), *The Matrix Reloaded* (2003), and *The Matrix Revolution* (2003), use animated synthetic actors created by computer programs to play the roles of fantasised cyborgs in live-action films (Manovich 2011: 79, Parent 2008: 33). As a result, the mixture of live-action and animation breaks the distinction between the real and the imaginary just as the cyborgs represented in those films blur the boundary between fantasy and reality.

More important, animation can be seen as a more flexible medium than live-action film in which embodies the fantasy of the human who mingles with technoscience. As a result, the imagery of cyborgs is prevalent in *mecha*, as the subgenre of Japanese science fiction animation, centring on human bodies which are fused with technology (Brenner 2007: 163).

American media have tended to stigmatise Japanese animation as excessively violent and sexual, in contrast to an American use of the form which is aimed largely at children (Artz 2005: 80, Bell, Haas, and Sells 1995: 7). As a number of commentators have argued, this focus is linked to specific histories of both censorship and media ownership (Hendershot 1998: 22-32, Pondillo 2010: 73-98, Couvares 2006: 1-15, Mittel 2004: 54-89). Disney's animated cartoons have dominated the international entertainment market since the 1980s through children's TV, Disney Channel, and cartoon cable television networks such as Cartoon Network, Fox Kids, and Nickelodeon which have been launched to broadcast children's animation since the 1990s (Corcoran 2004: 159). As a result, animation in the United States has been ideologically constructed as children's culture although adult-orientated animations have occasionally been produced for cinematic exhibition (Cross 201: 87).

Whilst American animated cartoons and films produced for child and adult audiences involve different levels of violence and sexual representation, the American media has labelled Japanese animation as excessively violent and pornographic. Kinsella (2000) observes that the American media generally represent Japanese comics and animation as violent, sexual, and strange on their TV shows and magazine articles by showing images excerpted from *anime* in reference to violence, sexuality, and cultural difference. The Western media's treatment of *anime*, Kinsella argues, shows the Orientalist assumptions that Japanese society is sexist, repressed, and peculiar (Kinsella 2000: 14). Moreover, Patter points out that since 1997 some of the American animation distributors such as CBS, ABC, NBC, Fox, UPN, and WB publicised that they will not air animation imported from Japan because Japanese animation, they argue, is violently and sexually oriented, and may harm children (Patter 2004: 70). In comparison to the United States, Japan has

a less strict censorship system which results in Japanese animation not only equally targeting both children and adults, but also representing adult themes which young children can watch (Allison 2000: 41, Patten 2004: 309). Whilst it cannot be simply concluded that American children's animation does not represent any violence or sexuality, American animations operate according to the American cultural norms embedded in American media censorship. For example, the representations of breast, nudity, homosexuality, child sexuality, and sexual violence are banned on TV cartoons; violence represented in TV cartoons involves minor acts in which realistic pain rarely is shown in victims' suffering; death and blood are not commonly seen; and it is forbidden to portray rape (Phoenix 2006: 26-34).

Whilst American cartoons and animated films predominantly feature fairy tales, children's fantasy, family drama, comedy, and parody, it is hard to find any imagery of cyborgs. In contrast, *mecha* made in adult-oriented animated films and OVAs primarily draws upon the figure of the cyborg as well as explicitly articulates the figure of the female cyborg with violence and sexuality. For example, the female cyborgs in the OVA such as *AD Police Files* and animated films such as *Ghost in the Shell* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* are aggressive as well as sexualised. Since these animations graphically depict brutality, blood, death, eroticism, nudity, pain, and suffering, I would like to employ the analytical concepts formulated in relation to depictions of gendered violence in live-action cinema as a basis for the exploration of the sexualised and violent female cyborg found in Japanese animation.

Whereas violence is traditionally seen as masculine or identified as a manifestation of manhood, womanhood is often rendered equivalent to the passive, the pacifist, the kind, and the non-violent (Madsen 2005: 164, King and McCaughey 2001: 2). For that reason, screen violence in cinema can be discussed within both an ideological and a psychoanalytic framework. For example, Neale in "Masculinity as Spectacle" (1983) argues that not only is the patriarchal ideology of masculinity engaged in a narcissistic identification with power, omnipotence, mastery, and control, but also Western mainstream films such as the Western and combat films

redirect the erotic and homosexual gaze on the male body into the scene of ritualistic fights and combats. In particular, heroic protagonists use violence to substitute for the sexualisation of their male bodies because graphic violence deflects the gaze and displaces male sexuality. Since the male body cannot be explicitly posed as an erotic object of the male look in heterosexual and patriarchal society, the male is marked as the object or the perpetrator of violence in order to justify the display of the male body for spectatorial pleasure. Holland (1995) draws on Neale's notion of masculinity as spectacle to analyse the representation of the violent male cyborg in Hollywood films. She argues that male cyborgs such as the Terminator and RoboCop are characterised by their ultra-violent behaviours through their invincible, armoured, and muscled bodies in order to replace the cinematic representation of male sexuality in relation to America's homophobia. Springer (1996) also observes that whilst hypermasculine male cyborgs are portrayed as aggressive, armoured, and muscular in science fiction film, male violence aims to recuperate or preserve the traditional notion of patriarchal manhood or the (masculine) subject, a subject threatened by social changes in relation to the advent of an electronic technology coded as feminine through its "silent, inconspicuous and miniaturized" characteristics (Cavallaro 2000: 115). Violence is thus used by the male cyborg in order to underpin the interrelationship between masculinity and power: "to be the most violent is to attain the group's highest symbolic status, a status that connotes ultramasculinity" (Neroni 2005: 43). Violence is a key factor in men's maintaining manhood, power, and social status (Edwards 2006: 58).

Although Neale's "Masculinity as Spectacle" does not further explore the spectacle of violence in terms of the female body, the combination of women and violence is hardly new in cinema, where women have been the victims in cinematic spectacles of violence (Burfoot and Lord 2006: xiii). At the same time, however, the violent woman who kills has also never been absent from cinematic representation, appearing in various genres from horror film, film noir, action film, and science fiction to the 1970s' blaxploitation films and the 1990s' road movies (Potter 1999: 80, Slocum 2001: 2, King and McCaughey 2001: 1, 4). More important, the

cinematic representation of violent women not only provokes ambivalent responses on-screen and off-screen but also attempts to cross over into a masculine territory which potentially challenges patriarchal gendered boundaries (King and McCaughey 2001: 1, Madsen 2005: 164). Therefore, the cinematic representation of violent women can be controversial, contradictory, and understood as either feminist empowerment or patriarchal disempowerment of women (Madsen 2005: 164). A number of English-language academic books have explored contemporary women who engage in violence (as either agents or victims) in Hollywood: the femme fatale in film noirs, the heroine in action films, the blaxploitation heroine in black-centred low-budget films, and the monstrous feminine or the final girl in horror films. The contemporary imagery of violent women in Hollywood emerges under the impact of two world wars and feminist movements where women take on 'masculine' roles and jobs to erode gender differences, actions which can be seen both as women's empowerment and as threat to patriarchal authority and dominance. Notably, since the 1980s violent women have been shown in different media forms such as films, television programmes, and video games, and in different genres like action, drama, and horror (King and McCaughey 2001: 4, Andris and Frederick 2007: 2, Neroni 2005: 35).

Cinematic representations of violence are often regarded as male-oriented and associated with masculinity, but this screen violence can be also understood through the feminist psychoanalytic approach to the 'femme castratrice' and the phallicised 'Final Girl' respectively proposed by feminist film scholars Barbara Creed and Carol Clover. Creed (1993) argues that the heroine in rape-revenge and slasher films is the femme castratrice, a figure who is powerful and destructive, controls the sadistic gaze, and takes the male as a victim. Creed takes issue with Mulvey's concept of visual pleasure in which woman is constructed as passive, masochistic, and eroticised spectacle. Whereas Creed sees the heroine as a castrator, Clover sees the heroine as a phallicised castrator. Drawn from Freudian psychoanalysis, the 'Final Girl', as theorised by Clover (1992), is the heroine who is phallicised, given masculine traits, actively controls the

sadistic gaze, and takes the male victim as the object of castration. For example, phallic symbols such as knife, sledgehammer, chainsaw, or knitting needle are used by the heroines to kill the male perpetrators (Chaudhuri 2006: 101). In other words, the violent woman can either be the castrating woman whose power is derived from her biological body or the phallic woman whose power is granted by her masculinised or phallicised body.

From this perspective, the sight/site of the female cyborg body offers the perfect fantasy vehicle to embody sexuality as well as stage the spectacle of violence by representing the “conventionally beautiful, glamorous, and sexualized” body in association with “superior fighting skills” and “enormous physical prowess” in a way that conforms to the voyeuristic-fetishist pleasure in the heterosexual male gaze (Springer 2005: 78, Brown 2011: 7). In contrast, the male cyborg’s invincible, forceful, and impervious body is strongly aligned with his violent and aggressive actions in order to avoid the eroticisation of the male body. Discussions of the violent female cyborg in Hollywood can be found in scattered chapters²⁷⁴, which articulate the theme of violent women with technological bodies in relation to reproduction and sexuality. In particular, Springer (1996) discusses two types of violent women: the first type is the female hero such as Anne Lewis in *RoboCop* (1987) and Sarah Connor in *The Terminator* (1984) and *Terminator 2* (1991), who are strong, resilient, and resourceful, and the second type is the vicious female cyborg that represents the patriarchal fear of female sexuality and reproduction such as Maria in *Metropolis* (1927) and Eve 8 in *Eve of Destruction* (1991), who are carnal, dangerous, and seductive (Springer 1996: 114). If science fiction as a genre is involved with the cyborgisation of the female body, it is not surprising that the imagery of violent women prevails in science fiction

²⁷⁴ Such as Creed’s “*Alien and the Monstrous Feminine*” in *Alien Zone: Cultural Theory and Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema* (1990); Springer’s “*Muscular Circuitry: The Whole World is Men’s Bloody Fantasies*” in *Electronic Eros: Bodies and Desire in the Postindustrial Age* (1996); Gillis’s “*Cyber Noir: Cyberspace, (Post)Feminism and the Femme Fatale*” in *The Matrix Trilogy: Cyberpunk Reloaded* (2005); Melzer’s “*Technoscience’s Stepdaughter: The Feminist Cyborg in Alien Resurrection*” in *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought* (2006); Cornea’s “*Gender Blending and the Feminine Subject in Science Fiction Film*” in *Science Fiction Cinema: Between Fantasy and Reality* (2007).

films because the female cyborgs who commit aggression, offense, and crimes, or who engage in combat, are constantly linked with their technological bodies. Melzer (2006) in *Alien Constructions: Science Fiction and Feminist Thought* further elaborates the two types of violent women which have been classified by Springer (1996). Melzer argues that the first type is defined as the human woman warrior who is strong, tough, resourceful, and knows how to use weapons. Examples are Sarah Connor in *The Terminator* (1984) and Ripley in *Alien* (1979), who fight for humanity and are identified with technophobic resistance. The other type is the female cyborg which represents the feminisation of technology and is often seen as a threat to the patriarchal order or (masculine) humanity; this threatening figure can be found in Eve III in *Eve of Destruction*, the alien-hybrid in *Species* (1995) and *Species II* (1998), and the Borg Queen in *Star Trek: First Contact*, who are portrayed as sexually attractive and dangerous (Melzer 2006: 129).

The discussions of the Western films mentioned above draw on Creed's notion of the 'femme castratrice' to assume that female cyborgs are 'naturally' capable of violence in terms of their feminine, maternal, and sexual identity rather than examine the imagery of violent female cyborgs in relation to the patriarchal fetishisation of the phallic woman and the social construction of gendered violence. In particular, Creed argues that the difference between the castrating woman and the phallic woman lies in the fact that whereas the violence of the femme castratrice signifies the female's castrating power derived from her sexual difference, the phallic woman is a castrated woman who is given a phallus or phallic traits such as carrying a gun, low voice, sexual aggressiveness, or violence to represent a comforting imagery of sexual sameness through the phallicisation of the female body (Creed 1993: 157). Creed claims that understandings of the monstrous woman in science fiction and the femme fatale in film noir over-emphasise the phallic fetish formation of the female body but neglect the fact that the monstrous feminine actually has a castrating power rather than simply represents the male fear of castration. In this respect, Creed links woman's 'monstrosity' with female violence, dominance, and aggression in relation to her biological, physical, and sexual body. However, the

female cyborg, whose body is a hybrid of the organic and the mechanic, can neither be simply positioned as a femme castratrice nor be seen as naturally capable of violence in terms of her hybrid body. The representation of the violent female cyborg can be understood through the notion of the monstrous feminine, if her hybrid body is sexualised or sexually transgressive in relation to a corporeality that threatens the patriarchal order.

Clover takes a psychoanalytic approach to characterise the Final Girl as the phallicised heroine in the slasher film, arguing that action heroines are “‘pseudo-males’ who are not ‘really’ women” because ‘normative’ female subjectivity is constructed through lack and defined as passive, masochistic, and subordinate (Hills 1999: 38). More important, Clover emphasises that the (male) viewer identifies with the Final Girl’s masculine heroic achievement rather than her sexuality (Clover 1987: 218-219, Clover 1992: 40). On that account, women who are aggressive, active, strong, and tough can be defined as “phallic, unnatural or ‘figuratively male’” (Hills 1999: 39).

Accordingly, since the female cyborg’s body is made up of the organic and the technological and her aggressiveness, physical prowess, or superior fighting skills are constructed or enhanced by technology, it can be argued that the female cyborg looks like a woman but acts like a man because the female cyborg’s aggression, dominance, and toughness is not derived from her biological femininity but from the technological phallicisation of her hybrid body. The female cyborg’s femininity is artificial, constructed, and performable. Brown (2011) in *Dangerous Curves: Action Heroines, Gender, Fetishism, and Popular Culture* also uses a psychoanalytic approach to explore the female cyborgs represented in Hollywood cinema and computer games. Brown observes that these female cyborgs are action heroines who are ideologically phallicised and fetishised, subject to being consumer commodities rather than subversive figures. The ‘real’ woman, Brown argues, is symbolically displaced by the imaginary creation of the cyborg which constructs the feminine ideal: the cyborg body is represented in a full-grown woman’s tall, young, firm, and fit body that is fetishised as erotic viewing pleasure as well as masculinised to act out the spectacle of

aggression, violence, and prowess. Brown concludes that the representation of the female cyborg which combines sexual attractiveness and violent capability not only embodies patriarchal fantasy but also disavows patriarchal anxiety in relation to the scenario of the castration complex. In particular, whereas the Final Girl, Clover argues, minimises her sexuality, Brown observes that the powerful female cyborg is considered as a sexual object. Accordingly, the social construction of the female cyborg resonates with Doane's (1991) notion of 'femininity as masquerade'. Within a psychoanalytic framework, Doane argues that femininity functions as a masquerade, overinvesting in feminine performance in order to let the male viewer contain the female body through the mechanisms of voyeurism and fetishism (Doane 1991: 38-39). Whilst the female cyborg's mind and flesh are artefacts, her activeness, dominance, and violence are an imitation of the masculine and a phallic or a figurative male rather than radically subverts gendered stereotypes.

English-language scholarship on the theme of violence and the female cyborg in Japanese live-action cinema and animation is scarce in comparison to academic discussions of violent female cyborgs in Hollywood, even though the imagery of female cyborgs is prevalent in *mecha anime*. In Chapter 5, I have explored the violent female cyborg, Sadako, in the Ring series in relation to aggression and violence which is strengthened by technologies of simulacra. The imagery of violent female cyborgs, however, appears not only in Japanese cinema but also in Japanese *mecha* animation. Napier (2005) points out that *mecha* (the Japanese word for 'robot', the abbreviation of 'mechanical'), as a genre of Japanese animation, highlights graphic violence in scenes where a *mecha* fights with another *mecha*. *Mecha* is a distinctive genre characterised by a narrative which contains at least one long fight scene. The configuration of *mecha* can be the human body that is encased in mechanical suits, the human who acts as a pilot fused inside and controls a titanic armoured machine or robot, or the fusion between humans and machine. Napier argues that the graphic violence of "mechanical brutality" relies on the spectacle of mechanical mobility and the mutilation of technological human bodies (Napier 2005: 89).

Napier's analysis of *mecha* underlines masculine violence as a norm, but she also suggests that the imagery of armoured women in the *mecha* genre can be considered as female empowerment. A group of 'attractive' 'young' women form a technologically armoured paramilitary group to assist the male armoured police in tackling high-tech crimes, thus allowing "women viewers to integrate the violent imagery and female embodiment in a positive fashion" (Napier 2005: 95, Tung 2004: 103).

