

**SHAPES OF NIKKEI FEELINGS: TIZUKA YAMASAKI'S CINEMA OF EMOTION IN
THE MILLENNIUM FILMS**

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Emy Takada, PhD

University of Pittsburgh, 2021

This dissertation is the first critical study that examines the millennium work of Brazilian filmmaker Tizuka Yamasaki, particularly the four films that she produced, directed, and released since 2000—*Gaijin*, *Love Me as I Am* (2005), *Xuxa in the Mystery of Feiurinha* (2009), *Aparecida: The Miracle* (2010), and *Encantados* (2014). They are all representative of a style that has often characterized Tizuka's work—one that evokes the feelings of the heart. Thus, the frequent allusion to her first films of the 1980s as Cinema of Emotion. Here, I discuss how the place of emotion in Tizuka's millennium work invites us to reconsider the legacy of Cinema of Emotion by exploring how her Japanese Brazilian, or Nikkei, heritage influences the way feelings take shape in her work. In doing so, I expand the scope of Cinema of Emotion by redefining it from a cinematic style to an intellectual practice that confronts racial, ethnical, cultural, and epistemological markers and the limits of emotion. In the end, Tizuka's millennium films reveal a long-lived cinematic testimony of how feelings take form from a Nikkei perspective and invokes novel engagement among Brazilians.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my loves Mark and Bowie.

PREFACE

In 2019, I spent three weeks looking for materials about Tizuka Yamasaki at the Brazilian Cinematheque in São Paulo. Among the materials that I found were newspaper articles, magazine clips, film reviews, film festival catalogs, scripts, and transcripts of interviews that had been collected since the 1970s. There were hundreds of pages in print, and nearly nothing was digitized. The solution was to take pictures—I took six hundred of them. As for Tizuka’s films, they were available on tape, but the Cinematheque had been short of budget, so they were unable to provide me with digital copies. Luckily, I was able to acquire them informally from VHS collectors from different parts of Brazil. After taking a year studying and trying to understand the great amount of information held in those materials, I was surprised to realize how much of it was new. Here, I merge moments of those materials that stood out to me with my own views on Tizuka’s films and practice, in an effort to paint as textured a portrait as possible of one the most important Japanese Brazilian creative minds of our times.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It may be true that one has to choose between ethics and aesthetics, but it is no less true that whichever one chooses, one will always find the other at the end of the road. For the very definition of the human condition should be in the mise-en-scène itself.

—Jean-Luc Godard¹

[The ordinary's] visceral force keys a search to make sense of it, to incorporate it into an order of meaning. But it lives first as an actual charge immanent to acts and scenes—a relay.

—Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects*

In this project, I explore the millennium work of Brazilian filmmaker Tizuka Akiyoshi Yamasaki (or simply Tizuka, pronounced Chee-zu-kah,) (figure 1), particularly the four films that she produced, directed, and released since 2000—*Gaijin, Love Me as I Am* (*Gaijin, Ama-me Como Sou*, 2005) (a.k.a. *Gaijin 2*), *Xuxa in the Mystery of Feiurinha* (*Xuxa e o Mistério de Feiurinha*, 2009), *Aparecida: The Miracle* (*Aparecida: O Milagre*, 2010), and *Encantados* (2014). They are all representative of a style that has often characterized Tizuka's work—one that evokes the feelings of the heart. Thus, the frequent allusion to her first films of the 1980s as Cinema of Emotion. Here, I discuss how the place of emotion in Tizuka's millennium work invites us to reconsider the legacy of Cinema of Emotion by exploring how her Nikkei heritage influences the

¹ This was cited in SONTAG 147. Sontag's compelling analysis of Godard's expression through thinking populates this entire Introduction, be it in the logic, in the language or in the emotion.

way feelings take shape in her work. In doing so, I expand the scope of Cinema of Emotion by redefining it from a cinematic style to an intellectual practice that confronts racial, ethnical, cultural, and epistemological markers and the limits of emotion. Tizuka's millennium films reveal a four-decade old cinematic testimony of how feelings take form from a Nikkei perspective and invokes novel engagement among Brazilians.



Figure 1. Brazilian Nikkei filmmaker Tizuka Yamasaki.

To date, Tizuka has had twelve theatrical releases: *Gaijin*, *Roads to Freedom* (*Gaijin*, *Caminhos da Liberdade*, 1980) (a.k.a. *Gaijin I*), *Parahyba Mulher Macho* (1983), *Patriamada* (1985), *Crystal Moon* (*Lua de Cristal*, 1990), *Fica Comigo* (1996), *O Noviço Rebelde* (1997), *Xuxa Requebra* (1999), *Xuxa Popstar* (2000), and her four millennium films. Her body of work also includes nine short films made between 1970 and 1991,² three TV series including the award-

² None of these short films is available for viewing at the Brazilian Cinematheque.

winning *O Pagador de Promessas* (1988), three soap operas, three operas, a play, the documentary *Tomie* (2014) made for a museum exhibition and her latest work, *1817: A Revolução Esquecida* (2017), a made-for-TV narrative film. Considering that Tizuka was born in 1949, that most of her films were successfully commercially when released in Brazil, that her combined Xuxa films holds the highest box-office of the 1990s despite the film industry's period of stagnation from 1989 to 1995, that she produced innumerable films through her production company Centro de Produção e Comunicação (CPC) and later through Scena Films, and that she also diversified with TV series, soap operas and operas, it is an impressive body of work. Unfortunately, many of her films have not been released for foreign distribution or seen at all in the US with the exception of showings at film festivals in places with significant Latin presence, such as Los Angeles and Miami.

However, Tizuka's first three feature-length films, which were all completed in the early 1980s, caught the attention of many film scholars, notably Leslie L. Marsh who dedicated a whole chapter to discuss them in her *Brazilian Women's Filmmaking: From Dictatorship to Democracy* (2012). For Marsh, those films were spaces that provided emotional solidarity to people from groups that lacked social power, through melodramatic assessments of their struggles.³ But if there was a general impression, conveyed in part through weighty allusions and citations, that her emotional films were highly effective political and sociological platforms, there was also a suspicion that they were, simply, a common expressive mode in Latin America that was guaranteed to tap into the cultural imagination.⁴ In any case, Tizuka was praised as a filmmaker for those

³ See MARSH 88-96, for an insightful analysis on how Tizuka's 1980s films employ the melodramatic mode to offer feminist interventions in the Brazilian politics and cultural identity.

⁴ See Darlene Sadlier's *Latin American Melodrama: Passion, Pathos, and Entertainment* (2009) for a thorough analysis of the affective power of Latin American films.

films. But the reverence for her early directing accomplishments proved to be unsustainable. When the 1990s came and Brazil's filmmaking industry became stagnant due to the closure of the State film enterprise Embrafilme, Tizuka turned to direct many commercially driven films and content for TV. Three of those films had the largest audiences of the 1990s,⁵ and she was recognized as an expert in making mainstream family films. However, critics could not make sense of how a serious art-house filmmaker could be unjudgmental towards commercial cinema and TV. For Tizuka, her reputation was undermined: "The cinematographic class started to ignore me. I was seen as the traitor to auteur cinema."⁶

As the 1990s becomes past, Tizuka's post-2000 films are unlike her previous films, but it is not self-evident how the films achieve the meaning they have. There are serious questions about how the larger problems Tizuka is interested in fit with and emerge out of the complexity of each millennium film. A large part of this project is therefore an attempt to work through the interpretative challenge that the films' visual and aural details pose. But these are intricate works, and it is hard to make their strength visible and accessible only by staying with the weave of image and sound. To better approach and understand these films, this project reworks two aspects of Tizuka's process—first, it makes a more complex and deeper understanding of Cinema of Emotion, and second, it offers a novel depiction of Tizuka's unique perspective as a Japanese Brazilian, one that is not limited to the boundaries of her ethnically-themed work. Several distinct yet interwoven concerns run through these films involving cinema, class, national and ethnic

⁵ *Crystal Moon* (1990) had about 4.7 million spectators, *O Noviço Rebelde* (1997) about 1.5 million, and *Xuxa Requebra* (1999) about 2.1 million (EDUARDO).

⁶ "A classe cinematográfica passou a me ignorar. Eu era vista como a traidora do cinema de autor" (EDUARDO). All translations here on after are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

identities, epistemologies, all complicated by the place of enunciation. Taken together, they form the core of Tizuka's late cinematic project—a sustained engagement with what she sees as cinema's debt to urgent matters of our times.

In the following parts of this introduction, I give some sense of the central issues of this project by placing Tizuka within a broader cinematic, intellectual and enunciative context that illuminates the terms and arguments of her millennium films. The intention is to give an initial picture of the ambitions of Tizuka's millennium films, the interpretive challenges they pose, and what we learn from them.

1.1 METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1.1 A Dialogue Between the Cinematheque Archives, Tizuka's Films and Shared Experiences

The methodology that I chose for this project consists of a conversation between Tizuka, her critics and me. I draw Tizuka's perspectives from interviews she has given and articles she has written about her experience making her films, which were found for the most part at the Brazilian Cinematheque in São Paulo. This approach allows for a full-bodied understanding of Tizuka's intellect and decision-making process. I generalize the second participant of this conversation as "critics." They include newspaper and magazine film reviewers, film scholars, and testimonials by co-workers and audience. The last participant is a combination of my readings of Tizuka's films, my readings of essays on the experience of Japanese Brazilian immigrants, and my own

experiences.⁷ The inclusion of essays of early Brazilian Nikkei intellectuals such as Tomoo Handa (1906-1996), Teiiti Suzuki (1911-1996) and Rokurô Kôyama (1886-1976) is fundamental because Tizuka's work is notably neglected as a source of knowledge about the experience of Japanese Brazilian immigrants if compared to their work, which is often cited and alluded to. In this project, I show how Tizuka's work gives relevance to seminal works by those authors in current times.

1.1.2 An Offspring of Cinema Novo?

In the introduction to her analysis of Tizuka's 1980s films, Leslie Marsh describes Tizuka as an *offspring* of Cinema Novo directors, alongside Ana Carolina Teixeira Soares (1943-), and as one of the first women filmmakers to establish a continuous career trajectory in Brazilian filmmaking (89). But what does Marsh mean by offspring? Perhaps she means the fact that virtually no woman filmmaker has been associated with Cinema Novo as a collaborator, and that the closest to a female collaboration was in the form of an apprenticeship. In that regard, Ana Carolina maintains that she has never worked with Cinema Novo filmmakers.⁸ Tizuka, however, has a different experience and view. Marsh mentions that when Tizuka worked as an assistant to Nelson Pereira dos Santos on *O Amuleto de Ogum* (1974) she gained an appreciation for Brazil's diversity and a concern for national identity, and that while assisting with direction and production

⁷ I am a Japanese Brazilian woman who became interested in learning how to make films in order to document realities, who, once trained, shot, and edited what I believed corresponded to those realities, and who saw herself in need to work in different areas of a microcosmos called the film industry. So, I know intimately the views and experiences that Tizuka shares in her interviews and articles. I feel compelled to include glimpses of my lived experience to show how the exercise of emotion proposed by Tizuka makes my thinking clearer by making me aware of my own.

⁸ Stated by Ana Carolina during an interview given to me in 2009.

in Glauber Rocha's *A Idade da Terra* (1980), she “gained a vision of cinema as an arena for political activism and how to transform one reality into something else” (89). However influenced she might have been, for Marsh, Tizuka's work represented a significant departure in style and substance from Cinema Novo directors because of Tizuka's heavy reliance on the melodramatic mode. Although Marsh does recall that Darlene Sadlier has shown that key traits of melodramatic mode “were never completely absent from the radical cinema [of Cinema Novo]” (109), she asserts that in Tizuka's debut film *Gaijin 1*, her employment of the melodramatic mode differed from her Cinema Novo predecessors because it openly foregrounded the “feminine” as part of her political analysis and activism. Moreover, Marsh asserts that through the protagonists in *Gaijin 1* and *Parahyba Mulher Macho* (1983), that is, iconoclastic, defiant women of the early twentieth century, Tizuka contributed to “suture the political milieu of the past” that set the ground for *Patriamada* (1985), which reflected “women's desire for direct engagement in politics” (89). So, if Tizuka's employment of the melodramatic approach differed from Cinema Novo's, perhaps it is her on-set experience with them that makes her their offspring:

Because I was like a daughter of Cinema Novo, I had an intellectual worry about the country, in promoting a cultural revolution and a new esthetic, but I can say that I was not influenced esthetically either by Glauber or Nelson when I made my first film. *Gaijin*, *Caminhos da Liberdade* was pure emotion. Because it was a personal story, I was drawn to my emotion and the result was the creation of a particular language.⁹

⁹ “Por ser um pouco cria do Cinema Novo, eu tinha uma preocupação intelectual com o país, em promover uma revolução cultural e uma nova estética, mas posso dizer que não fui influenciada esteticamente nem pelo Glauber nem pelo Nelson quando realizei meu primeiro filme. *Gaijin*, *Caminhos da Liberdade* foi emoção pura. Como se tratava de uma história pessoal, fui a reboque da minha emoção e o resultado foi uma linguagem particular” (ARAI 279).

Although I do not fully agree that Tizuka was not influenced esthetically by Glauber Rocha and Nelson Pereira dos Santos as my reading of *Patriamada* will show in Chapter 3, Tizuka was truly developing a particular filmmaking practice that resonated with the Cinema Novo tradition but did not emerge from it. However, there was one common goal that was certainly cultivated by Tizuka while working with the two directors, and that was one of the main traits that sustained the spirit of Cinema Novo filmmakers at least during the early years of the collaborative—to work on an ongoing process of exploration. The way in which Tizuka’s exploration partakes is precisely what she calls her “particular language.” And the topic of her exploration is emotion.

The language that I just used to sum up Cinema Novo’s and Tizuka’s common goal is drawn from Glauber Rocha’s “The Aesthetics of Hunger.” In 1965, while Tizuka was still in high school, Rocha famously presented his manifesto at the Latin American Cinema Conference in Genoa, Italy. The director of *Black God, White Devil* (*Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol*, 1964) spoke about how underdevelopment, hunger and violence were the engines behind the politically engaged cinema of Cinema Novo. He argued that the colonizers would recognize the colonized only through acts of violence (which resonated with Frantz Fanon’s ideas), both in the realm of the real and in the realm of representation. The first paragraph of the manifesto describes the issue:

Dispensing with the informative introduction that has become so characteristic of discussions about Latin America, I prefer to discuss the relationship between our culture and “civilized” culture in less limiting terms than those which characterize the analysis of the European observer. Thus, while Latin America laments its general misery, the foreign observer cultivates a taste for that misery, not as a tragic symptom, but merely as a formal element in his field of interest. The Latin American neither communicates his real misery to the “civilized” man, nor does the “civilized” man truly comprehend the misery of the

Latin American (MACKENZIE 324).

Rocha's point was that the topic of Latin American misery was looked at by foreign observers, which not only included viewers of Brazilian films and critics alike from overseas¹⁰ but also nationals, as an object of study rather than a real existential problem. Such viewers had a detached and distant point of view that revealed that they did not understand it. Hungry Brazilians, on the other hand, did understand their own misery but only lamented it instead of educating the foreign viewer about the tragic reality of their misery.¹¹ Cinema Novo, on the other hand, had been depicting it since the early 1960s through "characters eating dirt, characters eating roots, characters stealing to eat, characters killing to eat, characters fleeing to eat, dirty, ugly, skinless characters, living in dirty, ugly, dark houses: [the] hungry gallery that Cinema Novo identified as misery."¹²

¹⁰ Randal Johnson and Robert Stam give an overview of who Rocha might have been addressing in his manifesto: "Brazilian Cinema, and especially Cinema Novo, shares with Soviet film of the twenties, Italian Neo-Realism, and the French *nouvelle vague* a penchant for theorizing its own cinematic practice. There three film movements represent more than a mere parallel, of course; they constitute concrete historical influences as evidenced in frequent allusions by the Brazilian director to Eisenstein and Vertov, Rossellini and Zavattini, Truffaut and Godard" (55).

¹¹ Rocha's assertions in his manifesto sound like a filmmaker's response to the call to action by Paulo Emílio Salles Gomes, one of Brazil's first film critic-historians and the founder of the Brazilian Cinematheque, who, in his seminal article "Uma situação colonial?" (1960), argued that the struggle for the appreciation of Brazilian cinema was inseparable from social, economic, political, and psychological barriers that had prevented a true national cinema to flourish to begin with. For Gomes, film distributors in Brazil would not take the risk to promote national cinema because its revenue would not meet foreign films revenue. Not unlikely, filmmakers would make films that they despised claiming that the Brazilian cinemagoer would not accept films that were not made in the molds of foreign films (American, Italian, and French for the most part). Moreover, unlike a film critic from the *New York Times* who would correspond with Elia Kazan or one from the *Observateur* who would talk to Henri-Georges Clouzot and then publish the findings to the public, the Brazilian film critic did not have the motivation to communicate with Brazilian directors because they did not have readers who would appreciate such dialogue. For Gomes, the Brazilian public was marked by an underdevelopment that manifested in the form of their (un)appreciation of the cinematic form. Gomes called Brazilian national cinema a "disturbing element for the world," a "something else" not possible to be understood by common viewers nor specialized intellectuals, be them nationals or foreigners.

¹² As described in Glauber Rocha's Brazilian version of the manifesto: "De *Aruanda a Vidas Secas*, o Cinema Novo narrou, descreveu, poetizou, discursou, analisou, excitou os temas da fome: personagens comendo terra, personagens comendo raízes, personagens roubando para comer, personagens matando

The concluding paragraph of the manifesto sums up the line of action of the movement:

The time when Cinema Novo had to explain itself in order to exist has passed. Cinema Novo is an ongoing process of exploration that is making our thinking clearer, freeing us from the debilitating delirium of hunger (MACKENZIE 327).

In this final remark, Rocha sums up his idea that Cinema Novo has the intellectual and cinematic ability to convey the process of freeing Brazilians minds from their subordinate condition by showing that only Brazilians can own their own hunger.

In my view, what Tizuka inherits from Cinema Novo, and what makes her an offspring of the Cinema Novo directors, is the ongoing emotion of their narrative and the purposefulness of their practice. My intention is not to suggest that Rocha's manifesto was Cinema Novo's only ambition, but I will give it such status for the purpose of imagining how Tizuka's esthetics of emotion dialogues with the esthetics of hunger. As such, if for the esthetics of hunger Brazilians are hungry because of their social condition, foreigners see Brazilian hunger as a sort of for-export commodity, and Cinema Novo intellectually understands and cinematically demonstrates how Brazilians can emerge out of its subordinate condition, Tizuka's project adequately resonates with it. In this project, I seek to demonstrate: 1) how in Tizuka's esthetics of emotion Brazilians are emotional because of their social condition; 2) how foreigners see Brazilian emotion as a sort of for-export commodity; and 3) how Cinema of Emotion intellectually understands and cinematically demonstrates how Brazilians can emerge from its subordinate condition. In order to accomplish this, we need to go back forty years and study the shaping of Tizuka's intellectual and

para comer, personagens fugindo para comer, personagens sujas, feias, descarnadas, morando em casas sujas, feias, escuras: foi esta galeria de famintos que identificou o Cinema Novo com o miserabilismo" (CINTRA).

cinematic practice and exercise of emotion. But first, we need to explore the extent of Tizuka's unique perspective as a Brazilian of Japanese descent, that is, a first-generation Brazil-born Nikkei.

1.2 PERSPECTIVE: NIKKEI FEELINGS

1.2.1 Who Are the Nikkei?

According to Japan's The Association of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad, the term Nikkei refers to "[Japanese] people who have relocated overseas on a permanent basis, as well as their second, third and fourth generation descendants, irrespective of current nationality and degree of Japanese ethnicity."¹³ A map on their website shows that, as of 2017, there were approximately 3,800,00 Nikkei living in their adopted countries, the largest communities located in Brazil, the US, the Philippines, China, Canada, and Peru ("Who are 'Nikkei & Japanese Abroad'?"). American *sansei*¹⁴ Karen Tei Yamashita, on the other hand, describes Nikkei from a more personal lived and researched experience: "of Japanese ancestry or lineage; belonging to the Japanese tribe; however, some dictionaries translate this word to mean Japanese emigrant, or even Japanese American" (*Circle K Cycles* 10). And yet, São Paulo's Bunkyo—Brazilian Society of Japanese Culture and Social Assistance—, includes "Japanese culture sympathizers" in the realm of Nikkei.¹⁵

¹³ In this project, I use "Nikkei" as the more overarching term to describe any generation of Japanese descendant. I will use the terms *issei*, *nisei* and *sansei* in different ways later, depending on which generation of Japanese descendant is referred to.

¹⁴ *Sansei* is a second-generation of Japanese descendant born outside of Japan.

¹⁵ "[s]impatizantes da cultura japonesa" (BOCCHINI).

The lack of a consensus in defining Nikkei demonstrates the fluid mindset and heterogeneous experiences of Japanese foreign communities. Some Nikkei spend a lifetime searching for their cultural and ethnical identities, demonstrating their fears, frustrations, and moments of enlightenment, only to fall into doubt again.¹⁶ For some, it could be a rational journey, but for all, it is emotional because it pertains to who they were, might be, and can potentially become.¹⁷ One Nikkei who explores this topic is Karen Tei Yamashita, whose *Circle K Cycles* (2001) takes us on a journey where Brazilians who emigrate to Japan as *dekasegi*¹⁸ face hardships in the hands of Japan's reverence for the "pure Japanese." To explain the dimension of that view to the Nikkei, Yamashita describes how she felt during a research trip to Japan when the Japanese people only identified her as a "pure Japanese" after she gave a full description of her parents' and grandparents' Japanese lineage of ancestors. What could have meant to be a compliment was taken as an offense because Yamashita had grown up in the US where "many people, including the Japanese, had long struggled with the pain of racism and exclusion, [so] [p]urity of race was not something valued" (12). For the Japanese American, the pain of the memory of the relocation

¹⁶ In 1998, I received a scholarship to travel to Shiga-ken, the province where my paternal grandfather's family was originally from. I then spent a year in that province's capital Ôtsu studying computer design and immersing myself in Japanese culture. I was quite fluent in Japanese, but I was puzzled by my Japanese colleagues' unwillingness to accept my vocabulary when I used the ordinary and every-day word *denki gama* (rice cooker). They laughed at me because that was supposedly old Japanese and that these days, they call it *suihanki*. For the first time, I realized that my Japanese was fluent but not current. As such, it placed my Japanese purity in the past.

¹⁷ In 2018, as I was considering what to do for my MFA in Motion Picture Production thesis film, the thought of sharing on screen my experience growing up as a Japanese Brazilian could not leave my mind. I was in Miami, so the audience for my film was American with a hint of South America and the Caribbean. Looking at my thesis film as an opportunity to tell a story that was unknown to many, I went back to Brazil and shot *Sansei* (2019), a short in which I reflect upon some defining aspects of my cultural heritage in the way I think and live.

¹⁸ *Dekasegi* is a "verb meaning to work away from home; however, Brazilians and other migrant workers of Japanese descent have turned this work into a noun meaning: migrant laborer in Japan (spelled *dekassegui* in Portuguese)" (*Circle K Cycles* 10).

camps and the fight for compensation was still an ongoing struggle.¹⁹

But Yamashita still wanted to understand what being a pure Japanese might be, “[w]hat was the essence, the thing that might survive assimilation and integration into a new culture and society, the thing that tied communities in the North to those in the South and to the Far East” (*Circle K Cycles* 12). Her questions had to be answered somewhere else and she chose Brazil. In that country, Yamashita sought to understand “the efforts of Japanese pioneers, their clearing of virgin forests, their extensive accomplishments in agriculture, their social structures and political activity, their leisure, and their ideas . . . who these people were, why they came, what they believed. [She] wanted to know the answers to questions that might take a lifetime to discover: What is education? What is freedom? What is happiness?” (*Circle K Cycles* 12). In Brazil, the home to the largest ethnic Japanese population outside of Japan,²⁰ Yamashita met descendants of immigrants from the Meiji period who still incarnated their Japanese communities. There was no doubt they were purely Japanese.

1.2.2 The Brazilian Nikkei

When the first Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil onboard the *Kasato Maru* on June 18, 1908, they had big dreams. They had left an impoverished homeland. The Port of Santos

¹⁹ During WWII, hundreds of Brazilian Nikkei were interned at relocation camps but not in the extent that happened to US Nikkei. In general, those interned in Brazilian camps were new arrivals to Brazil and not those who were already established in the country. As we will see in more detail in Chapter 2, the war violence against the Brazilian Nikkei was actually done by fellow Nikkei who belonged to Shindo Renmei, a group that rejected the idea that Japan had been defeated.

²⁰ As of July 2020, Brazil is the home of almost 2 million Japanese immigrants and their descendants. It is estimated that there are 3.8 million Nikkei around the world (BOCCHINI).

represented a gateway of hope for the promised better life, one that would compensate the sadness of having left behind their family, origins, customs, and tradition rooted in an ancient past. Many Japanese families followed a similar path of sacrifice and hope. They were placed in different parts of Brazil, but the majority ended up in the southern parts of the country where there was a need to fill a labor shortage in the coffee plantations. Those *colônias* (colonies) became microcosmos of Japan and as such, much of Japanese language, culture, customs, traditions, and beliefs were cherished, passed on from generation to generation, and kept intact. But to many, the adversities they encountered in the foreign land killed their dreams of returning to Japan with easily earned money. To survive and, most importantly, to thrive they had to be patient, disciplined, persevering and hard-working. As their children were born, their original dream of returning to Japan vanished due to World War II, and it was replaced with a determination to leave the plantation for the big city. A large number of plantations were located in the State of São Paulo, so they headed to the state capital, the city of São Paulo. With their presence growing in the city, the Nikkei contributed to the formation of the metropolis that it has become. Until today, three of the many immigrant populations that contributed the most to the rapid growth of the city are the Italian, the German, and the Japanese.²¹

²¹ My grandparents immigrated to Brazil for different reasons. My mother's father arrived in Brazil as a twelve-year-old with his parents and siblings. They were placed in a *colônia* called Registro, in the State of São Paulo. He did not work in coffee plantations but, instead, took clerical jobs from a young age (I remember him talking about not having had to get his fingers dirty, which revealed a type of hierarchical division among immigrants). He later moved to another *colônia*, Bastos, where he met my grandmother. My grandmother was brought to Brazil by her father along with her siblings. Her father was a Japanese navy officer, so she was educated in Japan at international schools and moved many times while growing up, which was uncommon at the time. Upon retirement, her father was offered a position as a royal guard but turned it down, fearing that such a commitment would "entrap" him. Instead, he took his family to Brazil where, at seventeen years old and holding a Japanese high school diploma, my grandmother was put to work in the plantation and never went back to school. Her older sister dreamed of attending

The Nikkei influx kept occurring throughout the following decades. In 1973, the last ship of Japanese immigrants arrived in Santos. After that, the immigration agreement between the Japanese and Brazilian governments ended in 1981. That story could have stopped there but in 1986 it took a reverse turn, when Brazilians started migrating to Japan to take on low-skilled factory jobs. On June 1, 1990, the new trend was written into another immigration agreement between the Japanese and the Brazilian governments. As of 2003, the number of Japanese immigrants to Brazil, around 250,000, coincided with the number of Brazilians who had left to work in Japan, around 265,000. In Japan, their Japanese purity was questioned.

1.2.3 Being Nikkei

The immigrants need to live in a group in order to survive physically and culturally, because they feel that any

university but was discouraged by their father who feared for her inclination for Communism. In many ways, my maternal grandparents were like many early immigrants who had arrived in Brazil brought by their parents with the idea that they would be able to take their families back to Japan in a few years with enough savings. But, as the war broke out, they had to adopt Brazil as their home and moved to the city of São Paulo where their children went to high school, college, and became as prominent as my uncle who was once the country's Minister of Mines and Energy. The background of my paternal grandparents was different. My grandfather went to Brazil as an adult along with his brother and without a family. Having decided to get married, he went back to Japan looking for a bride and was arranged to marry my grandmother who was fifteen years younger. My grandmother was from a prominent family from the Kinki region of Japan, which includes metropolitan Osaka, Kobe, and Kyoto. In her early twenties, she divorced her first husband, which brought much shame to her family. When the family learned that a forty-year-old man had just arrived from his "adventure" in Brazil looking for a bride, they quickly arranged the marriage and sent my grandmother away. This story was omitted by my father but shared with me by my grandmother's nieces during my visit to Japan many decades later. Being late arrivals, unlike my mother's parents, my father's parents were not put in a *colônia*. They had the choice to remain in the city of São Paulo where my father and his sisters were born. Not unlike my mother's family, they all went to high school, college and had careers. For both sides of my family, it would have been unacceptable for their children to take low-skilled factory jobs in Japan at current times even if they were struggling financially—they had to prosper in Brazil, or elsewhere, doing high-skilled jobs. Although common among our family and friends, that positioning was certainly not a choice for many Brazilian Nikkei.

stranger can break their community and destroy their values, weaken it by affecting their culture and customs.

—Tizuka Yamasaki²²

Tizuka was born on May 2, 1949, in Porto Alegre, a city located in the southernmost part of Brazil, known for its large population of European heritage. When she was one, her family moved back to Atibaia, located an hour away from the city of São Paulo, where her *bachan* (grandmother) lived. Tizuka grew up there. After her sister Yurika Yamasaki (production designer for most of Tizuka's film) was born, her parents split up. Her father went back to Japan and passed away. Tizuka and Yurika were brought up by their strict mother who spoke better Japanese than Portuguese. Tizuka recalls how she was affected by her mother's personality:

She always made sure that I studied the Japanese language . . . I always understood that this concern with the presence of the ancestors' culture, common to all immigrants, was the most effective way to maintain the ethnic group and, therefore, the affect among the family. But my mother put so much pressure on me that I rejected all of that.²³

Tizuka's mother prepared her daughters to move from the countryside to study in the city of São Paulo. At fifteen, Tizuka moved to São Paulo by herself. Maybe to make her mother happy, she joined the so-called *sociedade japonesa* (Japanese society), which is a common way Nikkei in

²² “Os imigrantes precisam se agrupar para sobreviver fisicamente e culturalmente, porque sentem que um estranho qualquer pode romper a sua comunidade e destruir os seu valores, enfraquecê-la na sua cultura e nos seus costumes” (ROLIM).

