Locating Heisei in Japanese Film: The Historical Imagination of the Lost Decades

a virtual lecture by Marc Yamada

This presentation will discuss the films of the “lost decades” of Japan’s Heisei period (1989–2019)—three decades of economic stagnation, social malaise, and natural disaster. Through an examination of the films of major Heisei filmmakers—including Kurosawa Kiyoshi, Ichikawa Jun, Kore-eda Hirokazu, Sono Shion, and others—it explores the dissonance between the dominant history of Japan’s recent past and the representation of this past in the popular imagination of the period. Along with posing a challenge to normative accounts of history, Heisei film, this presentation will also suggest, explores new forms of referentiality between contemporary Japan and its past.

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