Saito's *Beautiful Fighting Girl* (2011) analyses the beautiful and powerful girls in *anime* from a Japanese perspective. As a psychiatrist in Japan, Saito draws on Lacanian notions of the phallicisation of the female body articulated in relation to a heterosexual male fan culture. Similar to Brown's (2011) discussion of the phallicised female cyborgs in Hollywood films and computer games, Saito also observes that the beautiful and fighting girl heroines, including the figure of the female cyborg depicted in Japanese animation, act as the phallus as well as the object of desire: sexually attractive (the compensation for lack) and physically forceful (the exertion of power) in order to satisfy the heterosexual male fans' desire for voyeuristic and narcissistic pleasure. In particular, Saito argues that the phallicised girls in Japanese animation are both sexual object and erotic spectacle, and thus not simply alienated from 'real' women and girls as well as without any reference to reality (Saito 2011: xi, 7).

However, Saito's analysis of the eroticised and violent female cyborg in *anime* is problematic in a number of ways. Since Saito claims that the sexualisation of girls in *anime* is 'culturally specific' to Japanese society, he coins the term the 'phallic girl' to distinguish this figure from the phallic woman in his discussion of animated female heroines (Saito 2011: 7). Saito argues that the phallic girl is the object of sexual desire whereas the phallic woman represents the powerful female. As a result, he generalises that the female cyborg heroines in Japanese animation are sexualised girls with an adult woman's power, ignoring the interplay between sexuality and power in relation to animated female cyborgs whose bodies are represented either as full grown or as in between adolescent and girlish bodies. For example, although *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) shows

Motoko's naked body as blurring the boundary between the adult woman and the adolescent, Saito still classifies this cyborg heroine as a beautiful fighting 'girl' (Saito 2011: 119). Saito's analysis is useful in a number of respects, however. In particular, whilst suggesting that the sexualisation of the girl in *amine* is culturally specific to Japanese society in relation to its heterosexual male fan culture, Saito also contextualises this cultural phenomenon within the Japanese *kawaii* (cute) culture and *rorikon* (Lolita) subculture (Saito 2011: 5, 6, 107). In Chapter 1, I have argued that the Japanese patriarchal fantasy of femininity represented in *manga* and *anime* is strongly influenced by the *kawaii* and *rorikon* cultures which infantilise, sexualise, and commodify female images.

Accordingly, I employ Saito's and Brown's notions of the phallicised-fetishised female cyborg to argue that the violent female cyborg represented in the adult-oriented *mecha* animated films such as *Ghost in the Shell* (1995) and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004), and OVA such as *AD Police Files* (1990), serve heterosexual male voyeuristic and fetishist pleasure rather than act as a challenge to or liberation from the hetero-patriarchal society. The body in the realm of cyborgisation can be metaphoric, fragmented, and assembled, so that the female cyborg body is no longer confined to a biological essentialism; nevertheless gender stereotypes are still inscribed on the body. For example, the forceful and violent female cyborg in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* discussed in Chapter 3 is given phallic traits like a gun-arm and aggressive behaviour. She is eventually killed, a punishment for her transgression of her 'appropriate' feminine position. Likewise, Sadako, discussed in Chapter 4, is identified as a ghost-cyborg in which the cyborgisation of her hysterical, maternal, and uncanny body reinforces the horror of her monstrous femininity. However, the single cinematic image of the violent female cyborg depicted in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and the individual female protagonist, Sadako, portrayed in the Ring franchise, cannot generalise the representation(s) of the violent female cyborg(s) that prevail in Japanese science fiction animation. For this reason, I select three contemporary Japanese animations, *AD Police Files*, *Ghost in the Shell*, and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, for further investigation of femininity and

violence in the representation of the female cyborg. Compared to the female cyborg whose body is grotesque, crude, and monstrous in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man* and the Ring series, the female cyborg body portrayed in the selected animations is a creature of technological delicacy: the body is composed of both biological organism and cybernetic device and the appearance of the body is based on a 'realistic', 'ideal', or 'aesthetic' female human figure. Moreover, the technologically mediated or constructed body is not only visually beautiful and attractive, but also physically powerful. Female cyborgs portrayed in these animations are not only capable of 'jacking in' to cyberspace to act as an avatar in virtual reality, but are also agile and resourceful in combat in both the real world and virtual reality. Unlike the female cyborg's violence derived from the male cyborg's manipulation in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, violence represented in the animations is the by-product of the cyborgisation of the body. The violent female cyborgs in these animations are portrayed as active, powerful, and instructional agents in policing and their technological-sexualised bodies function as spectacle. Whereas sexual difference is marked as fundamental to a patriarchal framework which views "only phallic masculinity [as] violent and ... femininity [as] never violent", the popular imagination produces the ambivalent image of the female cyborg as violent (masculine) and erotised (feminine) at the same time (Creed 1993: 155).

Redmond in "Liquid Metal: The Cyborg in Science Fiction" (2004) points out that the cyborg in science fiction films can be divided into two distinctive types: the humanist cyborg and the pathological cyborg (Redmond 2004: 156-157). The humanist cyborg is characterised by desire not only for human emotion and collaboration with humans, but also by frustration in the desire to get rid of technological elements of the cyborg body. In contrast to the humanist cyborg who seeks to become a 'real' human, the pathological cyborg aims to get rid of humanity in order to achieve a greater glory and power of technology by eliminating the entire human race. The definition of these two types of cyborg centres on the concept of 'humanity' which is the distinctive feature of being a 'good' humanist cyborg (like a human) as opposed to a 'bad' pathological cyborg (like an uncontrollable machine).

However, consciousness, memory, rationality, reason, emotion, feeling, and desire, which cluster to form and mark humanity and individuality, can be ‘installed’ and ‘uninstalled’ in the cyborg body, or simulated in virtual reality. The cluster that characterises humanity can be technologically recreated. Consequently, an identity crisis emerges when the humanist cyborg becomes ““more human than human”” in *Ghost in the Shell* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (Sobchack 2005: 272). This identity crisis results from the contingent consciousness that creates the cyborg, or the disorder of the cyborg’s artificial consciousness. Unlike the female cyborg whose subjectivity is externally controlled in *Tetsuo I: Iron Man*, consciousness drives the female cyborg characters in *AD Police Files*, *Ghost in the Shell*, and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* to speak out about what humanity is. In this drive to search for a cyborg identity the female cyborg body becomes not only the object of spectacle but also an agent endowed with power by structuring the narrative. The female cyborg is thus engaged with the technologically-gendered body, physically-generated violence, and the quest for identity. Is the female cyborg represented in animations concerned, then, with the myth of ‘woman’, the myth of ‘post-gender’, or the myth of ‘humanity’? Do those dominant, forceful, and aggressive female cyborgs resonate with either Clover’s definition of the phallicised woman or Creed’s notion of the femme castratrice? In what follows, I divide the chapter into two sections by following the contradictory imagery of the female cyborg body: an institutionalised and technologised phallic femininity in the representation of violent female cyborgs, and the monstrous feminine of the violent female androids and robots that kill and are killed.

1. Institutionalised and Technologised Phallic Femininity

In the imaginative world of science fiction, technology, violence, and the female body coexist in the figure of the armoured woman or female cyborg. The armoured women of the near future in *AD Police Files* and *Ghost in the Shell* are created as agents by the social institutions of the police and military to maintain social order and uphold the law. *AD Police Files* is a three-part

OVA (Original Video Animation), “Boomer Madness”, “Paradise Loop”, and “The Man Who Bites His Tongue”, that depicts a special group called AD Police who are highly trained and equipped with advanced and heavy weapons in order to deal with the crimes caused by the Boomer cyborgs in the city of Magatokyo. Situated in an era in which prosthesis is a trend for body transformation, and working in a male-dominated institutional force, Gina is the only female police officer with masculine characteristics such as a muscular body, a low voice, experience in combat, a metal prosthetic arm on the right shoulder, and an active, determined, and tough personality. Similarly, *Ghost in the Shell* begins with Public Security Section 9, the Japanese international organisation, in charge of counter-terrorism and anticrime, investigating cyborg hacking. Major Motoko Kusanagi in *Ghost in the Shell* is the only female cyborg and designated as the squad leader of Section 9, a male-dominated institution for national security in Japan. Motoko’s cyborg body is made of two parts: the ‘ghost’, which refers to the electronic, cyborgised brain, is situated in the cybernetic body called the ‘shell’. The interior body made of a complex cybernetic system is seamlessly covered by ‘titanium’ as the bodily skin, so that Motoko’s cyborg body is not only equipped with highly mechanical-reinforced prosthetic body parts, but also is lightweight, durable, and dent/corrosion/scratch resistant. Because of her superb physique and cyborgised brain, Motoko is not only a weaponry and martial art expert, but also an expert in real-time computer hacking. At first glance, the technological body empowers the woman’s physique in order to serve public services in relation to combat and killing. In general, these services associated with the police and military are ‘traditionally’ associated with manhood and violence. The two animations represent a woman who is ‘equal’ to man, challenging the stereotype based on gender or sexual difference by deploying the technological imagination on the female body. However, this equality is based on how violent woman can be in terms of the technological transformation of the female body. Violence, thus, is not only a technological construction, but separated from femininity and the ‘natural’ female body: sexist ideology is embedded within the representation of the violent woman.

The technological female body in *AD Police Files* and *Ghost in the Shell* is excessively sexualised, especially marked by the size of breasts, yet these heroines are deprived of femininity in relation to reproduction, maternity, and sexuality. Before the opening scene in *Ghost in the Shell*, the credits are accompanied by a montage sequence representing the process of Motoko's birth in the laboratory. The birth starts from the creation of the electronic brain along with the assemblage of cybernetic bodily parts. Motoko's naked body emerges from the laboratory tank filled with liquid after her body is completed with the assemblage of the inner parts of the body, the paint of the skin colour, and the installation of the bodily hair. Consequently, Motoko, as an artefact, does not have the function of being reproductive and maternal. The camera follows the whole figure of Motoko's body during the process of cyborgisation. Whilst her body is completed as a beautiful female human form by painting the seamed bodily shell, the camera constantly directs the viewer to look at Motoko's naked body between her face and her groin area. Discussing her mechanical body without sexual associations such as sexual desire and having a sexual partner, Napier argues that Motoko is "hardly genderless" in terms of her female body appearance (Napier 2005: 107). A sexist ideology is embedded in Napier's definition of Motoko's gender, however: it is sexual difference, especially the genitalia that determine what a woman is. Indeed, her sexualised body is highly emphasised by her breasts and her hairless genitalia. Creed (1993) points out that the boy has two different reactions while seeing the mother's genitalia with its pubic hair and the girl's hairless, smooth, and symmetrical genitalia in the shape of lips (Creed 1993: 114). The boy is subject to a fear of woman as castrated when seeing the mother's genitalia in which the labia are hidden behind her pubic hair, but assumes the woman as incorporator/castrator while seeing the girl's hairless genitalia. The hairy and hairless genitals are not only the source of castration anxiety, but the pubic hair makes the woman's vagina and sexuality more fascinating for man. Berger (1972) in *Ways of Seeing* suggests that the naked woman without hair on her body portrayed in European oil painting is traditionally made to appeal to the male viewer's sexuality, but, since hair is associated with sexual power and

passion, has nothing to do with *her* sexuality. The naked woman without bodily hair implies her girlish genitalia, minimises the woman's sexual desire, and represents male ownership of the woman in the painting. In relation to the Japanese cultural context, female pubic hair, Allison (1998) points out, is also the source of the Japanese (patriarchal) anxiety about the modern Japanese women's changing gender roles in association with westernisation, modernisation, urbanisation, and industrialisation. Female pubic hair under the Japanese censorship law is constructed as 'obscene', 'offensive', or 'illicit sexual stimulation and pleasure' which seeks to infantilise women and signifies male dominance over the female who is marked as the sexual object or commodity in visual media (Allison 1998: 195-218). In relation to Motoko's cyborg body, in the depiction of her half-closed eyes and naked body in her emergence from the artificial womb of the laboratory, her aesthetic body figure not only functions to satisfy voyeuristic pleasure but also compensates for the horror derived from the uncanny cyborg body underneath the body shell. Showing her hairless genitalia underlines her female gender but undermines her female sexual power. Napier may argue that Motoko is not a woman because of the lack of genitalia, but her female gender is deliberately constructed through the cinematic narrative, not simply classified as 'genderless' or 'post-gender' (Napier 2005: 107).



Figure 18: Motoko's birth in the laboratory in *Ghost in the Shell* (1995).

Marked by her female appearance and body figure as tall, thin, athletic, and full-grown, Motoko masquerades as a woman without sexualised femininity. Her gender is constructed as masculine – rational, determined, powerful, and speculative, but lacks feminine qualities such as emotion, reproduction, and sexuality. She has the female body with breasts but without the womb and the genitals. Whenever Motoko combats criminals and robots, her naked body which is represented as a ‘perfect’ body figure without pubic hair, is highly exposed in order to construct her femininity in relation to sexual appeal for (male) viewers. The combat scenes are highlighted when she takes off her clothes to wear a transparent weaponry suit, or her naked body is shown after her clothes are completely torn because of the combats. In *Ghost in the Shell*, Motoko and the male criminal hacker both wear the special transparent weaponry suit called Therm-Optic Camouflage which makes the whole body invisible. However, Motoko wears this suit on her naked body, but the hacker does not. Meanwhile, in *Ghost in the Shell* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, Bato, her male colleague, takes his coat to cover her naked body whenever her body is exposed after she switches off her transparent suit. It can be argued that Motoko’s femininity is constructed by Bato’s heterosexual gaze.

Motoko’s identity crisis reinforces the conflict between being a cyborg, being a human, and being a woman by constantly exposing her gendered cyborg body inside out in order to represent the uncanny body. The more violence, the more monstrous the mutilated body will become. In the scene of fighting with the tank controlled by the Puppet Master, Motoko again takes off her uniform and then wears the transparent suit in order to fight with a tank. The scene uses slow motion to direct the viewer’s attention to her naked body when Motoko crouches on the top of the tank and tries to open up the hood. While the medium shot focuses on her extremely muscular back, the slow motion represents the process of both her arms bursting into pieces mixed with the mechanical and the organic parts of the body.

This slow-motion graphic representation of the exploded female cyborg body associated with violence characterises the scenes of the female sexual doll cyborg’s suicide and fight with police

in *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, and the female Boomer cyborg's attack on humans in *AD Police Files*. The graphic violence is underlined by the female gender in terms of the slow-motion and medium shot which represents the burst, inside-out, and mutilated female body. However, the male violence is represented as a norm and natural. *AD Police Files*, *Ghost in the Shell* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* not only feature the number of female police or female soldiers as fewer than the males, but also the injured male body remains in a complete human form. Bato, a male cyborg, throughout the stories in *Ghost in the Shell* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*, never shows his naked or burst male cyborg body. In contrast to the emphasis on Motoko's physical combat, Bato and the other armed forces and armoured soldiers only use guns to shoot the enemies. When Bato's body is damaged by gunshot, the camera uses a medium shot either to show his amputated hand and gunshot body in *Ghost in the Shell*, or to show his inside-out mechanical arm which immediately reverts back to a shot which shows Bato's full figure in *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*. Similarly, Alex, a human AD police officer, in the scene in which he is killed by a female Boomer cyborg, is merely represented with his amputated body. In "The Man Who Bites His Tongue" of *AD Police Files*, even though the male cyborg police officer experiences the disintegration between humanity and machinery by releasing his anger and anxiety through violent killing, his damaged armoured body remains whole to represent his masculinity.



Figure 19: Gina, the only female police in *AD Police Files* (1990).