²³ “Ela sempre fez questão de que eu estudasse o idioma japonês . . . Eu sempre entendi que essa preocupação com a presença da cultura dos antepassados, comum a todos os imigrantes, é a forma mais eficaz para a manutenção do grupo étnico e portanto, do grupo familiar afetivo. Mas minha mãe fez uma pressão tão grande que eu rejeitei tudo aquilo” (ARAI 277).

São Paulo refer to their community.²⁴ But that was overwhelming for her:

After ten years, I realized that I was not able to live well in São Paulo, the pressure was less from the urban society . . . than it was from the Japanese community. This expectation of a Japanese behavior from me, I had already experienced in Atibaia. The Japanese [Nikkei], for example, are unable to think that you are Brazilian, they call you *nisei* or *sansei*. This is already a form of segregation.²⁵

In 1969, she moved to Brasília to pursue her first studies in filmmaking at the University of Brasília, which eventually led to a desire to address the impact of her roots:

When I decided to go to film school at the University of Brasília (UnB), in 1970, I still hadn't realized that, deep down, I was just running away from my origins. But it was precisely away from my family, São Paulo and the Japanese community, that I had the chance to get to know a Brazil with an accent and very different faces from what I was used to. It was then that in the midst of that diversity, those stories that my grandmother had told in my childhood, and that I insisted on rejecting, burst into my memories. For the first time, I thought about making a documentary about the Japanese immigration.²⁶

²⁴ Another way of referring to the Japanese society in São Paulo is *colônia*. The term was borrowed and was in reference to the coffee plantation colonies where the Japanese immigrants were placed when they arrived in Brazil.

²⁵ “Depois de dez anos, eu percebi que, se não estava conseguindo viver bem em São Paulo, a pressão era menos da sociedade urbana . . . do que da comunidade japonesa. Esse negócio de exigir de mim um comportamento japonês eu já sentia em Atibaia. Os japoneses, por exemplo, são incapazes de achar que você é brasileira, chamam você de *nisei* ou *sansei*. Isso já é uma forma de segregação” (RODRIGUES 45).

²⁶ “Quando decidi fazer o curso de cinema na Universidade de Brasília (UnB), em 1970, ainda não percebia que, no fundo, estava apenas fugindo das minhas origens. Mas foi justamente longe da minha família, de São Paulo e da comunidade japonesa, que tive a chance de conhecer um Brasil com sotaque e rostos muito diferentes aos que estava acostumada. Foi então que no meio daquela diversidade, aquelas histórias que a minha avó contava na minha infância e que eu insistia em renegar, surgiram aos borbotões nas

The program at the University of Brasília closed down and Tizuka transferred to a different filmmaking program at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF) in Rio de Janeiro, which gave more emphasis to narrative rather than to documentary filmmaking. At thirty years old, Tizuka debuted her first motion picture *Gaijin I*, which was the grand winner of the 1980 Gramado Film Festival (Brazil's most important film award) taking awards for best film, screenplay, original music score, photography, and supporting actor (José Dumont). It also won the best narrative film at the Havana Film Festival (1981) and the FIPRESCI Prize at the Cannes Film Festival (1980).

Following the incredible reception of the film, critics started to theorize about Tizuka's Cinema of Emotion. A favorite description defined it as a portrayal of feelings and its impact on the audience. But Tizuka's feelings have virtually been neglected as an element of Cinema of Emotion. Why is that? Could it be because she is Japanese, and Japanese are "not emotional"? But she is also Brazilian, that is, "very emotional." In response to that, in the center of Tizuka's exploration of emotion, is a resistance to heritage stereotyping through her embodiment of Nikkei feelings.

1.2.4 Nikkei Feelings

It is impossible to explain the difference between the Japanese and the Brazilian in words, as they have no bearing on Japanese understanding. The Japanese is at one extreme and the Brazilian at the other. Neither is better or worse, just very different. The Japanese do not express their feelings through words or gestures. Their hatred or their love is transmitted by the look, by facial expressions, by silence. Knowing how to keep quiet is a

minha lembranças. Pela primeira vez, pensei em fazer um documentário sobre a imigração japonesa" (ARAI 278-79).

way of respecting a partner, which is essential in the Japanese nature. Respect is in the relationship between one another, between a person and nature.

—Tizuka Yamasaki²⁷

In addition to the hybridity of languages, cultures, customs and traditions, the Nikkei deal with epistemological hybridity. In English and in Portuguese, emotion and *emoção* are closely related to the expression of feeling. Even a longer definition such as this one by Merriam-Webster—“a conscious mental reaction (such as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling usually directed toward a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioral changes in the body”—, is still very straightforward. It has to do with feeling in reaction to something.

In Japanese, emotion does mean the expression of feeling, but such a feeling can take numerous forms that are not necessarily in reaction to something. For example, feeling as *kimochi* is understood as “thought; sentiment; consideration; solicitude; gratitude” (“Kimochi”), all of which precede engagement with a specific object. Words are charged with different meanings that are interpreted depending on the place of enunciation and the receptor. The Japanese Brazilian understands that the Japanese language and culture require constant interpretation.

For Tizuka, who does understand the meaning of emotion and feeling in Portuguese but who was brought up in a Japanese community, the way those words are understood, embodied,

²⁷ “É impossível explicar a diferença entre o oriental e o ocidental em palavras, pois elas não têm peso no entendimento oriental. O oriental está num extremo e o ocidental no outro. Nenhum dos dois é melhor ou pior, apenas muito diferentes. O japonês não exterioriza seus sentimentos por meio de palavras ou gestos. Seu ódio ou seu amor são transmitidos pelo olhar, pelas expressões faciais, pelo silêncio. Saber ficar calado é uma maneira de respeitar o companheiro, o que é fundamental no caráter nipônico. O respeito está na relação do homem com outro homem, no homem com a natureza” (CAMBARÁ 39).

and expressed must comply with and accommodate the multiple meanings that they take on in the Japanese language. An example of an embodiment of a Japanese emotion lies in Tizuka's emotion for collectivity.

1.3 EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF FILMMAKING: WHAT DO *WE* WANT?

[Brazilian cinema] will heal. For this miracle to start happening, I think it is important to know who we are. To investigate what our culture is. Political transformation is useless if there is no deep feeling for the country.

—Tizuka Yamasaki²⁸

1.3.1 Cinema Novo and the Individual Approach that Depicts the Collective Vision

The first generation of the Cinema Novo filmmakers (Glauber Rocha, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Alex Viany, among others) sprung up in the late 1950s when Brazil was adopting a politics of development implemented by the president Juscelino Kubitschek that became emblematic with the construction of the new capital Brasília. Educated and idealistic, those filmmakers were influenced by foreign cinema but wanted to create a space of their own that was independent from Europe and the United States. They had envisioned creating an imaginary space that could only exist in Brazilian cinema. Driven by the spirit of development, Kubitschek's economic policies

²⁸ “[O cinema brasileiro] vai acabar se curando. [P]ara que esse milagre comece a acontecer, acho que é importante saber quem somos. Descobrir qual é a nossa cultura. Não adianta transformação política se não houver um sentimento profundo com o país” (“Tizuka: do cinema para as novelas”).

were benefiting the Brazilian elite while dismissing the needs of the poor (JOHNSON and STAM 30). Nelson Pereira dos Santos describes how Cinema Novo films gave a new value to cinema:

Up to that point there was this strongly held thesis defended by everyone, film critics, essayists, even Brazilian intellectuals. They considered that cinema, being an expression close to music, did not need to have nationalities. The beauty of cinema and the esthetic result depended exclusively on the space/time combination of shapes and sounds that the director was able to make, no matter what nationality. This is true to some extent, but, anyway, we defended a position that was exactly opposite.²⁹

In reaction to social injustice and led by Glauber Rocha's "The Aesthetics of Hunger," the first generation of Cinema Novo films focused on the poor and their miserable living conditions, the backlands of *sertão*, social struggle, exploitation, abandonment, and neglect from the State. Then, the hopeful idealism of the young filmmakers changed with the 1964 *coup d'état* (JOHNSON and STAM 30). In late 1969, when Tizuka entered film school, Brazil had just been hit by a *coup-within-the-coup*, and the country's repressive military government hardened the harassment, persecution, and torture of dissidents. Young film students learned they had to fight for what had been promised. Tizuka describes how she understood that there had to be a collective effort inside and outside the classroom:

²⁹ "[A]té essa época existia essa tese fortemente defendida por todos, críticos de cinema, ensaístas, mesmo intelectuais brasileiros. Consideravam que o cinema, sendo uma expressão próxima da música, ele não precisava ter nacionalidades. A beleza do cinema e o resultado estético do cinema dependia exclusivamente da combinação espaço/tempo de formas e sons que o diretor conseguisse fazer, não importava a nacionalidade. Isso é verdade até certo ponto, mas, enfim, nós defendíamos uma posição exatamente o contrário" (GUBERNIKOFF 2-3).

I learned at school to be political and outside of school how to put it into practice, you know? I think these two things are fundamental, right? . . . So my colleagues and I transferred to the Universidade Federal Fluminense much more for our political views than anything else . . . we came together and decided that we wanted the film degree, and we fought for it.³⁰

Brazilian filmmakers concentrated on politicized projects, striving to use film to engage the audience and to incite change. Like many young filmmakers, Tizuka entered the scene making social, cultural, poetic, and political short documentaries.

In 1974, her film instructor at the Universidade Federal Fluminense, Nelson Pereira dos Santos, gave Tizuka her first experience on a long-form film set as an assistant in *O Amuleto de Ogum*. The kidnapping scene in dos Santos's film was Tizuka's debut directing a scene on a feature film. Further experiences on the set included still photography in *Motel* (Alcino Diniz, 1975) and scenography in *Tenda dos Milagres* (Nelson Pereira dos Santos, 1977). In 1976, Tizuka, Lael Rodrigues and Carlos Alberto Diniz, two friends from film school, opened the production company CPC (Centro de Produção e Comunicação). In 1977, Glauber Rocha hired CPC to produce *A Idade da Terra* (1980). Rocha was already revered as one of the greatest filmmakers in Brazilian cinematic history, so it was a great responsibility for a relatively young production company to take on.

From October 1977 until March 1979, CPC worked on the production of Rocha's film.

³⁰ “[Tive] um aprendizado na escola, em termos políticos e fora da escola em termos práticos, né? Eu acho que essas duas coisas são fundamentais, né? . . . Então a gente foi para a UFF muito mais por uma posição política do que qualquer coisa . . . a gente se uniu e disse que a gente quer é o certificado de cinema, a gente brigou por isso . . .” (FIGUEIROA 18).

Tizuka served as Rocha's assistant director and describes how the role of CPC was "to make Glauber film,"³¹ meaning that he would change his mind about filming at the last minute. She recalls a particular moment when production was set up in the State of Bahia but Rocha changed his mind about the shooting location at the last minute. He told Tizuka to buy a few cars and drive the crew and the equipment from Bahia to the State of Goiás. It was rainy season and the dirt roads were very dangerous. She advised him to fly the crew and was astonished by his reply: "Not by airplane. I had a dream that an airplane had crashed." Tizuka ended up telling him that she did respect his beliefs but because she was Japanese (that is, not superstitious) she was going to take a plane and take part of the crew with her.

Tizuka found Rocha's individualism to be particularly unreasonable. It did not embody the filmmaking approach that she had learned in film school. Where was the spirit of collectivity, the emotion to work together and fight as a group for what had been promised? In fact, the validity of Cinema Novo's social consciousness has been met with skepticism because the filmmakers themselves were foreign to the unprivileged lives they portrayed and also because their films were often considered unintelligible to the common audience. In addition, after their films became internationally praised, they befriended European filmmakers, and were particularly inspired by the French New Wave filmmaker's strategy to theorize about their own films and about filmmaking in general. So, led by Glauber Rocha, Cinema Novo filmmakers such as dos Santos and Joaquim Pedro de Andrade established the parameters by which their films were to be read: they determined the proper language for their narratives, which was foreign and difficult to understand for the common people. Tizuka had a different idea on how to address the common

³¹ "fazer o Glauber filmar" (RODRIGUES 46).

people:

I think we have to know who the audience who sees the film is, because we have to know who they are to know what we're going to put on the screen . . . we want to put the Brazilian people on the screen but we don't know who they are . . . [We have to do that] because we're talking about them, because they're the theme, they're the approach, and because of what they are going to learn, so that they stop watching TV Globo and watch more Brazilian cinema, so that they stop enjoying the American cinema model and start to like what they do, them as character.³²

The path to Tizuka's work ethics as a filmmaker was being formed.

1.3.2 CPC and the Collective Approach that Depicts a Director's Vision

In his studies of “Eastern” and “Western” cultural dialogue, Sthaneshwar Timalsina maintains that subjects studying other cultures better understand and empathize with the subjects of their study when they are willing to sacrifice their own self-constructed cultural otherness. In other words, when one brackets one's own culturally constructed presuppositions, there is an opening for a “fusion of horizons” that allows for real cultural dialogue. This approach of deconstructing the self in an effort to learn about the other has a greater potential to bridge

³² “Eu acho que a gente tem que saber quem é o público que vê o filme, porque a gente tem que conhecer ele, para saber o que é que vai colocar na tela . . . a gente está querendo pôr o povo brasileiro na tela mas não sabe quem é ele . . . [A gente tem que conhecer] porque a gente está falando sobre ele, isso em função do tema, em função da abordagem, em função de o que que esse cara vai entender, para que ele deixe de ver TV Globo e veja mais cinema brasileiro, para que ele deixe de gostar do modelo do cinema americano e comece a gostar daquilo que ele faz, ele como personagem” (FIGUEIROA 32-33).

differences (8). Timalsina's argument resonates with Tizuka's willingness to remove herself from uncompromising cultural and directorial positions, which allows for more collaborative work. Accordingly, this is how she described her vision for CPC:

CPC was created with the aim of producing films and ideals. The partners participate in the entire creation, production and execution process. The relationship between professionals and the director is different from the usual one, because the goal is the film itself and not just the director's personal view of it. This implies a different, more dynamic and critical relationship. With such a collective approach, the possibility of making mistakes is smaller.³³

These are a few instances of Tizuka's filmmaking practice that demonstrate how she embraced the idea of the collective and the collaborative that she had envisioned for CPC.

1.3.2.1 *Gaijin 1*, a Collaborative Endeavor

Upon release, *Gaijin 1* was praised nationally and internationally. Tizuka enjoyed her suddenly-gained status as a prestigious filmmaker, but there was another great achievement that she repeatedly mentions—the film showcased to “society” the capability of the “technical team” to deliver a great film.³⁴ Curiously, Tizuka refers to the technical team as “us” most of the time, which blurs the often-rigid border between above-the-line and below-the-line crew. She is

³³ “O CPC foi criado com o objetivo de produzir filmes e ideais. Os sócios participam de todo o processo de criação, produção e execução. A relação dos profissionais com o diretor é diferente da habitual, porque a meta é o filme e não apenas a visão pessoal do diretor em relação ao filme. Isso implica um relacionamento diferente, mais dinâmico e crítico. Com um trabalho coletivo desse tipo, a possibilidade de errar é menor” (D’OLIVEIRA).

³⁴ “O *Gaijin* serviu, também, para todos nós da equipe técnica sermos reconhecidos diante da sociedade como pessoas capacitadas para fazer um bom filme” (ALMEIDA).

definitely clear about the value of teamwork:

I think we managed to make this film because we had a team that was committed to make this film happen. I think that the way we approached the realization and production was very . . . it is not that it was new, nor novel, but we worked a lot in terms of collective creation, so as everyone had a creative participation in the script, insofar as everybody could also give their opinions and the authority to create was shared, there wasn't a director who simply gave orders, who kept a hierarchy within the team. Suddenly, the actors were working on the same level as the technical team . . .³⁵

1.3.2.2 The Collective Commitment for a Great Production Value

Cinema Novo's alternative cinema resulted in abstract films that valued "ideas" and cinematic techniques. Hence, the *cri de coeur* of the movement: a camera in hand and an idea in mind. That idea was met with skepticism in Tizuka's circle: "It's not enough to only have a camera in hand One needs to have an idea in mind and something else."³⁶ Oftentimes, the radical nature of Cinema Novo interfered with production value. Tizuka's view on that is incisive: "At Cinema Novo, production was not given much value."³⁷ Production value was however at the core of CPC's technical team:

³⁵ "[Eu] acho que a gente conseguiu fazer esse filme porque a gente teve nas mãos uma equipe que estava a fim de fazer esse filme. Eu acho que o comportamento que a gente teve diante da realização e da produção foi muito . . . não é que seja novo, nem que seja inédito, mas a gente trabalhou muito em termos de criação coletiva, então como todo mundo tinha uma participação criativa no roteiro, na medida em que poderia também opinar e a autoridade como a criação era muito repartida, não existia assim um diretor que mandava em tudo, uma hierarquia dentro da equipe, mas de repente, tinha os atores trabalhando na mesma forma que a equipe técnica . . ." (FIGUEIROA 4).

³⁶ "Não adianta ter só a câmara na mão É preciso uma ideia na cabeça e mais alguma coisa" (BERNARDET 28-29).

³⁷ "No Cinema Novo, não se dava muito valor à produção" (BERNARDET 29).

[That strategy to] save money, . . . borrow a friend's camera, or ask someone for a hand . . . you couldn't work like that. This is our position as people, film technicians, who have been working in cinema for a long time as technicians. We didn't want to work like a producer, to save on certain things to stay within the budget. We tried to win in a different way, through production value.³⁸

For sound engineer Juarez Dagoberto, who collaborated with Tizuka in *Gaijin 1* and *Parahyba*, the quality of the sound in *Gaijin 1* was “precise” and had “the best quality standard.” Having worked on and seen films from around the world, he was confident that “it [could] be shown in any country in the world.”³⁹

1.3.2.3 Collaborative Investment on the Set

One of the most commended achievements of *Gaijin 1* is how well Tizuka portrayed the clash between cultures caused by the lack of a common language between the Japanese immigrants and Brazilians. In order to achieve such a result, she trusted that both the Japanese and the Brazilian actors, who were very experienced professionals but were coming from different on set experiences, would be able to build up the emotion of the culture clash scenes once they came across differences between them on the set. Tizuka's ingenious approach, however, was to encourage the Brazilians to team up with other Brazilians, and the Japanese to team up with their

³⁸ “Isso de economizar, . . . a câmara é do amigo da gente, ou alguém quebra o galho . . . não dava para fazer isso. Essa é nossa posição enquanto pessoas, técnicos em cinema, que já estão acostumados a trabalhar em cinema, há muito tempo, como técnico. A gente não estava na de produtor, economizar em determinadas coisas para ganhar no orçamento. A gente tentou ganhar por um outro lado, pela qualidade do filme” (FIGUEIROA 42).

³⁹ “[A]cho que é um filme preciso em qualidade de som. Padrão da melhor qualidade. Pode ser passado em qualquer país do mundo” (BERNARDET 25).

peers to create the sense of conflict:

The Japanese did not understand this indiscipline, this confusion that it is to make a film in Brazil, they are not used to it. But then, they got used to it. The Japanese asked dialogues to be taken out here and there, the Brazilians requested more lines. An interpretation rivalry between Fagundes and Jiro Kawasaki, for example, was remarkable, . . . with the Brazilians rooting for their actor, and the Japanese for their representative. We realized, then, that there was a clash between two techniques, two disciplines, methods, etc.⁴⁰

Tizuka identifies a sense of embodiment in the experiment: “It was an exciting thing, you know? The film, the crew, the extras, and the cast were the film itself.”⁴¹ The end result was a sense of collaborative effort because every part felt they had contributed. The level of commitment to the project was confirmed when, two decades later, Kyoko Tsukamoto, the protagonist of *Gaijin 1*, expressed to Tizuka a desire to participate on a sequel to *Gaijin 1*.

1.3.2.4 Living Up to the Commitment of the Collective

In 1984, CPC produced Lael Rodrigues’s directing debut *Bete Balanço*. Tizuka served as the executive producer and Carlos Alberto Diniz as the producer. Two of the biggest names of the Brazilian rock scene of the 80s, Cazuza and Barão Vermelho, were in charge of the soundtrack.

⁴⁰ “Os japoneses não entendiam muito essa indisciplina, essa confusão que é fazer um filme no Brasil, não estão acostumados com isso. Depois foram se acostumando. Os japoneses pediam para suprimir diálogos aqui e ali, os brasileiros solicitavam mais falas. E o próprio duelo de interpretação entre o Fagundes e o Jiro Kawasaki, por exemplo, foi notável, . . . com os brasileiros torcendo por seu ator, os japoneses pelo seu representante. A gente percebia, então o confronto entre duas técnicas, duas disciplinas, métodos, etc.” (FASSONI).

⁴¹ “[Foi] uma coisa emocionante, sabe? Era o filme, era a equipe, a figuração e o elenco era[m] o próprio filme” (FIGUEIROA 29).

The film also featured rocker Lobão, the band Titãs and legendary actor Lauro Corona. Unlike previous CPC productions, the audience-driven plot was filled with sex, drugs and rock and roll.

But Tizuka was onboard for her commitment to the collective:

We started doing cinema together and I was lucky to make *Gaijin* first. I have a duty to him [Rodrigues], which is to try to help him make his first film. It is very difficult: nobody believes in an unknown talent. I've been there.⁴²

Bete Balanço was a hit and among the largest national box offices in 1984. It paid off all of CPC's debt to date (CAETANO 16).

1.4 EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF CINEMA OF EMOTION: URGENT MATTERS IN THE MILLENNIUM FILMS

1.4.1 Cinema of Emotion in the 1980s: How Do *They* Feel?

Today, Tizuka is one of most recognizable names working actively in the Brazilian entertainment industry. Upon release, *Gaijin 1* made such a life-time impression that, even today, resists being replaced. However, the film has never been elevated to the status of a classic such as the best of Glauber Rocha or Nelson Pereira dos Santos. Part of that is because it was not valued for its formal esthetic but, instead, as an achievement in the depiction of the emotional experience

⁴² “Começamos a fazer cinema juntos e tive a sorte de fazer *Gaijin* antes. Tenho um dever para com ele, que é tentar ajudá-lo a fazer seu primeiro filme, o que é muito difícil: ninguém acredita num talento desconhecido. Já passei por isso” (CAVALCANTI).

of the Japanese people, which was foreign to many Brazilians who had never been personally exposed to it or even visualized it before.⁴³ This kind of filmmaking approach, although not singular to Tizuka, became a common description of her early work, which has been broadly dubbed Cinema of Emotion ever since.⁴⁴

Tizuka is grateful for the recognition that *Gaijin I* brought her, which was not expected in 1980 by the first-time feature-length film director. But the insufficient recognition of her formal aesthetic is an unfair burden for a serious filmmaker to carry. During a showing in Miami of her latest film *Encantados* (2014), she told an interviewer who insisted on talking about *Gaijin I* that that was the most praised *unseen* movie, suggesting that he should not be asking about a film he had not seen. Rightly so, most of the interviewers since the 1980s had made her repeat her answers about *Gaijin I* over and over. Why would the interviewer wish to talk about her first film, which had already been widely discussed, and not focus on the film of the evening? Tizuka's frustration is understandable because *Encantados* is probably one of her greatest cinematic achievements to date. It retains the emotional narrative strength of the 1980's Cinema of Emotion while clearly placing emotion in the form. For this film, as I will show in Chapter 5, Tizuka adopts an "inherited" Asian audiovisual approach, which gives emphasis on the dramaturgical rather than on the literary narrative process, to promote the preservation of the ancient Amazonian *marajoara* culture that has survived colonization, cultural appropriation, and massacre. The result of such a collaboration

⁴³ In Brazil, it was not uncommon for people to be oblivious to the influx of Japanese immigrants in the country, even though from 1908 to 1915 alone 15,000 had arrived, because most of them were placed in the southernmost part of the country.

⁴⁴ According to Leslie Marsh, Tizuka herself might have coined the expression (89). In any case, it has been often repeated since the 1980s.

between two unique but equally Brazilian cultures—the Nikkei and the *marajoara*—is a new formulation of national identity.

1.4.2 Cinema of Emotion in the New Millennium: How Do *We* Feel?

The difference between Tizuka’s millennium films and her previous work is that in the new millennium the depiction of emotional experiences relies greatly on the form—on how motion supplies emotion. In Sergei Eisenstein’s early explanation of the esthetics of emotion, he describes how emotion is a phenomenon that “is completely identical with the primary phenomenon of cinema [wherein] *movement* is created out of two motionless cells . . . a *movement* of the soul, i.e., emotion (from the Latin root *motio* = movement), is created out of the performance of a series of incidents” (145). That is, emotion is generated by putting together a series of incidents that are completed mentally. For Eisenstein, this internal movement of completing actions is emotion, the movement of the soul. Likewise, in Tizuka’s millennium films the movement of actions becomes central in the creation of emotion.

But this change in the course of her style has not been noticed, and critics still insist on referring to Tizuka’s work in a uniform way. Critics do not seem to find value in Tizuka’s new esthetic choices, and even create new problems. While her ninth feature-length film, *Gaijin 2*, has been criticized as a film with “overwhelming melodrama and sentimentality” where the most popular couple’s “tumultuous, soap-opera-ready relationship provokes more laughter than tears” (LA O’), her tenth feature, *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* (2009), is described as “sloppy” (MARTINELLI). Likewise, her eleventh feature *Aparecida: The Miracle* (2010) is said to be like a “true Mexican soap with a religious theme” that has “the audacity of a non-linear editing similar to that of an action movie” (DIDIMO). And her twelfth and latest feature, *Encantados* has been

described as “impaired by a truncated and rough edit, which destroys the rhythm of the plot” (MENDES). These are harsh comments that I will prove mistaken by offering a reading of Tizuka’s millennium films that shows the value in what those critics saw as flaws.

1.4.2.1 Form as Action

As described, Tizuka has had twelve theatrical releases to date. Although not all of her films are great, or at least regarded as such, her work deserves to be looked at in its entirety, even if bracketed in phases. It is not an easy task but, for practical purposes, I suggest the following three phases: first, the films of the 1980s (*Gaijin 1*, *Parahyba* and *Patriamada*); second, the films of the 1990s (*Crystal Moon*, *Fica Comigo*, *O Noviço Rebelde*, *Xuxa Requebra* and *Xuxa Popstar*); and third, the millennium films. The first phase has already been largely analyzed by Leslie Marsh (88-113). The second phase has been largely neglected, mainly because of the negative impact of the Xuxa blockbusters on Tizuka’s reputation as a serious filmmaker. I will be addressing that topic in Chapter 3. There, I will argue that one of the more recent aspects of Tizuka’s esthetic is that each of her millennium films derives its value from formal approaches that are intrinsic to the language of filmmaking in relation to a lifetime of filmmaking practice. That is why they constitute Tizuka’s most personal and experimental phase. Each film represents, in some sense, a fragment of the transformation of Cinema of Emotion in the new millennium.

That Tizuka is one of the most successful directors of her generation owes much to her capacity to maintain her own sensibility, which gives form to her Cinema of Emotion. This method complies with formal conventions of film narration such as causal relations, definition of events, parallelisms between events, linearity, clear main and secondary points, climactic scenes with beginning, middle and end, all of which make the films fairly intelligible. Thus, when viewers go to a new film by Tizuka, they can be fairly confident they will be treated with a feel-good

experience. What nobody is prepared to see is something abstract, that is not explained, that resists comprehension or sympathy. In the millennium films, while Tizuka is capable of maintaining the emotional sensibility of the 1980s, she presents filmic interventions that are unpredictable.

In Brazil, films are often seen as having two exclusive statuses: either mass entertainment or art-house cinema. So, Tizuka's decision to direct commercial content, such as a soap opera or a Xuxa film, was seen as a great risk for the director to take. Some thought that this commercial content would lessen her as a serious filmmaker. Rightly so, in the early 1990s when she directed her first Xuxa film, the standard criticism was leveled against her: they called her a sell-out, even though it was a rough time for the Brazilian film industry. It was hard to carry the burden of being an artist in Brazil. After all, she was seen as an artist, and at times regarded as an activist and a feminist. What critics do not understand is that the risk-taking formal quality of Tizuka's work in today's highly commercialized film industry is what makes her work so consistent in her exploration of emotion.⁴⁵

About those years, Tizuka is unapologetic. When asked if she felt like a traitor when she accepted to make mass entertainment films, she replied that there were too many urgent matters in the world to waste time thinking about it. She is driven by a belief in the integrity of all kinds of cinematic forms, and in the opportunity to learn from exploring them. A Xuxa film, for example, was a great opportunity to try to understand the world of the child. She made not one but four Xuxa films, which made her the highest box-office director of the 1990s, precisely when Brazil's film

⁴⁵ As Daniel Morgan explains in his study of Godard's late work, many critics are still caught up in the pure form of the cinematic medium, which rejects the value of anything that does not have specifically cinematic means. However, with the growth of television, video, and digital technologies in the production and manipulation of image, that view might be anachronistic as the primary artistic medium of the twentieth century (14).

industry was struggling. Yet, nobody has really come to change that perception since. And curiously, nobody has ever said anything negative about her work directing operas,⁴⁶ certainly because of its form being more in tune with art-house cinema. But Tizuka took the risk and not only survived but thrived as a director of strong and consistent audience appeal.

In the new millennium, Tizuka continues doing what she has always done—she takes risks to explore the possibilities of emotion. But the audience is not ready for her abstract filmic interventions because for most of her career she has not made herself too independent from the conventions of Hollywood narrative cinema. In fact, in Brazil, the only well-understood alternative to those has been to break completely with their formal structures and move away from a story and character development, notably by Cinema Novo. As mentioned earlier, this alternative cinema was practiced outside the commercial cinema circuit and resulted in abstract films that valued “ideas” and cinematic techniques. They were notable for their ideological transgressions that emphasized social commentary and intellectualism. Their plots were often undramatic and sometimes incoherent, and the films were generally emotionally disorienting, fragmented, undramatic, obscure, and heady.

However, the essence of the first and most significant films of the first phase of Cinema Novo⁴⁷—Glauber Rocha’s *Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol* (*Black God, White Devil*, 1964) and

⁴⁶ To date, Tizuka has directed three operas: *Madame Butterfly* (1988), *Árias* (co-directed with Sylvia Klein, 1994), and *La Bohème* (1996). They were all produced in Minas Gerais and featured Tizuka’s collaboration with Minas Gerais soprano Sylvia Klein. Those productions were warmly received locally, but Tizuka’s direction is yet to be reviewed.

⁴⁷ For practical purposes, I use Randal Johnson and Robert Stam’s three phase division of Cinema Novo. They identify the first phase going from 1960 to 1964, which roughly begins with Linduarte Noronha’s documentary *Aruanda* (1960) about an impoverished village of descendants of slaves in the northeastern Brazilian State of Paraíba and ends with the *coup d’état* in 1964 when the military overthrows the populist government of João Goulart. In that phase, Cinema Novo coheres most strongly as a

Nelson Pereira dos Santos's *Vidas Secas* (*Barren Lives*, 1963)—could have been misinterpreted if the filmmakers did not stand for the films collectively. *Black God, White Devil*, for example, speaks of historical struggles but it never reproduces those events as they actually transpired. According to Ismail Xavier, this is because, based on the “aesthetics of hunger,” the way the film is produced should always represent its esthetic and ideological position, which, at the time, was to counter the illusory transfer of the “real” life sought by the expensive and dominant cinema from Europe and the United States. The very texture of the film should express the subaltern position of Brazilian cinema before the dominant discourse of the film industry. In the film, the fighting sequences between rival peasants, for example, do not require a lot of movement from the actors, are not edited with jump cuts (as Hollywood counterparts would), and do not have special sound effects of crossfire. Instead, they are purposely exaggerated. Through such exaggeration, the technical precariousness of the production acquires meaning (134-48).

But the coherence of the first phase of Cinema Novo was not naturally sustainable. For Xavier, the collective was long-lasting because a few participants remained in the position of leadership, changing rules along the way, while participants who assumed different views were marginalized by the group. In the late 1960s, Cinema Novo went through a crisis because the

collaborative. The second phase goes from 1964 to 1968, the year of the *coup-within-the-coup* when the military handed power to more reactionary sectors of the army, which disconcerted democratic institutions and populism leaving them in ruins. Films from this phase often portray the failure of the left. The third phase goes from 1968 to roughly 1972. Under heavy censorship, the films in this phase often adopt allegorical forms. For Johnson and Stam, after 1972 one must speak of Brazilian Cinema rather than Cinema Novo (*Brazilian Cinema* 31-32). However, in Johnson's following book *Cinema Novo x 5: Masters of Contemporary Brazilian Film* (1984), the author chooses five Cinema Novo filmmakers—Rocha, dos Santos, Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, Cacá Diegues and Ruy Guerra—and analyses several post-1972 films to describe the uniqueness of each filmmakers' style, which indicates a continuing fascination for Cinema Novo beyond the third phase years.

Brazilian audience, accustomed to watching *chanchadas* and Hollywood films, did not relate with “intellectual” films that showed concern for the peasant but did not depict their points of view. Reduced box office sales made film productions infeasible. In order to reverse the situation, participants of Cinema Novo started to produce films that would have more popular appeal such as Leon Hirszman’s *Girl from Ipanema* (*Garota de Ipanema*, 1967). Nelson Pereira dos Santos adapted Mário de Andrade’s *Macunaíma* to the big screen in 1969 making use of a language that related more to *chanchadas* than to the esthetics of hunger. The outcome was visible. It became the largest Cinema Novo box office to date. However, some filmmakers took that approach as treason and as discussed by Randal Johnson and Robert Stam, rebelled against Cinema Novo by radicalizing the principles of the esthetics of hunger. They called themselves Marginal Cinema. The most illustrative film of the rebels of this new collective was Rogério Sganzerla’s *The Red Light Bandit* (*Bandido da Luz Vermelha*, 1968), which radicalized Cinema Novo by criticizing its academicism (35-40). While the serious Cinema Novo did not depict hunger from the point of view of the starving, in *The Red Light Bandit*, humor was adopted to emphasize the opposite—for example, in a scene when two slum dwellers try to steal each others’ wallets, they find out that neither of them owns one (318-19).⁴⁸

It is with a similar hunger for change that after decades of making smooth emotional cinema, Tizuka enters the millennium consciously in action. Even though critical intention is not

⁴⁸ We cannot forget that Cinema Novo reflected the culture and the spirit of the time in Latin America beyond Brazilian borders. There had been debates surrounding Third Cinema since the early 1960s, and the many manifestos that were produced during that time all reflected a common sense of urgency in Latin America to produce local cinema that addressed the call of Latin American filmmakers for a collective and politically engaged cinema. For example, Rocha’s “The Aesthetics of Hunger” (1965) engaged with the “Manifesto of the New Cinema Group” (Mexico, 1961), and may have served as inspiration for “Towards a Third Cinema” (Argentina, 1969) (MACKENZIE 310).

explicit, the change in the form tells us otherwise. Unlike Cinema Novo filmmakers, whose critical intentions were explicit in their explanation of their own films and general critical writings, the manifestations in Tizuka's films are uncovered within the films. It becomes evident that manifestations of the feelings of the characters alone are not enough anymore. There is a great inclusion of self-reflexiveness, which is actually not foreign to Tizuka's work. Self-referencing has always been present in her films, particularly during the first phase with *Gaijin 1*, *Parahyba* and *Patriamada*. What is different now is that she incorporates reflexivity on her craft into the means of production. They become activities that invite people to reconsider their own sensibility about mass media. It is as if she had a duty to be in touch with pressing issues in modern culture. But her approach is far removed from the solemn approaches of Cinema Novo. Tizuka's approach is simpler, more playful, more mystical, and sillier, which maintains her great sensibility toward her common audience while establishing a challenging puzzle to those who are willing to take up the challenge.

Tizuka is considered to be one of the most representative directors to have taken the task of representing emotion in Brazilian cinema. Several of her films include Brazilian soap opera stars who bring their melodramatic charge to the films. What is new about her millennium films is a preoccupation with ideas at the expense of the smoothness of the representation of emotion, via the introduction of alien elements into it. Those elements sometimes threaten to violate the emotional integrity of the work. That Tizuka has always taken the task of representing abstract ideas is true, but in the millennium films she questions her place as a filmmaker and an artist, which she attempts to settle by incorporating abstract identities into her films. Pressing current topics become her cinematic object of study. In *Gaijin 2*, a teenager interrogates her mother about her pre-inscribed identity and moral integrity; in *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha*, a royal servant

reframes (anti)Orientalism; in *Aparecida*, a believer reveals the ambiguities of faith; and in *Encantados*, a shaman disputes “Western” epistemology.

In the past, Tizuka’s Cinema of Emotion has treated cinema as a vehicle to promote feelings. Now, she stretches the scope of it and invites people to think about feeling. Thus, Tizuka discloses a new vein of lyricism for her Cinema of Emotion through genuine acknowledgement of both the heart and the intellect. Her point is that nothing is to be dismissed, and that co-habitation is fruitful. Thus, her discursive mutation is not destructive of old cinematic conventions, nor is it a rupture with current conventions, but an enrichment of it.

1.4.2.2 *Gaijin 2*: Gateway to the New Millennium

Tizuka has always sustained that filmmaking is where she feels the most comfortable. What was not so evident until *Gaijin 2* is a willingness to become independent from some conventions of mainstream Hollywood narrative cinema that will populate her films of the new millennium. Thus, one of the most interesting features of the millennium films is hybridization, which can be observed in Tizuka’s blend of themes, tempos and narrative methods, which invites us to think of her films in relation to popular Hollywood films: *Gaijin 2* could dialogue with *Babel* (Alejandro González Iñárritu, 2006) and its multiple narratives, *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* with *Enchanted* (Kevin Lima, 2007) and the characters’ journey from fairy tale into the “real” world, *Aparecida* with *The Way* (Emilio Estevez, 2010) and the possibilities of religion beyond faith, and *Encantados* with *The Shape of Water* (Guillermo del Toro, 2018) and its interspecies relationships. Tizuka finds in popular US narrative conventions a great utility for her own exploration of emotions. Although the production value of Tizuka’s films has achieved great levels of plasticity, a smaller budget and resources do not allow Tizuka’s millennium films to be as plastically harmonious as those films, but certainly they are just as engaging and powerful. By using familiar

and popular materials, Tizuka has the freedom to abstract without losing her common audience.

The millennium films are still narrative, though they are in the process of freeing themselves from the literalism that is associated with the main tradition of cinema. The films' newness sometimes resides in the editing, sometimes in the dialogue, sometimes in the camera movements, but ultimately in the form. The traditional narrative cinema's rule of explaining everything is disregarded and Tizuka either does not provide any motive at all or gives simplistic motives. But these moments are either actions that do not lead to consequences or dialogues that do not need to be entirely understandable. Because they do not divorce themselves from traditional cinema completely into abstraction, which would probably lead the common audience to disregard them as experimental, they often go unnoticed. But when they are noticed, their presence gives rise to criticism because people expect a certain smoothness in Tizuka's films. As unnoticed as these moments of abstraction may appear, they reside in the millennium films and cannot be completely discredited as being part of their narrative frameworks. And while they do not necessarily interfere with the course of the story or the overall comprehension of the plot, if we look closely these moments represent fully articulated, rewarding ideas.

Gaijin 2 is the first millennium film and it does not reside outside traditional esthetic parameters, but some abstracting treatment is demonstrated. According to Tizuka's description, *Gaijin 2* is a saga of the history of immigration and of a family. It was shot in two continents, is spoken in four languages, shows the story of four generations of people, and has a multinational cast from Brazil, the US, Japan, and Canada. The story is populated by largely interchangeable characters, and it is hard to determine who are the protagonists. The film is so crammed with incidents that it is hard to identify the climax of the plot if there is one. It can be followed only in a general way. But the film should not be judged for that. The value of this film is its formal

approach in addition to the emotional values, which are produced by the juxtaposition of the realistic and the improbable.

The realism of the film lies in the look—Tizuka built a scenographic city to replicate villages in Japan and in Brazil to the smallest details. The implausibility comes from the excessive nature of melodramatic experiences portrayed through prolonged elaboration and embellishment of emotions, which makes action take on a soap opera quality, as UCLA's Ana La O' has observed. The depiction of too many interchangeable emotional relationships made it difficult for that critic to identify with particular characters. But *Gaijin 2* does not have the luxury of the running length of a soap opera where there is no rush to reach the end. Tizuka's film has to pack several relationships into two hours, so she might not be able to offer all resolutions. And the end of the film is not anticipated with the sort of emotion that most films offer but produces a sense of nostalgia.

Even though the critic's parallel of *Gaijin 2* with soaps might sound negative, it is in fact precise and meaningful. Even within time constraints, *Gaijin 2* offers screen time for a wide range of characters, no matter if they are protagonists or minor characters. Consequently, heroes become less heroic, and villains, less villainous, which makes it trickier for audience identification, but allows for a more democratic filmic space. Moreover, by taking melodramatic experiences to the extreme of implausibility, Tizuka abstracts action and makes them redundant. The use of the extreme, therefore, is not a deficiency but an important technical means to establish the purposefulness of the saga.

In a way, *Gaijin 2* is the gateway to Tizuka's millennium cinema: it represents a transition between Tizuka's 1980s and 1990s films and the films of the new millennium. The topic of the saga is just appropriate—it represents a reassessment, a reflection, an account of her esthetic. It is

Cinema of Emotion taken to the extreme. In Tizuka's following millennium films—*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* (2009), *Aparecida: The Miracle* (2010), and *Encantados* (2014)—, the elaborate and embellished melodramatic experiences in *Gaijin 2* take on a different rhythm and form. The difference is that the abstracted action tale based on extreme melodramatic tone will not control the form as it did in *Gaijin 2*. Although melodrama remains the main trait of Tizuka's sensibility, there is an increasing emergence of concern with the form operating as point of viewer.

1.4.2.3 *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha*, *Aparecida* and *Encantados*: Heady Interventions to Hearty Narratives

Even though Tizuka has played with the idea of sequels (*Gaijin 1* was first envisioned as part of a trilogy about Japanese immigration), and certainly with the Xuxa films (not conceived as a series *per se*, but nonetheless unified through the protagonist Xuxa), her following millennium films will pose questions about the limits of single genre categorizations. In *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha*, the restless activity of the characters express dissatisfaction with the stereotyping of their actions. Thus, a truck driver overwhelmed by Xuxa's detachment from the everyday world confronts her fantasy-like worldview. The novelty is in the emergence of the truck driver character—he shows up after an abrupt discontinuity in the editing. This passage alone measures the extent to which *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* is and is not a Xuxa film.

If the organizing principles of *Gaijin 2*'s abstraction were the use of excessive elaboration and embellishment, and democratic screen time to main and secondary characters, the next millennium films will feature the juxtaposition of unpredictable and ambiguous elements—heady interventions to hearty narratives. And if the 1980s Cinema of Emotion was explicitly conceived to depict emotion and to provide emotional gratification, her millennial Cinema of Emotion implies further functions: reassessment of the past and rearrangement for the future. Instead of a

narration unified by a coherent plot and a consistent tone, the narrative of the millennium films is broken by events and expressions of the form that seem out of context and mood, which causes abrupt interruptions in the flow of the cinematic narrative. If the intervention is small, it may go unnoticed or may appear as an error. If it is evident, it may appear as a parallel or secondary narrative.

A fairly obvious way that Tizuka interrupts the flow of a sequence of narration is by theatricalizing some of the material. In *Aparecida*, she applies conventions of the Hollywood musical to interrupt the story. In the film, a young man sings and dances his frustration towards his father's "blindness." Tizuka uses a formal device that makes the performance non-realistic and complicates the emotional involvement of the audience with the scene—in the beginning, the performance is geared toward the public in the film but then it switches to the public of the film by acknowledging the presence of the camera. By breaking the fourth wall, the action is interrupted, and the point of view is shifted to the audience. The audience is left with a sense of ambiguity about whose and what ideas are being represented. Tizuka exposes the ambiguities of historical time and imagines a vaudeville-like liberation troupe roaming the streets of the little town of Aparecida, much like Cinema Novo, only to show how insufficient it is.

The employment of shifting point of view has a greater importance in Tizuka's millennium films. By bridging different narrative voices, Tizuka invites the participation of a number of different point of views. Thus, Tizuka's most recent millennium film, *Encantados* displays three samples of places of narrative enunciation—first, the usual soliloquizing voice personified by the maid of the protagonist's family. Then, the protagonist's inner thoughts, her monologue, which is a strategy Tizuka has employed since *Gaijin I*. And, finally, one that comments on the action and may represent Tizuka's voice. The film introduces the notion of a narrative that addresses the

audience in order to explain how the character is really feeling at the moment. But it is not that Tizuka is an actual character in the film or that she is present off camera. Her presence is felt in the form. And by inserting herself as a reflection of what is being shown, Tizuka shows how she is still a partisan of the spirit of old cultural revolutions of which she was once part. But the radical temperament of the past is replaced by a firm and confident view that allows her to manifest herself before the audience, inviting it to partake in the action.

As a whole, Tizuka's millennium films are conceived as contemporary events and, as such, they reference the role of art, perspectivism, and esthetics complicated by current socio-political issues related to class, nation and ethnic identity formations, global labor, transnationalism, cultural appropriation, and the construction of the past and the future of a nation. The films include casual references and spontaneous sentiments, but, ultimately, they live in our immediate present, and will only tell something about the past to clarify the present. The events in the films *exist* in the present—*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* is not a fairytale but a film about fairytales; *Aparecida* is not about wasted faith but about faith itself; *Encantados* is not about the preservation of an indigenous culture but about indigenous epistemology for a renewed future. Tizuka's millennium cinema is still about emotion, but emotion engaged in the function of the medium. Images continue to invite the audience to feel the emotion, but abstract interruptions remind them to be active viewers.

2.0 *GAIJIN 2*

2.1 THE PRACTICE OF CINEMA OF EMOTION IN *GAIJIN 2*

In Gaijin 2, I want to discuss what a family is, what it is like to fight for a family and see it disintegrate, and then discover that there is mobility in a family. That is, what is thought to be a family may change the meaning, and other possibilities of configuring a family may arise.

—Tizuka Yamasaki⁴⁹

2.1.1 A Story About Loving the Foreign from Within

When *Gaijin: Ama-me Como Sou* (a.k.a. *Gaijin 2*) was released in 2005, Tizuka had already directed seven feature-length films, and over 400 episodes of soap operas and miniseries for TV. To recall, during the early 1980s, she had directed *Gaijin: Roads to Freedom* (1980) (a.k.a. *Gaijin 1*), *Parahyba Mulher Macho* (1983), and *Patriamada* (1985), which were praised by critics who identified a unique esthetic approach in Tizuka's work (figure 2). In the 1990s, with the advent of Embrafilme's closure, the stagnation of art-house cinema production, and Tizuka's children's desire that their mother directed films for the young audience, she turned to direct a series of family films. Those years were later dubbed the "commercial decade." A non-commercial film called

⁴⁹ "Em *Gaijin 2*, estou querendo discutir o que vem a ser uma família, o que é a pessoa lutar por uma família e vê-la se desintegrar, e depois descobrir que a família tem uma mobilidade. Ou seja, aquilo que se pensa ser uma família pode deixar de ser, mas acabam surgindo outras possibilidades de se configurar uma família" (NAGIB 510).

Fica Comigo (1996) was directed during those years, but it has been largely neglected and dismissed by critics as a failure. Nonetheless, together, Tizuka's 1990s films positioned her as the decade's number one box-office director.



Figure 2. Posters of *Gaijin 1* and *Gaijin 2*.

But critics were not willing to accept that Tizuka was a commercial filmmaker even though the director herself had spoken positively about being one. Very often critics who reviewed Tizuka's films of the commercial decade still preferred to describe her as the filmmaker behind the acclaimed *Gaijin 1*, “not just another outstanding filmmaker, but as a woman who had earned the power to express her opinion and express herself . . .”⁵⁰ Critics seemed to believe that to be known as the director of Xuxa films was not as prestigious. After all, a Xuxa film would not be

⁵⁰ “Quando *Gaijin* conquistou as telas, eu fui reconhecida como cineasta de prestígio. Não era apenas mais uma cineasta de destaque, mas eu representava uma mulher que conquistou um poder para opinar e se expressar . . .” (“Tizuka vai mostrar agora, ‘Mulher da Gota Serena’”).

valued overseas by people of the caliber of Robert Nakamura⁵¹ of the University of California in Los Angeles who had praised *Gaijin I* and had welcomed Tizuka's desire to be part of a wider conversation with other Asian immigrants who questioned their place in history. Among critics in Brazil, there was a sense of longing for something that was considered more powerful, more artistic, more authorial, and more independent. It was with that sense of expectation and longing that the promise of the sequel to *Gaijin I* was met.

If *Gaijin I* was a portrayal of Tizuka's view on Japanese immigration from the standpoint of a Japanese immigrant,⁵² *Gaijin 2* was first imagined to be the second film of a trilogy (a portrayal of the effects of World War II in the immigrants), and a third film would follow to complete the trilogy by making a commentary on the Brazilian Nikkei in contemporary times (perhaps that would have been the late 1980s or the 90s). But *Gaijin I* was Tizuka's debut feature, and she did not want to be stigmatized as the "filmmaker of Japanese matters," so she dropped the idea of the trilogy and decided to branch out into other topics (OKITA 27).

⁵¹ Nakamura is regarded as one of the first Asian Americans to use filmmaking as a way to explore, interpret and present the cultural experiences of Americans of Japanese ancestry. Among his pioneering films is *Manzanar* (1972), a film about his childhood memories of incarceration in an American relocation camp during World War II. Nakamura spent a lifetime promoting the unity of Asians among the Asian American film community that he helped create. In the early 1980s, he saw *Gaijin I* at a special screening event at UCLA and regarded it as an important portrayal of the struggles of Japanese immigrants.

⁵² From the perspective of Japanese people, *gaijin* is a foreigner, a foreign person, a person who is marked by physical traits that are different from the standard Japanese "look." For example, blond hair, clear eyes, dark skin would be differentiators. People that may look Japanese but are of another Asian ethnicity would be described according to their specific ethnicity. For example, a person from China would not be described as a *gaijin* but as Chinese. Because the Japanese were part of the first and largest wave of Asian immigrants to Brazil, there was no need for Japanese immigrants to differentiate themselves, or being differentiated, from other Asian looking people. Thus, everybody who did not look like their own would be generalized as *gaijin* by the immigrants, and everybody who looked Asian were generalized as Japanese by the Brazilians.

It was not until 1996 that Tizuka reconsidered a follow up to *Gaijin 1*. The film's lead actress Kyoko Tsukamoto invited Tizuka to Japan to witness how the population of Brazilian *dekasegi* (a temporary worker who usually does unskilled manual labor) was multiplying in the country's main industrial cities. Tizuka says that upon returning to Brazil, she already had the argument of *Gaijin 2* in her mind. She started working on the script and looking for funds. That year, the US dollar conversion to Brazilian real was one to one, which was a very optimistic scenario for a film that had been budgeted at 9.5 million Brazilian *reais*. But in 1998, when time had come to start raising funds, the price of the US dollar tripled so it became very difficult to raise funds during the following two years. Nonetheless, *Gaijin 2* was brought to life later thanks to the loyal support of a number of collaborators:

Because I am like a tractor and I have three warriors to help me—Cacá Diniz, Yurika [Yamasaki] and Kyoko Tsukamoto—[*Gaijin 2*] became possible. We brought together a foreign cast (the American Tamlyn Tomita, from *Come See the Paradise* [1990]; the Cuban Jorge Perugorria, from *Strawberry and Chocolate* [1993]; the Canadian Nobu McCarthy; the Japanese Kyoko Tsukamoto [who played] Titoe in *Gaijin 1*; Eijiro Ozaki; Kissei Kumamoto and Rygo Suguimoto) and Brazilians Louise Cardoso, Luis Melo, Zezé Polessa, Mariana Ximenes and Dado Dolabella. The film follows several decades of our history, it talks about the atomic bomb, of Shindo-Renmei, of the frost in the north of Paraná, of the dekasseguis who went to work in Japan during the Collor years, of the earthquake that shook Kobe in 95.⁵³

⁵³ “Como sou um trator e tenho três guerreiros a me ajudar—Cacá Diniz, Yurika e Kyoko Tsukamoto—se viabilizou. Reunimos elenco estrangeiro (a norte-americana Tamlyn Tomita, de *Bem-vindos ao Paraíso*; o cubano Jorge Perugorria, de *Morango e Chocolate*; a canadense Nobu McCarthy; os japoneses Kyoko

In September of 2005, after being in the works for seven years, the 131-minute (super)production was released with impressive numbers: a cost of 5 million-dollars, a star-studded cast, a specially built film set in the southern State of Paraná and three thousand extras (OKITA 26). Co-written by Tizuka and Jorge Durán (marking a 25-year collaboration since *Gaijin 1*), *Gaijin 2* centers on the saga of four generations of women—an aged Titoe from *Gaijin 1*, and the next three generations of women born in Brazil (her daughter Shinobu, her granddaughter Maria, and her great-granddaughter Yoko). While *Gaijin 1* represented Titoe’s point of view as the narrator, *Gaijin 2* is told two generations later by her grandson Kazumi who is writing a book about the saga of his family. In the core of the plot are the four Nikkeis’ struggle to integrate their Brazilian and Japanese roots in relation to one another and to their surroundings. For the Japanese Brazilians who were brought up learning about the purity of the Japanese culture, it might take a lifetime to acknowledge and accept the foreign in their blood. If in *Gaijin 1* the foreigner was kept outside the household, in *Gaijin 2* the foreigner is the household. As always, Tizuka tells a story of love, and *Gaijin 2* is the story of loving the foreigner within. But not everybody understood it that way.

Tsukamoto; a Titoe de *Gaijin 1*; Eijiro Ozaki; Kissei Kumamoto e Rygo Suguimoto) e os brasileiros Louise Cardoso, Luis Melo, Zezé Polessa, Mariana Ximenes e Dado Dolabella. O filme acompanha várias décadas de nossa história, fala de bomba atômica, da Shindo-Renmei, de geada no norte do Paraná, dos dekassegus que foram trabalhar no Japão durante os anos Collor, do terremoto que sacudiu Kobe em 95” (CAETANO 8).

2.1.2 Confronting Assumptions and Misconceptions

Press coverage following the release of *Gaijin 2* was mostly positive, but certainly raised more questions than enlightened. The major publication *Revista de Cinema* said:

Tizuka Yamasaki launches a new film to end the journey on the history of Japanese immigrants. After an interval of 25 years, she debuted in theaters in early September, “Gaijin - Love Me as I Am,” which took the Kikitos for best film and best direction (for Tizuka Yamasaki) at the Gramado Festival that year [The film] went through many comings and goings, changes in script, lack of sponsorship, death of one of the actresses during filming . . . the final result has little of the simplicity of its predecessor, although the “*gambarê* spirit” [hardworking, self-sacrificing spirit] that governed the characters in “Gaijin” is present and even more explicit in this sequel Unlike “Gaijin,” which candidly recounted the drama of a few people and knew how to explore particular aspects of these people in order to create empathy in the public, “Gaijin 2” misses the point in its best feature: being an anthropological study of the old and new characteristics of a group that is too specific, over a very long period of time.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ “Tizuka Yamasaki lança novo filme para encerrar jornada sobre a história dos imigrantes japoneses. Depois de um intervalo de 25 anos, estreou nos cinemas, no início de setembro, ‘Gaijin - Ama-me Como Sou’, que levou os Kikitos de melhor filme e melhor direção (para Tizuka Yamasaki) no Festival de Gramado desse ano [O filme] passou por muitas idas e vindas, mudanças de roteiro, falta de patrocínio, perda de uma das atrizes durante as filmagens . . . o resultado final tem pouco da simplicidade do seu antecessor, embora o ‘espírito *gambarê*’ (espírito trabalhador, esforçado) que regeu os personagens em ‘Gaijin’ esteja presente e ainda mais explícito nessa continuação Diferentemente de ‘Gaijin’, que contava de maneira sensível o drama de algumas pessoas e soube explorar aspectos particulares dessa gente de modo a gerar empatia no público, ‘Gaijin 2’ peca por sua melhor qualidade: ser um estudo antropológico sobre as velhas e novas características de um grupo específico demais, ao longo de um tempo muito amplo” (OKITA 26-28).

Another major publication, *SET* magazine, said:

Tizuka gives herself a break from commercial films and turns her camera toward a personal project: the sequel of *Gaijin – Os Caminhos da Liberdade* Having worked as Nelson Pereira dos Santos and Glauber Rocha's assistant at the beginning of her career, Tizuka Yamasaki established herself as an authorial filmmaker . . . [but] in the 1990s, this situation changed . . . she became one of the most sought after film and tv directors, making soap operas and miniseries for different channels, as well as films for *Os Trapalhões* (*O Noviço Rebelde*) and for Xuxa (*Lua de Cristal*, *Xuxa Requebra* e *Xuxa Popstar*).⁵⁵

The film was also reviewed overseas, notably by the International Institute at UCLA, Robert Nakamura's home institution. The review said:

Set amidst a backdrop of war, political turmoil, and economic unrest, *Gaijin 2* strives to be an epic of one Japanese family's immigrant struggles in Brazil. However, its compelling storylines of single mothers and interracial marriages drown beneath the film's overwhelming melodrama and sentimentality. Maria (Tamlyn Tomita) and Gabriel (Jorge Perugorria)'s tumultuous, soap-opera-ready relationship provokes more laughter than tears. *Gaijin 2* fails to create sincere pathos, but manages to satisfy anyone looking for a happy ending in which heroines persevere and immigrants find home (LA O').

⁵⁵ “Tizuka Yamasaki dá um tempo nos filmes comerciais e vira suas câmeras para um projeto pessoal: a sequência de *Gaijin – Os Caminhos da Liberdade* Assistente de Nelson Pereira dos Santos e Glauber Rocha no início da carreira, Tizuka Yamasaki firmou-se como uma cineasta autoral quando deu seus primeiros passos como diretora de filmes de ficção . . . na década de 90, essa situação mudou. Tizuka transformou-se numa das mais requisitadas diretoras de cinema e televisão, tendo trabalhado com novelas e minisséries para várias emissoras, além de filmes para *Os Trapalhões* (*O Noviço Rebelde*) e para Xuxa (*Lua de Cristal*, *Xuxa Requebra* e *Xuxa Popstar*)” (GIANNINI 13).