The uncanny female body is constantly displayed, examined, exploded, and fragmented. Gina, a female prosthetic police officer, is also represented as masculine, characterised by the armoured uniform, the prosthetic arm, the muscular figure, and her manly behaviour. With her one prosthetic arm, Gina is not a complete cyborg, so that a part of her femininity remains – her sexuality in particular. Different from Motoko, Gina's body is never shown as exploded or mutilated during combat. In "Boomer Madness" and "The Man Who Bites His Tongue", Gina's sexuality is underlined by her sexual desire for man. In the combat with the female Boomer or the fight with her male cyborg colleague, her body is never shown like Motoko's naked and burst body. Gina's sexual desire is never fulfilled or questioned because she is not a pure female human. She is involved with her male colleagues: Leon who is her investigation partner and Alex who is her sexual partner and her ex-boyfriend. Gina's femininity and sexuality are represented through taking off the armoured uniform, keeping the tight vest on her body, washing her face in the sink, and showing sexual interest towards her colleague. However, her uncanny female body is emphasised by her metal-prosthetic arm and shoulder. Therefore, none of the three men can fulfil the relationship with Gina: Alex is killed by a mad female cyborg, her ex-boyfriend becomes an uncontrollable cyborg policeman and is killed by Gina, and Leon unconsciously assumes her to be a threatening cyborg by projecting the image of his traumatic experience of being attacked by a female Boomer onto Gina's sunglasses. In "Paradise Loop", Iris is a police officer affiliated with the local police station, neither combating criminals nor displaying her naked body. In addition to her non-muscular body compared to Gina, Iris's femininity is underlined as clever, naïve, and innocent. She investigates the murder of female prostitutes in the train station, but has never been to the station called "Paradise Loop" which is a centre for outlaws and prostitution. Iris and Gina represent the opposite imagery of the human and the non-human, the feminine and the non-feminine, the muscular and the non-muscular, and the threatening and the non-threatening. When Iris seeks to replace her sore eye with a prosthetic eye, her male colleague, Alex, constantly implies the danger of losing her femininity and human

identity. Alex not only warns Iris that having prosthetic surgery means the loss of humanity, but also assumes that Iris is not ‘that kind of woman’ who would like to have prosthetic surgery. The Japanese science fiction animations keep the female human body unquestioned as a whole, ‘naturally’ connoted with humanity, femininity, and sexuality, in contrast to the female cyborg marked by an ambivalent attitude towards humanity, femininity, and sexuality in the technologically-mediated or constructed body. Whilst Iris, being a real human woman, keeps the unquestionable qualities of humanity, femininity, and sexuality, Motoko and Gina are either deprived of or excluded from those qualities, and more important augmented by violence.

Motoko and Gina are the only female cyborgs working in the male-dominated institution which specialises in eliminating ‘bad’ or ‘dangerous’ cyborgs, and never question their violence institutionalised by the governmental, the military and the police forces as the agents representing social order and the law. Female policing cyborgs can neither be read as an answer to feminism, nor the embodiment of Haraway’s deconstructive notion of the post-gender. Rather, the patriarchal fantasy of exaggerated gender difference governs their cyborg bodies: they are too sexy and too masculine at the same time. Motoko takes her violence as part of her mission and obligation, and does not see her mutilated body caused by violence as affecting her subjectivity, which is based on the mind not the body. The representation of Gina’s violence is highlighted in “Boomer Madness” where Gina is determined to combat a powerful and uncontrollable female Boomer alone. Regardless of her colleague’s warning of danger in combating the Boomer alone, Gina seeks revenge on the Boomer who has killed her sexual partner, Alex. In the scene in which Gina kills the Boomer, the camera not only shows her male colleagues surrounding Gina and the Boomer, but also follows the male gaze of her colleagues to represent the unfit and uneasy relationship between violence and femininity. All of the men are shocked to watch Gina’s shooting of the Boomer’s body. While Motoko is emotionless in her violence, showing her gendered, naked, muscular, and exploded body, Gina is emotional, shooting the female Boomer with a large gun.

2. The Monstrous Feminine and the Horror of the Sexualised Android and Robot

The ambivalent technophobia or anxiety about losing humanity caused by prosthetic technology underlined in *AD Police Files* and the *Ghost in the Shell* series is characterised by an attempt to use the female cyborg as a way of defining humanity in contrast to a hysterical, monstrous, and uncanny femininity. Since science fiction is often considered a masculine genre, humanity is ‘naturally’ defined and embodied by men in terms of the narrative. On the contrary, *AD Police Files* and the *Ghost in the Shell* series highlight a ‘gendered’ humanity in which the female body speaks out what humanity is. Napier suggests that what makes *Ghost in the Shell* different from the other Japanese ‘masculine’ *mecha* is its ‘feminine’ sensibility in terms of associating the female protagonist with a less action-driven as well as more reflective narrative (Napier 2005: 105-106). *Ghost in the Shell*, Napier argues, uses the female protagonist and the female body to display the vulnerability of humanity under technological and institutional exploitation (Napier 2005: 112). Since humanity is represented through the female cyborg body, anxiety about sexual difference remains unexamined in Napier’s conclusion about Motoko’s religious and philosophical quest for her identity. When woman is technologically created or technologically mediated, the relationship between humanity, sexuality, and femininity becomes ambiguous and ambivalent. In contrast to *AD Police Files* where humanity is determined by the biological body as a whole, the *Ghost in the Shell* series presumes that humanity can be artificially recreated. The *Ghost in the Shell* series retains the mind/body dualism where the mind determines humanity. Ghost (the artificial brain), memory, and consciousness are the cluster terms for mind. In particular, *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* further investigates the complex relationship between the sexualised female cyborg body, the monstrous feminine, and humanity.



Figure 20: The uncontrolled Boomer is shot by the AD Police in *AD Police Files* (1990).

Whilst Motoko and Gina in the *Ghost in the Shell* series and *AD Police Files* are portrayed as heroines whose violence is accompanied by the institutionalised cyborg body which maintains social order and executes social power, we find the opposite group of female androids, robots, and cyborg characters in these animations as the villains whose violence is not only derived from their sexualised android and prosthetic bodies but also threatens the social order. Whereas Motoko and Gina are the comforting imagery of the phallic woman in a full-grown body whose masculine traits are constructed by technology in order to sustain the patriarchal order, horror in relation to the lack of integration between humanity and machinery, mind and body, and natural and artificial is represented through the monstrous female cyborg that is controlled, examined, and punished. ‘Boomer Madness’, the first episode in *AD Police Files*, emphasises that the violence is derived from the disintegration between the recycled androids and their sexualised bodies. Similarly, ‘Paradise Loop’, in the second episode of *AD Police Files*, centres on a successful businesswoman’s pathological violence in response to her losing humanity after replacing her body with prosthetic organs. *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* concerns the investigation of the girlish-looking androids who brutally murder their male owners. The horror of these androids represented in *AD Police Files* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* lies in the dysfunction of the android body which is provided with either an artificial vaginal organ or the human girl’s

mind. These animations share one thing in common: the female android and cyborg villains are represented as threatening and vicious to society because of their technological sexualised body.

Whilst *AD Police Files* is set in the near future of 2027, in which prosthetic technology is affordable and fashionable, it seems that the distinction between human and machine is blurred. Ideologically, the animation series advocates the concept of purity of being a human rather than the hybridity of being a cyborg or android. The hybridity of human and machine in *AD Police Files* is divided into two different forms: the prosthetic human whose bodily parts are replaced by prosthetic counterparts, and the android named 'Boomer' created in a human form which consists of protein, internal organs, bio-chips, and artificial intelligence. The prosthetic organs are made to either replace damaged bodily parts or enhance the performance of the human body, but the android represented in "Boomer Madness" is specifically female-gendered and technologically-outdated. The old model Boomers are designed to do 'general women's jobs'. These are not specifically defined but, according to the mise-en-scène, are implied to be service-oriented – waitresses, for example. These old type Boomers have not been completely eliminated from the market; instead, the demand on the black market for recycling the old models increases. Moreover, a certain old type of Boomer is more popular and valuable on demand because of the sexual function designed in the body. Thus, the women's jobs are not only service-oriented, but also sexualised. As a result, the manufacturer services these old models by replacing their software to do women's jobs, and junk dealers dismantle and recycle the broken-down Boomers in order to supply the demand for the recycled Boomers on the black market.

The horror represented in this episode lies in the malfunction of the Boomer's body. In particular, the Boomer's breakdown is associated with the emotional and sexual. The malfunction is caused by the programme destruction that triggers the female Boomer's emotional derangement during sexual intercourse with men. The low quality of the recycling technology and the continual recycling of the sexual parts of the android accelerate the technical flaws in relation to the Boomer's emotional derangement. This means that the hormonal signals distort

the Boomer's biochips during intercourse. The hormonal signal is linked with the index of the Boomer's emotion. Once the Boomer's emotion runs higher during intercourse, the hormonal signal will become intensified, which results in programme dysfunction. The android body is designed with the sexual function, but reproductive functions are excluded. The danger lies in the Boomer's sexuality that is uncontrolled and rendered unpredictable by technology. Whereas the design flaw represents male anxiety towards the female body, the demand for the recycled old type of Boomers represents man's fantasy of the female body as the source of sexual pleasure and her traditional social role as submissive and passive. Although the Boomer is equipped with artificial intelligence, it is not a free-willed individual. In fact, the Boomer is a technological commodity, an uncanny 'Other', a hybrid of human and machine. While the Boomer is represented by a female figure, sexual anxiety is embedded in the body: the artificial vagina is uncontrollable and destructive. The doom of Boomers is a way of releasing the anxiety of technophobia and castration. The detailed visualisation of the destruction and fetishisation of the Boomer's body is a way of reassuring (male) human mastery. Moreover, the AD Police officers are equipped with special military force and heavy weaponry to tackle the Boomer's powerful and violent physique. In line with the animation title, 'Boomer Madness', Boomer's malfunction is associated with symptoms of psycho-pathology, 'insanity' plus ultra-violence and ultra-aggression. The female Boomer is not only devalued but also demonised in terms of the visualisation of the sexualised, insane, and emotional body. The Boomer's characteristics suggest the cinematic figure of the femme fatale in film noir who is defined by her sexuality, presented as desirable but dangerous. In order to restore the order disrupted by the femme fatale, the male hero has to expose, investigate, and destroy her through his voyeuristic and sadistic control over her sexuality (Root 2007: 309, Chaudhuri 2006: 36).

"Boomer Madness" highlights the horror of the uncanny cyborg body in relation to the monstrous feminine. The Class-B Boomer's uncanny body features in the first half episode, in a series of exposures, investigations, and destructions through the AD Police's brutal violence

acting upon her body. The Class-B android has been illegally recycled, and is working as a restaurant waitress. Her body is a mixture of robotic and human characteristics: her feminine body figure is represented as slim, tall, with fair skin colour, and in a long pink dress, but the skin on her face and shoulder retains the seams of the metal shell which covers up the organic and mechanical body. The robotic features are represented in the hydraulic sounds along with her every body movement. Moreover, she has neither the speaking function nor rich facial expression. The only emotion shown on her face is through the sound of hissing which shows her anger when she sees the AD Police officers. Her malfunction is caused by either the quality of the recycling technology or the overuse of the recycled sexual parts of her body. The feminine android body associated with unemotional violence, slow, awkward movement, and powerful strength is represented as the uncanny that crosses the boundary between human, machine, and woman. Her body is anatomised from the surface to the interior in the scene of her death caused by the AD Police. First, the camera shows us that she is half naked because her red dress is torn by gunshot, but without the gunshot scar on her bullet-proof body. The fading skin colours on her shoulder and the knife cut on her neck show the surface part of her artificial body. Her body is further constructed as the abject by Gina who uses her powerful prosthetic fingers to pierce into her breast: a huge amount of white liquid which represents the abject blood is emitted from the hollow and burst breast. Finally, her body is completely destroyed after continual shots from the laser guns. Her head and torso are exploded into pieces but the wires, skeleton, skull, teeth, amputated limbs, and torn pink dress remain on her ripped body.



Figure 21: The Gynoid self-destructs herself in *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004).

The uncanny android body is a fetish object which either eliminates sexual difference by representing the “extreme aesthetic perfection” of the female body or reinforces sexual difference by highlighting its malfunction in relation to femininity and sex (Chaudhuri 2006:36). Compared to the Class-B Boomer, the Class-A Boomer is an advanced model android which is nearly indistinguishable from the human: not only is her body designed with body odours and voice chords, but also the body skin is without the metal seams of the Class-B Boomer. The Class-A Boomer’s femininity is reinforced by her feminine dress style: long blond hair, makeup, ear-rings, bracelet, nail varnish, sunglasses, and high heeled shoes. Her fetish body is constructed by her sexy lingerie: the half transparent corset, knickers, thongs, and hosiery. Where the Class-B Boomer is represented by pathological and aggressive violence, the horror of the Class-A Boomer is derived from her ‘over-sexual’ drives. As with the Class-B Boomer, the association of femininity, sexuality, and violence constructs the Boomer’s threats towards the patriarchal society. Despite being a technologically advanced android, she remains doomed by her sexualised body. In the scene of fighting with the AD Police, the Class-B Boomer’s violence is represented as sadistic, killing the AD Police with either her bare hands or her gunshot. In contrast to the Class-B Boomer’s sadistic and psychopathological violence, the Class-A Boomer’s violence is masochistic. Based on the creation principle of ‘doing a woman’s job’, the Class-A Boomer is

programmed as a prostitute who is compelled to repeatedly take off her coat and show her body dressed in sexy lingerie in order to arouse men's sexuality. However, the Class-A Boomer's sexual function causes disintegration between her recycled body and her traumatic memory. Her horrific hysteria is derived from her sexual compulsion to kill triggered by her dysfunctional recycled body and her compulsive memory that repeats the traumatic scene of the past when she was killed by the male police officer, Leon. In the pre-title sequence, the Class-A Boomer's violence is seen to be caused by a malfunctioning body where the biochip is disrupted by the high hormonal signal during intercourse. Different from the Class-B Boomer's violence, represented as inexplicable insanity, the Class-A Boomer's violence is caused by her unsatisfied sexual desires towards men: "I kill men who can't satisfy me." On the one hand, heterosexual intercourse results in the disturbance of the female consciousness which triggers body malfunction. On the other hand, the malfunctioning body reconstructs the female consciousness which turns into either the Class-B Boomer's lunatic violence or the Class-A Boomer's unsatisfied-sexual-desire violence.



Figure 22: Class-A Boomer is shot by the AD Police, Leon in *AD Police Files* (1990).

The Class-A Boomer's decentred, fractured, and fragmented subjectivity is constructed by traumatic memory, sexual desires, and the sexualised body. Killed by Leon, who is a normal police officer, she is later illegally recycled and put back on the streets as a prostitute. However, since her memory of being killed by Leon and examined by the police remains on her recycled

body, this traumatic memory becomes the compulsion to repetition, re-enactment, and re-victimisation of the Boomer's past. Unlike the first attack characterised by sadistic violence, the second attack is represented as the prostitute's sexual seduction of Leon. The traumatic memory continually draws the recycled Class-A Boomer to encounter Leon in order to repeat what she suffers before her body was recycled. While she repeats what she does in the first attack by taking off her coat and showing her body with the lingerie set, her recycled Boomer's identity is trapped in the disintegration between consciousness and the body. She tries to tell Leon that he is responsible for her death and she wants to be killed again by him, but she cannot voice herself because her vocal chords are disabled. In fact, the more she tries to speak, the more her body language demonstrates her sexual temptation of Leon: her mouth is half-open, the tip of her tongue licks around her lips, and her hand is placed on her crotch. She is aware of the disintegration between her consciousness and her body. Her consciousness, controlled by the traumatic memory, is separated from her body that is merely programmed for sexual service. When the repetition of her traumatic experience of being killed, as a masochistic re-victimisation, is associated with her sexual compulsion embedded in the body, the Boomer turns into a horrific and threatening 'Other' in terms of Leon's male gaze.

Such representation of sexualised Otherness occurs constantly throughout *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*. Unlike the sexual horror of the female adult android in *AD Police Files*, *Ghost in the Shell* concentrates on the 'paedophilic' horror of the cute and girlish-looking android under the influence of Japanese *kawaii* and *rorikon* cultures which commodify the imagery of cute and sexualised young girls and women that I have discussed in Chapter 1. The fantasy of the technological female android is shifted from a female adult to a girl, but the patriarchal sexist ideology of the desirable and monstrous female body remains the same. Similar to *AD Police Files*, the desirable android called 'Gynoid' also relies on the design of sexual function. Where the danger of the android in *AD Police Files* is associated with the disintegration between the biochip and sexual intercourse, the danger of Gynoid represented in *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* is

derived from the disjuncture between the electronic brain and sexual intercourse. The 'Gynoid' body is not designed according to an adult woman's body figure, but a pubertal figure. Boomers and Gynoids are sexual commodities for men and the victims of sexual exploitation by men, but they are represented as criminal and threatening to society. Whereas Boomers take revenge on humans, Gynoids only kill their male owners and then commit self-destruction initiated by their electronic brains. Where *AD Police Files* depicts the danger of the out-dated, recycled, and adult female body, *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* addresses the danger of the advanced technological girlish artefact combined with the sexual function and a human girl's mind. Gynoids are the prototypes of 'Rox Robot 2052', not only products of highly technological workmanship in which the artificial body is designed with a sexual function, but also provided with different human girls' minds in their electronic brains. What makes this advanced model popular in the market is not only the sexualised body as in the case of Boomers, but also the nearly genuine girl-like mentality. However, the mixture of the girl's mind and the sexual function results in the breakdown of Gynoids. Consequently, the breakdown triggers the android's violence, attacking humans. However, designed with Ethical Code 3, the self-preservation or self-destruction of Gynoids occurs after attacking humans. The Gynoid's violence is derived from a malfunction in which her subjectivity is caught in the clash between the constructed identity of being a naïve girl and the constructed sexualised body: her consciousness cannot tackle sexual intercourse with adult males. The disintegration of mind and body causes a decentred, fractured, and fragmented subjectivity. Similar to the Class-A Boomer as a technologically-advanced android, where the distinction between human and machine becomes ambiguous, the android is endowed with human psychic characteristics: the sadistic (namely violence, attack, killing, invasion, and penetration) and the masochistic (namely self-destruction, desire to be killed, and penetrated).