The reviews bring up important points about the film, but they are vague, so two problems arise from them. First, their potential to entice people to watch and appreciate the film is very low. And second, they have the potential to reinforce certain assumptions and misconceptions that are not representative of the dimension of Tizuka's intellectual and creative practice. For example, when *SET* calls *Gaijin 2* a "sequel of *Gaijin*," it implies that it must be understood in relation to *Gaijin 1*. That assumption creates the expectation that the second film will give continuity to main elements of the original story, such as the dramatic development of the main characters. What happens, however, when the original film ends with the protagonist meeting her love interest and romance finally becoming a possibility, but in the second film that love interest is not even mentioned? Likewise, because *Revista de Cinema* only sees *Gaijin 2* as a "sequel," it does not recognize the possibility of a different meaning to the "spirit of *gambaré*" that it mentions. Another example is that if *Gaijin 2* represents the "end [of] the journey," as stated by *Revista de Cinema*, does that mean that the film provides a resolution to the stories of Japanese immigrants, and to the history of Japanese immigration, and that the Japanese Brazilian journey does not continue from there? Additionally, by saying that Tizuka had "established herself as an authorial filmmaker . . . [but] in the 1990s, this situation changed," the *SET* article rejects the possibility of a commercial drive in authorial work and reinforces the tired opposition between commercial and authorial work in cinema. It also ignores *Fica Comigo*, the film that Tizuka directed in 1996 in the midst of the commercial decade. However personal to Tizuka, the film is often neglected because it is a low-budget and low-box office production and, therefore, does not fit the common description of a 1990s Tizuka film. In sum, to simply call *Gaijin 2* a sequel, an end of a journey and non-commercial falls short. In fact, those are the topics that Tizuka invites us to reflect upon in *Gaijin 2*.

There is a final observation about the reviews that needs to be addressed, and that closely relates to my argument about Tizuka's approach in *Gaijin 2*—the fact that both *Revista de Cinema* and the UCLA International Institute do recognize the value in the portrayal of the stories of the family of immigrants, but are not satisfied with the amount of time dedicated to the portrayal of their dramas. For the *Revista de Cinema*, the film “misses the point in its best feature: being an anthropological study of the old and new characteristics of a group that is too specific, over a very long period of time.” And for the UCLA International Institute, the film “strives to be an epic of one Japanese family's immigrant struggles in Brazil. However, its compelling storylines drown beneath the film's overwhelming melodrama and sentimentality,” thus, the verdict that it is “soap-opera ready.”

There are a few thoughts that should be considered about these reviews. First, the idea that the film is specifically about a particular family. In fact, it is quite the opposite. The film portrays the common story of any immigrant family. The particularity here is that one family lends its private life and intimacy in order to tap into the various conflicts that many immigrant families go through, first when they encounter each other upon arriving from Japan, second, as their offspring becomes more integrated in Brazilian society outside of a nuclear family embedded in Japanese customs and traditions, and third, when the outsider is brought in. A second thought that should be considered is the idea that the amount of screen time dedicated to individual dramas sometimes do not seem to be relevant to the development of the plot or even to connect with it, and, as a result, do not offer convincing resolutions. Again, it is quite the opposite. Japanese immigrants had come from a culture that took two thousand years to take its modern form. So, the film is actually a brief and selective portrayal of the dimension of emotion that the Nikkei carry when they have to process so many changes within such a short period of time as a half of a century. Not unlike Chantal

Akerman who dedicated long shots to people performing mundane chores such as peeling potatoes, precisely to comment on the common perception of those chores as mundane,⁵⁶ Tizuka dedicates a lot of screen time to emotion in order to reveal the inadequacy of popular characterization of her emotional films as either political and sociological platforms, or, simply, as a common expressive mode in Latin America.

Now, let us recall the argument of *Gaijin 2* to have a sense of why the UCLA International Institute review perceives it as overwhelmingly melodramatic, sentimental and soap-opera like. In the film, a mature Titoe repeats her role as a resilient and hard-working Japanese woman. If in *Gaijin 1* she had lost her husband to malaria, and taken her daughter and other immigrants to the big city to escape a life of exploitation on the coffee plantation, in *Gaijin 2*, she leads her community to a newly created settlement for Japanese and European immigrants in the south of Brazil. There, Titoe gains the respect of the community, which sees her as a visionary for opening a school and hiring a teacher from Japan to help the community preserve the Japanese language and culture. But World War II breaks out and the teaching of Japanese language and culture is forbidden. Moreover, the main financial source of the family, the cultivation of silk, is destroyed by Brazilian police. After the war is over, Titoe's son-in-law, the teacher from Japan, is killed by a member of Shindo Renmei, a group of Japanese immigrants that denies Japan's defeat in the war. His wife, Titoe's daughter and *nisei* Shinobu, has always seeing integration with "Western" culture as a threat to her Japanese roots and has difficulty accepting that her daughter, *sansei* Maria, breaks out of the "purity" of their roots by falling in love with the son of a rich Spanish immigrant.

⁵⁶ See Ivone Margulies's *Nothing Happens: Chantal Akerman's Hyperrealist Everyday* (1996) for detailed discussions of Akerman's work.

Nonetheless, they get married and have two children. But they face economic hardships and move in with Titoe. Shinobu then goes to Japan to work in a factory as *dekasegi* to send money home. When she is followed by Maria's husband, who uses his right-by-marriage to go to Japan as *dekasegi*, it takes Maria's daughter Yoko, a third generation born in Brazil, to convince Maria to follow his steps as a *dekasegi* to look for him. But the reverse migration takes a toll on Yoko, who is biracial, does not speak Japanese and refuses to behave like a Japanese person. Yoko relives her great-grandmother's experience as she is treated as a foreigner in the land she has the right to claim as her own. At some point, four generations of Japanese Brazilians find themselves in Japan. In the end of the film, Titoe, who had spent her years in Brazil wishing to go back to Japan, proclaims that Brazil is her actual homeland.

At first glance, as the UCLA International Institute review observes, *Gaijin 2* is arguably all over the place with so many stories crammed together, which makes its nuances incomprehensible. However, I argue that the very reason why *Gaijin 1* was deemed important as an epistemological viewpoint is what makes *Gaijin 2* a melodrama that does not create "sincere pathos." That is, *Gaijin 1* was a satisfying melodrama because it conformed to and reaffirmed Japanese traditional values and virtues. *Gaijin 2*, on the other hand, is filled with melodramas that are unrecognizable as Japanese-like. The issue could be related to a non-recognition and unfamiliarity with the uniqueness of the Japanese Brazilian experience, which relates to Karen Tei Yamashita's experience as described in the introductory chapter of this project. The Japanese American Nikkei experience contrasts with the Brazilian-Japanese experience in the sense that it is still filled with a pain caused by the internment of 100,000 American Nikkei during World War II. In the US, the Nikkei were not only seen as different but also as the enemy. In Brazil, the government did intern the Nikkei but not in the extent that happened in the US. Some 480 Nikkei

are registered to have been interned but, in general, they were not immigrants who were already established in the country, but new arrivals (REED; “Japanese-American Internment During World War II”). The war violence against the Brazilian Nikkei was actually done by fellow Nikkei who belonged to Shindo Renmei.

So, if *Gaijin 1* was regarded as relevant because it recognized the epistemological significance of Japan represented by Japanese values and virtues in the film, what if *Gaijin 2* also conformed to and reaffirmed values and virtues of the Japanese people while also representing particular and original values and virtues of the Japanese Brazilian immigrant? That is precisely the intellectual exercise that *Gaijin 2* invites us to partake in. Next, I will demonstrate what can be understood by Japanese values and virtues, and how they relate with Japanese Brazilian values and virtues by reviewing a 1971 essay by Brazilian Nikkei artist Tomoo Handa that has been referenced in a number of studies on the development of a Japanese Brazilian esthetic sense.

2.2 FOR A JAPANESE ESTHETIC SENSE IN BRAZILIAN SOIL

2.2.1 The Loss of the Japanese Esthetic Sense

Tomoo Handa (1906-1996)⁵⁷ was a Japanese immigrant who became one of the most prominent observers and artists to portray the rural life of the Japanese immigrant (figure 3). He

⁵⁷ Handa arrived in Brazil in 1917. His legacy includes essays and a number of articles in colony newspapers, paintings depicting the life of immigrants, and an 800-hundred-page account of his journey in *O Imigrante Japonês* (*The Japanese Immigrant*, 1988).

was a founding member of the group Seibi,⁵⁸ a collective that produced, promoted, discussed and criticized each member's creative work.



Figure 3. Tomoo Handa during the release of *O Imigrante Japonês* (1988).

In 1971, Handa wrote an essay about a Japanese Brazilian esthetic that would become widely referenced. In this essay titled “Senso Estético na Vida dos Imigrantes Japoneses” (“The Esthetic Sense in the Life of Japanese Immigrants”) Handa maintains that the Japanese immigrants had arrived in Brazil with a Japanese esthetic sense that was inscribed in the way Japanese people saw the world and lived, and that had been developed during two thousand years. However, because these immigrants had migrated to Brazil temporarily and with the understanding that they

⁵⁸ Seibi was a collective of Nikkei painters (for the most part *issei*) established in 1935 that included Tomoo Handa, Hajime Higaki (1908-1998), Shigeto Tanaka (1910-1970), Kiyoji Tomioka (1844-1985), Kichizaemon Takahashi (1908-1977), Yuji Tamaki (1916-1979), Yoshiya Takaoka (1909-1978), Kikuo Furuno, Masato Aki, Iwakichi Yamamoto, and later Manabu Mabe (1924-1997), Tikashi Fukushima (1920-2001), Tomie Ohtake (1913-2015) and Flávio-Shiró (1928) (“Grupo Seibi”).

would be returning to Japan in four or five years, they only focused on their work, which was usually in coffee plantations. If they were not working in the fields, they were working in their vegetable gardens (to harvest the vegetables that they were used to cooking) or in their houses (Brazilian housing took longer to clean). They did not have time to make their life in Brazil more pleasant and consequently lost the esthetic sense in their life.

According to Handa, the esthetic sense of the Japanese people was formed by an “everyday living tradition,” which, most of the time, could not be separated from a lifestyle where the “center of existence” was based on sitting on the *tatami*, a straw flooring used in traditional Japanese-style houses. For example, the *tatami* inside the house and the outside Japanese garden formed a unity because the garden was supposed to be contemplated by somebody sitting on the *tatami*. Singing, another valuable activity in Japan, was not projected but done with a low tone of voice because it was usually performed in the *zashiki* (*tatami* room). The tradition of sitting on the *tatami* also translated into the contained ritualistic movements of Japanese group dance. As for the walls of the *zashiki*, they were modestly ornamented. The only items on the walls were the *kakejiku* (vertical paintings) or the *ikebana*, which were placed in the *tokonoma* (special recess on the wall). Their simplicity served the purpose of helping to maintain a sense of serenity and purity in the room, never interfering with it. So, they were not just ornamental but also functional.

The *tatami* was nowhere to be found in the colonies where the immigrants were first placed. Instead, their housing was covered with floors of raw dry dirt where they had to sleep in beds (instead of on *futon*, a bedding mattress set used on top of the *tatami*) (figure 4). And instead of *fusuma* and *shoji*, paper panel and wooden frame room dividers, the walls in the colony housing were made of wattle and daub (figure 5). In addition to being stripped from their center of existence of the *tatami*, the immigrants had to take off their *kimono* (traditional garment) and set aside the

bowl and the *hashi* (chopsticks). This loss added to the lack of time to enjoy pleasant activities such as playing music (not many had brought typical instruments such as the *shamisen* [three-string lute] or the *shakuhachi* [flute]) or celebrating traditional festivities, taking away any possibility for the immigrant to cultivate the Japanese everyday living tradition, or *modus vivendi* as Handa calls it. Additionally, because of the temporary character of their journey in Brazil, there was a lack of interest among immigrants in learning the Brazilian *modus vivendi* and, consequently, the possibility of developing a new esthetic sense more in tune with the Brazilian land. For Handa, the biggest regret was the loss and the lack of a replacement, which caused an esthetic emptiness among the immigrants.



Figure 4. In *Gaijin I*, an immigrant sleeps on a bed while his roommate improvises a *futon*.



Figure 5. In *Gaijin 1*, Jiro, Titoe and Yamada are seen in their colony house with walls made of wattle and daub.

However, an esthetic sense did emerge among the immigrants, but it was one that Handa was not fond of, and categorically discards:

There is an expression “The Culture of Leaflet,” used among the Japanese in the colony. It designates the way of life or the artistic sense of certain people who boast about gluing pieces of paper all over the walls of their dining and the living rooms. [When they become rich], they hang an enlarged picture of themselves, or a portrait posing next to distinguished people, or even, if they are prominent locally, they hang framed thank you letters, and that way fill all of the walls.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ “Há uma expressão ‘Cultura de Folhinha’, usada dentro da colônia japonesa. Designa a maneira de viver ou o senso artístico de certa gente que se gaba de colar folhinhas pelas paredes todas das salas de jantar e de visita de suas casas. [Quando se torna rico] então, passa-se a pendurar na sala o retrato ampliado do seu dono, ou o retrato em que este aparece em companhia de pessoas ilustres, ou ainda, se ele é importante na localidade, cartas de agradecimento recebidas, emolduradas em quadros, a encher o espaço inteiro das paredes” (HANDA 224).

Handa explains that according to the Japanese esthetic sense, modesty must be observed, so people avoid exhibitionism. The culture of the *folhinha* represented the opposite—a culture of accumulation on the walls as opposed to the simplicity of Japanese walls, ostentation as opposed to the modesty of Japanese ornaments, and imitation of the “Western” culture, which hangs things on the walls, as opposed to originality. Handa could not see the purpose and functionality of those hangings in creating or maintaining a pleasant environment, much less a sense of serenity and purity that was so important in Japanese houses. For Handa, there was a lack of “finesse” and “sensibility”—it was an “anti-esthetic” *modus vivendi*. Furthermore, he believed that “the violent transformation in the situation of the immigrants in the farms developed, in many people, a kind of spiritual anomaly.”⁶⁰ That is, in addition to a *modus vivendi* that was anti-esthetic, some Japanese developed a defect. For Handa, the only way to re-balance the spirit was to fix the defect and then assume other esthetical forms.

There are two thoughts that emerge from Handa’s essay that calls for consideration. First, the treatment of the Nikkei population as generally homogeneous, followed by an expectation that they would respond to the challenges posed by different social orders in a homogeneous way. That was far from reality. Japanese immigrants had come from different places in Japan such as what was regarded as “mainland” Japan and “ethnic” Okinawa; they might have had a lot in common with European immigrants if placed in the southern part of Brazil, while possibly contrasting with indigenous populations if placed in the northern part of Brazil; some had come with family and some alone; some had not received much formal education while some arrived in Brazil as medical

⁶⁰ “a transformação violenta na situação dos imigrantes metidos nas fazendas provou o aparecimento, em muitas pessoas, de uma espécie de anomalia espiritual” (HANDA 226).

doctors; and so on. While having an understanding and sharing a general Japanese system of values and virtues, the heterogeneous nature of the Nikkei population adopted and accommodated their contact with each other, and then to the world outside their community differently.

Curiously, although Handa sees the immigrants as a homogeneous population, he makes a point to differentiate two different populations of Brazilians and their respective esthetic sense—the *caipira* (a local rural Brazilian) and the *caboclo* (a rural Brazilian who migrated from a different area). While he appreciates the *caipira*'s ability to maintain their home orderly, which made their living pleasant, he commends the *caboclo* custom of playing music around the firepit after dinner even though they sit on the floor because they do not own furniture. However, as much as Handa recognizes the value in those populations' enjoyment of life and shared moments, he does not seem to have envisioned them as models to be followed by the immigrants to enrich their own esthetic sense. He seems to be mostly interested in the Brazilian's potential to make the Japanese be reminded of the esthetic sense that had been lost.

The second thought that calls for further consideration is the expectation of a new esthetic sense envisioned as a revival, as opposed to one that considers a new esthetic sense that emergences from within. The first, is not unheard of.

2.2.2 The Revival of the Japanese Esthetic Sense

When it became evident that Japan had lost the war, many first-generation immigrants had to deal with the pain of giving up on the dream of returning to Japan. The country had been economically and morally destroyed. The first-generation of Brazilian Nikkei had left Japan when the reforming Meiji era (1868-1912) was investing on nationalism and militarism, so the immigrants that arrived in Brazil were used to seeing Japan as of superior race and culture. The

defeat was a great blow on this belief system. In addition to dealing with the embarrassment, they had to reconsider what to do to secure their future in Brazil. The rural *issei* who did not speak Portuguese and had not learned the Brazilian way of living could not serve as a model for their children. Thus, their way of living, as well as the Japanese culture that they represented, were rejected by many of their descendants as an obstruction to social ascension, urbanization and spending power.

But that picture changes starting in the 1980s when Japan establishes itself as a world power and a new and more intense interest in the Japanese culture arises. Japanese culture becomes a symbol of refinement. At that point, the *nisei* had already established themselves in the cities and, with their economic situation more stable, they turn to their roots and to Japanese cultural values such as *chanoyu* (tea ceremony) and *ikebana*. In fact, many Brazilian specialists in Japanese traditional culture have since applied Handa's view on the esthetic sense to understand the development of traditional Japanese culture in Brazil. Cristina Moreira Rocha, for example, used it as a reference to identify in *chanoyu*, which in itself serves as a system of ethic and behavior, what was chosen by Japanese descendants to revive the Japanese origin in their memory and what elements of the Brazilian culture were incorporated (ROCHA).⁶¹

⁶¹ Curiously, the participants of *chanoyu* were not limited to the Nikkei. Rocha explains that people in countries with a large population of Nikkei such as Brazil became increasingly interested in looking for ways to have access to and to understand Japanese traditional culture. That was when Brazilians of different heritage joined the Nikkei, and the non-immigrant Japanese, in the tradition of *chanoyu*. In her research, Rocha found out that it was in the conflict between these participants that their aspirations emerged. The question of identity and power were fundamental in the existence of *chanoyu* in Brazil. For Rocha, Handa's desire for a revival of the Japanese sensibility worked as a paradigm of the *issei* feeling toward this loss. When the opportunity arose, they pursued the learning of *chanoyu* and of other traditional art to revive the finesse and delicacy of the lost sensibility.

2.2.3 For a Japanese Brazilian Esthetic Sense

In his essay, Handa does recognize the value of the post-war invigorated interest in Japanese culture, specifically in *ikebana*, in Japanese traditional dance, in Japanese singing, in *shamisen*, in Japanese cuisine and in *bonsai*. However, he is unimpressed:

I see the scarcity and confusion of the artistic sense of the life of our fellows in the artistic sensibility that they are currently trying to revive and, that is why, by looking back at the immigrants' past, I sought to understand the process by which what was Japanese was lost It is not a matter of regretting what was lost, but of feeling better through the realization that what is currently within our reach is what sustains our lives . . . What does not adapt in any way to the Brazilian soil will die withered, because it only develops what adapts to it.⁶²

As much as those revivals were positive, he still sees them as “corpses of Japanese culture.” What Handa had truly envisioned was an originality based on an adaptation with the environment and with life, which is where, as an example, he places himself and his fellow painters and poets:

. . . because fine arts did not find the language barrier for expression, the artists were able to develop inquiries about what was Beautiful, what were the fine arts of Japan, as well as what was the art that the immigrant could create in Brazil . . . It is possible to affirm with

⁶² “Vejo a pobreza e a confusão do senso artístico da vida dos nossos patrícios, no gosto artístico que atualmente eles tentam reavivar e, por isso, relanceando o olhar para o passado dos imigrantes, queria compreender o processo pelo qual se foi perdendo o que era japonês Não se trata de lamentarmos o que foi perdido, senão de nos sentirmos melhor através da constatação de que o que está atualmente ao nosso alcance, constitui o alicerce de nossas vidas . . . O que não se adapta de modo algum ao solo brasileiro há de morrer ressequido, pois nele se desenvolve apenas o que a ele se adapta” (HANDA 224).

all certainty that all [the effort of the artists] was never in the sense of imitating the forms of Japanese fine art and that they will not leave for posterity sad shadows of them.⁶³

Handa expected that not only the artist but also the common people lived in an artistically and pleasantly looking way. For him, the hope for fulfillment of the emptiness among immigrants were in the hands of the *nisei* who were born in Brazil and saw themselves as belonging there. They would be the ones to bring back the attention to esthetics to the core of the Japanese community. The challenge was to develop an esthetic sense that didn't simply revive but that emerged from the living experience in the new land. However, what was in the young culture of the new land that could conform to a culture that had taken thousands of years to form its esthetic sense? Perhaps the answer was inwards, in the core of the immigrant.

2.2.4 The Value in the Margin: Tizuka's Revival of the *Issei* Esthetic Sense

2.2.4.1 The Wall as Canvas

Handa acknowledges that sometimes it is necessary to move away from a traditional everyday living condition ("disintegrate"), even if that means impoverishing that living condition, so that the realization of its necessity is perceived and revived ("reconfiguration"). The problem is that the middle of the process between the moving away and the realization is often misunderstood.

⁶³ “. . . não tendo as artes plásticas encontrado a barreira da língua para a expressão, puderam os artistas desenvolver indagações sobre o que seja o Belo, o que sejam as belas artes do Japão, bem como o que seja a arte que o imigrante poderia criar no Brasil . . . É possível afirmar com toda a segurança que todo [o esforço dos artistas] jamais foi no sentido de imitar as formas das belas artes japonesas e que não se deixarão para a posteridade sombras tristes das mesmas” (HANDA 232).

Here, I take a moment to make a parallel that might seem unrelated but that shares a logic that might be helpful.

In recent wall painting culture, tagging, the act of writing or drawing a graffiti artist's name on public spaces to mark territory, has often been seen as vandalism. Graffiti, on the other hand, has become a valid and powerful form of artistic expression even in the eyes of high art critics. However, people tend to forget that before they achieved the ability to display their talent on the walls, and ultimately embellish them, graffiti artists had practiced their skills by painting and tagging. That is why it is unfair to celebrate an artist's work of art while invalidating his scrap book as non-artistic just because they are not pleasant to the eyes. If by giving tagging a functional value we are able to accept it as a contributor to the art to come, perhaps we could give a meaningful value to another form of wall dressing: the Japanese Brazilian culture of *folhinha*.

For the *issei* who employed that esthetic, the walls were like a canvas for self-expression where strokes emerged every day, in different forms and shapes, often unpleasantly to the trained eye. But those strokes bore meanings, history, and formed a compilation of life. They represented the uniqueness of the Japanese Brazilian immigrant *modus vivendi*.

2.2.4.2 Accumulation as Process: Reconsidering the Culture of *Folhinha*

Handa did not realize that a valid esthetic sense with deep meaning to the immigrants' everyday lives could be in the works on the walls of their houses, perhaps because they represented the opposite of the essential elements in the Japanese esthetic sense. But if we look at the *issei* way of living more closely, we might be surprised by some similarities. For example, not unlike the *kakegiri* and the *ikebana* in the *zashiki* of a Japanese house, *folhinhas* were not just ornamental in the immigrant house, but also functional. If the *kakegiri* and the *ikebana* served as apparatuses to maintain a sense of serenity and purity in the *zashiki*, *folhinhas* served to maintain a sense of

urgency for survival through ascension, urbanization and spending power that the immigrant had so little time to achieve. The fact that the shape and form of the *folhinha* started as simple pieces of paper and, the more the immigrant accomplished, they became more “ostentatious” until they took the form of expensive paintings, attests to it. The *folhinha* became richer as the immigrant achieved more social, economic and esthetical stability. The culture of *folhinha*, therefore, was not simply about ornamentation but also functioned as the ignition of an engine.

The culture of *folhinha*, often perceived as transient, anxious, and volatile, in fact posed as a hand-in-hand witness to the process of ascension, belonging and becoming of the immigrant, so when its functionality as an ignition was not needed anymore, it resumed as mere ornamentation. The walls were uncluttered. But the uncluttering of the walls hardly indicated less accumulation. The reason why is because while the cluttering was on the physical level, formed by pieces of papers and the like, the accumulation was on the emotional level. It was possible for the immigrant to become esthetically minimalistic as they became more financially stable, but it was emotionally harder.

As Handa skillfully observes, the rural Japanese who arrived in Brazil believed they knew everything about the land they belonged to. Mobility in rural Japan was rare so the house and land they worked on there had belonged to their families for centuries, most likely since feudal times. They did not have clock in or clock out but bore the responsibility for the land, so they observed ritualistic schedule and rigid structure. In contrast, the day in Brazilian colonies started loud, with bells ringing and foremen shouting. Words were incomprehensible, the weather was hot, and the food was heavy and not necessarily nutritious. The job was not hard, but the intensity of everyday life was exhausting. While trying to integrate among themselves and become a unity, the immigrants experienced overwhelming challenge to relate to the surrounding people, weather, soil,

smell, taste, sound, color, language, and so on. In contrast with the Brazilian and the non-Japanese immigrant ways, there was the remarkable Japanese custom of internalizing their emotions—a trait of the Japanese esthetic sense that had been preserved. As already mentioned, for Handa, the violence in the transformation of the *modus vivendi* of the immigrant developed a “spiritual anomaly” in many of them. But how could the immigrant recover their spiritual self if they were not in balance with their surrounding environment?

In the privacy of their homes’ walls, the immigrants were able to express themselves creatively and address their accumulated emotions about themselves and the world around them. Perhaps to cover the walls with *folhinha* was not esthetically acceptable by Japanese upper-class standards, but it was a practice that potentially hosted great affective power and beauty if only it was recognized as a valid form of esthetical practice. That is precisely the gift of Tizuka’s *Gaijin 2*.

2.2.4.3 Addressing Nikkei Feelings: When Emotion Becomes a Protagonist

A description of *Gaijin 2* could be summarized in a few lines—in 1908, young Titoe migrates from Japan to Brazil hoping that she will make enough money in five years to return to Japan. Three generations later, it is Titoe’s granddaughter who will open the path for her return to Japan, not before having to come to terms with her family’s constant struggle with their Japanese Brazilian identity. But when Titoe finally arrives in Japan, she realizes her homeland had become Brazil. As much as this synopsis seems concise and sound, as we have already seen, it hardly describes the main narrative of *Gaijin 2*. The reason for it is because the plot is informed by several narratives that are significant individually but seemingly incongruent when put together. That is why the film’s stories have been perceived as redundant, irrelevant and incomprehensible.

Not unlike the *folhinha* culture, *Gaijin 2* represents an accumulation of narratives. The “disintegration” of Titoe’s family goes through excessive detailing at the same time that the constraint of the length of the film rushes them. The subsequent “reconfiguration” process, instead of selecting and qualifying what is most relevant and important, repeats the feat and also goes through excessive detailing. As in the *folhinha* culture, no piece of narrative is eliminated because it holds the emotion of an achievement, at the same time that there is an understanding that no elimination of a piece is capable of eliminating the emotion of a loss.

As a long-standing representative of the Japanese Brazilian artistic body, there is no question that Tizuka has been contributing to the revival and celebration of the Japanese esthetic sense for decades. But she is also a filmmaker who uses her medium as action, so *Gaijin 2*’s topic of the saga is just appropriate—it represents a reassessment, a reflection, an account of a journey toward a lost Japanese Brazilian esthetic. Tizuka’s strategy in *Gaijin 2* is to look inwards, to the core of the immigrant, and recognize the importance of an esthetic sense that emerges from within. But if the *folhinha* walls were limited to static images that were glimpses of accumulated emotions, in *Gaijin 2* Tizuka expands its scope by imagining the immigrants’ emotional journeys.

When Tizuka first moved to São Paulo from Atibaia, in the countryside of the State of São Paulo, she expressed a desire to study architecture, so her mother gave her the opportunity to learn painting from masters Masao Okinaka and Yoshiya Takaoka, two of the most recognizable members of the Seibi group. Like the immigrant painters, in *Gaijin 2* she uses her brushes to paint a dignifying and beautiful picture of the immigrant. But she takes it a step further. She acknowledges the uniqueness of the Japanese Brazilian esthetic sense by validating accumulation as process and pays a tribute to the emotional value of the esthetic of *folhinha* by fitting a large

collection of memories in *Gaijin 2*. Thus, because of the possibilities of her medium, she embeds the uniqueness of the Japanese Brazilian esthetic in the form.

2.3 *GAIJIN 2*: SHAPES THAT EMERGE FROM WITHIN

[In Gaijin 1] I didn't just make a dramatic film. I integrated the fatalism of the Japanese into the mood of the Brazilian . . . So, there's a possibility to laugh and to cry, because my intention was to carry out a work at the level of emotion. Emotion for emotion is not a rational emotion, it is intellectual, so I wanted people to laugh or to cry, and I think I was successful.

—Tizuka Yamasaki⁶⁴

If the immigrant was the theme in *Gaijin 1*, in *Gaijin 2* it is also the form. Through this form, Tizuka invites us to reflect upon how the immigrants dealt among themselves and others as Brazil was becoming their permanent homes. It also invites us to relive the sense of happiness, peace and spiritual balance that one achieves after enduring future-threatening insecurities.

2.3.1 On Heterogeneity

The difficulty of integration among immigrants might be taken for granted if they are seen as a homogeneous group. As already discussed, it is not that simple. A simple example can

⁶⁴ “[Em *Gaijin 1*] não realizei apenas um filme dramático. Integrei o fatalismo dos japoneses ao humor do brasileiro . . . Então, pode-se rir e chorar, porque minha intenção foi realizar uma obra ao nível da emoção. A emoção pela emoção não é uma emoção racional, é intelectual, então eu queria que as pessoas rissem ou chorassem, e creio ter conseguido isso” (FASSONI).

illustrate the challenges that immigrants might have faced—the difference in their diet. In Kyushu, in the south of Japan, it is not uncommon to see pork meat topping noodle soups, probably because of the island's proximity to Korea. However, in Akita, in the north of Japan, winters are so harsh that it is a common practice to smoke meat. Therefore, their noodle soups have a smoked flavor. In the Japan of the early 20th century, people from Kyushu would not have ventured to visit Akita, or vice-versa. But in Brazil, they might have had to share a roof.