The theme of the personification of androids associated with the human double or the mimic of humanity is constantly repeated in *AD Police Files* and *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence*. Telotte observes that the manufacture and sale of indistinguishable copies of the real, such as

mechanical snakes, birds, dogs, and people, embodies the imagination of the double or the copy in order to satisfy people's desires for entertainment and companionship (Telotte 1990: 154). The indistinguishable boundary between the human and machinery, or the Self and the Other, triggers anxiety towards these objects which challenge the human's dominance and threatens humans with being supplanted by their creations in terms of their humanity or desire for life, love or meaning (Telotte 1990: 154-155). Boomers and Gynoids are created under the circumstances defined by Telotte, made for female labour, sexual entertainment, and sexual outlet, but the menacing representation of the human double in relation to gender is neglected by Telotte. Boomers and Gynoids are gendered with the female body forms of adult woman and teenage girl. While serving male humans, they are represented as menacing in association with mechanical malfunction. Their threat actually is derived from male sexual anxiety, rather than from either the copying of humanity or the desire for life, love or meaning defined by Telotte. These androids have consciousness, but the female body is determined by technological programmes as a labouring or sexual servant. Meanwhile, they are constantly termed 'dolls'. The final scene of "Boomer Madness" shows the death of the Class-A Boomer, lying down on the ground with her bleeding body, her 'beautiful' face covered with her long blond hair, and the voice-over narrated by Leon, "I was thinking things, and like maybe Boomers, seemingly mere mechanical dolls, were better suited than humans to this crazy town." The female android technologist in *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* draws an analogy between Gynoids which are made in the human's image with utilitarian and pragmatic purpose, and dolls played with by girls who not only practise motherhood but also realise the ancient dream of making artificial humans. The technologist argues that Gynoids not only function like dolls which satisfy the human desire of creating a double, but also satisfy the human desire to control and manipulate inanimate objects. When doll-like androids are represented as aggressive, dangerous, and unpredictable, the cause, Telotte (1990) argues, is the conflict that occurs when the human's narcissistic fascination with doubling meets the desire for the Other. He suggests that the Otherness of the double not only

blurs the boundary that defines the Self, but also causes horror or the feeling of uncanniness. Telotte's argument is imbued with the patriarchal ideology that men are the human subject and the norm of humanity. The technologist ignores the gender implications of Gynoids and dolls: Gynoids function as a human double but they only satisfy the male heterosexual desire for making the female double and manipulating the female body, rather than threatening humanity with replacement by the double. According to Freud's discussion of the uncanny, the doll can be seen as an uncanny object blurring the distinction between life and death and recalling "a primitive period in our personal and cultural development where the boundaries between the I and the world were less clearly defined" (Simms 1996: 674). In this respect, technology, Simms argues, is the embodiment of the uncanny that constantly threatens and confuses the world we define by ourselves (Simms 1996: 674). In the case of Boomers and Gynoids, these female figures not only represent the uncanny of the human double through cyborgisation, but also represent the 'uncanny woman' who arouses the repressed. McCaffrey coins the term 'Uncanny Woman' which is based on Freud's notion of "The Uncanny" to argue that woman's uncanniness can be understood through the *unheimlich* or the unfamiliar of female genitals, the uterus, sexuality, castration, and death in relation to representing woman as "automaton, double, castrator, and castrated" (McCaffrey 1994: 96, Creed 2005: 10). Accordingly, the uncanniness of Boomers and Gynoids is not only concerned with their sexualised bodies but also their uncanny subjectivities that are technologically programmed. Where the Boomer's subjectivity is designed to become a labouring or sexual servant, the Gynoid's consciousness is the simulacra of a little human girl's mind. Not only is the body figure and facial appearance of Gynoids the copy of the pre-pubertal girl, but also the Gynoid's subjectivity is made of the simulacrum of the girl's mind. Gynoids are illegally created to satisfy heterosexual paedophilia because they look like a young girl but their sexuality is that of an adult woman. The horror of their technological uncanniness is derived from the gendered stereotype in which the feminine is not only attached to the hysterical, monstrous, and sexual body, but also destroys or conflicts with the mind.

Conclusion

According to my analysis of the adult-oriented animated films and OVA, the representation of the violent female cyborg in Japanese animation can be divided into two types: whereas the phallicised-fetishised cyborg with a full-grown adult body provides a comforting imagery in which violence is used for sustaining the social order, the monstrous cyborg's violence originates from her sexualised body and active sexuality in the adult as well as girlish forms and undermines the social order. If we argue that the nature of femininity is a social construction rather than a biological product, then gender formation becomes an arena for controlling, managing, and regulating the body. In the case of the cyborgisation of the body, violence is a notion attached to gender rather than sex and has nothing to do with the physical and biological nature of the body. The violent cyborg I have described is highly governed and ascribed to two types of feminine bodies as an object of heterosexual male desire. The first type is represented by Gina and Motoko who are erotic, dominant, resourceful, and institutionalised as police officers to sustain the social order. Their sexuality is restrained – Gina's boyfriend is dead, her masculine toughness makes her male colleague lose his sexual desire towards her, and Motoko never shows sexual interest in men – and their materiality is either omitted or deprived. But whereas Gina's and Motoko's violence is legitimated as institutional policing and represented through their strong and agile physique as a result of cyborgisation, the second type of violent cyborg represented by Boomers and Gynoids is characterised as the product of an uncontrolled sexuality and sexualised body which inevitably leads them to be demonised, criminalised, and marginalised by a patriarchal society.

Chapter 6

Apocalypse, Transcendence, and Posthumanity

This chapter explores the interplay between religion, the cyborg, and gender in a science fiction/fantasy live-action film, *Casshern* (2004) and a science fiction/fantasy animated film, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* (1997). Whereas Haraway sees her utopian figure of the cyborg as escaping the Christian narrative of “origin-fall-salvation”, a narrative which she equates with patriarchal and dualistic religion, the popular imaginings of cyborgs in Japanese live-action and animated films contain numerous Christian references and motifs (Haraway 1991: 157, Hollinger 2005: 242). This seems at first sight odd since, although Christianity was introduced to Japan in 1549 by Portuguese Catholic missionaries, Christians in modern Japan account for only one per cent of the country’s population (Song 2006: 168). Christian belief has had little success in penetrating Japanese religious traditions and practices due to the fact that ancestor veneration has been seen as an important element of maintaining the Japanese kinship and family system, and such veneration is seen by Christianity as idolatrous or pagan practice (Mullins 1998: 102). Christian faith is to a large extent not compatible with Japanese religious and cultural traditions. The fact that this cultural difference does not prevent Japanese writers, filmmakers, and animators from taking up Christian semantics, references, or motifs can be accounted for, at least in part, by the fact that contemporary Japan is both a consumer of and influenced by Western science fiction/fantasy literature and cinema, which frequently engage in debates about and uses of Christianity (Tatsumi 2005: 325, Dessler 2003: 182, Anders 2005: 661-663, Matthew 1989: 138-144, Napier 1996: 181-222, Mendlesohn 2003: 264-275).

In particular, the secularised Christian apocalyptic view about the end of the world brought about by human causes has burgeoned in Japan since the Second World War. The atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 have suggested the possible annihilation of humanity caused

by technoscience rather than a transcendental God (Wójcik 1997: 97, Napier 2005: 250). In 1995, the Japanese religious cult Aum Shinrikyo, which articulates such an apocalyptic vision with a millenarian message, initiated the Tokyo Subway sarin gas attack in order to achieve its apocalyptic-millenarian goal by ‘saving’ humanity through its own terrorist attack (Kang 2009: 219). In this incident, which resulted in twelve deaths and five thousand injuries, we can see the extent to which Japanese culture and society has been permeated by apocalyptic sentiments in response to contemporary economic and social anxieties. These have included a series of economic collapses since the late 1980s and the disastrous 1995 Hanshin Earthquake that caused more than 5000 deaths (Napier 2005: 251, Morris-Suzuki and Rimmer 2003: 159, Normile 1996: 65). Accordingly, writers such as Murakami Haruki, Tsutsui Yasutaka, Kamatsu Sakyō, and the Nobel Prize laureate Oe Kenzaburō have explicitly depicted literary versions of such anxieties, ranging from technological apocalypse to mental breakdown (Napier 2005: 29).

Likewise, the imagined apocalypse or the apocalyptic imagination is the most prevalent theme in Japanese live-action film and animation (La Bare 2000: 43, Tsutsui 2010: 104-124, Orbaugh 2009: 121). The narratives of both *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* centre on the creation of a cyborg which heralds the arrival of a cataclysmic event bringing “widespread destruction, leading to a dramatic change in the nature of human civilization on Earth” (Booker and Thomas 2009: 321). Rather than simply generating a “canonical presentation of the religious doctrine”, however, both films rewrite and reinvent religious motifs and figures, syncretising Christian concepts with Japan’s indigenous Shinto beliefs to produce techno-apocalyptic scenarios (Tappenden 2007: 109). Drawing on Haraway’s conceptualisation of the cyborg in which there is a complex interplay between the post-gendered cyborg and apocalypse, my aim is to explore how gender ideology operates in these Japanese apocalyptic narratives which revolve around the creation of the cyborg within an imaginative high-tech world (Haraway 1991: 149).

Despite the fact that her utopian version of the cyborg is located “outside salvation history”, Haraway concedes that it also represents “the awful apocalyptic *telos* of the ‘West’s’ escalating dominations of abstract individuation” (Haraway 1991: 150-151, author’s emphasis). If Haraway’s post-gendered cyborg might “subvert the apocalypse of returning to nuclear dust in the manic compulsion to name the Enemy” (Haraway 1991: 150, 151), nevertheless its origins are in the (masculinist) military/industrial machine, associated with violence, dominance, destruction, competition, and control. If her own “cyborg myth” is about “transgressed boundaries, potent fusions and dangerous possibilities”, the “cyborg world”, she warns, might equally be about “the final appropriation of a grid of control on the planet, about the final abstraction embodied in a Star Wars apocalypse waged in the name of defence, about the final appropriation of women’s bodies in a masculinist orgy of war” (Haraway 1991: 154).

I find Haraway’s cyborg vision of a masculinist and secular apocalypse helpful in understanding the representation of apocalypse through the figure of the cyborg in *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion*. I argue that these Japanese live-action and animated films use their techno-apocalyptic narratives to play out gender politics in the ambiguous form of a male fantasy of transcendence through the technological transformation of the body, which is at the same time an expression of anxiety about a (masculinist) humanity that may be taken over or destroyed by the cyborg. In the first section of the chapter, I will revisit key notions including those of the posthumanist cyborg, transcendence, and apocalypse which have been discussed and conceptualised in a Western context, and then review the main ideas of Japan’s indigenous Shinto religion in relation to the notion of apocalypse and transcendence, before commencing my case studies in the final section.

1. The Posthumanist Cyborg, Transcendence, and Apocalypse

Haraway adopts a postmodern and poststructuralist critique of contemporary technologies in order to deconstruct the patriarchal, masculinist, and sexist implications of the humanist subject.

However, she does not explicitly envisage what form such a posthumanity might take in a world in which the cyborg subverts the notion of humanness and creates a hybridised humanity. Haraway's cyborg manifesto does not itself refer directly to the cyborg as a posthuman, but instead uses 'hybrid' to describe the problematic status of a re-envisaged humanity (Haraway 1991: 177-179). However, a number of discussions do adopt the terms 'posthuman' and 'posthumanism' in response to her theorisation of the cyborg. Badmington gives the terms a longer lineage, suggesting that a problematic definition of humanity appeared not only in the late twentieth century when cybernetics was applied to human life, but also much earlier, in the theories of Marx and Freud which undermined the humanist project (Badmington 2000: 5). Marx argues that the rational mind does not determine social reality, but instead material life determines human consciousness. In the meantime, Freud 'proves' the existence of an unconscious that reconfigures, challenges, and threatens the humanist subject's conscious mind. Whilst humanism excludes God from human life, the ideas proposed by Marx and Freud have been influential on a range of late twentieth century theoretical traditions – for example feminism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism – all of which construct 'anti-humanist' accounts of the 'Self' (Wolff 1995: 14). Badmington (2000) uses 'posthumanism' to describe these theoretical discussions which question and challenge humanist ideologies. In his edited collection *Posthumanism* (2000), he includes articles which discuss the problematic humanist subject from a range of different social constructionist perspectives, but it is notable that one third of the articles deal with the technological subject, among them Haraway's pioneering "*Cyborg Manifesto*". Katherine Hayles, too, argues that technology in a postindustrial society has played a crucial role in challenging the humanist subject and engaging with "*a different construction called the posthuman*", in relation to the collapse of bodily boundaries triggered by cybernetics (Hayles 1999: 2, author's emphasis). According to Badmington's notion of posthumanism and Hayles' definition of the posthuman, the cyborg can be understood as a representational form of the posthuman and an embodiment of the anti-humanist subject in a technocratic society. It

represents a 'transition' from the normative humanist subject to an ambiguous, multiple, or rebellious cyborg subjectivity. Technology, therefore, does not simply announce "the end of the human" or "the advent of the superhuman"; rather, the posthuman continually both shapes and is shaped by contemporary technological society (Graham 2002: 11). In this view the posthuman captures a present moment in which social relationships are reconfigured by technology, rather than picturing an "anticipated future" (Brooker 2003: 201).

Haraway's notion of the cyborg, as we have seen in my Introduction, uses her political claims for the cyborg to deny the religious creation myth, but she does not consider what has become an increasing interest in the notion of a religious quest through technology as well as a corresponding fascination with understanding technology through religious concepts. The relationship between science and religion, Sweetman argues, is always uneasy, because current scientific disciplines such as astronomy, astrophysics, evolution, genetics, and neurology are becoming "increasingly relevant to the study of questions normally left to religion", such as the monistic concept of God, the origin of life, and transcendence (Sweetman 2007: 113). Both religious and scientific discourses can be seen, from a Foucauldian perspective, as authoritative discourses which function to explain the source of order or tell the 'truth' of nature (Sweetman 2007: 133-4, Reilly 1985: 3). Both too, argues Nobel (1999), share the idea of 'transcending' human fragility and limitation. He argues that religious or mythic terminologies prevail in contemporary scientific discourses and that scientists tend to use religious connotations to describe technology, attempting to embody the notion of religious, mythic, or spiritual quest through technology. In addition, Stahl (1999) observes that Western media, literature, and philosophy also employ religious concepts for discussing technology. For example, the advocates of Artificial Intelligence see the possibilities of 'immortality' and 'resurrection', computer scientists predict that virtual reality or cyberspace can achieve God-like 'omnipresence' and disembodied perfection, and genetic engineers envision the 'divine' creation of life (Nobel 1999: 5). Likewise, media like *Time* magazine used religious terms to describe the advent of personal

computers in the mid 1970s: children are seen to “sit in communion” with their machines; the elder users see portable computers as “gospel”; and the “computer converts” describe the feeling of using the personal computer as “microelectronic baptism” (Stahl 1999: 80).

Thus, despite Haraway’s deliberate exclusion of them from her conceptualisation of the cyborg, religious imaginations and implications in the representation of the cyborg have never been absent from science fiction/fantasy, especially in relation to the theme of apocalyptic humanity. Since technology is used to re-vision the religious quest or to secularise religious discourses such as faiths, myths, and ethics, the techno-religious implications of imagining posthumanity fascinate Western filmmakers. Hollywood science fiction/fantasy cinema has used the figure of the cyborg to envisage posthumanity as well as posthuman society in films such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Cherry 2000* (1987), *Johnny Mnemonic* (1995), *AI. Artificial Intelligence* (2001), *I, Robot* (2004), the Cyborg sequels (1989, 1993, 1995), the Alien franchises (1979, 1986, 1992, 1997), the Matrix series (1999, 2003), and the Terminator franchises (1984, 1991, 2003, 2009). These films deal in ‘imaginative’ reality and “‘pseudo-science’” by “providing rationalisations of these impossible activities in terms that *sound like* scientific discourse” (Roberts 2000: 9, author’s emphasis). They tend to represent the secularisation of religious beliefs, rituals, or values through scientific explanations and technological inventions, articulating technoscience with religious dogma, or creating technology as the mythic, the sacred, or the sublime. Science fiction/fantasy cinema, therefore, seen as a discursive practice, reconstructs the discursive relationship between religion and science rather than defining their difference.

Science fiction/fantasy thus operates a secularisation of Christian notions of transcendence in its explorations of whether technoscience provides ‘faith’ in progress or of whether this ‘promised’ progress creates a perfect order of human life through the cyborgisation of the body and the overcoming of the limitations of the physical and natural world. A very early example, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), describes a scientist who seeks to usurp the power of

Nature/God by creating life out of dead body parts. One of the common themes in science fiction/fantasy has become that of a ‘mutation’ of humanity which triggers “evolutionary transcendence” in creating a new species that may lead to the emergence of posthumanity (Levy and Slonczewski 2003: 177, Starr 2006: 75). For example, J. D. Beresford’s *The Hampdenshire Wonder* (1911), Olaf Stapledon’s *Odd John* (1935), and A. E. Van Vogt’s *Slan* (1940) explore the transcendence of human brain-power or intelligence, and William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* (1984), which is generally acknowledged as the exemplary cyberpunk novel, emphasises that the transcendental can be realised through the mind downloaded into cyberspace or virtual reality. Human evolution represented in science fiction/fantasy often depicts the idea that humanity is superseded by a successor species of machine, superhuman, or a combination of the two, as a transition from the ‘natural’ human to the posthuman (Graham 2002: 9). This may be achieved through the cyborgisation of physiology in relation to the brain, sexuality, reproduction, or genetic engineering, in an imaginative response to the fascination with transcendence explicitly posed by religious traditions (Levy and Slonczewski 2003: 175, Hughes 2003: 1). Cyberculture sees humanity as being in a process of becoming and manipulation, and the emergence of posthumans turns ‘natural selection’ into ‘artificial interference’ to create a hybrid that “Charles Darwin never would have envisioned” (Dery 1996: 292-293).

Rather than offering a ‘utopian’ version of “a imaginary ideal society” whose “social, political, and economic problems of the real present” have been solved, contemporary science fiction/fantasy literature and cinema often offer a ‘dystopian’ vision, seeing the technological evolution of humanity as the failure of, and ‘crisis of faith’ in, science (Booker and Thomas 2009: 65, Baccolini and Moylan 2003: 1, King and Krzywinska 2000: 17, Ryan and Keller 2004: 48, Graham 2002: 210). After the holocaust and the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, science fiction/fantasy writers, Reilly (1985) argues, tend to use religion to justify ethical and moral questions posed by science in association with rationality, objectivity, and progress. It is not surprising that science fiction/fantasy takes the religious notion of apocalypse to explore a

science that is out of control, dehumanises, and fails to provide transcendence, in a dystopian critique of technoscience and a technological society.

2. Shinto, Transcendence, and Apocalypse

Since *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* take up not only Christian elements but also Japan's indigenous Shinto beliefs in their representations of techno-apocalypse, it is necessary to review the basic points of Shinto. Whilst Western science fiction/fantasy literature and cinema have been strongly influenced by the two Christian notions, transcendence and apocalypse, those religious notions are foreign to the Shinto worldview. The Japanese word for Shinto is '*kami no michi*', translated as "the way of the *kami*" (Ellington 2009: 151). *Kami* can refer to a single deity/sprit as well as being the collective term for deities/sprits (Mason 2002: 50). *Kami* preserves the animist tradition that deities or sprits are all aspects of nature/life and manifest in various natural animate or inanimate objects such as the sun, trees, plants, mountains, rocks, animals, and human beings (Ranki 2011: 63, Ono and Woodard 1962: 7, Picken 2011: 40). In the Shinto origin myth, the coupling of the female *kami* Izanami and the male *kami* Izanagi produces both humans and the lands that make up Japan, giving a divine origin to the ethnic nation (Lavinson 2002: 1502, Kato 2011: 41, Herbert 2011: 469, Lundskow 2008: 256). The diverse *kami* can be personal or impersonal: they can bring wrath or misfortune if they are disturbed, and if they are pleased and content, *kami* can create good fortune (McFaul 2010: 93). In other words, since humanity is not created by *kami* but is descended from them, people coexist with nature in harmony rather than confrontation (Picken 1994: 63, 348). Thus, the believers' main concern is to respect and avoid offending *kami*.

More important, *kami* are not immortal, and they embody "no absolute good or evil" (Picken 1994: 63, Wolff 2007: 68). Thus, *kami* can be understood as representing divinity as immanence in contrast to the Christian idea of the omnipotent, omniscient, or transcendent God who executes His apocalyptic judgement on humanity (Picken 1994: 348, Deal 2007: 190, Rehill 2009:

79). In the following section, I shall examine how these very different concepts are articulated together within the constructions of the posthumanist cyborg within my case study films, arguing that in both instances religious notions are not abandoned. Rather, the religious implications of the posthumanist cyborg or posthumanity are reinforced by gendered stereotypes.

3. Case Studies: *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion*

The monster film discussed in Chapter 2 makes claims for humanity by highlighting the alliance of humans and Godzilla to defeat the monstrous Other(s), and cyberpunk, analysed in Chapter 3, uses cyborgs to question humanity by representing outlaws struggling in a technologically dominated society. The two selected texts in this chapter, however, share the theme of transcendence, grafting religious faiths, myths, and rituals onto technological transformation of the human body. Both films use religious metaphors and motifs to represent technological transcendence and apocalypse whilst masculinist technocratic society is seen to be governed by male cyborg citizens. In the representation of the cyborg's hybridity in science fiction/fantasy cinema, Short argues, the cyborg narrative either accepts artificial and partial humans by seeing them as similar to humans, or rejects them because their Otherness is too different from or threatens humanity (Short 2005: 110). In both *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* we find the depictions of a heterosexual, hypermasculine, and ultraviolent male hero or antihero who tries not only to save humanity from destruction by posthumanist cyborgisation, but also to resolve political, racial and ethical conflicts between the 'good' cyborg that desires to be "the *same kind* of human being" and the 'bad' cyborg that seeks to replace humanity with posthumanity (Redmond 2004: 156, author's emphasis). In relation to *Casshern*, I shall investigate the racialised, gendered, and nationalised posthuman body and the apocalyptic posthumanity represented within the film. In particular, I shall argue that Christian mythic themes such as eternity, resurrection, and messiah run throughout *Casshern*, a fantasy set

in a date-unspecified period with an industrial and futuristic mise-en-scène, where the patriarchal, repressive, and monopolist Federation's racial and health policies trigger endless war between humans and humans, and between humans and cyborgs. The second case study will examine how the advent of posthumanity represented in *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* is achieved by imposing the religious perspective of apocalypse onto the cyborgisation of the body. This animated film envisages the transcendence of humanity through grafting techno-religious dogmas onto teenagers who are fused with giant armoured robots, in order to re-play the Christian mythology of genesis and messiah. These narratives, on the one hand, represent an anxiety that humanity will be destroyed by cyborgs, and on the other, construct a 'post-humanity' that both confronts and coexists with humanity.

3.1 The Uncanny Posthuman and Techno-Religious Apocalypse in *Casshern*

Although *Casshern* is set in an imaginary late twenty-first century which has experienced fifty years of war between the Greater Eastern Federation and the European Union, elements of it bear an uncanny resemblance to the visual imagery of fascist imperial Japan in the 1930s (Large 2009: 167). A horizontal tablet inscribed with the words "East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"²⁷⁵ adorns the Federation Headquarters; Federation flags are displayed on the streets; the Federation leader's photos and statue are found on walls and in factories; there are black military uniforms and soldiers on parade; and the extremely grand, spacious, and symmetrical buildings of the Federation Headquarters dominate the film's mise-en-scène. These images echo Japan's

²⁷⁵ 'East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' represented in the film is a reference to the 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere' (大東亞共榮圈, *Dai-to-a Kyo-eiken*) which was a concept mentioned in *The Cardinal Principles of the Nation* published by the Ministry of Education in 1937 for use in public schools. The term refers to not only a new order of Asia that will be realised through Imperial Japan's military conquest of the East Asia neighbouring countries, but also the reassertion of the Japanese Emperor's divinity and absolute authority of the state. See Barbara McCloskey, *Artists of World War II* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2005) 114.

participation in the two world wars and foreground the idea that the film's Greater Eastern Federation attempts to build a militant nationalist-authoritarian empire by 'nationalising' or excluding the Other (Karan 2005: 63-69). While the Federation wins the war and controls most parts of the Eurasian continent, the only part in Eurasia that cannot be controlled, Zone Seven, opposes the discrimination and oppression of the Federation government's racial policy. After the Zone Seven's conflict becomes intense and the authorities send more soldiers to resolve the situation, *Casshern* begins to reveal the discourse of the body constructed by the Federation in the name of defeating terrorism and developing medical treatment. The un-modernised villagers in Zone Seven are systematically constructed by this political/scientific discourse as the racialised Other. They are, first, an 'inferior' ethnic group, in a dangerous war zone occupied by terrorists threatening the Federation's authority, and second, experimental subjects which can be pursued both political and personal goals. Dr. Azuma seeks to develop regenerative cell therapy from their bodies in order to cure his dying wife, as well as prolong the life of sick General Kamijo, the militarist emperor of the Federation. The 'inferior' people's Neon-Cells, argues Dr. Azuma, are the source of all human cells, able to metamorphose into any cell to grow any organs at any time, so that self-regenerative Neon-Cell therapy can replace the risk of tissue rejection caused by transplants. His theory challenges the racial superiority of the ruling class, so that his Neon-Cells project is rejected by the Ministry of Health. However, Dr. Azuma's project is secretly sponsored by the Federation's military. It is challenged, however, by the war victims of Zone Seven after they are resurrected by the Casshern deity: the resurrected victims develop their posthumanist subjectivity against imperial-colonial humanity.

No-one in this film represents the 'natural human' because the body is consistently mediated by either medical or warfare-related technologies. In the scene in which Dr. Azuma presents his cell therapy for Ministry of Health approval, a sequence of images of industrial waste, polluted air, smoking factory chimneys, the destroyed urban landscape, and the eye that grows on the experimental rat's back that accompany his speech in the parliament reinforce his argument that

the side effect of using chemical weapons is that humans have become more vulnerable to disease and mutations. There is bodily mutation through warfare chemicals; biotechnology such as cloning and regenerative cell therapy is common to improve or prolong human life; most of the ruling class are either old or ill and rely on advanced medical technology to sustain life; and the Federal soldiers are equipped with cybernetic armour suits to fight in the war. Yet before Dr. Azuma's secret experiment is interfered by the 'divine' power of Casshern, humanity has not been questioned but reinforced by the racial myth which maintains this patriarchal, imperial society. This racial discourse is based on a biological essentialism that defines the 'nature' of humanness in such a way that humanity is not challenged by technological mediation but confirmed by the biological and heterosexual reproduction of the human race. The crisis of humanity in this film is caused not by internal racial conflict but by the resurrection of the dead and the emergence of the 'posthuman'.

The manifestation of transcendence is achieved not through technology – whose drive to discover/recreate the re-generating Neon-Cells is seen to have failed – but through the religious resurrection of the dead. The film adopts not only Shinto's belief in the existence of spirits that animate as well as separate from the body but also the Christian concept of "immersion baptism" and "resurrection" (Cerf 1989: 220, Karambai 2005: 220). On the one hand, the dead Zone Seven people are resurrected by Casshern's divine/supernatural power, and on the other hand, Tetsuya's resurrection is achieved by his father who 'baptises' his dead body.

The scene of the techno-religious resurrection that occurs in Dr. Azuma's secret laboratory has echoed the notions of the uncanny maternal and the Freudian primal scene. The representation of the laboratory is built on the model of a late nineteenth century industrial landscape: the scientists, who wear white protective suits covering their faces, heads, and bodies, work in a spacious, dark, and humid laboratory which is constituted by iron machinery. Within it we find imagery of birth, death, amniotic fluid, and uterine shapes: a pile of body parts such as heads, limbs, and torsos are soaked in red liquid stored in a number of reservoirs, and the divine

deity is materialised in the phallic form of a lightning bolt. Casshern manifests its divine power as lightning striking the laboratory tanks from the dome, leaving its solid matter vertically inserted into the laboratory tanks. The scene highlights the genesis of the posthuman in an uncanny monstrosity, a result of fusion of the divine/supernatural with the abject bodies of the dead. Equally important, this resurrection of the descendents of the religious Zone Seven people is chosen rather than accidental, the result of the return of the protective divine deity Casshern that touches and activates the Neon-Cells liquid.



Figure 23: The Neonroid is born/resurrected in the laboratory in *Casshern* (2004).

Tetsuya, Dr. Azuma's son, dies in the war of Zone Seven, and is immediately resurrected by his father through a process of Christian baptism. Tetsuya's spirit, which is separated from his dead body, cannot stop his father's unethical action which 'subverts' the laws of nature and blurs the boundary between the living and the dead. We see his disembodied spirit standing on the edge of the reservoir and looking at his father, shouting, "What are you doing? I don't want to come back, Father! Stop!" Tetsuya is a horrified witness of his own abject resurrection or uncanny primal scene. After Dr. Azuma soaks his dead body in the liquid and then pushes his head into it three times, Tetsuya's spirit is spontaneously reconnected to his body. In this scene we see reference to both Christian resurrection through baptism and the Shinto concept of spirits, in a process which represents the abject and uncanny horror of the techno-religious

transcendence of the mortal body. Both the resurrected Zone Seven residents and Tetsuya are thus an amalgam of the technological and the supernatural, mixing Dr. Azuma's Neon-Cells experiment and Casshern's divinity.

Racial conflict is intensified rather than dissolved in the posthuman era: whilst the resurrected of Zone Seven are marked as the threatening and repressed Other by their abject bodies, the racial antagonism is between the human and the posthuman, whose individual subjectivity and collective identity are constructed through their resistance to and appropriation of humanity. Their development of self-awareness is represented in four scenes. The first depicts the emergence from the laboratory reservoir of the man who is the first resurrected posthuman – or Neonroid – and who will later become their leader. He confronts his creator/parent Dr. Azuma with an identificatory gaze that can be read as a version of Lacan's 'Mirror Stage'. In response to Dr. Azuma's coldness towards this technological-supernatural hybrid creature/monster covered with brown and wet mucus, the resurrected male eyes Dr. Azuma with resentment, apparently both recognising his monstrosity and experiencing the pain of rejection. In the second scene the resurrected leader constructs his posthuman identity based upon anger and rebellion against the Federation's oppression: he faces the sky and screams in rage while watching the only resurrected baby being buried by the other survivor in the snowy weather. The third scene depicts the construction of a collective posthuman identity built on shared trauma: the Federation soldiers are ordered to kill all of the resurrected in the name of preventing the spread of an unknown contagion, in order not to expose the secret of the experiment on the massacred people. The handful of naked and horrified survivors not only witness the soldiers' shooting the resurrected in the laboratory but also discover a huge pile of dead bodies dumped in the sewage – the failed subjects of Dr. Azuma's Neon-Cells experiment. They use the torn clothes they find in the laboratory to cover their naked bodies and march towards Zone Seven in the snowy mountains, but only four survive the military massacre and the frigid weather. The survivors develop a self-awareness based on their uncanny birth/resurrection and traumatic experiences in the laboratory.

In the scene in which they arrive in the throne room of an abandoned castle, the Neonroid leader stands in front of the throne declaring his 'Neonroid Manifesto' to the other three survivors. In it we see a posthuman subjectivity which is defined by its relation to/rejection of humanity:

“We’re alive! We are unmistakably alive. But men made no attempt to recognise this. Far from it, they used every brutal means at their disposal to destroy us. As if they had the right to judge. As if they deserved such a right. Is there superiority and inferiority with regard to the poignancy of life? No, absolutely not! But men placed us on the scales of judgement. If they claim this as their right, then we will claim our rights too! We can possess their rights! We will build a kingdom here. As our lives indicate, as our wills lead us, as a new species reigns over death, we Neonroids vow to exterminate mankind!”



Figure 24: The Neonroid's Kingdom in *Casshern* (2004).

As he presents his Neonroid Manifesto, we see a sequence of images which not only characterise the Neonroid kingdom as militant, authoritarian, and fascist but also present it as the uncanny double of the Greater Eastern Federation: the Neonroid leader appoints himself as sole commander of the Neonroid kingdom whose aim is to eliminate the Greater Eastern Federation; the other three survivors become militant soldiers wearing traditional armour; and the throne room is decorated by swastika flags, and countless robotic troops are displayed in the castle square waiting for dispatch.