Tizuka reminds us that we should not forget about the friction and difficulties that arise when the difference among the Nikkei is stressed. Some of Tizuka's casting of *Gaijin 2* were met with suspicion in Brazil, especially the choice of Tamlyn Tomita and Jorge Perugorria who played the leading roles of Maria and Gabriel, and were also the main romantic couple in the film. Tomita is a Japanese American actress known for playing the leading role in Alan Parker's *Come See the Paradise* (1990), and Jorge Perugorria is the Cuban star of Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *Strawberry and Chocolate* (1995). Given that Tomita was a well-known actress who had played the leading role of an immigrant in *Come See the Paradise*, her casting in *Gaijin 2* should not have been strange, but Brazilians were outraged and particularly criticized the fact that Tizuka did not hire a Japanese Brazilian actress preferring, instead, to dub Tomita's lines. Tizuka certainly found in the star an opportunity to appeal to foreign audiences, but what she also did was an elaboration on the question of difference among immigrants.

Among Brazilian Nikkei, an evident outsider was the immigrant from Okinawan origin (the *okinawano*). Located at the southernmost part of the Japanese archipelago, the Okinawa island sits closer to Taiwan than to mainland Japan. Before meeting on Brazilian soil, Okinawans and mainlanders had probably never been in contact, so the cultural shock was evident. Okinawans were warmer, their looks were different perhaps because they might have descended from other

southern Asian populations, their surnames did not indicate where their ancestors were from, their diet was based on meat, and so on. To date, it is not uncommon to identify the Okinawans in a group of Nikkei, as if they were a separate breed. Coincidentally, or not, Tomita was born in Okinawa.

2.3.2 On the Place of Enunciation

Men receive different education; they learn that crying is ugly and when they make films, they want to show realities, but they want to make the audience cry. Perhaps this is a more specific characteristic of the feminine side. So, I think a female director shows reality differently than a male director.

—Tizuka Yamasaki⁶⁵

The opening scenes of both *Gaijin 1* and *Gaijin 2* follow a similar approach with a unique feature. They include establishing shots that indicate the theme of the films and voice overs that, informed by an aural match-frame,⁶⁶ point to their critical comment. In the opening scene of *Gaijin 1*, a panning shot shows a line-up of Japanese emigrants inside of a building in a port in Japan (figure 6). They are carefully listening to an official who reminds them of the terms of their contracts in Brazil. Even though the words are uttered in Japanese and the sound is muffled, we

⁶⁵ “Os homens recebem uma educação diferente; aprendem que chorar é feio e quando fazem filmes querem mostrar realidades, mas querem fazer chorar. Talvez essa seja uma característica mais específica do lado feminino. Por isso acho que uma diretora de cinema mostra a realidade de maneira diferente que um diretor” (D’OLIVEIRA).

⁶⁶ Thematic, visual and aural match-framing are created by superposing shots that situate in different space and time. They are often used in *Gaijin 2* to indicate the moments in the film that pose as continuations to scenes in *Gaijin 1*.

understand them through Titoe's thoughts as she tries to make sense out of the working agreement between the Japanese and the Brazilian governments. Titoe hears the announcement from the outside of the building where women, children and older people sit and wait (figure 7):

. . . one year of work without pay? On top of that they would deduct their expenses with us in the plantation farm. What expenses? . . . They also said they would kick us out if we were caught making politically motivated affiliations. Affiliations? Politically motivated? How was I supposed to understand what all of that meant?⁶⁷



Figure 6. In *Gaijin I*, Japanese emigrants listen to an announcement before embarking for Brazil.

⁶⁷ “. . . um ano sem receber? E ainda iam descontar as despesas que a fazenda teria com a gente. Mas que despesas? . . . Também disseram que expulsavam se a gente fizesse associação de natureza política. Associação? Natureza política? Como eu podia entender tudo aquilo?” (*Gaijin I* [00:01:00-00:01:38]).



Figure 7. In *Gaijin 1*, Titoe listens to an announcement before embarking for Brazil.

The voice over is in Portuguese, which indicates that Titoe is not thinking in the present. It is a portrayal of Titoe's memory of the thoughts she had before embarking for Brazil and her reflection about those thoughts to wonder about her life in Brazil. She evaluates, in the present, if things would have been different if she had understood the real meaning of that agreement. The opening sequence of *Gaijin 1* anticipates to the audience that the film is not about the experience of (male) immigrants, as suggested in the panning shot but, first, about Titoe's experience in Brazil and, second, about her thoughts about her experience. The sequence informs us that Titoe is a young Japanese woman who learned Portuguese fast and is critically minded.

The establishing shot of *Gaijin 2* follows a similar approach. On voice over, we hear a male voice, but it sounds much softer and calmer than the announcer in *Gaijin 1*. It represents the thoughts of Kazumi, Titoe's grandson. Like Titoe's thoughts in the opening scene of *Gaijin 1*, Kazumi's thoughts are also in Portuguese, his native language. Kazumi is writing a biography

about the four generations of Nikkei women in his family—his *bachan* (grandma) Titoe, his mother Shinobu, his sister Maria and his niece Yoko. The voice over we hear represents what he puts on paper (figure 8):

I still remember the laughter of the children chasing me. I wanted to jump down their throat. My mother would say: *Gaman shinasai* [whispering], and then be quiet. I swallowed my anger, cried, and tried to resign myself. But then my grandmother, my *bachan*, would say: *Gambarenasai*⁶⁸ How could I fight, how could I overcome difficulties? Inside of those thoughts, I learned to be quiet . . . One day, without asking, I got a typewriter, a Remington. It was the only thoughtful answer I got in this house . . . The Remington was the way to find the answers. You didn't like the reality? Come up with different one Who am I? What country is this? Where does my *bachan* come from?⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Gaman shinasai* and *gambarenasai* are imperative iterations that can be understood as “deal with your pain and do not show other people that you are in pain” and “be brave and do not give up,” respectively. However, the meanings may change depending on the emotion of the utterance.

⁶⁹ “Ainda me lembro da risada das crianças correndo atrás de mim. Eu tinha vontade de voar no pescoço delas. Minha mãe falava: *Gaman shinasai* e se calava. Eu engolia a raiva, chorava, e tentava me resignar. Mas aí a minha avó, a minha *bachan*, me dizia: *Gambarenasai* Como eu podia ir à luta, como eu podia superar as dificuldades? E assim, fui aprendendo a me calar . . . Um dia, sem pedir, ganhei uma máquina de escrever, uma Remington. Foi a única resposta compreensiva que consegui nesta casa . . . A Remington foi o caminho para buscar as respostas. Não gostou da realidade? Invente outra Quem sou eu? Que país é este? De onde vem a minha *bachan*?” (*Gaijin 2* [00:02:02-00:04:15]).



Figure 8. In *Gaijin 2*, Kazumi writes his book.

Here, the Portuguese we hear in the voice over also functions as a marker of time and space. If, in *Gaijin 1*, the language indicated that what was being represented was the *issei*'s reevaluation of her journey as an immigrant in order to understand the present and foresee the future, in *Gaijin 2*, the Portuguese of the *sansei*, which is constantly marked by Japanese words, indicates that what is being represented is an assessment of Kazumi's journey as a Brazilian of Japanese ancestry so that he can understand the present and rewrite the future. Although the male character could potentially be looked at as a mediator who is necessary to validate the actions of the women in the film, *Gaijin 2* is still unique—it invites a male Nikkei to openly address and come to terms with his repressed feelings, which is still very uncommon in Brazilian Nikkei creative production. Coincidentally, or not, Kazumi is the only main character in the film who is left behind and does not participate in a ceremony in Japan to honor his family's past (figure 9).



Figure 9. In *Gaijin 2*, Maria, Titoe, Yoko, Shinobu, and other guests participate in a blessing ceremony in Japan to honor Titoe's family's ancestors.

2.3.3 On Silence

Japanese Brazilians choose not to, or feel they should not, speak everything in their minds that they believe is not socially or culturally appropriate. But their thinking can be and are constantly conveyed in other ways. Tizuka makes great use of the medium to convey her thinking in *Gaijin 2*, including being quiet(er) about a sensitive topic. There is a specific moment in the film that is quieter than many had expected—the inner violence in Japanese Brazilian communities following the end of World War II. *Revista de Cinema*'s review is particularly unimpressed by it:

. . . WWII breaks out and prejudice against the Japanese reaches alarming levels in Brazil: they cannot congregate . . . their lands are invaded, their *honor* is belittled. Chaos reaches its peak when, after the war, a group of Japanese people who do not accept Japan's defeat

begin to terrorize and kill their own people for admitting that Japan had surrendered . . . Unfortunately, what could have been one of the most exciting and strong passages in the film ends up being portrayed very quickly . . . The journalist Fernando Morais portrayed impressively the question in the book *Dirty Hearts*, in which he revives the violent massacre against the *makegumi* . . .⁷⁰

The review implies that Tizuka was not able to depict the issue of violence as well as Morais did. His book certainly allows for more time and space to develop this situation that certainly had a deadly impact in the core of Japanese Brazilian communities in Brazil. But to compare a book with a film is not that simple. First, the discourse of a film can only be assessed through careful study of the moving image. And second, in order to make a valid comparison between Morais's and Tizuka's works, it is crucial that an understanding of the place of enunciation is part of the discussion.

Until today, there is still a level of sensibility in this topic that brought both shame and a sense of betrayal to rather peaceful Japanese Brazilian communities. The ability to handle the sensitivity of this topic depends on who is doing it. Morais's book might be lengthy, but it does not depict certain nuances of the effects of the war in the lives of Japanese Brazilians as well as

⁷⁰ “Num segundo momento, estoura a Segunda Guerra Mundial e o preconceito contra os japoneses, dentro do Brasil, atinge níveis alarmantes: não podem se reunir . . . suas terras são invadidas, sua honra é menosprezada. O caos atinge seu ápice quando, após a guerra, um grupo de japoneses que não aceita a derrota do país começa a fazer terrorismo e a matar os próprios conterrâneos que admitem que o Japão se rendeu . . . Infelizmente, o que poderia ser uma das passagens mais emocionantes e fortes da história, acaba sendo retratada de forma muito rápida . . . O jornalista Fernando Morais retratou de forma impressionante a questão no livro ‘Corações Sujos,’ em que revive o violento massacre contra os *makegumis*” (OKITA 28).

Tizuka's film does, in part because his view is impersonal.⁷¹ A Brazilian journalist with no roots in Japan has the privilege of the distance, so his detachment is acceptable. A Japanese Brazilian filmmaker needs to talk about the topic from within and, therefore, carries a different level of responsibility—one that is sensitive to the historical and emotional truths according to her people. And that is precisely what Tizuka does. Through an intelligent maneuver of the visual and aural possibilities of filmmaking, she offers a novel way of dealing with and learning from the pain caused by Shindo Renmei. Such pain and shame cannot be simply addressed by reviving the gruesomeness of Shindo Renmei killings, as suggested by *Revista de Cinema*, because they would provide no new wisdom. A more effective way is Tizuka's choice to address the emotion in the act of silence.

In the film, Titoe's brother Jiro Kobayashi, who married her to Yamada in *Gaijin 1* so that they could emigrate to Brazil together, is blinded by the information promoted by Shindo Renmei and does not accept Japan's defeat. When Shinobu's husband, *sensei* Yamashita, confronts him, Jiro shoots him and his nephew Kazumi. In the emotion of the shock, Shinobu, who was pregnant, delivers her daughter next to her dying husband. The child, Kazumi, is left paraplegic and Shinobu sunken in silence. Through this scene, Tizuka creates a tragic scenario that justifies Shinobu's

⁷¹ In the following passage from *Dirty Hearts*, for example, Moraes describes the murder attempt of the pharmacist Assano but there is no attempt to find out anything about him, not even his full name, before or after this passage. The only information we learn about the victim is that he was a target and that the attempt to murder him failed: “[Kato e Yoshida] perguntaram quem era Assano, e quando o japonês atrás do balcão respondeu: ‘Sou eu’, Kato disparou um tiro contra o patricio. A bala entrou pela têmpora e saiu pelo maxilar cruzando em diagonal a cabeça, mas milagrosamente Assano estava vivo . . .” / [Kato and Yoshida] asked who Assano was, and when the Japanese man behind the counter replied, “It's me,” Kato fired a shot at the patrician. The bullet entered his temple and got out through the jaw diagonally across the head, but miraculously Assano was alive . . . (MORAIS 236-37).

silence—the murder of her husband, the disability of her son and the shame of having an uncle who is a murderer. But her silence is deeper than that.

Shinobu's family accepted that Japan had lost the war, so they would have been seen as *makegumi* (defeated) by Shindo Renmei. But because her uncle was a *kachigumi* (victorious), the Japanese society would have branded her entire family *makegumi*. The dishonor caused by Jiro Kobayashi would be extended to the family for generations to come. It is a heavy burden for anyone to carry, but especially for Shinobu who was the only one in her family who had never lost the strength of her emotional ties with Japan. After the killing of her husband, we cannot be certain about how she feels because she becomes silent, but we cannot discard that she was being haunted by unanswered questions—she could be doubting her sense of patriotism for a country that had caused so much disgrace to her family, she could be struggling to be seeing as both betrayed and a betrayer, she could be mourning her husband's death and her son's disability, she could be suffering for being in so much pain while raising an infant daughter, or she could be blaming her mother who followed her brother to Brazil. Any or none of those could be possibilities, and that is where the Japanese silence comes to place. It is an individual and oftentimes lonely journey, that is often misunderstood as depression in “Western” readings. But Shinobu's silence is only quiet on the surface. The challenge is to understand the non-spoken ways in which she conveys her feelings. I will next describe how Tizuka proposes that we learn from silent pain.

Toward the final moments of *Gaijin 2*, after Titoe, Shinobu and Maria have come to terms with their Japanese relatives who agree to return Titoe's parents' land to them, both the Japanese and the Brazilian branches of the family participate in a ceremony to honor their ancestors. Evidently, *sensei* Yamashita is represented in a picture that sits on the altar. During the ceremony, Shinobu stands up unexpectedly and carefully places a picture of her uncle Jiro next to her

husband's (figure 10). As a panning shot reveals that everybody remains still and silent after the incident, an unexpected conversation takes place on voice over between Yoko and Kazumi:

Yoko: How could my grandmother forgive this man? He killed my grandfather and left my uncle Kazumi paraplegic.

Kazumi: But she understood that forgiveness is the only doctrine that can annul the past. The soul of my great-uncle, Jiro Kobayashi, needed a service. That way, he would be able to rest. And we were able to exercise our generosity.

*Yoko: I have a lot to learn.*⁷²

The unlikeness of this conversation is because it is only possible on a different realm—on the realm of the audio track. It is impossible that it would have taken place at the immediate present, first because, as we know, Kazumi was not present at the ceremony. And second, because it portrays Yoko's thoughts which Kazumi would have had no immediate access to. But there are two possible interpretations that could make the scene plausible. First, it would be if we were willing to accept that the dialogue happens in a metaphysical realm that is independent from temporal and spatial constraints. A second possibility would be if the scene actually represented Yoko's assessment of the thoughts she had during the ceremony after she had shared them with her uncle Kazumi upon her return to Brazil. If that would be the case, it indicates that, although we see the scene happening before our eyes, Yoko's first thought is reproduced by her uncle

⁷² Yoko: "Como a minha avó pôde perdoar esse homem? Ele matou o meu avô e deixou o meu tio Kazumi paraplégico."

Kazumi: "Mas ela compreendeu que o perdão é a única doutrina capaz de anular o passado. A alma do meu tio-avô, Jiro Kobayashi, necessitava de uma missa. Assim, ele pôde descansar. E nós, exercitamos a nossa generosidade."

Yoko: "Tenho muito o que aprender" (*Gaijin 2* [01:57:52-01:59:19]).

Kazumi, then he comments on it, and finally Yoko agrees with her uncle saying that she still has a lot to learn. Interestingly, because the whole narrative is told by Kazumi as he writes his book, and therefore it is important for him to tell it this way even if it is tweaked, we know that he calls for integration (as his input blends the ways in which Brazilians and Japanese honor the deceased) and for assimilation (as he wants Yoko to learn more about how her grandmother thinks). Additionally, he expresses his hope for a better future in young people's hands. All in all, while respecting the integrity of Shinobu's silence.



Figure 10. In *Gaijin 2*, a picture of Jiro Kobayashi is placed by Shinobu next to a picture of *sensei* Yamashita.

2.3.4 On the Future

As often noticed by reviewers, *Gaijin 1* depicted Japanese traits that were easily recognizable as Japanese such as resilience, perseverance and strength in the face of adversities. Most notably, it portrayed the spirit of *gambarê*, which, as seen, could be understood as “to keep

working hard” or “to not give up.” There are several instances in that film where it is expected that the spirit of *gambarê* is observed. For example, when a male coffee picker falls from a ladder and gets frustrated, fellow workers ignore his screaming and crying, hold his arms and legs down, and say: “Stupid. Why are you crying? A [real] man stands on his feet.”⁷³ We have also seen that in *Gaijin 2* the theme is revived in Kazumi’s project for self-recognition. But *Gaijin 2* does more than that—the theme is interrogated and disrupted in young people’s hands.

When Yoko decides that she and her mother should look for her father in Japan, Maria accepts to take a job as *dekasegi*. While her mother works in a factory, Yoko attends a high school dedicated to the children of *dekasegi* but she does not fit in and is bullied, so she often skips school. Maria, however, expects more from her daughter so when Yoko comes home after partying at a night club, she demands an explanation (figure 11):

Maria: *What is this, Yoko? You haven't been to school in three days. You missed an exam.*

Yoko: *I'm sorry, Mom.*

Maria: *No more excuses.*

Yoko: I was *gambateando* a job with a colleague, Mom.

Maria: *Gambateando?*

Yoko: Yeah, Mom, *gambateando* from *gambarê*, your fight.⁷⁴

⁷³ “Idiota. Por que está chorando? Homem fica em pé” (*Gaijin 1* [00:23:50-00:24:41]).

⁷⁴ Maria: “O que é isso, Yoko? Você não vai à escola há três dias. Perdeu uma prova.

Yoko: “Desculpa, mãe.”

Maria: “Chega de desculpas.”

Yoko: “Tava gambateando um trabalho atrás de uma colega, mãe.”

Maria: “Gambateando?”

Yoko: “É, mãe, gambateando de gambarê, tua luta” (*Gaijin 2* [01:42:03-01:42:32]).



Figure 11. In *Gaijin 2*, Yoko tells her mother that she was *gambateando*.

As Yoko explains, *gambateando* comes from the word *gambarê*, which, for her, represents her mother's fight. As seen before, *gambarê* is normally understood as the imperative "Keep working hard." But when Yoko says it, it acquires a new meaning because of the way she says it. Coming out of the mouth of a teenager who is in desperate need to maintain her connection with Japan in the hopes that she could be seen and treated as part of it, "I was *gambateando*" acquires the meaning of "I was surviving." Even though Portuguese is the teenager's first language, and that is the language that she uses to speak to her mother, if she said, "I was surviving" in Portuguese, the meaning would come short. When she says *gambateando*, she is using the Japanese word in the form of a verb in the progressive tense. By conjugating the word, her response to her mother is a statement of action. She gives movement and dimension to a static word and its abstract meaning. What was once an expression mainly used by the immigrants in Brazil to boost each other's confidence, and certainly adopted by Maria, here it is merged with Portuguese grammar to give action to the verb. Embodied by the teenager, it transforms from *gambarê* to *gambateando*.

The new *gambarê* reveals what surviving really means for the young Nikkei in Japan. It means dealing with bullying, living with the shame of doing unskilled labor in a factory, refusing to accept the love of a Japanese guy (a “pure Japanese” as the teenager describes her boyfriend), wearing a pink wig, skipping classes to hang out with friends who despise Japanese culture, behaving in a way she would not normally behave, being what she is not, and being somebody else’s dream.

Gambarê was probably the most common word used by the immigrant in Brazil and its subsequent generations but, as we have seen, it acquires a new meaning in Yoko’s mouth—it now incorporates action, the body in movement, and the way a body moves below a head that thinks. That is, *gambateando* is the spirit of the new Nikkei. But this type of neologism is hardly novel for Japanese immigrants.

According to Handa, “[t]he Portuguese language learned on the plantation farms from comrades and settlers [did] not make much progress, so although it [lent] itself to understanding, it is certain that the meaning of words [was] generally confused. Hence, the many Brazilian nouns coming into the Japanese language, as well as Brazilian verbs turning Japanese. For example, in *come-suru* [eats-*suru*] or *sentá-suru* [sits-*suru*], *come* (eats) from *comer* (to eat) and *sentá* (sits) from *sentar* (to sit) [were] paired with a Japanese transitive verb as if it was an auxiliary verb. If the intention was to speak Portuguese the way Japanese [was] spoken, then what should have been done is to add *suru* to the noun The Portuguese language of the immigrants served only as an accommodation for life, not being a vehicle for transmitting the nuances of the soul. The Japanese language too, with the loss of its purity, [ceased] to lend itself to this vehicle With that in mind, I believe that because we are immigrants assimilated to Brazil, we have lost much of what was ours, so, to make up for this loss, we have to wait for the growth of our children. We will have

to learn about the joy in a Brazilian way of living until the moment we are able to realize the Japanese things that we have lost and, only then, recover the delicacy of sensitivity.⁷⁵

Unlike the early immigrant's maneuvers of the Japanese language, Yoko's neologism challenges us to rethink the effects of the experience of survival of the foreigner who must speak somebody else's language. Her action dislocates the Japanese language that represents a cultural capital that legitimizes Japanese values, and sheds light to the fixity of dominant/subordinate binaries. But it also poses as an invitation to reimagine the possibilities of survival of the spirit of cultures. Her neologism in action lets us know that it is a work in progress.

2.4 WHEN THE ETHNICALLY THEMED WORK SERVES TO INFORM A LARGER SOCIETAL MATTER

[The theme of Gaijin 2], in a way, is in Fica Comigo, when street children, in their search for a home, end up forming, among themselves, a family along traditional lines . . . This issue involving the family is something that I am experiencing, because my children are leaving home, because I married three years ago, because almost my

⁷⁵ “O português aprendido nas fazendas através de camaradas e colonos não progride muito, pelo que, embora se preste ao entendimento, é certo que o senso que têm das palavras se mostra em geral confuso. Daí, muitos substantivos brasileiros, entram de permeio ao idioma japonês, além de os verbos brasileiros serem japonesados. Um exemplo é o de dizer: “come-suru” ou “senta-suru”, em que ao “come” de “comer” ou ao “senta” de “sentar” se junta o verbo transitivo japonês como se tratasse de verbo auxiliar. Se o caso fosse de japonesar de fato, então, o que se deveria fazer era juntar o *suru* ao substantivo A língua portuguesa dos imigrantes serviu apenas de acomodação para a vida, não chegando a ser veículo de transmissão das nuances da alma. O idioma japonês também, com a perda de sua pureza, terá deixado de se prestar a esse veículo Assim pensando, creio que por sermos imigrantes assimilados ao Brasil perdemos muito do que era nosso, pelo que, para compensarmos essa perda, temos que esperar o crescimento de nossos filhos. Teremos que ir aprendendo a saborear o gosto do viver brasileiro até o momento de nos tornarmos capazes de nos dar conta das coisas japonesas que perdemos e recuperarmos, só então, a delicadeza da sensibilidade” (HANDA 230).

entire life I denied the family, my generation denied the traditional family, and I suddenly realized that family is super cool. I think this is, in essence, the theme that I am developing, with the whole dekassegui adventure.

—Tizuka Yamasaki ⁷⁶

2.4.1 *Fica Comigo* and the Urge to be Seen and Heard

This section marks my final reading of Tizuka's first millennium film *Gaijin 2*. My intention here is to claim Tizuka's place as an intellectual contributor to a new world project that acknowledges epistemologies produced outside the logic of the market and political trends, in order to prepare human thinking for a more sustainable future. *Gaijin 2* is much more than a sequel to *Gaijin 1*—it is a film about the future. Here, I reiterate that the insufficient reading of *Gaijin 2* was caused by assumptions that the film is a mere continuation of *Gaijin 1*'s project, when, in reality, it expands on a discussion that initiated in the marginalized *Fica Comigo* (1996). The journey of Yoko in *Gaijin 2* dialogues with the fight for survival of the young street kids in that film and their unique way of seeing the world that have long ignored them.

While it is well-known that Tizuka made films for a younger audience during her commercial decade, very few critics acknowledge that *Fica Comigo* was part of that decade, much less the importance of it. Tizuka had adopted a child at that time and, in that context, said: "I am trying to reach a middle ground, by offering a deep film that can be understood by millions of

⁷⁶ "Este tema, de certa maneira, está em *Fica Comigo*, quando as crianças de rua, na busca por um lar, acabam formando, entre si, uma família nos moldes tradicionais . . . Essa questão envolvendo a família é algo que estou vivendo, porque meus filhos estão saindo de casa, porque eu me casei três anos atrás, porque quase a minha vida inteira eu neguei a família, minha geração negou a família tradicional, e de repente descobri que a família é um grande barato. Eu acho que esse é, no fundo, o tema que estou desenvolvendo, com a aventura toda dos *dekasseguis*" (NAGIB 510).

people.”⁷⁷ *Fica Comigo* was a way of reaching out to a young audience by sharing a personal experience that could speak closely to them. However, her only non-commercial film of the commercial decade did not do well in the box-office, which Tizuka attributes to bad marketing and distribution.

Shot on location in Espírito Santo using city incentives, *Fica Comigo* was produced with limited funds by Cacá Diniz, Tizuka’s partner at CPC (Centro de Produção e Comunicação). In the film, the protagonist Dora was born in a simple but loving family in Vitória, Espírito Santo. Her parents provided for her and her two brothers—one older and one younger. But her father gets killed by explosives in a work accident and her mother ends up in the streets with her three children. They survive as beggars. When the mother goes insane and is taken to a mental hospital, Dora ends up in a foster care home, and loses contact with her brothers who she assumes remained in the streets. She is eventually told that the older brother was dead and decides to find the younger one. In the meantime, the couple Marli, a dentist, and C.H., a former cop turned mafioso (played by Antônio Fagundes, the leading actor of *Gaijin I*), go to Dora’s orphanage to adopt her. The teenager goes from living in an institution with no privacy to an upper-class house with a swimming pool. But Dora does not get along with Marli, who moves out. C.H. raises Dora, pampering her, but a few years later, the teenager decides to find her biological family. Against C.H.’s wishes, Dora wanders the streets looking for her two brothers. When she meets the petty criminal Wan, she fantasizes he is her deceased brother, and falls in love with him. They eventually

⁷⁷ “[E]stou entando chegar a um meio-termo, ao filme cabeça que possa ser entendido por milhões de pessoas” (NAGIB 512).

find Dora's younger brother. In the meantime, C.H. tracks the teenagers down, but let them go free and their own way.

In an essay published in 2007 on the new perspectives on poverty in Brazilian cinema, Ivana Bentes coined the expression “cosmetic of hunger,” which is an allusion, and an opposition, to the esthetics of hunger proclaimed by Glauber Rocha. She uses the term to define films that, set in needy scenarios, aim at a good-to-see spectacle, not a forceful reflection. *Cidade de Deus* (*City of God*, Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, 2003) is cited as an example of this new look. For Bentes, the formal options in the film try to soften the brutality of the real model while the tragic sense is attenuated by the anecdotal tone, so as to not sacrifice entertainment. Everything is reasonably comfortable and even fun for a situation intolerable by nature. In *City of God*, the poor person is “the other,” a wild foreigner, distant in spite of being so close. He is in a barbaric world, apart, with his own rules, a symptom of a broken society. Isolated in a new quilombo, the characters do not react to those above. They kill each other and are oppressors of themselves. For Bentes, *City of God* empties the idea of contrast and allows the viewer to feel away from that.

In many ways, *Fica Comigo* could be a precursor of *City of God*. From a technical point of view, it is a well-made film. It flows dynamically, has recognizable actors, offers attractive esthetic solutions such as aerial shots, and strategies from the Italian neo-realism such as filming in real scenarios about a topic of social urgency. From a narrative point of view, it is a patchwork of facts stitched in a fascinating way. The script has a lot of characters with impossible likelihood: a street child in Rio de Janeiro who is rescued from the streets by a rich man who lets her go her own way because he cannot rescue her from her tragic past. *Fica Comigo* could have been described as a “cosmetic of hunger” film, if not for one scene.

In this scene, Tizuka presents a moment of dialogue with the esthetic and ideological ways of Nelson Pereira dos Santos, her mentor, and that takes her film to a deeper level than *City of God*. When C.H. sends Dora back to the orphanage to punish her, she sees herself sharing a big room with other girls. The room is divided by hanging curtains that serve to separate each girl's single bed. Dora is lying down on her bed when two girls, King and Kong, start harassing her. They want to find out what the deal is with that girl who had been raised by a rich man but is sent back to the orphanage. When Dora rejects them, they try to sexually assault her, and a fight breaks out. Other orphanage girls rally around them chanting as if they were on a fighting tournament rink. Dora punches Kong in the face and breaks free from her. While all girls remain in the background chanting around Kong, Dora walks toward the camera and positions herself in the middle of the frame. She raises her right arm up to hold a horizontal pole above her head and screams the nursery rhyme "Boi da cara preta" out of her lungs (figure 12).

The shot only lasts a few seconds but is filled with significance. As figure 12 shows, the positioning of Dora's body may allude to the Black Power salute by Tomie Smith and John Carlos on a Mexico City medal stand in 1968. At the time, reaction to the gesture was divided—some felt that using a sporting event as a problem-solving platform was inappropriate, but younger Black people felt empowered. The image ingrained itself in popular culture and became an act of defiance that many have related to ever since. Years later, Nelson Mandela also famously raised his fist upon his release in 1990 from twenty-seven years of prison during apartheid South Africa. Mandela's salute was seen as both a call for solidarity for freedom and a reminder that the struggle was not over. Reenacted by Dora during the only scene in the film where Tizuka's presence can be felt, the gesture directs the viewer to the urgent issue that the film addresses: the youth's extreme desire to be heard, and society's resistance to learn from them.



Figure 12. In *Fica Comigo*, Dora screams “Boi da cara preta.”