The Neonroids are reborn from the human body but alienated from their previous life experiences as human. All of them have extraordinary physical powers but their memories of the past are suppressed so that they do not have individual identities associated with name, kinship, and other social relationships. Each survivor's body is an assemblage of body pieces: gendered (three men and one woman), with dark skin colour, sequential numbers tattooed on the wrists, and scars on limb joints and the abdomen. After dwelling in the abandoned castle in Zone Seven, the four survivors use the technological equipment left in the castle to create an authoritarian-fascist kingdom with giant robot troops to eliminate the human race. In this hyper-masculinist, authoritarian, fascist, and posthuman kingdom, the three survivors make daily reports to the dictator about progress in producing robot troops and the plan to attack the Federation. Individual identity is replaced by strict hierarchy and a collective (but gendered) identity. The idea of the 'posthuman' is thus constructed here not as a liberatory 'Other' to oppressive social structures and human hierarchies but rather as their mirror. The Neonroids have no memory of their human past as peaceful villagers and victims of racism; their posthuman subjectivity is constructed solely in relation to the Federation's discursive construction of difference and the Otherness of the racialised body.

The resurrection of Tetsuya might seem a more likely vehicle for questioning received accounts of (gendered) identity formation, blurring as it does the boundaries between Self and Other, superior and inferior, living and dead, and human and non-human. Tetsuya's uncanny body places his masculinity in question because the overgrown cells of his uncanny body threaten to burst through the skin of his male form. Whilst Tetsuya's cyborgised body exposes the collapse of dualist boundaries, however, in what follows the film reasserts rather than critiques the masculine norms of power, dominance, and superiority. This re-construction of Tetsuya's masculine identity is effected in three key scenes. First, Tetsuya's patriarchal identification is established when his father baptises him in the laboratory reservoir. Second, his wearing of the cybernetic armoured suit which covers him from head to toe re-establishes

masculine restraint – the suit restrains his overgrown cells from bursting through the skin. Once fitted out in this way, he can be acknowledged as a saviour of humanity in the dying words of his fiancée's father: "Tetsuya, the fate lying in store for you is just too cruel. But there must be some meaning to it all. There must be some meaning. You shall know what it is!" Accordingly, Tetsuya begins to kill the Neonroids and the robot troops. A final scene sees that Tetsuya grabs a Federation soldier to prevent him from shooting Zone Seven residents. As he does this, his repressed memory returns and, as he gazes in horror, the soldier's face turns into his own. The soldier becomes, briefly, Tetsuya's uncanny double, reminding him of his former ruthless actions in killing the Zone Seven civilians. However, the Zone Seven male doctor transforms Tetsuya's nationalist identity into that of 'human' saviour by killing the soldier, repressing the return of Tetsuya's war trauma and linking his uncanny body with the Casshern deity. Tetsuya's human/technological/religious identity is finally established when he accepts the doctor's request to save the Zone Seven civilians. Tetsuya's uncanny hybridity is thus converted into a hypermasculine posthumanity, recuperating the traditional or dualist boundaries that his uncanny body threatens to dissolve.

This is a vision far from Haraway's utopian concept of a post-gender cyborg imaginary which erodes dichotomised boundaries. A dualistic structure is retained in the representation of humanity, race, the divine, and the posthuman, ascribing traditionally gendered qualities to the film's characters. The human characters divide into two groups: the first group is with the masculine being associated with violence, hatred, ruthlessness, war, and control of the Other, and embodied in characters such as the Federation politicians, soldiers, and scientists. The second group is related to gentler characteristics of femininity that are represented by the characters of Tetsuya's mother, his fiancée, and her mother, who share qualities of being anti-war and emphasising peace, the victimisation of war, and kindness to people. In contrast to the representation of these Federation characters, the Zone Seven people, although seen as inhumane terrorists by the Federation itself, are represented as 'humane' in terms of their non-

violent and peaceful 'nature', their representation as religious believers in Casshern and victims of war, and their harmonious family relationships. They share the qualities of the female characters mentioned above, rendering them feminised as well as racialised Others. Finally, the process of resurrection which renders Tetsuya and the Zone Seven people as posthuman constructs both as hypermasculine in terms of their hyper-powerful physique and 'brutal', 'ruthless', and 'tough' characteristics.



Figure 25: Tetsuya wears the cybernetic armour suit fighting with the Neonroids in *Casshern* (2004).

Since Tetsuya and the Neonroids are the melding of human Self and the techno-religious Other, their posthuman subjectivity does question traditional models. However, whilst this construction of the posthuman threatens to blur psychoanalytic boundaries between Self and Other, sexist ideologies remain unchallenged: the Self is masculine and the Other feminine. This narrative dominated by male characters establishes a cluster of binary relationships: the Self (the masculine, the brutal, the ruthless, the superior racialised human, and the Federation ruling class) and the Other (the feminine, the 'humane', the inferior racialised human, and the massacred Zone Seven villagers). Echoing Haraway's identification of the cyborg with apocalypse, the narrative highlights techno-apocalypse in terms of the endless war caused by a racial dominance identified with masculinist aggression, competition, and violence, and emphasises that the feminine quality of accepting Otherness is the only way of solving racial and class antagonism.

However, the posthuman in this film neither deconstructs the dualisms that uphold racial and gender divisions nor accepts the Other. Instead, the posthuman is represented as hypermasculine, reconfirming patriarchal power rather than corresponding to Haraway's political claim for the posthuman cyborg which would see it challenging patriarchal gender ideologies. In the end the film depicts the posthuman's failure to integrate hypermasculinity and the 'feminine' characteristics of humanity. The narrative exposes the paradox in Tetsuya's re-establishing patriarchal phallic power and becoming the Other at the same time. At first he denies his identity as human because of his uncanny body and his inhumane character represented through the war. Later he seeks to define himself as human by identifying with the racialised Other, his mother's 'humane' qualities, and the Casshern deity. When, however, Tetsuya turns himself into a religious *heroic* figure, his posthumanity is represented as hypermasculinity. Situated in a world divided into superior and inferior human 'races', the human and the nonhuman, Tetsuya uses retributive violence against both the Federation and the Neonroids in order to protect humanity. However it is impossible for Tetsuya to maintain his masculinity and identify with the feminine Other at the same time. The more he seeks to identify with the Other, the more frustration accompanies his attempt to maintain his masculinity through violence. In scenes in which he uses his bare hands to kill countless Federation human soldiers and the robot troops, and Neonroids in order to save mankind, we see Tetsuya's now hysterical masculinity. The more he attempts to act as saviour, the more deaths occur. The ensuing frustrations produce a masculinity crisis:

"Mother, can I be wrong? Did I just fight so as to have no regrets? I fought so that the sadness would never be repeated. But did I really just do it for my own self-satisfaction? ... I don't know who was right and who was wrong. One can feel hatred, but one's enemy feels the same way. When you realise this, you're left impotent."

This frustration reaches its peak in the scene in which his father kills Tetsuya's fiancée in order to take back his dead wife's body from Tetsuya's hands. Dr. Azuma's obsession with his regenerative cell therapy is not only simply to find a treatment for his dying wife, but also

connects with his political motivation to ‘eradicate defective humans’. Politically defined as of the inferior race, Dr. Azuma seeks to technologically manipulate life and death at will and rewrite social status by producing a new human race through the Neon-Cells. Being both representative of the Symbolic Order and boundary breaker, and both biological and technological father of Tetsuya, Dr. Azuma becomes an ambiguous figure. When Tetsuya opposes his father’s technological manipulation of his dead mother, and when Dr. Azuma kills Tetsuya’s fiancée to make Tetsuya identify with his feeling of loss, Tetsuya is pushed to the limit and kills his father with his bare hands. It is an action which recalls the Oedipal scenario and sees Tetsuya regain the Symbolic Order. Tetsuya’s patriarchal, heroic, and posthuman figure, then, does not challenge or blur the boundaries between the Self and the Other, the natural and the artificial, and life and death, but instead maintains and re-establishes these boundaries.

Whilst Tetsuya’s posthuman subjectivity is torn between ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ identifications, the Neonroids’ posthumanity relies on the reinforcement of traditionally masculine qualities to resist the Federation’s oppression and underpin the Neonroid kingdom. When the Neonroids are defined by the Federation as derived from the racialised and peaceful Others of Zone Seven, they are associated with the feminine, racialised, nonhuman Other. Once they have become posthuman, however, both male and female Neonroids construct their subjectivity by identifying with the masculine characteristics that underpin self-identity. In contrast to Tetsuya’s efforts to become the Other and maintain the Self at the same time, the Neonroids form their self-identity by excluding any characteristic of an Otherness seen as feminine and racialised. Midori recognises the Neonroid’s Otherness and emphasises its positive side: “But hatred just bears forth more hatred. Is that not just too sad? You surely weren’t born in this world to hate. Those who have died so far would surely not want any more hatred. I’m sure you can [be kind to people], too.” The Neonroids, however, consistently deny their humane qualities by rejecting Midori’s identification and suppressing their memories of their former peaceful and kind characteristics.

Whereas Tetsuya's posthuman subjectivity is torn between his history of being human and his experiences of being nonhuman, that of the Neonroids is anti-history and based solely on the experience of being born or made posthuman. This is, however, a misidentification. Not only does the Federation ruling class erase the Neonroids' history through their military operation in the name of disease control, but the Neonroids also suppress the memories of their past life in Zone Seven. Instead, after they are 'born' or 'made' in the Federation laboratory, in what Lacan would recognise as the imaginary relations of the mirror stage they internalise the Federation's hatred and recognise Dr. Azuma as artificial father/mother. They identify with the law of the Father: controlling, excluding, and eliminating. It is, however, a fragile identification, and the Neonroid leader's subjectivity begins to crumble after hearing that the Federation General claims that the Neonroids are not only the product of the Federation's body politics but also have a history of being victimised Zone Seven villagers and the descendents of an original humanity.

When the Federation collapses after a military coup in which the emperor is killed by his son, the Neonroid kingdom fails after the four Neonroids are eliminated by Tetsuya, and Tetsuya experiences psychological breakdown after he kills his father, techno-religious apocalypse seems inevitable. Instead, the Casshern deity turns the Christian notion of apocalypse into a Shinto religious manifestation of *kami*, deity, or spirit. After the conflict derived from the technological manipulation of life and death, the supernatural deity redraws the line between the two. At the end of the film, the Casshern deity activates the 'spirit' to separate from the body: each dead (post)human body emits a bright light and then the lights conjoin together as a single beam which represents the collective spirit of humanity. This light leaves the earth, flies around the universe, and finally becomes a lightning bolt that strikes in a jungle lake on an unknown planet. The deity, it is implied, does not recreate the technologically-mediated posthumans but releases their spirits so that they will now inhabit inanimate or animate objects, or be reborn as humans on the unknown planet. This new world is represented by Tetsuya's sentimental voice-over mixed with montages of the main characters' past memories of happy, peaceful, and caring moments

with their families, echoing the Shinto idea that humans should live in harmony with nature and recognise the divine power of *kami*, spirit, or deity. Accordingly, Tetsuya's narration is linked with a moral message about war and class conflict:

“Now at last I understand we harm something through our very existence. That's what living is all about. It's about harming something or other. We needed to be tolerant to one another. Tolerant of the fact that we live together in the same world.... We do more than just exist. We have the strength to Dr.eam of living together.”

This new world arranged by the Casshern deity is kind, peaceful, and tolerant, very different from both the Federation created by the racially superior humans and the Neonroid kingdom created by the posthumans, both of which emphasise racial and class difference. The new (post)humanity reorganised by the divine/supernatural power, however, emphasises not only a reunification with the organic, natural, sexual, and mortal human body without racial classification or technological intervention, but also the importance of the familial relationship under a patriarchal system, which is seen to act as a ‘natural check’ on the more extreme ‘masculine’ characteristics of humanity.

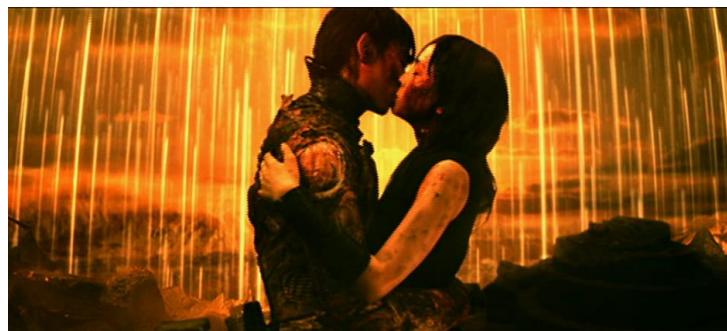


Figure 26: Tetsuya kisses his fiancée, Luna while the people's spirits separate from their bodies and fly into the sky in *Casshern* (2004).

The film, then, combines Christian and Shinto religious beliefs to represent a techno-transcendence/apocalypse that reveals ideological operations at work. The imagery of imperial militarism, wars, and scientific experiments on humans shown in the opening sequences of the

film can be argued to play out in displaced form the war crimes of ‘Unit 731’ – the most controversial social and political issue for postwar Japan due to the Japanese government’s ambiguous position of neither disavowing nor confirming its existence (Lanouette and von Hippel 1990: 6, Seaton 2007: 88). In 1938, Imperial Japan covertly set up ‘Unit 731’ in Pin-fang in northeast China as the Japanese Imperial Army’s biological warfare unit. It conducted secret bacteriological and other experiments on human subjects which caused more than 10,000 deaths of Chinese, Russian, Korean, American, and European people including men, women, and children (Li 2003: 297, Wan 2006: 312). The experiments aimed to develop effective weapons from biological warfare and the Japanese scientists used the practically unlimited supply of human subjects among the illiterate Chinese villagers living near the military base (Li 2003: 299-300). The victims were subject to various forms of experiments in relation to cholera, epidemic haemorrhage, bubonic plague, and frostbite (Li 2003: 300). They were artificially infected with disease and then dissected either with or without anaesthetics in order to observe the state of deterioration of the internal organs (Li 2003: 300, McNeil 1993: 24). Meanwhile, the dissected body parts were also surgically reconnected (McNeil 1993: 24). The imagery of the Neo-Cells experiment on the Zone Seven people strongly echoes Japan’s repressed wartime atrocities in relation to Unit 731. This cinematic narrative based on secret state experiments on an ethnic group which are constantly justified through technological, nationalistic, and racial discourses can thus be seen as offering a critique of a masculinist ideology that is embedded in war, imperial nationalism, racism, and technology. It shows the horrific apocalyptic consequences of biotechnology, racial massacre, and long years of warfare which are “fuelled by the patriarchal, dualistic drive to escape – literally, to transcend – the contingent world of embodied finitude and continuity” by utilising technology to achieve a quasi-religious quest for invulnerability, invincibility, and immortality (Graham 2010: 429).

However this technological manipulation of the body in the end of the film neither challenges nor achieves a quasi-Christian transcendence. Instead, the film uses Shinto elements

to provide a ‘resolution’ of the apocalypse caused by technological dehumanisation, offering an ideological stance on Christianity and Shinto. Whereas Dr. Azuma uses technology to achieve transcendence of the finite body, performs baptism to resurrect his son and causes apocalyptic social destruction, the Casshern deity, with its overtones of Shinto, leads humans and posthumans back to Japan’s traditional view of humanity living within the natural order. In this sense, the film rewrites rather than critiques Japan’s controversial wartime atrocities. In other words, it uses the historical war crime as a backdrop to reproduce a masculinist fantasy of power, dominance, and competition represented by the hypermasculine, forceful, and aggressive posthumans such as Tetsuya and the Neonroids, who defy the limitations of corporeality or the laws of nature. However, since this masculinist fantasy represents not only the deviant and undesirable in relation to Japan’s repressed war crimes but also the social destruction of techno-apocalypse in relation to anxiety about the loss of (masculine) humanity, the ending of the film offers restoration through a representation of Shinto’s traditional religious and ethical values which is also a restatement of Japanese patriarchal socio-cultural norms.

3.2 Apocalyptic Transcendence and Abject (Post)humanity

In contrast to *Casshern*’s idea that religious manifestation might replace the ‘failure’ of technological transcendence of life and death, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* uses religious references to represent a transcendental posthumanity that is achieved by techno-religious apocalypse. The animated film’s title and plot are derived from the Christian mystic tradition. Evangelion is the Greek for ‘gospel’. Accordingly, the title can be translated as ‘the end of gospel’ – or apocalypse. This anime adopts the religious semantics and references of Christianity to construct a futurist worldview, in a narrative in which three chosen young teenagers who are military robot pilots are used by scientists to be the techno-religious medium for the ‘evolution’ of humanity. It is set in the year 2000 after the earth has suffered from the ‘Second Impact’: a global cataclysm caused by scientists who try to excavate the first Angel,

Adam, in the South Pole. The excavation results in a massive explosion that melts the Antarctic ice cap and leads to a shift in the Earth's axis. The resulting global climate change and rise of sea levels wipe out most of the human population. In addition to the vast environmental damage and climate change, the human race faces the attack of various cyborg monsters called 'Angels' which are the progeny of Adam. Possessing mechanical engines and AT Fields, the Angel monsters create a physical barrier around their bodies as an absolute defence against any kind of weapons made by humans. The film does not specifically explain the origin of the Angel and its relation to the human but depicts the male-dominated paramilitary organisation, NERV, as choosing the teenagers to pilot the gigantic robots made of the remains of the Angel Adam, to fight with his monstrous offspring. The story begins with the scientist Gendo who attempts to execute a secret plan called the 'Human Instrumentality Project' to supplement humanity into becoming a perfect race after the last Angel is eliminated. This project proposes the fusion between humans and Angels to assemble each human's individual soul/spirit into a collective entity in order to transcend finite humanity.