In the cinematic journey proposed by Tizuka since *Gaijin 1*, there has been a continuous attempt to recognize the youth as intelligent and capable human beings. Sometimes their stories still remained in the background, and sometimes they were brought forward but misunderstood. In *Fica Comigo*, the young people make a radical move to demonstrate that they are still not been heard by the adult—a sign that Tizuka continues trying to make sense of their complexity. Not surprisingly, the full title of Tizuka’s first *Gaijin* film, *Gaijin: Roads to Freedom* (1980), resonates with the title of Mandela’s autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* (1990)—both texts coincide in their pursue of freedom. What would not be expected is an uncanny resemblance to *Fica Comigo* in the poster of Mandela’s book adaptation to the screen *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (Justin Chadwick, 2014) (figure 13), which I hope is not a coincidence.



Figure 13. Poster of the film *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*.

3.0 XUXA IN THE MYSTERY OF FEIURINHA

I'm sure that if I didn't make Gaijin, if I didn't discuss my origins in that film, I wouldn't be able to do anything, to live, to find a boyfriend, to have children, or to work, nothing, because it was something that tormented me since I was born. Now, after having made Gaijin . . . I think everything else is a bonus. I don't care if people like it or not, if the critics . . . I don't give a shit. What matters is that it gives me this satisfaction, that makes me a more generous person, more pleasurable in life. I'm up for that trajectory, I believe.

[And] now this Xuxa children's film showed up, which was also fantastic as a learning experience, everything, I had the greatest pleasure doing it. And I also discovered that the pleasure is the same between doing something started in your head . . . [or] to film a project that, quote unquote, is not yours, because it is a matter of attitude . . . It's like adoption. The child that doesn't grow in your belly is as yours and another one who grows in your belly. It depends on what you want.

—Tizuka Yamasaki⁷⁸

⁷⁸ “Eu tenho certeza que se eu não fizesse o *Gaijin*, não fosse discutir as minhas origens naquele filme, eu não ia conseguir fazer nada, nem viver, nem arrumar namorado, nem ter filhos, nem trabalhar, nada, porque era uma coisa que me atormentava desde que nasci. Agora, depois que eu fiz o *Gaijin* . . . eu acho que o resto é lucro. Não me importa se as pessoas gostem ou não gostem, se a crítica . . . caguei. O que importa é que eu tenha essa satisfação, que me faça ser mais generosa, mais prazerosa com a vida. Eu tô a fim dessa trajetória, digamos . . . [E] agora pintou esse filme infantil da Xuxa que também foi genial como aprendizado, tudo, tive o maior prazer de fazer. E descobri também que o prazer é o mesmo entre fazer uma coisa iniciada pela sua cabeça . . . [ou] filmar um projeto que, entre aspas, não é seu, porque é uma questão de postura . . . É como adoção. O filho que não é gerado na tua barriga é tanto seu quanto outro gerado na tua barriga, dependendo daquilo que você quer” (YAMASAKI, “Memória do Cinema”).

3.1 THE PRACTICE OF CINEMA OF EMOTION IN *THE MYSTERY OF FEIURINHA*

3.1.1 Opening Up for a New Path

When Tizuka's second film of the new millennium *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* (*Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha*), a.k.a. *The Mystery of Feiurinha* (figure 14), was released in 2009, it marked the fourth and last collaboration between the filmmaker and the beloved Brazilian TV presenter Xuxa Meneghel.⁷⁹ It also marked Xuxa's final film after starring in fourteen features,⁸⁰ which were all produced by her own Xuxa Produções, a conglomerate that oversaw the Xuxa franchise. To make a film happen, Xuxa Produções often joined forces with other production companies such as Ponto Filmes, the production company that was formed by Cacá Diniz, Yurika Yamasaki and Yoya Wurch amidst the closure of Tizuka, Cacá and Lael Rodriguez's⁸¹ Centro de Produção e Comunicação (CPC) in the late 1980s.⁸² As mentioned earlier, CPC had been formed in 1977 with the idea of centering production and business dealings under one umbrella, and successfully produced and released *Gaijin 1* (1980), *Parahyba Mulher Macho* (1983) and *Patriamada* (1985). But at some point, the partnership became overwhelming to Tizuka:

⁷⁹ Born in 1963, Xuxa is described by Amelia Simpson in her widely cited *Xuxa: The Mega-Marketing of Gender, Race, and Modernity* (1993) as: "blond sex symbol Maria da Graça Meneghel, universally known as Xuxa [Shoo-sha], emerged in the 1980s as a mass media figure of unprecedented dimension in Brazil. By the end of the decade, she had become the undisputed *rainha* (queen) of mass culture, 'the national megastar' . . . Xuxa has built an empire around a television program that is aimed at children but informs the culture at large about the ways of being in society" (2).

⁸⁰ Depending on the source, the number of films in which Xuxa has starred range from fourteen to nineteen. I have chosen to use the number fourteen because that is the number of films that I was able to trace.

⁸¹ Film director and CPC partner Lael Rodrigues passed away in 1989 (BUENO 269).

⁸² Following the dissolution of CPC, while Cacá Diniz, Yurika Yamasaki and Yoya Wurch formed Ponto Filmes, Tizuka partnered with Maria Cena and formed Scena Filmes (BUENO 269).

[Cacá kept] saying that I didn't act like a businesswoman. Because I am, indeed, a terrible businesswoman, I proposed my departure from CPC, because my talent was directed to film direction. So, Lael went his own way and Cacá created Ponto Filmes with my sister, Yurika Yamasaki. But none of it prevented us from keeping our emotional and professional ties. Every time I film or partake a project, I pass them on to Cacá so that we can keep working together.⁸³



Figure 14. Posters of *Crystal Moon* and *The Mystery of Feiurinha*.

Tizuka's desire to keep working with Cacá was mutual as he invited her to direct *Crystal Moon* (*Lua de Cristal*, 1990) (figure 14) which marked her family film debut:

⁸³ “Cacá vivia me cobrando essa postura, dizendo que eu não raciocinava como empresária. Como de fato sou péssima empresária, propus minha saída da CPC, pois meu talento estava voltado para a direção de filmes. Então, Lael seguiu o seu caminho e Cacá criou a Ponto filmes com minha irmã, Yurika Yamasaki. Isso não impediu que os laços afetivos e profissionais caminhassem juntos. Toda vez que filmo ou faço algum projeto, passo-os para Cacá para podermos continuar trabalhando juntos” (NAGIB 509).

[I made the film] because I had two children, Ilya and Fabio, demanding that I direct a children's film, and a baby daughter, Naína, aged 9 months. And, one day, I realized that Naína, who was learning to walk, came running towards the TV the moment she heard the song that announced the beginning of Xuxa's children's program. She started to shake in front of the TV, that baby in diapers! That was when Cacá Diniz, my ex-partner, Diler Trindade and Marlene Mattos got together and decided I should direct the next film and then [they] produced it.⁸⁴

The press took Tizuka's decision by surprise. Ironically, the idea of directing a family film was not new. It had been on Tizuka's mind at least since the early 1980s. In an interview following the release of *Parahyba Mulher Macho* (1983), she said: "I don't want to make a historical film anymore; my next film will be for the young audience, for children, a Brazilian fable, full of magic and animals."⁸⁵

While *Crystal Moon* was taking shape, national cinema was going into a stall. The then President Fernando Collor de Melo disbanded several cultural institutions, including the Brazilian state funded company Embrafilme (Empresa Brasileira de Filmes S.A.), the Brazilian Cinema Foundation and the National Cinema Council (Concine). To shut Embrafilme down was particularly harsh on filmmakers. The company had been created in 1969 for the production and

⁸⁴ "[Fiz o filme] porque eu tinha dois filhos, Ilya e Fabio me exigindo a direção de um filme infantil, e uma filha bebê, Naína, de 9 meses. E, um dia, eu percebi que Naína, que estava aprendendo a andar, veio correndo em direção à TV no momento em que escutou a música que anunciava o início do program da Xuxa. Começou a chacoalhar em frente à TV, aquele bebê de fraldas! Foi aí que Cacá Diniz, meu ex-sócio, Diler Trindade e Marlene Mattos se uniram, decidiram pela minha direção e produziram o filme" (CAETANO 17).

⁸⁵ "Não quero mais fazer filme histórico; meu próximo filme será infantil, para crianças, uma fábula brasileira, cheia de mágicas e bichos" ("De Cinema—Novo Longa-Metragem de Tizuka Yamasaki").

distribution of Brazilian films and, although struggling in 1990, it was still the pillar of Brazilian cinema. Ongoing projects were interrupted and films that were completed could not be distributed. But Cacá Diniz's Ponto Filmes managed to keep production going in 1990 by investing on films for the young audience that could count on the appeal of TV personalities. Working independently from government subsidizers, Ponto Filmes associated with Diler Trindade Dreamvision, Xuxa Produções and Art Films and brought *Crystal Moon* to the theaters amassing an astonishing 5 million viewers (BUENO 270). With *Crystal Moon*, Tizuka broke a box office record with a national film at a time when other directors could not get their films from paper to screen.

But the stagnation of national film production in Brazil, that lasted until 1995, did affect Tizuka, who had to wait until 1996 to make *Fica Comigo* which, as discussed before, was funded by local incentives of the city of Espírito Santo. Her following film, *O Noviço Rebelde* (1997) featured Brazil's "most-loved clown" Renato Aragão (a.k.a. Didi Mocó, the main character of Os Trapalhões franchise) and was produced by his production company Renato Aragão Produções Artísticas. Meanwhile, Tizuka had been working on *Gaijin 2* since 1996 but the production had to be postponed in 1998 because of the rising price of the US dollar. Without the possibility of funding *Gaijin 2*, Tizuka accepted the invitation to direct a second Xuxa film—*Xuxa Requebra* (1999). The film was very successful and brought 2.1 million people to the theaters ("O poder da imprensa que derrubou Nixon"). The following year, Tizuka accepted to take over the direction of *Xuxa Popstar* (2000) when the original director Paulo Sérgio Almeida became ill. With three Xuxa films and one Renato Aragão film under her belt, Tizuka was establishing herself as a powerful family film director. Paulo Aragão, Renato Aragão's brother and the director of *Simão, o Fantasma Trapalhão* (1998) recalls:

With *Simão*, my debut directing feature film, I had the responsibility of being as successful as Renato Aragão's return to cinema, which happened a few years earlier with *O Noviço Rebelde*, directed by Tizuka Yamasaki, a monster of cinema, with whom I learned from watching her films. At the time, she had an audience of 1.4 million viewers, so much for a supposed period of stagnation.⁸⁶

But that success did not come without concern to Tizuka: “At that time, my fear was that I would be marked as a family film director.”⁸⁷ Moreover, directing family films was limiting:

All of the children's films that I directed were for other producers. So, I didn't make them as I would have liked, and that wouldn't even have made sense. I'm not going to make a film for Xuxa that frustrates her audience or that frustrates the untouched Marlene Mattos. But my children's film, I have never done.⁸⁸

In 2002, after eighteen years, the legendary collaboration between Xuxa and the “untouched” producer Marlene Mattos, the woman presumably behind all of her decisions, came to an end. Perhaps for that reason, nine years later, Tizuka directed one more Xuxa film, *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha*, and the result was not in the molds of her previous Xuxa films. Perhaps it was the departure of Marlene Mattos from Xuxa Produções that allowed the company to give more freedom to Tizuka, or perhaps it was Tizuka who felt more comfortable to request that her

⁸⁶ “Com Simão, na minha estreia na direção de longas-metragens, eu tinha a responsabilidade de chegar ao mesmo patamar da volta de Renato Aragão ao cinema, que aconteceu poucos anos antes com *O Noviço Rebelde*, dirigido por Tizuka Yamasaki, um monstro do cinema, com quem eu aprendi vendo seus filmes. Na ocasião, ela fez um público de 1,4 milhão de espectadores, muito para uma retomada” (NAGIB 66).

⁸⁷ “Naquela altura, meu temor era que eu ficasse marcada como diretora de filme infantil” (CAETANO 18).

⁸⁸ “Todos os filmes infantis que eu dirigi foram para outros produtores. Então, eu não fiz como gostaria, e isso nem teria sentido. Eu não vou fazer um filme para a Xuxa que frustre a plateia dela ou frustre a intocada da Marlene Mattos. Mas o meu filme infantil, eu nunca fiz” (“Entrevista com Tizuka Yamasaki [trechos]”).

views and style be implemented. Whatever the case, for the first time, the uniqueness of Tizuka's filmmaking practice emerges on a family film.

Before we look at *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, let us recall the film that set the ground for the long-lived Tizuka-Xuxa collaboration—*Crystal Moon* (1990).

3.1.2 Once on the Path, Follow the Heart

My niece, Lissa, who was seven, was crazy about Xuxa. And I couldn't get enough of those children dressing up like Xuxa, believing that they would have her King Midas power! So I wanted to provoke this young audience [by] showing that even the mighty Xuxa had to struggle to achieve what she had achieved: [she had] to study, suffer, etc.

—Tizuka Yamasaki⁸⁹

In *Crystal Moon*, Maria da Graça is a young woman from the countryside of the southernmost state of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul, who, full of big dreams, embarks on a solo adventure to cosmopolitan Rio de Janeiro where her aunt lives lavishly with her daughter and son. After being mistreated by her aunt and cousins and making a living as a waitress at a diner, Maria da Graça rises to stardom only to ditch a prince, who had saved her with a true love's kiss, and, instead, be with her coworker at the diner. Through this contemporary version of Cinderella's

⁸⁹ “Minha sobrinha, Lissa, de sete anos, era louca pela Xuxa. E eu não me conformava com as crianças se vestindo como a Xuxa, acreditando que teriam o seu poder de rei Midas! Portanto, quis provocar este público infantil, mostrando que mesmo a poderosa Xuxa teve que ‘ralar’ para chegar onde chegou: estudar, sofrer, etc.” (CAETANO 17).

story, Tizuka dramatized the life of Maria da Graça, the real-life young woman who would later become known as the megastar Xuxa.

Among all twelve Xuxa film directors, Tizuka was, and has since been, the only film director who recognized the value in Xuxa's early path, from her humble origins in the small town of Santa Rosa in Rio Grande do Sul and, since she was five, on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro, to becoming Xuxa, the most recognizable and longstanding children's entertainer in Brazil. For that matter, however beloved in Brazil, Xuxa's mass appeal has drawn criticism, notably by Amelia Smith who argued that Xuxa had abused her Caucasian appeal to reach success.⁹⁰ Those criticisms did not seem to bother Tizuka who cherished her collaboration with Xuxa: "Xuxa is not an actress, she knows she is not, but she is better than many actresses I know. She sets herself to work and photographs very well."⁹¹

Working closely in three films in the 1990s allowed Tizuka and Xuxa to build a level of personal intimacy. Tizuka remembers telling Xuxa:

[D]o you want to have a child? Go ahead and have it. [If] you keep putting it off because you have to make a movie, you will never have time to have a child. Go ahead and make one, for god's sake!⁹²

⁹⁰ Amelia Simpson's skepticism about Xuxa's relationship with whiteness and racial integration can be observed on her comment about Xuxa's relationship with Pelé, the famed African Brazilian soccer player: "Xuxa's relationship with Pelé at the beginning of her TV and film career enabled her to play up her whiteness without accusations of being racially insensitive" (15).

⁹¹ "A Xuxa não é atriz, sabe que não é, mas é melhor do que muitas atrizes que conheço. Ela se propõe a trabalhar e saca muito de camera" (YAMASAKI, Interview with Rodrigo Cardoso).

⁹² "Xuxa, você está querendo ter filho? Vai lá e tenha. Fica adiando, porque tem de fazer filme, nunca vai ter tempo para ter filho. Vai e faça um, pô!" (YAMASAKI, Interview with Rodrigo Cardoso).

Tizuka understood Xuxa's reluctance but, speaking from the experience of being an independent mother of three, she insisted:

[Xuxa] would get a little startled. She is very responsible, professionally. She knew that getting pregnant would change the whole professional scheme around her. [But] I'd tell her: "Forget it, girl. You gotta do what you want in life! You've already done everything else."⁹³

3.1.2.1 A New Path for Xuxa

Sure enough, nineteen years after *Crystal Moon*, Tizuka directs Xuxa in *The Mystery of Feiurinha* where the star shares the screen with her *de facto* partner at the time Luciano Szafir, and their child, eleven-year-old Sasha in her screen debut. In addition to Xuxa's family, some of her closest friends, also TV celebrities, and with whom on screen collaboration is not uncommon, also join the film. More than a conclusion to a successful Tizuka-Xuxa story and Xuxa's film career, *The Mystery of Feiurinha* represents a celebration of the family that Tizuka had wished for Xuxa years earlier.

In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, once again Tizuka directs a Xuxa incarnation of Cinderella. If in *Crystal Moon*, Xuxa played Maria da Graça as a princess in the making, in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, she is a fully formed princess, twenty-five years older than when she first met her prince and has five children with him. The film draws upon a literary reference—Pedro Bandeira's *The Fantastic Mystery of Feiurinha* (*O Fantástico Mistério de Feiurinha*, 1986). According to

⁹³ “[Xuxa] ficava meio assustada. Ela é muito responsável, profissionalmente. Sabia que ficar grávida alteraria todo o esquema profissional em torno dela. [Mas] eu falava: ‘Esquece isso, menina. Vai fazer o que quer na vida! O resto, já fez tudo’” (YAMASAKI, Interview with Rodrigo Cardoso).

Bandeira, his story was meant to be “a great tribute to the storytellers we will never meet . . . [and] also a tribute to the reader [because] there is no book without a reader.”⁹⁴ The book is one of Bandeira’s most successful publications. Since 1986, it has sold over 2.6 million copies and won the prestigious Brazilian literature award Jabuti. The book chronicles the mission taken on by aged princesses to search for Princess Feiurinha who has mysteriously disappeared. The princesses in the book are from old folk tales—*Cinderella*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Snow White*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Love for Three Oranges*—, and they time travel to present-day to look for a writer who will write Feiurinha’s story and bring her back.

Tizuka’s version of the story follows three storylines. She takes the first storyline to the sumptuous governor’s palace of Rio de Janeiro, Palácio das Laranjeiras, which serves as the fairy-tale Kingdom of Encantado. There, Cinderella enjoys a life of ever-lasting happiness with her prince and their children. One day, her friend Riding Hood⁹⁵ tells her that Princess Feiurinha had vanished because nobody could remember her story. Cinderella realizes that all the princesses of the kingdom could also disappear if their stories were forgotten. When her concern gets the better of her, she convinces her sisters-in-law Princesses Rapunzel, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty and Belle to help her find someone who can write Feiurinha’s story. Tizuka then sets the second storyline in the transatlantic cruise ship MSC Música⁹⁶ docked in present-day Rio de Janeiro where the princesses and Riding Hood meet the writer Pedro who will write Feiurinha’s story.⁹⁷ The third

⁹⁴ “uma grande homenagem que fiz a esses contadores de histórias que nunca conheceremos . . . uma homenagem também ao leitor, não existe livro sem leitor” (OROSCO).

⁹⁵ Riding Hood is short for Little Red Riding Hood.

⁹⁶ Since 2012, Xuxa has been the “godmother” of MSC Cruises fleet in Brazil (“No Dia da Mulher, conheça as madrinhas dos navios de cruzeiros”).

⁹⁷ In Rio de Janeiro, the princesses find their kingdom’s messenger Caio already working with the writer Pedro. He had been sent by the Queen Mother (played by TV presenter Hebe Camargo) to search for

storyline takes the form of a flashback narrated by Jerusa, Pedro's assistant. Set entirely in the fantastic realm, the look of this storyline contrasts with the other two because the footage is tinted with a sepia color that creates an old film look. The flashback depicts Jerusa's recount of Feiurinha's story—she had been kidnapped from her parents and brought up by ugly witches who turned her into a witch until a beautiful prince broke the spell with a true love's kiss. The film ends with all of the princesses, including Feiurinha, reunited with their loved ones in the Kingdom of Encantado and destined to live happily ever after.

It is tempting to sum up *The Mystery of Feiurinha* as a story that guarantees the perpetuity of *Crystal Moon*'s age-old story of a commoner who is saved by a prince with a true-love-kiss and a promise of everlasting happiness. But the film is much more than that. For Brazilians, especially for girls like Tizuka's niece Lissa, who had grown up watching Xuxa since the 1980s, who looked up to her as a queen in her perfection, who wished to belong to her world, who dressed up and embodied her movements to "become" her but who, eventually, became adults and could not keep up with Xuxa's eternal childish personality. That is precisely where Bandeira's story came in handy. For the first time since its first production in 1988, Xuxa Produções committed to produce a literary adaptation to the screen. Upon release of the film, Xuxa said:

Feiurinha after the queen had learned about her disappearance from her servant Confúcia. But the search hits a dead end. It takes Pedro's assistant Jerusa to save the day after she reveals that she remembers Feiurinha's story. According to her, Feiurinha was beautiful despite her name (in Portuguese, Feiurinha means Little Ugliness). She had been kidnapped from her parents (her father is also played by Luciano Szafir who has a dual role in the film) and brought up by four ugly witches who made her believe she was ugly. The witches turned Feiurinha into an ugly witch, but a beautiful prince broke the spell with a true love's kiss. Once the story of Feiurinha is recovered, the flashback ends, and we are back in Rio de Janeiro where Pedro takes on the mission to print Feiurinha's story so that all the princesses can live happily-ever-after. The film ends with all of the princesses, including Feiurinha, reunited with their loved ones in the Kingdom of Encantado.

My films have always spoken to the “baixinhos,”⁹⁸ but they have been met with prejudice by adults. Now, many people tell me that they want to see the film because Pedro’s book was important in these people’s childhood. Mothers, fathers, teachers, everyone looking forward to seeing Feiurinha on the screen.⁹⁹

The newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo* noticed the urgent tone of the project: “Xuxa works to get back on her feet, [the film] has a good history, a well-developed production and a director she trusts” (figure 15).¹⁰⁰ Having the popularity of Bandeira’s book serve as the selling point of the film to an adult audience, Xuxa entrusted Tizuka to help her reconnect and reconcile with an audience that had been avoiding her. Asked about the film, Tizuka, stood by their mission:

I don't work on publicity, music videos, anything like that. I live for my cinema. I work so hard that a critic—Rodrigo Fonseca, from Rio—found authorial connections between my *Gaijins* and my *Trapalhões* and Xuxa films . . . Xuxa is at the lowest point of her career: 300 thousand spectators with [her last film] *Sonho de Menina*. We now have a good story, careful production. We are working to recover and expand her audience.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ In Portuguese, “baixinhos” means “the short ones” but Xuxa has used the term to speak to and refer to her children audience since the beginning of her career as a TV presenter in the early 1980s. Since then, it has become a staple of her emotional relationship with her fans.

⁹⁹ “Meus filmes sempre dialogaram com os baixinhos, mas havia o preconceito dos adultos. Agora, muita gente me diz que quer ver o filme porque o livro do Pedro foi importante na vida dessas pessoas. Mães, pais, professoras, todo mundo querendo ver a Feiurinha na tela” (MERTEN, “O ano”).

¹⁰⁰ “Xuxa tenta reerguer-se, tem boa história, produção caprichada e uma diretora em quem confia” (MERTEN, “Xuxa faz Shrek”).

¹⁰¹ “Não faço publicidade, clipes, nada. Vivo do meu cinema. Me empenho tanto que um crítico—Rodrigo Fonseca, do Rio—descobriu conexões autorais entre meus *Gaijins* e meus filmes como os *Trapalhões* e Xuxa . . . Xuxa está no ponto mais baixo de sua carreira: 300 mil espectadores com [seu último filme] *Sonho de Menina*. Temos agora uma boa história, produção caprichada. Estamos trabalhando para retomar e ampliar o público dela” (“Tizuka não tinha dinheiro: cortou o dragão”).



Figure 15. A production still from *Xuxa Requebra* (1999) with a message by Xuxa that reads: “Tizu, Thanks! Once again. Kisses with much love, Xuxa.”

In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Xuxa is not the angelic, gentle, innocent and unpretentious Maria da Graça that Tizuka had created for *Crystal Moon*. Here, Tizuka brings Xuxa’s character Cinderella closer to real life as it represents a Xuxa eager to reestablish the once everlasting relationship with her audience, overly anxious about her daughter’s happiness and inclusion, heavily reliant on personal alliances with powerful TV celebrities and businesspeople, a star coming to terms with her own fears and prejudices, and willing to share the spotlight. Tizuka invites the audience to participate with sympathy and compassion as Xuxa walks us through her unresolved dilemmas. A very symbolic moment in the film demonstrates its ambition. When Cinderella asks the fairy godmother to show her the book that contains all fairy tales, she inquires about a big round dot in the last page of the book. The fairy godmother explains that that is a magical end point—a portal to a different realm (figure 16). Xuxa jumps inside of it and falls into present-day Rio de Janeiro.

The end point in the film does not represent the end of the story, but the port of entry to its second storyline. That is, the end point is stripped from its usual function as a marker of a story that ends and, instead, given the function of a gatekeeper of a path. If *Crystal Moon* was about Maria da Graça’s path to happiness, *The Mystery of Feiurinha* is about the path itself. In *The*

Mystery of Feiurinha, happiness is not a permanent product of a fixed origin but a temporary product of an ongoing process. But not everybody understood it that way.



Figure 16. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Cinderella looks at the magical end point.

3.1.3 Confronting Assumptions and Misconceptions

With Xuxa, I was careful to look at her as a star, not an actress. I cannot demand from her what Renato Aragão does, because he is an actor, he creates characters, while Xuxa, even if she is playing a character, will never stop being Xuxa. People have their own personal traumas, fears and joys, securities and insecurities; I think the role of the director is to perceive what is unique to each person and assist accordingly.

—Tizuka Yamasaki¹⁰²

¹⁰² “[C]om Xuxa, tive o cuidado em percebê-la como uma estrela, não uma atriz. Não posso exigir dela o que [o apresentador e comediante] Renato Aragão faz, pois ele é ator, cria personagens, enquanto Xuxa, mesmo que esteja fazendo um personagem, não vai deixar de ser Xuxa nunca. Cada um tem seu trauma

Press coverage following the release of *The Mystery of Feiurinha* was either highly enthusiastic or depreciating. Most of the positive coverage was charged with a nostalgic tone of loyalty to “the queen of the little ones” and to the acclaimed Tizuka and hardly went into details of the film itself. The more pessimistic reviews, on the other hand, took the time to point out the many flaws they found. A review by the website *Cinema com Rapadura* written by Túlio Moreira¹⁰³ particularly stood out for two reasons. First, because of the website’s potential as a powerful opinion-maker. According to the company’s press kit, they are one of Brazil’s most respected online websites about cinema. Through their platforms that include a website, a podcast and a YouTube channel, they attract an impressive 300,000 visitors and 2.5 million pageviews per month. They are also followed by 400,000 social media users (Cinema com Rapadura). Thus, the impact of a negative review by this company could not be ignored. The second reason why *Cinema com Rapadura*’s review needs to be addressed is because it curiously regarded as flaws the most meaningful aspects of the film. This is what it said:

Xuxa's new film is more of the same: a circle of in-laws and a parade of pseudo-actors The film *Xuxa in The Mystery or Feiurinha*, supposedly adapted from the book, is an intolerable excuse for the “queen of the little ones” . . . to parade her famous friends and

peçoal, seus medos e suas alegrias, suas seguranças e inseguranças; acho que o papel do diretor é perceber o que é próprio de cada um e dar o que ele precisa” (NAGIB 511).

¹⁰³ From 2009 until 2012, Túlio Moreira wrote ninety-two film reviews for *Cinema com Rapadura*. According to his profile in *Portal dos Jornalistas* (*Portal of Journalists*), he received a Journalism degree from the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) in 2010 and, while a student, won the first-place award in the student category at the 1st Latin American Reporting Contest (São Paulo, 2009). Since 2006, he has covered several film festivals, including the important International Environmental Film Festival (FICA) in 2006, 2007 and 2008 (“Túlio Moreira”).

introduce her daughter to the Brazilian public Here we have a legitimate case of cinematic nepotism. Xuxa summons her clan of presenters, singers, ex-boyfriends and celebrities of the moment to compose a *mise-en-scène* absolutely eager for the content and absurdly concerned with scaling the ego of personalities of so-called Brazilian television culture to the big screen. If the theme is interesting because it shows the princesses' routine, their illusions and achievements after the "happily ever after," any chance of developing this context is useless after the first attacks of star complex By ignoring the video game soundtrack . . . the lame editing and some excessively closed frames, the film manages to leave only an incorrigible sense of fakeness. Real actors are missing. That is why the only palatable moments in the story are those starring Samanta Schmutz [*sic*] (in the shoes of the frustrated Little Red Riding Hood), Dani Dondo (priceless as the Chinese maid who speaks like Cebolinha) and a few other professional actors, who fight for a space with the big celebrities of the moment This fake aspect of the film is raised to levels of national embarrassment when Sasha Meneghel makes her debut on the screen. Having been educated in English is not enough to free her from the shame that her emotionless performance causes in the public stripped of affective ties with Xuxa What remains of *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* is the certainty that our culture has plenty of potential to produce good films for children and young people, if there is respect for the intelligence of the little ones and no underestimation of the critical analysis of the older ones. The only barrier is precisely to remove celebrities from the eighties who are disconnected from the new reality of this audience, used to films of memorable subtleties, such as *Toy Story*, *Harry Potter*, *Bridge to Terabithia*, among many other recent cases Pedro Bandeira's own work . . . could be more used by Brazilian producers. After all, it is the dream of any

child (and adult) who has ever read any of his books to see all of that on the big screen . . .