Whereas *Casshern* deploys Shinto's worldview to solve the problems of a technological apocalypse caused by the male scientist's ambition to transcend mortal life, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* uses technology to embody the Christian worldview of apocalyptic transcendence. The Earth represented in the film is constantly under threat from (super)natural disasters: the First Impact is the asteroid clash with the Earth of four billion years ago that caused the Moon to separate from the Earth; the Second Impact is the Angel's explosion that causes such destruction to the human population; and finally, the impending Third Impact is about the unification of the first Angel Adam and the second Angel Lilith which will result in a supreme being to replace the human race. This Third Impact is linked to the Christian notion of apocalypse through which God will amend a finite and imperfect humanity by destroying the world and replacing it with a perfect one. Rather than passively waiting for the apocalyptic elimination of humanity, the male-dominated scientific institution, Seele, which

possesses the mythical Dead Sea Scrolls that predict the impending impact, seeks to execute the Human Instrumentality Project in order to create an artificial impact which will transform humans into posthumans. The advent of posthumanity will be achieved by employing technology to merge the teenage boy with Adam and Lilith, a manifestation of the continuity of humanity as well as the embodiment of immortal life. This animation therefore rewrites the Christian linear narrative of progress which starts from Genesis and ends with apocalypse, presenting a genesis of the posthuman that is initiated by techno-religious apocalypse. Whilst the themes of technological interference with the (super)natural and the technological reproduction of the immortal human run throughout the animated film, I argue that, like *Casshern*, it also represents the masculine fantasy of mastery over death as well as the male desire to usurp female reproductive power in the name of saving humanity from apocalypse. Unlike *Casshern* which highlights the posthuman's struggle for legitimisation and self-identity, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* emphasises both masculine anxiety over and desire for becoming posthuman.

Yanarella (2001) argues that in the contemporary secular cultural and social context notions of the cataclysmic or apocalyptic have given way to the post-cataclysmic or the post-apocalyptic. Humanity, he argues, “now possesses a capacity for global destruction hitherto reserved to the powers of the gods or the ravages of nature”, superseding the Christian apocalypse in which God will rectify human flaws by destroying the world and creating a new world order (Yanarella 2001: 21). The Christian apocalyptic narrative emphasises “a final battle between forces of the righteous and the forces of Satan, the wholesale destruction of the world with the evil side being cast into hell, and the ultimate happy ending with the evildoers condemned and the righteous believers ascending to the kingdom of heaven” (Napier 2005: 250). From this perspective, science fiction/fantasy versions of post-apocalypse represent the imagination of “how the vestiges of humanity would survive and how [humans] might attempt to restore some semblance of morality to human existence” (Yanarella 2001: 60). Accordingly, this animation does not

represent the Christian apocalypse executed by God, but instead offers secular apocalypse that human survival after the Second Impact is seen as a disaster caused by the irresponsible use of technology. Following this, the scientists excavate the body of Adam and use the three teenagers who are born in the era of the post-apocalyptic Second Impact to accomplish the techno-religious transcendence of humanity. It pictures what happens next if the final apocalypse comes. Since the scientists, according to the narrative, cannot transform the entire human race into an armoured cyborg in order to survive the cosmic destruction of the impending Third Impact, it can be argued that the cyborgisation of the body is seen to fail to sustain humanity in a post-apocalyptic world. *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* illustrates an anxiety over the sustainability of a humanity which relies merely on the technological transformation of the human body.

For example, after the Second Impact the three chosen teenagers are transformed into cyborgs in order to protect humans from the Angels' attack, but their hybrid bodies reinforce rather than challenge traditional definitions of humanity: the natural, the sexual, and the patriarchal. Their bodies are fused with the robots but are kept whole because of the LCL liquid which acts as the medium to connect their bodies with the robots without losing or transforming their human body shape. LCL operates when the pilot sits in the capsule-like operation panel of the robot Eva. When the pilot is on board, this viscous liquid covers the pilot's whole body and is electrically charged to change its molecular configuration in order to link the pilot to the robot physically and psychologically, and to provide oxygen directly to the pilot's lungs. The liquid inside the capsule also protects the pilot from the physical attack of Angels. There is clear reference here to the amniotic liquid in a mother's womb to symbolise the inseparable and undistinguishable relationship between the Self/human and the Other/Mother – Eva. Embedded within the robotic body of Eva and the LCL liquid, the teenagers become armoured cyborgs. In the interaction with the Angels, some of the Angels penetrate into the robotic body and the LCL liquid to transform the pilot's body into the monstrous form of the Angel, but after

defeating the Angel, the deformed pilot's body immediately returns back to its normal human form. The process of becoming cyborgs and the interaction with Angels cause the temporary fusion of the body, the machine, and the monster, but the boundary between the human and the nonhuman is still clearly distinguished.

However the pilots are psychologically unstable and physically vulnerable in the combat. Repressed trauma constantly resurfaces during both cyborgisation and combat. Shinji's integration with Eva illustrates a series of psychological and physical denials, resistances, submissions, and compromises in the construction of his cyborg identity, and the manifestation of the return of his repressed trauma in relation to his loss of his mother and his emotionally distant father. He either refuses to cooperate with NERVE in order to show his protest against his father or constantly fails to pilot the robot due to his lack of concentration. Moreover, Asuka experiences injury although her body is encased in the gigantic and hard metal suit. In the scene in which she is defeated by the Angel, she screams hysterically about her guilt in causing her mother's death as she tries to re-control the dysfunctional robot.



Figure 27: Asuka becomes hysterical when she is defeated by the Angel in
Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion (1997).

Under the double threat of cosmic destruction and mental disorder, the animated film represents apocalypse at two levels: the material and the psychological. Whilst the Earth is under threat of impact on a cosmic scale, the return of the repressed also contributes to apocalypse at the psychological level. This cosmic-psychological apocalypse not only subverts human identity

as a whole but also denotes individual identity crisis. In particular, the apocalyptic effect of the Second and the anxiety caused by the impending Third Impact mark the crisis of masculinity. Gendo, as the key figure in the scientific operation of NERV and Seele, is ambivalent towards the supernatural and technological apocalypse of humanity. After experiencing the loss of his wife and the destruction of the Second Impact, he becomes emotionless, inexpressive, and introspective. Gendo plays an ambiguous role, being Shinji's father as well as the commander in NERV, protecting and destroying humanity at the same time. He is emotionally distant to his son and secretly conducts the Human Instrumentality Project while directing NERV and working with Shinji to fight with the Angels. Similarly, Shinji also undergoes a crisis of masculinity but his crisis is caused by separation anxiety from his mother and father. Shinji is the only boy in the group but since he is timid and reluctant to pilot the robotic weaponry, he can be characterised as feminine in contrast to Asuka and Rei who are competent combat pilots. Since his mother dies when he is young and he is distanced from his father, Shinji hates his father and has developed a personality that tries to shrink from social relationships and lacks positive and active motivation. His weak and pessimistic personality results from his failure to identify with his father and constantly contradicts the saviour or messianic role assigned to him by his father and the paramilitary organisation Seele.

Meanwhile, the other two chosen teenage pilots constantly re-experience the return of repressed traumatic memories that profoundly affect their performance in controlling the Evas and their interpersonal relationships, suggesting a bleak, desperate, dissatisfied, and nihilist milieu in this post-apocalyptic society. Rei and Asuka are girls who either lose or are without biological parents. Interpreting her mother's suicide as parental abandonment, Asuka not only creates her own guilt, loneliness and craving for association with people but also projects her trauma onto her mission of eliminating the Other/Angels. She enjoys killing the Angels, displaying an excessive aggression that is reinforced by her gigantic mechanical suit. In particular, if she fails to defeat Angels she becomes hysterical, constantly blaming herself for causing her mother's death.

Similarly, Rei is a lonely and bewildered girl and emotionally attached to Shinji's father, Gendo, who has created her by cloning Shinji's mother. Her submissive attitude towards Gendo reproduces an Oedipal scenario in which the wife/daughter identifies with the patriarchal, familial, and erotic authority of the father. Rei constantly questions her gendered identity because of Gendo's ambiguous view of her as 'his daughter'. Accordingly, in contrast to Haraway's vision of a cyborg identity which does not fit the framework of psychoanalysis, the three young cyborgs' neurosis is linked with the repetition of their childhood traumatic experiences. Their bodies as represented in the animation are ambivalent, dangerous, and problematic.

Seele sets out to solve the cosmic-psychological apocalypse in relation to the finite body by developing a project that transcends humanity as a whole without retaining bodies (Rollins 1999: 97). The meaning of 'seele' is soul in the German language, associating it with Shinto's concept of *kami* or spirit that can separate from the body and is "innately good" (Seward 1995: 197). Seele's project also corresponds to a rationalist mind/body dualism and the cybercultural metaphor of the "disembodied mind that rejects the body as the site of subjectivity and identity" (Nayar 2009: 119). Napier's definition of the apocalypse is one of "psychological discordance" because the sense of individuality that is built on the body makes all individuals alienated from each other, so that they struggle to negotiate, compromise, and integrate their isolation and difference within social relationships and communities (Napier 2005: 267). Seele assumes that the psychological mechanisms, built on the biological body or sexual difference, define the Self/Other as well as create the sense of individuality which constitutes a threat to humanity. The Human Instrumentality Project proposed by Seele does not see the cyborgisation of the human body as a way of preserving humanity, but rather as a continuation of humanity that will be achieved by dissolving human bodies and then producing an entity composed of the collective human soul/spirit.

In order to overcome a finite body that causes physical injuries and psychological neurosis, the final part of the animation demonstrates the advent of the posthuman by fusing the three

chosen teenagers with Angels. It articulates the Christian notion of genesis with Shinto's mythology of creation to rework the primal scene in relation to the representation of uncanny forms of copulation and conception. Adam and Lilith are derived from the Christian religious tradition: humanity is descended from Adam as the first human and Lilith was his first wife (Soulen 2006: 107). According to Shinto mythology, the genesis of the world is a substance like an egg. When the substance begins to separate into two parts, the purer, lighter, and clearer element rises up to form heaven, and the denser and heavy elements sink to become the Earth. The primal divine couple, *Izanagi* and *Izanami*, descend to the Earth to give birth to the main islands of Japan, dwell in these islands, and produce descendents (Rankin 2011: 23). The film transforms the Christian genesis of Adam and Lilith into a Shinto version of creation in which Adam and Lilith are respectively embedded in the white moon that breeds Angels and the black moon that breeds humans (Roberts 2010: 18). Lilith as depicted as the source of life for humans and her body is embedded in the black moon that is buried in the Izu Peninsula of Japan.

The uncanny copulation is divided into three stages: the fusion of human and Angel, the fusion of human and Eva, and the fusion of human, Angels, and Eva. Gendo orchestrates the primal scene of posthumanity: he chooses the parents. This uncanny copulation relies on the narrative of heterosexual coupling as the means of reproduction of the posthuman: Adam/Lilith, Gendo/Rei, and Shinji/Asuka. At first, the cloned human Rei is fused with Gendo's right hand that is implanted with the embryonic first Angel, Adam, and then her body enters into the head of the second Angel, Lilith. The gigantic entity that combines the cloned human, the Angel's embryo, and the Angel's body transforms into a giant human/angel form with pairs of wings. Each individual's body is dissolved into LCL liquid and the souls/spirits are kept to be absorbed into the angel/human body. This grows to a supreme size equal to the Earth itself after merging with the souls/spirits of all humans.

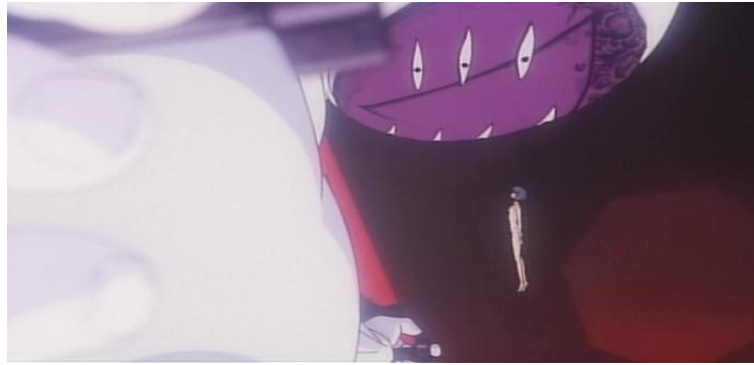


Figure 28: Rei floats up and prepares to merge with Angel Lilith in

Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion (1997).

The second stage occurs when nine Evas are sent by Seele to capture Shinji in his Eva robot. This stage is to initiate the formation of the ‘Tree of Life’ by uniting Evas and the human. Here again we have Christian references: the Tree of Life is derived from the Christian Kabbalah and is a diagrammatic representation of genesis (Petry 2004: 75, Novick 2008: 191). The animation adopts Christian mythology to represent the technological creation of life through religious metaphors. Shinji’s response, however, is hysterical, a hysteria derived from his traumatic sexual experience while witnessing the uncanny primal scene staged by his father. Shinji gradually returns to the unconscious pre-Oedipal and maternal sphere where boundaries collapse, and fuses with his Eva Unit 01 to become a huge red cross which then pierces the forehead of the giant Angel/human form. As blood spouts from the giant body’s neck and surrounds the earth, Rei explains to Shinji that the process of creating a new humanity is via the LCL liquid as the primordial soup of life, an ambiguous world where it is hard to distinguish the boundary between life and death, the beginning and the end, and the inside and the outside.

The final part of the animation depicts what should be the crucial moment of conception or fertilisation which is determined by Shinji’s decision to separate his soul/spirit from his body to complete the techno-religious reproduction of the posthuman. Once Shinji realises that his father is the mastermind in the transcendence of humanity through removal that is individuality as fundamental to the construction of self-identity, social relationships, community, and society,

he jumps out of the eye of the Angel/human body, which begins to crack and separate into pieces. The collective human soul/spirit stored there splits into individual soul or spirit that forms each individual human body. In the final scene, the injured pilots Asuka and Shinji are re-materialised from the LCL sea and stay in the ruins of Tokyo-3. Shinji threatens to strangle Asuka, who feebly says to Shinji, “I am tired of it!” Humanity is not transcended through the artificial Third Impact and its aftermath. The final scene indicates the ambivalent sexual relationship between Shinji and Asuka represented throughout the story. It implies that humanity will survive no matter how many times apocalypse may occur; physical suffering and psychological discordance are reassurances of the essence of humanity and will be repeated as long as humanity is defined by gendered/sexual embodiment. Whereas technological transcendence dissolves the distinction between life and death, sex and gender, and the body and the mind, when Shinji and Asuka appear alive at the end of the film we see the essential recuperation of humanity and gendered/sexual difference that is threatened by such techno-religious transcendence. Shinji transforms himself from a timid and effeminate youth into a masculine adult man who decides to reject his father’s project that subverts the laws of the natural world. Asuka, as the only female post-apocalyptic survivor, is placed in a subordinate position in relation to Shinji’s role as heroic saviour, in order to ensure biological reproduction of their offspring and reconstruct patriarchal social relations through their heterosexual relationship.



Figure 29: The Angel, Lilith and the human’s spirits or souls are ready to merge
in *Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* (1997).

This animation, then, re-plays the Christian view of apocalypse and the Fall of Man. Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden because they eat the fruit of knowledge. The fruit of knowledge is represented as reason, rationality, science, and technology in secular modern terms. Therefore, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* represents the Angels' attack as the apocalyptic punishment for a humanity in which scientists repeat their human ancestors' original sin: creating Eva as hybrid of the human and God in order to defend themselves from God's punishment and usurp God's power. On the other hand, Shinji's final decision to reject transcendental humanity or the birth of the posthuman draws a moral conclusion which opposes what the film labels as the technological dehumanisation of mankind.