I will come to believe in magic the day Xuxa is definitively removed from Brazilian reality.¹⁰⁴

Cinema com Rapadura's review questions a lot of choices made for the film but, ironically, it replicates what it perceives as "excessively closed frames." That is, what it sees as flaws could be seen as positive if only looked at from a broader perspective. Let us consider, for example, the opening statement of the review: "Xuxa's new film is more of the same: a circle of in-laws and a parade of pseudo-actors." The statement implies that the film is merely another specimen of a non-

¹⁰⁴ O novo filme de Xuxa é mais do mesmo: rodinha de comadres e desfile de pseudo-atores . . . O filme "Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha", supostamente adaptado do livro, é uma desculpa intolerável para que a "rainha dos baixinhos" . . . desfilasse seus amigos famosos e apresentasse a filha ao público brasileiro . . . Eis aqui um legítimo caso de nepotismo cinematográfico. Xuxa convoca sua patota de apresentadores, cantores, ex-namorados e famosos do momento para compor um *mise-en-scène* absolutamente afoito com o conteúdo e absurdamente preocupado em dimensionar para as telas do cinema o ego de personalidades da chamada cultura televisiva brasileira. Se a temática é interessante por mostrar a rotina das princesas, suas ilusões e conquistas após o "felizes para sempre", qualquer chance de desenvolvimento desse contexto é inútil após os primeiros ataques de estrelismo em cena . . . Ignorando a trilha sonora de videogame . . . a edição de fundo de quintal e alguns enquadramentos excessivamente fechados, o filme consegue deixar apenas uma incorrigível sensação de falsidade. Atores de verdade fazem falta. Por isso mesmo, os únicos momentos mais palatáveis da história são aqueles protagonizados por Samanta Schmutz [*sic*] (na pele da frustrada Chapeuzinho Vermelho), Dani Dondo (impagável como a empregada chinesa que fala como o Cebolinha) e outros poucos profissionais da atuação, que disputam espaço no tapa com as celebridades globais do momento . . . Esse aspecto *fake* do filme é elevado a níveis de constrangimento nacional quando Sasha Meneghel faz seu *debut* nos cinemas. Ter sido alfabetizada em inglês não é suficiente para livrá-la da vergonha alheia que sua *performance* apática provoca no público despido de vínculos afetivos com Xuxa . . . O que fica de "Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha" é a certeza de que nossa cultura tem potencial de sobra para produzir bons filmes para o público infanto-juvenil, se houver respeito pela inteligência dos pequenos e sem subestimar a análise crítica dos mais velhos. A única barreira é justamente afastar desse processo celebridades oitentistas desconexas com a nova realidade dessa plateia, acostumada a filmes de sutilezas memoráveis, como "*Toy Story*", "*Harry Potter*", "*Ponte para Terabítia*", entre muitos outros casos recentes . . . A própria obra de Pedro Bandeira, figura responsável pela estrela solitária atribuída à nota desse "Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha", poderia ser mais utilizada pelos produtores brasileiros. Afinal, é o sonho de qualquer criança (e adulto) que já leu algum livro dele ver aquilo tudo na tela grande . . . Passarei a acreditar em mágica no dia em que Xuxa for afastada definitivamente da realidade brasileira" (MOREIRA).

professional cast Xuxa film and discards the possibility of any nuance that might differentiate one Xuxa film from another. Not only does the review dismiss nuances and flattens and homogenizes Tizuka's four Xuxa films, but it also dismisses the work of the other twelve directors that were involved in making Xuxa films. Those directors came from a variety of backgrounds that includes TV, theater, mainstream and art-house cinema, among others, so even if subordinated to Xuxa's production company, it is inaccurate to consider that every Xuxa film emerged as a mere clone. Another unfortunate judgement is to call the tight 700,000-dollar-budget *The Mystery of Feiurinha* "disconnected from the new reality of [the] audience" by comparing it to "the memorable subtleties" provided by multi-million Hollywood studio productions such as *Toy Story*, *Harry Potter* and *Bridge to Terabithia*.

Let us look at another "flaw" observed by the review—the "incorrigible sense of fakeness" in the film, which it partly blamed on "lame editing and some excessively closed frames." This observation seems to refer to a lack of continuity, which has the potential to call attention to the "fake" reality created by a film. There are certainly a few instances of unorthodox cuts in *The Mystery of Feiurinha* that could be seen as "lame editing" in the sense that it makes the audience aware of the "real" people behind the production of the film. One example that might illustrate what the review means is the opening scene of the film, which shows the writer Pedro and his assistant Jerusa on the deck of a cruise ship. Through a medium close-up and side view shot of the two people talking face-to-face, we learn that Jerusa is unsuccessfully trying to convince Pedro to have something to eat and drink. When he finally accepts her offer, the shot cuts to a close-up of Jerusa who smiles, satisfied. The editing in this sequence could be seen as "lame" because in the close-up shot of Jerusa, her eyeline does not match Pedro's, which emphasizes the cut between the shots and, therefore, compromises continuity. Moreover, very closed frames are chosen for this

sequence. However, Tizuka might be compromising continuity in order to charge the scene with socio-political meaning, which is the case in this scene as we will discuss later. Therefore, a more productive approach toward unorthodox editing in this film would be to identify those instances when “fakeness” is sensed and understand why the smoothness of the narrative had to be interrupted.

In the midst of *Cinema com Rapadura*’s rampage, there is a very interesting approach that was undertaken. While something as common and expected as an opinion about Xuxa’s performance playing the protagonist Cinderella is completely absent, the review expresses a strongly worded objection to the participation of Xuxa’s inner circle in the film. The review calls it “a circle of in-laws and a parade of pseudo-actors,” “a legitimate case of cinematic nepotism,” a “clan of presenters, singers, ex-boyfriends and celebrities of the moment,” a parade to “introduce her daughter to the Brazilian public,” and so on. The review blames the failure of the story on the cast’s inability to focus on acting—“any chance of developing [the] context is useless after the first attacks of star complex.” Such an emphasis on the participation of secondary characters in the film contradicts the approach that is commonly taken by critics when analyzing family films. According to Noel Brown, a common genre denomination such as a family film, or a Xuxa film in this case, usually implies that it aims at a very strong identification with the protagonist and the challenge that the protagonist must overcome to save the day (BROWN 29). Perhaps for *Cinema com Rapadura*, an opinion about the protagonist is already given when it calls the film “more of the same” so it is not necessary to emphasize that Xuxa’s performance is just like any other of her past performances. However, an alternative thought could be that the review might not consider *The Mystery of Feiurinha* to be a family film.

Although the review does not go as far as to suggest alternative ways of categorizing the film, it gives food for thought. For example, let us consider Rick Altman's problem with traditional genre criticism of films for what he describes as stemming "from the ever-present desire for a stable and easily identifiable object of analysis." According to Altman, for a genre to exist, "a large number of texts must be produced, broadly distributed, exhibited to an extensive audience and received in a rather homogeneous manner." But, for Altman, critics have tended to locate genre in a single part of this process rather than where he believes it should be located: "somewhere in the overall circulation of meaning constitutive of the process." That is, "as the by-product of an extended series of events, a genre must be defined in a manner consisted with the complexity of an overall situation made up of three-dimensional events spread out over space and time" (84). As *Cinema com Rapadura* might have sensed, *The Mystery of Feiurinha* is indeed consisted of several complex situations and does resist easy genre bracketing.

The *Cinema com Rapadura* overall verdict seems to be that *The Mystery of Feiurinha* is a twisted and cheapened adaptation of Pedro Bandeira's story presented by Xuxa and her clan's ego. However, the review fails to recognize that Tizuka infuses Bandeira's story with a *mélange* of tales that invites us to think further than that the film is an allegory about housewives and happy endings imagined through a writer in crisis. The so called "pseudo-actors," for example, come in from real life to incarnate characters that become twisted and sometimes intertwined with real life or within the film itself. The character of Luciano Szafir (Xuxa's partner in real life) is multiplied and assumes both the role of the husband of Cinderella (Xuxa) and the father of Feiurinha (Sasha, his and Xuxa's daughter in real life). Xuxa's character also doubles as both Cinderella and a mother of a child other than Cinderella's children. Unlike Szafir, she does not impersonate Sasha's mother but Sasha's character's mother-in-law. One of Xuxa's closest friends, TV personality Luciano

Huck, plays the husband of Rapunzel who is played by his real-life wife Angélica. In real life, Angélica is also a highly beloved presenter, and has been portrayed as Xuxa's biggest competition. In the film, the two impersonate catty in-laws. One of Sasha's best friends, Bruna Marquezine, is also part of the celebrity-studded cast and plays the girl's character's opposite, witch Belezinha. Xuxa's "clan" is blessed by famed veteran TV presenter Hebe Camargo, who plays the Queen Mother. Another character that comes in from Xuxa's real-life circle is one of the two that *Cinema com Rapadura* called "palatable"—Daniela Dondo, who plays the "priceless" "Chinese maid who speaks like Cebolinha." In real life, Dondo is a Rio de Janeiro socialite, the daughter of a billionaire businessman and the stepsister of another one of Sasha's best friends.

The Mystery of Feiurinha might seem like a big stretch from the book that it was based on but, having been directed by Tizuka, it is not possible to make simple assumptions about the unorthodox choices and arrangements that *Cinema com Rapadura* noted. In the following sections, I address three questions in order to understand what the unorthodox choices and arrangements can communicate about Tizuka's ambitions for the film: 1) What if the characters brought in from real life, the ones that are supposedly only concerned about "scaling [their own] ego," were real assets? 2) If not a family film, how should *The Mystery of Feiurinha* be regarded as and what would be the benefit of it? 3) What is significant about Daniela Dondo's "Chinese maid" being distinguished as "priceless" by the review? In order to support my thinking, I will recall a filmmaking strategy undertaken by Tizuka and her team in her most experimental film to date—*Patriamada* (1985).

3.2 EXPLORING EMOTIONS IN *THE MYSTERY OF FEIURINHA*

3.2.1 Real Life and Fictional Character Blend: Exploring Unscripted Emotions

According to Tizuka, *Patriamada* was meant to be a big musical,¹⁰⁵ but then came the decision to make a documentary with fictional characters being inserted in the real life that was being documented. This idea was in fact from an old project that Tizuka and her CPC fellows had had, which consisted of going around Brazil with a small crew, a screenwriter and a couple of actors. As they passed through places, they would stop, see what stories were going on at the place and insert their fictional stories into the local reality. It was envisioned to be an experiment between fiction and reality, between drama and documentary filmmaking—an exercise to evaluate the emotion created when the real met fiction (NAGIB 510-11).

With *Patriamada*, Tizuka managed to implement the old idea very successfully. It was conceived with a small crew, and both the script and the production relied heavily on reality—that is, a lot of scenes were written according to the outcome of the day on the field, and production followed along:

As there was no script, the film was written during the filming process, I would call Luciano and tell him: write about this. And then Luciano would call back shortly after, get me out

¹⁰⁵ As noted in Chapter 1, in 1984, CPC produced *Bete Balanço* to mark Lael Rodrigues's directing debut. Tizuka served as the executive producer, and Cacá Diniz as the producer. The film is a musical so perhaps the decision to make *Patriamada* as a documentary was also influenced by the fact that CPC wanted Lael Rodrigues to direct his first film, so he had the first bid to make a musical.

of the film set, and say: I thought about this and that. That's how we were making the film.¹⁰⁶

Tizuka and her crew shot actual footage of *Diretas Já*, the street protests in 1983 that called for direct presidential elections that would end two decades of military dictatorship. The team also interviewed politicians in Congress and opposition leaders, filmed the voting of the (failed) bill, and so on, all while fictional characters navigated through those events and engaged with real life people as if they were not fictional. One aspect of the experiment was surprisingly unanticipated by Tizuka:

What surprised me was that this kind of “docu-drama” was in favor of fiction all the time. For example, when the [then] president João Figueiredo greeted the actor Walmor Chagas, he thought he was greeting the businessman that Walmor was playing [on a soap opera] at the time.¹⁰⁷

Walmor Chagas's character in *Patriamada* had an uncanny resemblance to the character he was playing in the highly popular soap opera *Vereda Tropical* (Carlos Lombardi, 1984-85)—their lives were split between their upper-class demanding families and their position as chairman of their companies. According to Tizuka's evaluation of the experiment, when real-life people interacted with Chagas's character in *Patriamada*, not only he was not a stranger to them, but he

¹⁰⁶ “Como não tinha roteiro, a coisa era escrita assim mesmo durante o processo de filmagem, eu ligava pro Luciano e dizia: escreve sobre isso. E aí o Luciano daqui a pouco ligava e me mandava buscar no set de filmagem e dizia: pensei em tal coisa. A gente ia fazendo assim” (YAMASAKI, “Memória do Cinema”).

¹⁰⁷ “O que me surpreendeu foi que essa espécie de ‘docu-drama’ esteve a favor da ficção o tempo todo. Por exemplo, quando o ex-presidente João Figueiredo cumprimentou o ator Walmor Chagas, ele achou que estava cumprimentando o empresário da novela que o Walmor estava interpretando naquele momento” (NAGIB 510-11).

had been around them in the privacy of their TV rooms. They already knew him intimately, so he deserved their attention.

A careful look at the footage from *Patriamada* (figures 17-19) shows that President Figueiredo does not seem to question what that man, that stranger in a suit, is doing there at the top of the Palácio do Planalto ramp during his ceremonial walk, which is usually reserved to state visits. It is indeed a powerful moment when Chagas's character makes his presence known to the president and the president, in turn, recognizes the actor (as perhaps Chagas's character in the soap opera) and accepts his invitation to enter and participate in the privacy of his fictional realm by initiating the handshake that bounds their complicity.



Figure 17. In *Patriamada*, President Figueiredo (center, fourth from left) goes up the Palácio do Planalto ramp.



Figure 18. In *Patriamada*, Walmor Chagas's character waits for Tizuka's signal to greet President Figueiredo.



Figure 19. In *Patriamada*, Chagas's character greets President Figueiredo.

In a different scene we can observe another powerful moment of complicity on camera. We see the journalist Lina, played by actress Débora Block, interviewing the prominent singer

Milton Nascimento during the Diretas Já street protests. The scene is scored with a live performance of Milton's famous song "In the Dances of Life" ("Nos bailes da vida," 1981) with fans cheering to the song, as if it was diegetic and coming out of the podium speakers. The interview goes:

Lina: *Milton Nascimento, excuse me, what's the importance for you to be here at this rally?*

Milton: *Look, the importance is that I'm participating in this demonstration that clearly shows that the people are already tired of being massacred and that they really want someone to represent their wishes up there.*

Lina: *And the emotion of being here, how is it?*

Milton: *That's the most important thing because I already sing that every artist has to go where the people are, so that's that. I'm here.*

Lina: *I'm your fan, did you know?*¹⁰⁸

Seemingly flattered and shy, Milton graciously smiles at Lina as soon as he hears her compliment. But he is also visibly taken by surprise, perhaps because he did not expect a journalist to address him so candidly, or, if he knew he was participating in Tizuka's film, because the actress had broken character when she said—"I'm your fan, did you know?" For experienced actors, it might not be difficult to incarnate scripted emotions even if they have no personal affective bound with the scene or with the other characters on the scene, at the same time that it might not be

¹⁰⁸ Lina: "Milton Nascimento, por favor, qual é a importância pra você de tá aqui nesse comício?"

Milton: "Olha, a importância é de tá participando dessa manifestação que mostra claramente que o povo já tá cansado de ser massacrado e que realmente quer alguém que represente seus anseios lá em cima."

Lina: "E a emoção de tá aqui, como é que é?"

Milton: "Isso é a coisa mais importante porque eu já canto que todo o artista tem que ir onde o povo está, então é isso aí. Tô aqui."

Lina: "Eu sou sua fã, sabia?" (*Patriamada* [00:20:27-00:21:00]).

difficult to control unscripted emotions in lieu of scripted emotions in case they have personal affective bond with the scene or with the other characters on the scene. Understandably, a less experienced actor like Débora Bloch, who had just debuted on the big screen as the lead-actress of *Bete Balanço* shot the previous year, might break character in a scene that is personally emotional to her. In the end, although the footage of real-life events was woven into a linear and coherent fictional narrative in the editing table, it had to follow the lead of the unscripted emotions that emerged the moment reality met fiction and was captured by the camera. And that is where the filmmaking strategy undertook for *Patriamada* and *The Mystery of Feiurinha* meet.

In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, instead of fiction informing real life, real life informs fiction. Non-professional interpreters in Xuxa films are not seen as such, but as temporary interpreters who have been entrusted with characters. The emotion they bring is not the studied, corrected, developed and elaborated emotion of trained actors. Xuxa's inner circle in the film is not expected to have such a toolbox. Instead, the value they bring is their personal affective bond with Xuxa and the determination to support her project. We must not forget that most of them are highly qualified and respected professionals in their respective areas of expertise who do not really need to participate in films in order to advance their careers. Xuxa's inner circle who plays Rapunzel, her husband, Cinderella's husband, the Queen Mother are not amateurs. They bring extensive on-camera experience and a great potential to aggregate.

Additionally, as we have already seen, the strength of Tizuka's characters is not in what they are, but in the process of maturation that they go through. Their characters are transformed, sometimes into surprising, sometimes contradictory acts, sometimes with a socio-political tone, to identify themselves. Tizuka's view on self-identification also suggests that the biological must also be present—the body, the intellect, the soul and the heart must emerge and express themselves in

ways that are valued as individual ways of communicating. This is particularly important in this film where one needs to recall what it is to feel like a child. Few adult celebrities, unless they are professional actors for children like Renato Aragão, are seen on screen being unapologetically playful, vulnerable, childish and immature as Xuxa's inner circle. They were fully capable of and committed to generate unscripted emotions that would speak to Xuxa's fan base and beyond.

3.2.2 The Docu-drama: Exploring Audience Affective Engagement

*It was at the dances of life or in a bar
In exchange for bread
That a lot of good people set foot in the profession
Playing an instrument and singing
No matter if those who paid wanted to listen or not
That's how it was . . .*

*Singing was to seek the way
That will lead to the sun
I have with me the memories of what I was
To sing nothing was too far, everything was so good
Even the dirt road riding in the back of a truck
That's how it used to be*

*With the clothes soaked and the soul
Full of dirt
Every artist has to go where the people are
If that's how it was, that's how it will be
By singing I disguise myself and never get tired
Of living or singing*

—Milton Nascimento, “In the Dances of Life” (1981)¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ “Foi nos bailes da vida ou num bar / Em troca de pão / Que muita gente boa pôs o pé na profissão / De tocar um instrumento e de cantar / Não importando se quem pagou quis ouvir / Foi assim
Cantar era buscar o caminho / Que vai dar no sol / Tenho comigo as lembranças do que eu era / Para cantar nada era longe tudo tão bom / Até a estrada de terra na boleia de caminhão / Era assim
Com a roupa encharcada e a alma / Repleta de chão / Todo artista tem de ir aonde o povo está / Se foi assim, assim será / Cantando me disfarço e não me canso / De viver nem de cantar” (FREITAS).

I was shocked that there was no one else filming such an important event. It was a turning point in the history of Brazil, it sounds exaggerated but at that moment we believed it. How come no one documents that? And it was also a way, quote unquote, of being kind of patriotic, for us to be able to participate in that transformation with what we had because those who knew how to sing went on the stage and sang. As I don't know how to sing, the way I found was to go there and film it.

—Tizuka Yamasaki¹¹⁰

In the *Patriamada* dialogue that prompted Débora Bloch's character to reveal to Milton Nascimento she was his fan, the journalist had asked the singer to describe his emotion at being at the rally, to which he answered: "That's the most important thing because I already sing that every artist has to go where the people are, so that's that. I'm here." The journalist's reaction—"I'm your fan, did you know?"—certainly did not mean that she was Milton's fan solely for his engagement with the cause of Diretas Já. What we witness is that, for a moment there, the experimental project, the real activism, the fictional film, they are all paused to give room to the private Débora Bloch and her true emotion as a fan, which emerges as she finds herself face-to-face with her idol who validates the fight of young artists like her, and Tizuka, who had never been given the chance to vote.¹¹¹ Milton's song translated the feeling and determination of a lot of young artists at the time—artists were to use their craft to "seek the way" and "go where the people were." As a

¹¹⁰ "Eu fiquei assombrada que não tinha mais ninguém filmando aquilo que era súper importante. Era uma virada na história do Brasil, era exagero mas naquele momento a gente achava isso. Como é que ninguém documenta isso? E era também uma forma, entre aspas meio patriótica, da gente poder participar daquela naquela transformação com aquilo que a gente tinha porque quem sabia cantar ia no palanque e cantava. Como eu não sei cantar, a forma que eu achei era ir lá filmar isso" (YAMASAKI, "Memória do Cinema").

¹¹¹ In 1985, anybody who was between 18 and 38 years old would not have had the chance to vote because the military regime had been in power for twenty-one years.

filmmaker, Tizuka was determined to participate in Diretas Já by documenting that turning point in the history of the country.

In *Patriamada*, the exercise to evaluate the emotion created when the real met fiction as envisioned by Tizuka and her team is very successful. But, ultimately, it is strategically explored to inspire an affective engagement of the audience. After leading us to witness the private stories of public people, Tizuka invites us to affectively engage with those private stories. The outcome, as Leslie Marsh has put it, has the potential to inspire “once-alienated individuals to again love and become engaged” (116) with the issues Tizuka wants to raise awareness of.

Let us now imagine the affective impact that *Patriamada* might have had on the young audience who had been waiting for twenty-one years for a chance to vote, in relation to the impact that *The Mystery of Feiurinha* might have had on Xuxa’s audience. If we consider that the film marks the end of the filmmaking career of a star that had been entertaining Brazilians, many of them since their childhood, for the past twenty-five years, it is plausible to say that both films are representative of a turning point in history. And for Tizuka, as a filmmaker, her way of partaking in the transformation is to not only to make a film about Xuxa, but to document the process by which Xuxa deals with her transformations by having by her side people who know her privately, and who are also not strangers to the audience. Those are people who have been around the audience in the privacy of their TV rooms for decades.

If we now know that making *Patriamada* in the mold of a musical would have been insufficient to engage the audience at the level that the filmmakers are confident it did, making *The Mystery of Feiurinha* in the mold of a conventional family film would have been equally insufficient to achieve Tizuka’s ambitions for the film. At a historical turning point, in order to be with the people, the film had to take the form of “a kind of docu-drama.”

3.2.3 Confúcia: Exploring “Heady” Audience Affective Engagement

What interested me the most in working with Renato [Aragão] and Xuxa was the fact that they are two people who represent popular taste in Brazil. They are figures that attract millions of spectators. So, I wanted to learn everything about them to understand what popular cinema is, because they do it naturally, it's as if they were born with this gift of being loved by the masses. I am part of a generation that was born worried about going to film school and making “heady” films. But is making a “heady” film what I want? Is it worth doing it? On the other hand, I cannot put aside what I have stood for for years. So, I'm trying to reach a middle ground, to make “heady” films that can be understood by millions of people.

—Tizuka Yamasaki¹¹²

We already know that Tizuka has given empowering roles to Brazilian Nikkei, particularly women, since the beginning of her career. *Gaijin 1* (1980) and *Gaijin 2* (2005) are unequivocal examples, as well as the more recent *Tomie* (2014) about the celebrated Japanese naturalized Brazilian abstract painter Tomie Ohtake. But more than ever, Tizuka's depiction of Confúcia in *The Mystery of Feiurinha* shows an idealized engagement to raise (and test) awareness about the insufficient understanding about the depiction of Asian people and cultures. It is the first time that Tizuka seems to set her own path dealing with Asian stereotypes.

¹¹² “O que mais me interessou no trabalho com Renato [Aragão] e Xuxa foi o fato de serem duas pessoas que representam um gosto popular no Brasil. São figuras que atraem milhões de espectadores. Então, eu quis ‘sugá-los’ para entender o que vem a ser cinema popular, pois eles fazem isso naturalmente, é como se tivessem nascido com esse dom de serem queridos pelas massas. Faço parte de uma geração que nasceu preocupada em querer estudar na universidade e fazer filme “cabeça”. Mas será que fazer filme ‘cabeça’ é o que eu quero? Vale a pena fazer? Por outro lado, não posso pôr de lado aquilo em que acreditei durante anos. Então, estou tentando chegar a um meio-termo, aos filmes “cabeça” que possam ser entendidos por milhões de pessoas” (NAGIB 510).

In Pedro Bandeira's book, Confúcia does not exist, and, in the film, she looks completely out of place in the Euro-Brazilian setting. So, what is the relevance of Confúcia? Since Asians are usually not represented in Xuxa's texts (TV shows, films, live shows, etc.) and Tizuka is Asian, it would be natural to assume that Confúcia could represent the director's alter-ego. Or, perhaps, that Xuxa wanted to please her daughter Sasha or a business partner. As mentioned before, the actress who plays the part, Daniela Dondo, is the half-sister of one of Sasha's best friends ("Xuxa e Sasha realçam noite temática"), and the daughter of Minoru Dondo, one of the film's distributors.¹¹³

Whatever the case, Tizuka's depiction of Confúcia relies heavily on mimics of easily recognizable and identifiable Asian stereotypes. For instance, when we are first introduced to Confúcia, we hear a sound effect that sounds like shimmering bells—a sound that is part of the Brazil's imaginary of East Asians. Moreover, she wears a shiny silky robe and an old-fashioned large hat and holds an infamous fan (figure 20). Her walk is difficult as if her feet were bound or she was wearing a *kimono*, which she is not. Her face is plastered with a white layer of makeup, so her natural features are neutralized at the same time that her Asian features are accentuated by the black outliner that stretches her eyes. However, unlike the general idea of Brazilian women of Asian heritage, Confúcia does not smile much—her expression is remarkably stiff. Unlike the princesses in the film who are White, tall, slim and attractive, wear natural looking makeup and outfits that accentuate their curves, Confúcia is not attractive and short, wears artificial looking makeup and an outfit that hangs too big around her body making her look boxy and shapeless. But why is Confúcia depicted that way?

¹¹³Minoru Dondo made his fortune doing business in Angola and facilitated the release of *The Mystery of Feiurinha* in that country. If writing a character for Daniela was part of the deal, it paid off as the film secured a lifetime record in Angola selling more than *Avatar* (James Cameron, 2009) (WALTHER JR.).



Figure 20. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Confúcia lifts up her fan as she speaks.

In Brazil, the most numerous Asian population is Japanese, so the audience would probably identify Confúcia as Japanese Brazilian. In fact, like Tizuka, Daniela Dondo is also Nikkei. In 2008, the year before the release of *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, the Nikkei celebrated 100 years since the first Japanese immigrants arrived in Brazil. Despite the century-long history of integration and assimilation, many Nikkei have a history of being stigmatized as a foreign other. For Brazilians, the Japanese Brazilian embodied the old country's conservative, and sometimes, strange ways. Tomoo Handa describes an episode that he must have observed in the post-war:

Professional singers visited Japanese colonies once or twice a year to sing *naniwa-bushi*, consisting of a recitative in a low tone, with effort developed in the lower part of the belly, which was recited with epic themes. It turns out that this style of singing, more like moans or howls, was a laughingstock among Brazilian kids. For this reason, young people,

especially *niseis*, felt ashamed when their elders sang it in the presence of Brazilian people.

The *niseis* annoyed the singers by calling them “angry singing” or “angry song.”¹¹⁴

Later, when the Nikkei started to leave Brazil to find factory work in Japan, they were also stigmatized. For the Japanese, the Japanese Brazilian represented the loose type of Nikkei that embodied reprehensible “Western” behaviors. For example, Karen Tei Yamashita describes an episode that she witnessed while conducting research in a community of *dekasegi* in Japan:

On weekends, men vent their frustrations and retrieve their youth competing in traveling soccer tournaments. Today, a Wednesday, they’ve skipped out their jobs in order to see live, for the first time, the Brazilian champions . . . (*Circle K Cycles* 130).

Yamashita is very understanding of the solemnity of the occasion for Brazilians, but the Japanese would hardly forgive the Japanese Brazilian excuse to skip work to honor their national soccer champions.

To each side, Japanese Brazilians provide a convenient set of cultural specifics that is required for the advancement of the Brazilian or the Japanese own agenda. The Japanese Brazilian is, thus, multiply stereotyped in a situation in which they have to negotiate its own cultural relevance. In the entertainment business, where physical appearance is often more valued than skills, Japanese Brazilian trained actors like Marcos Miura feel particularly disempowered:

¹¹⁴ “Cantores profissionais visitavam as concentrações de japoneses, uma ou duas vezes por ano, para cantarem *naniwa-bushi*, consistente num recitativo feito em tom baixo, com esforço desenvolvido na parte inferior do ventre, recitativo esse com temas épicos. Acontece que este estilo de canto, mais assemelhado a gemidos ou uivos, era motivo de chacota dos moleques brasileiros. Por essa razão, os jovens, principalmente *niseis*, sentiam-se envergonhados quando os mais velhos o cantavam na presença de elementos brasileiros. Os *niseis* os aborreciam chamando-os de ‘canta bravo’ ou de ‘canto bravo’” (HANDA 221).

The field of work for Asians is still restricted. The image standard in Brazil is still for characters aimed at White actors. Black people have already overcome this obstacle, having worked as protagonists in TV and cinema. Unfortunately, for us Asians, there is still a distorted view [about us], and the roles that are assigned to us, most of times, are stereotyped.¹¹⁵

Two years after making that comment, in 2016, Miura was one of the two hundred Brazilian artists who signed a manifesto aimed at ethnic equality. The first paragraph reads:

We, artists and art professionals with or without Asian ancestry, whether Japanese, Chinese or Korean, demand equality in fair treatment for all citizens, opposing to practices of ethnic discrimination that occurs in some audiovisual productions that portray the Asian in a stereotyped manner, prejudiced and distorted from reality. Particularly for popular broadcast TV productions such as soap operas, series and commercials, which reach the majority of Brazilian citizens, directly influencing society, sometimes promoting the distorted and negative concept, building a wrong image of Asians and educating the new generations with prejudiced view against our community.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ “O campo de trabalho para os orientais ainda é restrito. O padrão de imagem imposto no Brasil ainda é para personagens voltados para atores brancos. Os negros já conseguiram superar esse obstáculo, tendo trabalhos como protagonistas em TV e cinema. Infelizmente, para nós, orientais, ainda há uma visão deturpada, e os papéis que nos são destinados, em grande maioria, são os estereotipados” (MINATOGAWA).