Conclusion

The cinematic representations of the cyborg in Japanese science fiction/fantasy do not echo Haraway's notion of the posthumanist cyborg which deconstructs a dualist, hierarchical, and patriarchal relationship between nature and culture. Instead, these representations of posthumanity work to reinforce – though they might sometimes also question – male-dominated gender ideologies embedded in historical, psychoanalytic, and techno-scientific discourses. Rather than simply embracing the advent of a posthumanity in which the cyborgisation of the body challenges the limitations and fragility of (masculine) humanity, these filmic worlds underline a technophobic horror in relation to anxiety about a humanity which might be replaced or ended by the cyborg. The films represent the ambivalence of posthumanity and reconstitute gender stereotypes through a patriarchal religious discourse. *Casshern* suggests that whereas the cyborgisation of the human body provides the possibility of 'transcendence' to reach immortality or omnipresence, the cyborg also indicates possible 'apocalypse', the end of humanity. In contrast, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* represents masculine anxiety about losing dominance over nature by staging an uncanny primal scene in its apocalyptic scenario. Both films present a technocratic patriarchal society that is dominated by male

politicians, scientists, and military, and whose mission is to create the posthuman in order to survive a post-apocalyptic environment caused by war and natural disasters. Whereas *Casshern* depicts a transcendence which is achieved by the technological regeneration of the body, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion* privileges disembodiment in a transcendence in which the soul/spirit is technologically preserved. These versions of apocalyptic transcendence through cyborgisation rework patriarchal, masculinist, and violent stereotypes in the representation of a transcendental posthuman who either seeks to eliminate humanity or threatens the post-apocalyptic society maintained by the patriarchal order. Both films ultimately suggest that such dreams of transcendence are both wrong and doomed. However, the resolutions they offer, drawing on religious references whether Christian or Shinto, return us to a vision of humanity in which gendered norms and traditional family relationships are reaffirmed. In sum, faced with an imagination of the posthuman which cannot – or will not – transcend the notions of gender and the Oedipal narrative, as Haraway suggests, these films reaffirm both and return to a patriarchal religious framework.

Conclusion

This thesis has investigated a range of contemporary Japanese films and animations with a shared characteristic: their focus on the difficult, shifting, and often ambiguous figure of the cyborg, an amalgam of humanity and technology. I have argued that the cyborg is a figure which, first, is pervasive in Japanese science fiction cinema. Second, it crosses generic categories, being found in monster, disaster, horror, science fiction, and fantasy films, and crossing over to the medium of animation. I have used Donna Haraway's hugely influential theorisation of the cyborg, together with feminist theory and a feminist-psychoanalytic approach, to examine these cinematic representations of the cyborg in relation to the body, gender, and national identity. Whilst Haraway argues that the cyborgisation of the body could deconstruct patriarchal gender and dualist ideologies and create a post-gender world where women can embrace their hybridity, challenge social conformity, and gain empowerment in a male-dominated society, the cultural manifestations of the cyborg in the selected Japanese live-action films and animations I have discussed present very different scenarios. These cyborgs, I argue, are creatures of man's fantasy and products of male anxieties, rather than functioning to challenge gendered and other oppressions. Representations of the cyborg, I argue, are not only constructed in specific historical, social, economic, and political contexts, but also tend to replay patriarchal gender ideologies and the Oedipal drama, as well as patriarchal religious discourses.

Instead of representing Haraway's version of the cyborg – one that excludes the myth of origin, Oedipal identification, and an essentialist notion of religion – these Japanese cinematic texts are re-inscribed with patriarchal and psychoanalytic norms through the gender coding of the cyborg. The films demonstrate the notion of 'technofetishism' – technology as fetishised commodity – by investing social, political, and religious values in the cyborgisation of the body. In this sense, technofetishism works to uphold patriarchal dualistic ideologies, but at the same time it cannot help but reveal the indeterminate, transgressive, and hybrid identities of the

cyborg. This hybrid embodiment, then, must, as Haraway suggests, perform a destabilisation of traditional hierarchal binary oppositions (Self and Other, mind and body, human and nonhuman, organic and technological, natural and artificial, and living and dead), which have been legitimated in order to preserve social order. The techno-fetishist appeal of the cyborg works through disavowal, displacement, and compensation for the dissolution of boundaries, as a defence against gender anxiety, especially in relation to castration perceived as the loss of patriarchal phallic power. Since the gender division between the feminine and the masculine fundamentally foregrounds dualistic binaries, constructs patriarchal power, and sustains the patriarchal order, the cyborg is a figure always accompanied by an anxiety caused by its potential subversion of the traditional dualistic model of power structured by gender division. In this respect, these Japanese live-action films and animations exhibit an ambivalent and contradictory dynamic of inclusion, exclusion, and abjection: whereas the cyborg can be identified by its possibilities for transgression, subversion, and hybridity, all of which represent challenges to the patriarchal order, what we find is that the cyborg is repeatedly used strategically to re-establish and re-affirm gendered division in order to maintain the social order.

In contrast to Haraway's argument that the figure of the cyborg functions to reject hegemonic interpretations of history, the cyborgs represented in these films are inextricably linked with Japan's postwar history: responses to the defeat of Japan in the Second World War, the American occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1952, and the Japanese economic growth and subsequent recession between the late 1980s and the 1990s. These cyborg figures become embodiments of a gender anxiety that is intensified by the social, economic, and political upheavals in postwar Japan. The cinematic cyborgs I have discussed can be classified into three types according to their exaggerated treatments of traditional gender divisions. The first group are hypermasculine in their excessive violence, invulnerable bodies, physical prowess, and heterosexuality. The second type is that of the monstrous feminine, with their abject, hysterical, and maternal female bodies. The final figure is that of the phallic woman who either has an

external phallus or appropriates phallic attributes to perform masculinity. The excessive gender performativity in these constructions of the cyborg not only serves to preserve and reinforce traditional gender roles and gender-based violence, but also functions to recuperate the phallic power that is threatened and challenged by the cyborg itself.

The first group of case studies explores ways in which the figure of the male cyborg uses the fetishisation of the cyborg body to replay the resolution of the Oedipus complex in order to restore the patriarchal order or phallic power. In Chapter 2, I argue that the cyborg finds an early manifestation in the form of the monster, Godzilla, hybrid of the American atom bomb and the Japanese god-dinosaur. The Godzilla monster is a technological fetish, functioning to disavow responsibility for the Second World War and the lack of masculine power caused by the defeat in war, and compensating for the lack of masculine nationalistic confidence. The monster cyborg is transformed from a national war victim/perpetrator into a Japanese national hero and patriarchal father figure through a process of repeated resurrections over a fifty-year period during which Japan becomes one of the richest countries in the world and recovers from its war trauma. Chapter 3 develops this argument in its analysis of the ultra-masculinist, ultra-violent, and ultra-heterosexual male characters in cyberpunk films. The technofetishism of these male bodies functions to compensate for anxieties caused by the Japanese economic bubble between the late 1980s and the early 1990s that threatens the Japanese hegemonic masculinity of the middle class salaryman, seen as crucial in maintaining the social order. However, the techno-fetishised cyborg not only conceals but also reveals masculine lack. The hypermasculine male cyborgs in the Japanese cyberpunk films constantly display the spectacle of hysterical masculinity when they suffer from the abjection of their cyborgised bodies, in a performative excess that both disavows and reveals masculine 'lack'.

The second group of case studies examines ways in which Japanese patriarchal ideology structures the misogynist representation of the female cyborg in relation to the notion of the monstrous feminine. The previous case studies argue that the construction of the male cyborg

must be understood within Japanese historical, economic, and political changes which profoundly affect constructions of masculinity. These images of the female cyborg – abject, maternal, and/or sexualised – also respond, I argue, to cultural changes in Japan, including the *kawaii* culture and *rorikon* subculture which fantasise and commodify cute, young, and erotised women. Chapter 4 uses the Ring franchise to examine ways in which the representation of the female cyborg, Sadako, a hybrid of technology, psychic power and the female ghost, is constructed by patriarchal ideology as a fetish object of the monstrous feminine in order to reinforce the horror of the female body in relation to biological, sexual, and feminine attributes. This techno-fetishisation does not operate to hide, replace, or substitute for the lack of phallus, however, but instead reveals the power of the monstrous female body. The cyborgisation of the female body represented in the Ring series strengthens rather than transgresses traditional gender roles, during a period of rapid technological change and resultant threats to those roles. Specifically, the films exaggerate the dangerous, destructive, and uncontrollable power of the female body in association with a horror of the feminisation of technology, in order to legitimate a patriarchal society which would eliminate such a threat as a means to reassure the social order. In like manner, Chapter 5 argues that technofetishism in the animations discussed here creates two types of female cyborg which combine the use of violence with an agile, beautiful, and powerful physique: the sexualised cyborg for private sexual services and the institutionalised cyborg for public policing. Both types are fetishised as the phallic woman because their bodies are built by a patriarchal technocracy. The former type has two models: one with an adult woman's body and the other with a girlish body. Both models are constructed with an excessive feminine body as beautiful and sexy, and with a 'feminine' personality (innocent and naïve), in order to disavow fear of sexual difference and satisfy the heterosexual male's sexual desires. However, the sexualised cyborg is also a reminder of the horror of the monstrous feminine and has to be punished or killed in order to restate the lack which is seen as characteristic of the female body. In contrast, the policing cyborg is constructed as a safe and comfortable techno-

fetish object since her body is deprived of reproductive, maternal, and sexual characteristics in order to provide the male spectator's voyeuristic pleasure in viewing the phallic woman.

The final case study investigates the cyborg in relation to ideas of the posthuman and the imagination of posthumanity. These ideas often have religious connotations in which the meaning and purpose of the cyborg are associated with the religious concepts of immortality, transcendence, and apocalypse. The live-action and animated films analysed in Chapter 6 depict a cyborgisation which is controlled by male technocrats who seek to transcend the limitations or constraints of the biological, natural, organic body. Nevertheless, the process of cyborgisation or the advent of posthumanity in fact intensifies the masculine qualities of competition, exploitation, and aggression which in turn results in a potential apocalypse for humanity. In these films, not only the notion of humanity but also the transcendental notion of the posthuman is gendered as masculine, and simultaneously suffused with anxiety. Thus, gender anxiety, the crisis of masculinity in particular, is never absent from a representation of the posthuman that is re-inscribed with patriarchal ideologies and follows the Oedipal trajectory. Whether cyborgisation leads to the eradication of the body or creates a form of posthumanity that dehumanises the masculine image of humanity, the cyborg's ultimate act is to reinstate traditional gender divides. Thus, in *Casshern* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The End of Evangelion*, the only heterosexual male cyborg appears to either kill the posthumans or abolish a cyborgisation that threatens to erode the boundary between the human and the nonhuman, and the only heterosexual female human or cyborg remains at the end of the films in order to produce offspring who will survive in the aftermath of the destruction caused by transcendental cyborgisation.

Finally, then, this thesis has argued that the representation of the cyborg in the Japanese science fiction films and animations examined here veers far from Haraway's radical reading of a cyborg which would challenge, question, and subvert patriarchal gender ideologies. These cinematic cyborgs are profoundly gendered, serving the function of upholding patriarchal

ideologies under conditions shaped by the changing contexts of postwar Japan's social, political, and economic history.

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Godzilla: Tokyo S.O.S. Dir. Masaaki Tezuka. Pref. Noboru Kaneko, Miho Yoshioka, and Mitsuki Koga. 2003. Sony, 2004. DVD.

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Spriggan. Dir. Hirotugu Kawasaki. Pref. Koyasu Takehito, Morikubo Shotaro, and Tamagawa Sakiko. Studio 4°C, Bandai Visual, and TBS, 1998. Animation.

Star Trek: First Contact. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. Pref. Patrick Stewart, Jonathan Frakes, and Brent Spiner. Paramount, 1996. Film.

Star Wars. Dir. George Lucas. Pref. Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, and Carrie Fisher. 20th Century Fox, 1977. Film.

Terminator 2. Dir. James Cameron. Pref. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton, and Edward Furlong. TriStar, 1991. Film.

Tetsuo I: Iron Man. Dir. Shinya Tsukamoto. Pref. Kei Fujiwara and Tomoro Taguchi. 1989. Palisades Tartan, 2002. DVD.

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The Black Scorpion. Dir. Edward Ludwig. Pref. Richard Denning, Mara Corday, and Carlos Rivas. Warner Bros, 1957. Film.

The Crazy Ray. Dir. René Clair. Pref. Henri Rollan, Charles Martinelli, and Louis Pré Fils. Film Arts Guid, 1925. Film.

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The Day the World Ended. Dir. Roger Corman. Pref. Richard Denning, Lori Nelson, and Adele Jergens. ARC, 1956. Film.

The Deadly Mantis. Dir. Nathan H. Juran. Pref. Craig Stevens, William Hopper, and Pat Conway. Universal, 1957. Film.

The Death Ray. Dir. Lev Kuleshov. Pref. Porfiri Podobed, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and Sergei Komarov. Goskino, 1925. Film.

The Fly. Dir. David Cronenberg. Pref. Jeff Goldblum, Geena Davis, and John Getz. 20th Century Fox, 1986. Film.

The Grudge. Dir. Takashi Shimizu. Pref. Sarah Michelle Gellar, Jason Behr, and Clea Duvall. Columbia, 2004. Film.

The Grudge 2. Dir. Takashi Shimizu. Pref. Amber Tamblyn, Jennifer Beals, and Sarah Michelle Gellar. Columbia, 2006. Film.

The Humanoid. Dir. Shin'ichi Masaki. Pref. Runa Akiyama, Sarah-Anne Dafoe, and Michael Dobson. Central Park Media, 1986. Animation.

The Impossible Voyage. Dir. Georges Méliès. Pref. Georges Méliès. Georges Méliès, 1904. Film.

The Incredible Shrinking Man. Dir. Jack Arnold. Pref. Grant Williams, Randy Stuart, and Paul Langton. Universal, 1957. Film.

The Katsura Tree of Love. Dir. Hiromasa Nomura. Pref. Kinuyo Tanaka, Ken Uehara, and Bakudankozo. Shochiku, 1938. Film.

Them!. Dir. Gordon Douglas. Pref. James Whitmore, Edmund Gwenn, and Joan Weldon. Warner Bros, 1954. Film.

The Matrix. Dir. Andy Wachowski and Larry Wachowski. Pref. Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, and Carrie-Anne Moss. Warner Bros, 1999. Film.

The Matrix Reloaded. Dir. Andy Wachowski and Lana Wachowski. Pref. Keanu Reeves, Laurence Fishburne, and Carrie-Anne Moss. Warner Bros, 2003. Film.

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The Mysterious Island. Dir. Benjamin Christensen, Lucian Hubbard, and Maurice Tourneur. Pref. Lionel Barrymore, Jacqueline Gadsden, and Lloyd Hughes. Metro Goldwyn Mayer, 1929. Film.

The Ring. Dir. Gore Verbinski. Pref. Naomi Watts, Martin Henderson, and Brian Cox. DreamWorks, 2002. Film.

The Ring Two. Dir. Hideo Nakata. Pref. Naomi Watts, Sissy Spacek, and Simon Baker. DreamWorks, 2005. Film.

The Spiral. Dir. Joji Iida. Pref. Koichi Sato, Miki Nakatani, and Hinako Saeki. 1998. Warrior, 2003. DVD.

The Stepford Wives. Dir. Bryan Forbes. Pref. Katharine Ross, Paula Prentiss, and Peter Masterson. Columbia, 1975. Film.

The Terminator. Dir. James Cameron. Pref. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Michael Biehn, and Linda Hamilton. Orion, 1984. Film.

The Thing from Another World. Dir. Christian Nyby. Pref. Margaret Sheridan, Kenneth Tobey, and Douglas Spencer. RKO Radio, 1951. Film.

The War of the Worlds. Dir. Byron Haskin. Pref. Gene Barry and Ann Robinson. Paramount, 1953. Film.

Things to Come. Dir. William Cameron Menzies. Pref. Raymond Massey, Ralph Richardson, and Cedric Hardwicke. London, 1936. Film.

Transatlantic Tunnel. Dir. Maurice Elvey. Pref. Richard Dix, Leslie Banks, and Madge Evans. Gaumont, 1935. Film.

Tron: Legacy. Dir. Joseph Kosinski. Pref. Jeff Bridges, Garrett Hedlund, and Olivia Wilde. Walt Disney, 2010. Film.

Venus War. Dir. Yoshikazu Yasuhiko. Pref. Goro Naya, Anna Alba, and Bradley Cole. Bandai Visual, Gakken, and Shochiku, 1989. Animation.

Videodrome. Dir. David Cronenberg. Pref. James Woods, Deborah Harry, and Sonja Smits. CFDC, 1983. Film.

What Is Your Name?. Dir. Oba Hideo. Pref. Keiko Kishi and Keiji Sada. Shochiku, 1953. Film.

WXIII: Patlabor the Movie 3. Dir. Fumihiko Takayama. Pref. Katsuhiko Watabiki, Hiroaki Hirata, and Atsuko Tanaka. Shochiku, 2002. Animation.

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