¹¹⁶ “Nós, artistas e profissionais das artes com ascendência oriental, seja japonesa, chinesa ou coreana, reivindicamos por igualdade no tratamento justo a todos os cidadãos, repugnando práticas de discriminação étnica que ocorrem em algumas produções de audiovisual que retratam o oriental de forma estereotipada, preconceituosa e distorcida da realidade. Em especial para produções populares de rede aberta como novelas, seriados e comerciais que atingem a maioria da parcela dos cidadãos brasileiros, influenciam diretamente a sociedade promovendo às vezes, o conceito deturpado e negativo, denegrindo a imagem dos orientais e educando as novas gerações com a visão preconceituosa contra a nossa comunidade” (“Manifesto do Coletivo Oriente-se no Brasil pela Igualdade Étnica”).

A couple of paragraphs later, the manifesto acknowledges the inevitability of discriminatory practices and calls for action:

We understand that, in the face of existing inequalities, it is not enough to reject discriminatory practices, but to take actions that can correct distortions and bring individuals together. It is the responsibility of each of us Brazilians to promote equality in daily life, through our actions, works and posture.¹¹⁷

Seven years before, there were two aspects of the manifesto that Tizuka had already addressed in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*—the importance of opposing ethnic discrimination in mass audience outlets, because of its ability to “directly influence society,” and the need to act to “correct distortions” rather than simply rejecting discriminatory practices. Tizuka has always been impressed by Xuxa’s mass appeal, but in *The Mystery of Feiurinha* she acknowledges its potential to directly influence society by challenging the audience to question the depiction of Asians on screen. As we will see, the approach that Tizuka undertakes is not easily digestible so perhaps that is where *The Mystery of Feiurinha* importance lies for the filmmaker’s career—in the “middle ground,” “a ‘heady’ [film] that can be understood by millions of people.”

Tizuka’s action to “correct distortions” consists of charging the easily recognizable and identifiable Asian stereotypes used to describe Confúcia with meanings that can only be fully grasped by an audience knowledgeable of aspects of traditional Japanese performing arts and their continuing practice in Brazil—that is, it requires a sophisticated cultural sensibility. By taking such

¹¹⁷ “Entendemos que, frente às desigualdades existentes, não basta rejeitar as práticas de discriminação, mas sim realizar ações que possam corrigir distorções e aproximar indivíduos. É responsabilidade de cada um de nós brasileiros, promover a igualdade no cotidiano, através de nossos atos, trabalhos e postura” (MINATOGAWA).

approach, Tizuka reveals the absurdity of simplistic interpretation of stereotyping used to disfranchise cultures. For example, an understanding of Tizuka's approach would potentially have prevented *Cinema com Rapadura* from describing Confúcia as “priceless as the Chinese maid who speaks like Cebolinha,” and inspired questioning of Confúcia's stereotypical treatment instead of being amused by it. But who is Confúcia? What aspects of traditional Japanese performing arts and their continuing practice in Brazil are important to know in order to participate in Tizuka's experiment to confront insufficient understandings about the depiction of Asians in the Brazilian entertainment industry?

3.3 CONFÚCIA'S (HI)STORIES

For [a woman] to be able to make cinema here in Brazil, you [must] become very masculine. I joke a lot: it is as if I had to put on a male armor to prove that I can make movies as well as a man. Then after you manage to make the first film and discover that, all right, now that you've been recognized as a filmmaker, to remove that male shell, that male power, in order to make cinema as a woman's point of view, I think it's as difficult as putting on the shell to become a man . . .

—Tizuka Yamasaki¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ “Pra você poder fazer cinema aqui no Brasil, você se masculiniza muito. Eu brinco muito: é como se eu tivesse que me vestir com uma armadura masculina pra poder provar que eu posso fazer cinema tão bem quanto um homem. Aí depois que você consegue fazer o primeiro filme e descobre que, tudo bem, agora que já te reconheceram como cineasta, tirar essa carapaça masculina, desse poder masculino pra poder fazer um cinema como um ponto de vista de mulher, acho que é tão difícil quanto você vestir a carapaça pra virar um homem . . .” (YAMASAKI, “Memória do Cinema”).

All phenomena that arise in history have a preliminary mythological existence. The myth is the memory of the origin.

—Sakae Murakami Giroux¹¹⁹

3.3.1 Understanding Confúcia

Aside from stereotypical assumptions, Confúcia's story is never discussed in the film. There is no explanation in the plot of where she is from, how she ended up in the Kingdom of Encantado, or what she wants to do from there. However difficult to pin down, she is nevertheless not beyond definition.

Humorously, when the name Confúcia is pronounced with a Japanese accent, it sounds like *confusa*, which means “confused” in Portuguese. But her name is most likely to be an allusion to Confucius. Confúcia's incarnation of old-fashioned Confucian values such as her unconditional loyalty to the Queen Mother could be representative of a Chinese parent who named her after Confucius. But as she incarnates the Japanese concept of *giri-ninjo*¹²⁰ when she gives up on a romantic interest to be true to her duty, she could also have been named by a Japanese parent who wanted to honor the Confucian legacy in Japanese society. Confucian philosophy has been shaping Japanese norms and values since ancient times and, in common knowledge, has been described as

¹¹⁹ “Todos os fenômenos que surgem na história têm uma existência mitológica preliminar. O mito é a memória da origem” (GIROUX).

¹²⁰ *Giri-ninjo* is a concept of balance between social duty and spontaneous human feelings. “*Chushingura*, one of Japan's most popular stories, elaborates on the conflict between a sensible obligation towards one's master and one's feelings towards the family . . . The story clearly depicts the complicated ethics and interpersonal relationships of Japan in the past, some of which remain today” (Kabuki).

a teaching of loyalty and trustworthiness suited to authoritarian rulers (such as the emperor) and obedient subjects (such as the *samurai*).

If Confúcia's ethnicity is Chinese, she was probably envisioned to represent the population that the Nikkei used to call "manchu," that is, the Chinese who had immigrated to Brazil during or following the Manchurian Qing dynasty that ruled China until 1912. If so, because of her rich outfit and hairdo, which contradicts what a servant would wear (figures 21-22), she could be representing an aristocrat who had, somehow, become a servant to White royals. However, among Chinese aristocrats, fans indicated social standing until pre-revolution China so she could not be an aristocrat because her handling of the fan is not refined. It becomes particularly evident when she is holding it and speaking—she uses it to point at people or to hit against her other palm to make a point. Such a utilitarian use of the fan could be associated with the way Japanese officers used the fan, a *tessen* to be more specific, for combat signaling during the Shogunate.¹²¹ To complicate matters, Confúcia challenges an unequivocal view of Asian women in Brazil—that they are naturally virtuous, docile and submissive. Although a servant to the Queen Mother, Confúcia often challenges and confronts her authority, speaks without causing offense, has comedic mannerisms, stands next to the master at all times, and is physically unattractive. There is one character in the popular imaginary that would fit that description—a court jester.

¹²¹ A *tessen* was like an ordinary folding fan except that the outer sticks, or all of the sticks were of iron. It was carried by the lower grades of officers for signaling, as a parrying weapon and also as a fan ("A Glossary of the Construction, Decoration and Use of Arms and Armor in All Countries and in All Times" 270).



Figure 21. Ladies of the palace pose dressed in imperial clothes of the Qing dynasty.



Figure 22. A woman poses with her maid in Beijing in 1869 during the Qing era.

According to Beatrice Otto, China has the longest, richest, and most thoroughly documented history of court jesters, particularly advising or correcting the monarch. The Chinese records give an idea of how effective a jester could be in tempering the ruler's excesses. But then, with the rise of stage acting during the Yuan dynasty (1206–1368), actors took up the jester's baton not only in entertaining their patrons, but also in offering criticism and advice no less clear for being couched in wit (233). The incarnation of a stage actor, rather than a jester, would fit Confúcia better because it would justify her expensive outfit and her undetachable fan, which is an important expressive object in the Chinese opera stage (figure 23).¹²²



Figure 23. A Beijing opera troupe.

¹²² Figures 21, 22 and 23 are from an article by Sophie Williams for *Dailymail.com*.

But there is interesting detail about Confúcia that jeopardizes her possible Chinese heritage—she “speaks like Cebolinha.” The word Cebolinha is a reference to a famous child character created by cartoonist Mauricio de Sousa who spoke replacing the /r/ for /l/. Likewise, when Confúcia delivers her first line in the film, the audience hears a very thick accent as she says: “A Lainha Mãe, com muito orgulho apresenta . . .”¹²³ The pronunciation without an accent would have been transcribed as: “A Rainha Mãe, com muito orgulho apresenta.” Confúcia forcibly replaces the sound of /r/ for /l/ when she talks. The impression that Asian people confuse those sounds is a crude joke in Brazil that is repeated in countless films and TV programs. Veteran actress Cristina Sano shares her frustration.

When I’m asked for some stereotyped speech, I don’t even participate [in the test]. I make it very clear that a woman of my age born in Brazil, does not speak wrong, or with an accent.¹²⁴

Aside from the stigmatization, there is another issue here which is the misrepresentation of phonetics. According to Ben T. Smith, several Asian languages and dialects do not distinguish /r/ from /l/ the way Western languages do and the most striking of these mix-ups is in the Japanese language. In that language, there is no Western type /l/ or /r/ sound, but rather a single consonant that lies between the two. Therefore, there is no such a thing as a replacement of the /r/ for /l/. That is why when Scarlett Johansson asks in the film *Lost in Translation* (Sofia Coppola, 2003) why the Japanese people switch the /r/ for the /l/, she is misinformed because no sound is actually being switched. In the case of Chinese, only Wu Chinese reportedly has a single r/l-type sound similar

¹²³ “The Queen Mother, proudly presents . . .” (*Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha* [00:16:42]).

¹²⁴ “Quando pedem alguma fala estereotipada, já nem participo [do teste]. Deixo bem claro que uma mulher da minha idade nascida no Brasil, não fala errado, nem com sotaque” (MINATOGAWA).

to that of Japanese. But that is not the Chinese that the Manchurians used, so Confúcia's accent is Japanese and not Chinese.

Regardless of being Chinese or Japanese, Confúcia's accent transcends the issue of Asian speaking inadequacy when she forcibly exaggerates it. That trait, combined with her highly stylized gestures, her mask-like makeup, her outfit that refuses to reveal her body shape, her unapologetic tempering of the Queen Mother's excesses, her indifference about being a realistic character, and last but certainly not least, her dignified posture as she stands confident despite being constantly put down, resonates with a character of a traditional Japanese performative art that has been practiced by Japanese Brazilians since when the first generation of immigrants arrived in Brazil—the *kabuki*. But more specifically, Confúcia resonates with *kabuki's onnakata*, male actors who play females roles, thus her uncanny resemblance with the *onnakata* on the cover of H. G. Robert's poetry book *Confessions of an Onnagata* (figures 24-25) released seven months before *The Mystery of Feiurinha*.



Figure 24. A close-up shot of Confúcia that shows details of her makeup.



Figure 25. The cover of the book *Confessions of an Onnagata*.

3.3.1.1 The *Onnakata* of *Kabuki*

The word kabuku means “to show by conduct what goes beyond normality.” It indicates, perhaps, something that belongs to the hidden fantasy of people, something that is not rational, but deeply intuitive. Perhaps it designates the vital force of the bourgeoisie for their desire for freedom. That's probably why they named their art kabuki. In their performances, the public was ecstatic to see on stage their inner reality materialized.

—Sakae Murakami Giroux¹²⁵

¹²⁵ “A palavra kabuku significa ‘mostrar pela conduta aquilo que ultrapassa a normalidade’. Ela indica, talvez, algo que pertence à fantasia oculta das pessoas, aquilo que não é racional, porém profundamente intuitivo. Talvez designe a força vital dos burgueses pelo seu desejo a liberdade. Provavelmente, por isso, eles deram à sua arte o nome de kabuki. Nas suas representações, o público se extasiava vendo no palco a sua realidade interior concretizada” (GIROUX 111-12).

Kabuki is a classical form of drama featuring elaborate costumes, outlandish makeup, and exaggerated movements. It originated in the early 17th century and is said to have evolved from *matsuri* (religious manifestations that involved dancing and singing), *yayako otori* (young women's dance) and, later, *onna kabuki* (women's *kabuki*), notable for including erotic scenes. In 1629, thirty years since the inception of *kabuki*, the Shogunate prohibited women from performing on the stage, arguing that their sensual dances corrupted public morals. Their biggest concern, however, was to prevent the "moral decadence" of the *samurai* who often sought sexual services from *onna kabuki* actresses. As a result, *kabuki* performances became plot driven and the unique tradition of *onnakata* came about as a way to get around restrictions imposed by the Shogunate (GIROUX).

Being played by men, there are a lot of particularities that the *onnakata* actors have to master in order to incarnate a female character. For example, they often cannot rely on their physical appearance, so they compensate for it by emphasizing and stylizing feminine movements and gestures. Also, because of the masculine tone of their voice, they do not speak in a natural way but in falsetto. Moreover, there is no attempt to hide the performative aspect of the character—that is, they are not concerned about being a woman but, rather, about accentuating the woman's traits that are important. Manjiro Ichimura, one of Japan's highly honored *onnakata*, whose distinguished *kabuki* family boasts eighteen generations of actors, shares how he feels as he prepared to incarnate Maizuru at Tokyo's National Theatre in 2006:

When I'm on stage, I don't think about whether I'm a man or a woman, I think of the character. In period pieces, a person's class was more telling of their mannerisms than gender. Maizuru is noble; she is a woman, but she is also a person of power and dignity. That is the more important trait (FAIOLA).

3.3.1.2 The *Onnakata* of the Immigrant *Kabuki*

Traditional Japanese performative culture was familiar to Japanese immigrants thanks to immigrant theater troupes, also known locally as *kabuki*, that recreated the traditional Japanese theater and took it on the road. Tomoo Handa describes the presence of the *kabuki*, although briefly, during the celebration of the emperor's birthday—“[on] these celebrations, the promotion of theatrical shows was very frequent, which, however, were almost always imitations of Japanese theater” (221). In Handa’s view, the plays presented by the immigrants were like imitations of the classical *kabuki*. However, the productions of theatrical performances were activities taken seriously, often exercised by theatrical groups that dedicated themselves exclusively to them.

In the early days, the theatrical performances “consisted of amateur theater performances (*shibai*) promoted by veteran immigrants who wrote plays and called teenagers to stage them . . . Later, performances achieved a higher level, notably by the most famous group of the time, the Hakkodan, formed by the immigrant Takeno Mitsuishi and her children (figure 26).¹²⁶ The troupe walked through the countryside of the State of São Paulo and also Paraná, moving in trucks on still precarious roads, performing in immigrants center at cities with large Japanese populations (USAMI). Mitsuishi’s daughter, Misako, recalls:

We started walking from colony to colony. The Japanese were so happy that they even cried because they had no fun things to do. They had nothing, nothing. They had no theater, television, cinema, nothing, nothing . . . The performances reminded the immigrants of a

¹²⁶ Takeno Mitsuishi and her children had been performing as a family since 1934 (“5 mulheres que marcaram a História da Imigração”).

traditional Japanese art—the *kabuki* theater It was like a soap opera, only it was older.¹²⁷



Figure 26. Takeno Mitsuishi and her children on an immigrant *kabuki* stage.

Lúcia Sugimoto, who grew up in Bastos, one of the largest *colônias* in the State of São Paulo, recalls the affective quality of those immigrant *kabuki* performances:

When the stage was filled with movement and voices, everyone was transported to magical moments, when art brought a bit of Japan back to the elders and gave young people and children the opportunity to learn something about Japanese culture. For everyone, that

¹²⁷ “Começamos a andar de colônia em colônia. Os japoneses ficavam tão contentes que até choravam porque não tinham divertimento. Não tinham nada, nada. Não tinham teatro, televisão, cinema, nada, nada.... As apresentações matavam as saudades dos imigrantes de uma arte tradicional do Japão—o teatro *kabuki* Ele era que nem novela, só que era mais antigo” (“Conheça a cidade que reúne o maior número de descendentes de japoneses”).

party was a guarantee of emotion, fun, joy and fraternization, which filled the hearts with excitement.¹²⁸

Unlike the traditional Edo *kabuki*, the immigrant *kabuki* reenacted by Hakkodan was led by a woman and included both male and female actors. The female parts were played by women because, locally, the group had to work with what they had and also it did not matter if *onnakata* was played by men or women because the meaning of the performative theater had changed. Therefore, it did not have to completely honor the traditional theater. Although thematically the immigrant *kabuki* had maintained the traditional themes of loyalty and *giri-ninjo*, instead of reinforcing those values already existing in Japanese society, it taught them to an audience that not necessarily knew them. Aside from being played by a female actress, Confúcia certainly resonates more with the immigrant *kabuki* than the traditional one.

Tizuka has said that because the Brazilian film production industry was so masculine, she had to “put on a male armor” to prove that she was as capable as a male filmmaker. Likewise, Tizuka covers Confúcia with armor like layers to give her enough thickness to confront discriminatory depiction of Asians. As Confúcia becomes visible every time she is marked with a stereotype, she challenges us to think about what those Asian markers reminds us about her place in history. Let us look at one sequence of the film where Tizuka’s experiment is observed.

3.3.1 Discrimination vs. Traditional Performance Art

¹²⁸ “Quando o palco se enchia de movimento e vozes, todos eram transportados para momentos mágicos, quando a arte trazia de volta um pouco do Japão para os mais velhos e dava oportunidade aos jovens e crianças de aprenderem algo sobre a cultura japonesa. Para todos, aquela festa era garantia de emoção, divertimento, alegria e confraternização, o que enchia os corações de ânimo” (USAMI 441).

3.3.1.3 The Fan

When Confúcia sees Cinderella and Caio, the Lackey having a serious conversation about the disappearance of Feiurinha, she rushes to eavesdrop it. After hearing some revealing news, she quickly and mechanically opens up her fan and covers her mouth as if she had realized her indiscretion (figure 27). But we soon realize that Confúcia did not use the fan to keep her indiscretion to herself because she rushes to gossip the news to the Queen Mother (*Xuxa in the Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:17:44]).



Figure 27. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Confúcia covers her mouth with a fan.

The form of representation of Confúcia in the fan scene would be seen as comic by the audience because Brazilians find it amusing that Japanese women often cover their mouths when they laugh. That is, it is not an uncommon stereotypical way of portraying a Japanese woman. But if the fan sequence is looked at from the perspective of performative *kabuki*, the fan is accurately used by Confúcia as an apparatus to extend the emotion expressed through her body. On the other hand, the Queen Mother, who also holds a fan in this sequence and opens it up to cool off when

she hears the breaking news, not only does not come across as comic but perhaps even elegant. The irony is that, from the *kabuki* perspective, the queen's use of the fan for "fanning" is considered merely utilitarian, that is, without the esthetic finesse expected from nobility.

3.3.1.4 Slanted Eyes

After Confúcia has told the Queen Mother about Feiurinha's disappearance, she helps the queen realize that the princess could be her daughter-in-law because all princesses in the kingdom are married to one her sons. Confúcia asks: "Aren't the Encantado princes all Your Majesty's children?" to what the Queen Mother answers: "Confúcia opened her eyes."¹²⁹

The queen recognizes Confúcia's wisdom, but instead of placing herself as the receptor of such a wisdom and saying, "Confúcia opened *my* eyes," she positions herself defensively and attacks the servant in two ways. First, she implies that the information had been withheld by Confúcia, perhaps viciously, and that it was only revealed because of a clearing of conscience. And second, she uses a stereotypical expression based on the slanted eyes of Asians, which assumes they are closed all the time. When that expression is used in Portuguese, it has a similar racist connotation as when in the US a Chinese person is called a "chink," or a Japanese, a "jap." Throughout the film, the Queen Mother grants herself the right to stereotypy Confúcia and constantly attacks her using racial slurs.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Confúcia: "Os plíncipes encantados não são todos filhos de Vossa Majestade?"

Queen Mother: "Confúcia abriu os olhos" (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:17:46-00:18:16]).

¹³⁰ For Rey Chow, some people's ability to grant themselves the right to stereotype is a form of power even larger than stereotype itself. For Chow, the problem with stereotypes is not stereotyping per se, but the power involved in the election of who is eligible to use or to reject stereotypes. In other words, the important question to consider is who is doing the stereotyping and who is accepting it. She recalls what Fredric Jameson had said about the use of stereotypes being inevitable in cross-ethnic representations

However, there is a meaningful detail from the *kabuki* perspective that operates in this sequence that confronts the absurdity of the queen's aggression towards Confúcia. In *kabuki*, the *onnakata* wear an elaborated facial painting that radically modify their features recreating their eyebrows, eyes and lips. Because of the makeup and the controlled facial expressions of the *onnakata*, their eyes look more homogeneously slanted than they would naturally look. Confúcia's makeup creates the same effect so during the slanted eyes episode, her eyes remain homogeneously slanted throughout the scene. The Queen Mother's eyes, on the other hand, are the ones that open wide when she realizes she might have forgotten about the existence of a son (figure 28). Whereas Confúcia's eyes remain as an esthetic device and her wisdom is made known through non-physical attributes, the queen's understanding of her servant's wisdom is made known by her eyes being literally open. That is, her eyes are utilitarian.

3.3.1.5 Ancient Culture

As the queen remains disturbed by Confúcia's realization that the husband of missing Feiurinha could be her son, she goes to see her Magic Mirror for advice. With a sarcastic tone, the Queen Mother asks: "Mirror, mirror, why is it that my servant speaks such nonsense, huh?" to what the Magic Mirror answers: "On that one's head there are only little fortune cookies." Immediately, Confúcia intervenes: "Don't you dare offend Confúcia's ancient culture."¹³¹

because the representation of others is a regular and unavoidable practice in cultural relations, to remind us that he misses out on the question of power in the relation between parts that deploy stereotypes. That is, his arguments cannot explain why some stereotypes can be controversial and explosive and, under other circumstances, the same stereotyping are seen as acceptable or even conscionable speech (59-60).

¹³¹ Queen Mother: "Espelho, espelho meu, por que a minha ama tem que falar essas barbaridades, heim?"
 Magic Mirror: "Na cabeça dessa daí só tem biscoitinhos da sorte."

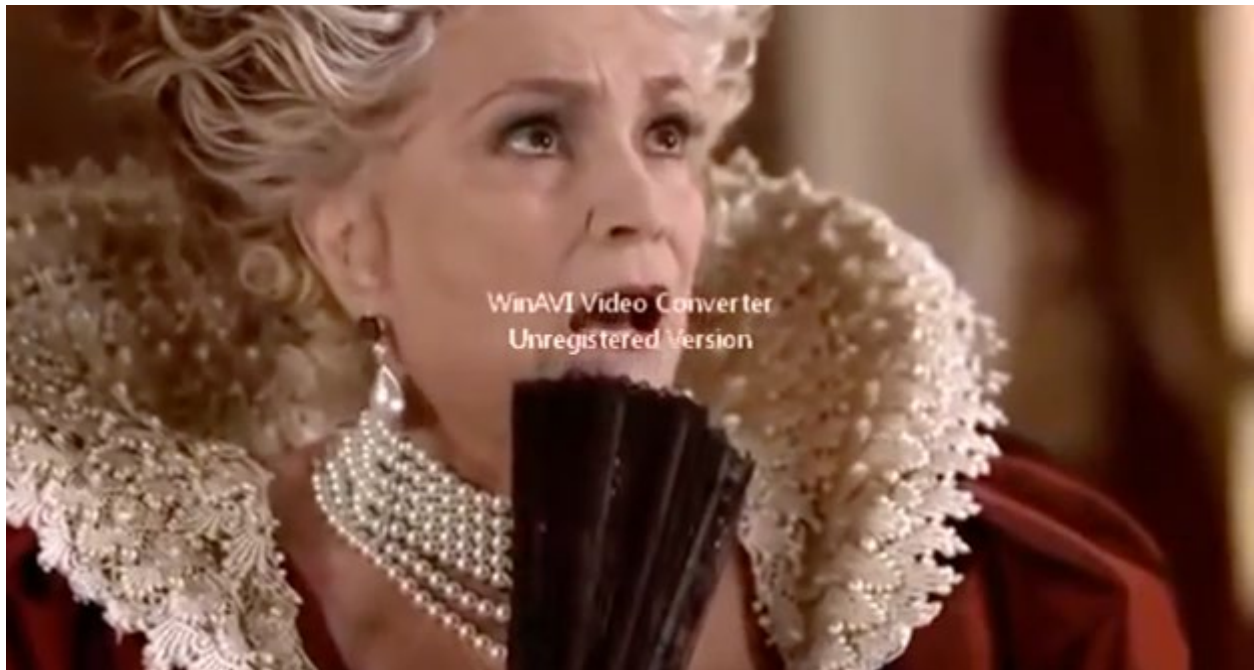


Figure 28. The Queen Mother opens her eyes.

Confúcia's answer to the Magic Mirror is paired with the sound of "Asian" shimmering bells in the background and a view of the queen's face who seems to be holding laugh. Under those circumstances, it is hard to take Confúcia's reaction to the Mirror's comment seriously. However, at a closer look, we notice an ambiguity in Confúcia's response. Since the issue in question refers to Confúcia's wisdom, by calling what is inside of her head "little fortune cookies," the Mirror seems to be trying to underestimate it by implying that she has the type of wisdom found in fortune cookies. Confúcia certainly takes offense, perhaps because fortune cookies are a stereotype of Chinese restaurants, even though they may not be Chinese or ancient at all, but a 20th century US

Confúcia: "Não ofenda a cultura ancestral de Confúcia" (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:18:24-00:18:40]).

invention by way of Japan and not China.¹³² But most likely, Confúcia is annoyed for having her wisdom be reduced to the “wisdoms” of fortune cookies.

The irony of this passage is that while attempting to underestimate Confúcia’s wisdom by calling it “little fortune cookies,” the Mirror reveals that he adopts the belief in a kind of “wisdom” that can only be regarded as such by people who are not familiar with actual Chinese or Japanese wisdom. In other words, while not calling it “wisdom,” people who are knowledgeable of Chinese and Japanese wisdom would probably not call someone “little fortune cookie” for the sake of making fun of the person because the “wisdoms” in fortune cookies would have been recognized for their positive value.

What is remarkable about Confúcia’s response to the Mirror is that instead of taking it as an attack to her personal wisdom, Confúcia takes it as an attack to her ancient culture. If we think about how, at the end of a meal at a Chinese restaurant, customers are often drawn to read the Asian “wisdom” in their fortune cookies as if they were motivational messages that could be applied to and change people’s immediate reality and daily lives, we can see why Confúcia would be frustrated. What was offensive to her was the suggestion that her wisdom was something that could be used by anyone in need of motivation in their immediate reality and daily lives—in other words, utilitarian. By correcting the Mirror’s understanding of her personal wisdom from utilitarian to “ancient culture,” Confúcia reinforces the *onnakata* that she incarnates—that she is not the appearance of culture but culture itself.

¹³² Jennifer Lee, author of *The Fortune Cookie Chronicles*, explains that the fortune cookie was introduced in the US by a Japanese immigrant to supply a tea house at the Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. It was not until World War II broke out and the Japanese were sent to relocation camps that Chinese businessmen started to produce their own fortune cookies selling them to Chinese restaurants (YEH).

Ironically, because Confúcia is the only character in the film that is uniquely marked by her multiple (hi)stories, she stands at a position of distinction that is not even shared with the princesses of the kingdom whose farthest past starts with “Once upon a time.” In other words, while Tizuka charges Confúcia with historical references that take her roots back for thousands of years, she flattens the roots of the other characters and situates their most significant moment in life in “twenty-five years ago.” Moreover, there is no specificity in their language and mannerisms that speaks for their heritage, their history, their culture and their struggles. While Cinderella and the other princesses are depicted as the result of an idealized fairy tale, Confúcia is depicted as the result of a historical process. That is why Cinderella’s quest in the film—to find Feiurinha so that everlasting happiness is guaranteed—is so arduous. Unlike Confúcia’s past, which sits as a solid foundation that is often honored in the present, Cinderella’s commoner background is nothing more than a past haunting the present.

3.4 *THE MYSTERY OF FEIURINHA*: SHAPES THAT EMERGE FROM WITHIN

3.4.1 When Happiness is Ambition Rather Than Heart...

In the film, Cinderella and her sisters-in-law Rapunzel, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty and Belle are all commoners who became princesses after they married the sons of the Queen Mother of Encantado. They are all White, tall and slim, which in Brazil is a world out of reach with the exception of the southernmost part of the country where women of European ancestry stand tall in their whiteness. The princesses are Cinderella’s mirrored image and loyal supporters. Like a band

of cheerleaders, they celebrate every time Cinderella comes up with a good idea, chanting in unison: “Princesses, united, will never be defeated.”¹³³ They are Cinderella’s family.

Cinderella’s quest in the film is to find out why Feiurinha had disappeared. But the name of the vanished princess suggests that she might not look like a typical Encantado princess. Feiurinha translates to Little Ugliness (or Ugly Lili as Pedro Bandeira puts it in his novel), so if she is named after the way she looks, she is potentially ugly. However, for the princesses in the film, that is something that does not cross their minds. For them, there is no doubt that Feiurinha looks just like them—White and beautiful—despite her name.

Early in the film, after the princesses learn about the disappearance of Feiurinha and try to make sense of it, Rapunzel tells her sisters-in-law and Riding Hood that she remembers something about the vanished princess: “Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a beautiful child who was loved and lived in a happy family.”¹³⁴ As Rapunzel tells the story, a flashback shows baby Feiurinha playing with her parents (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:12:56-00:13:23]). Even though Rapunzel does not give a detailed description of Feiurinha’s looks, the flashback that illustrates her thoughts depicts the “beautiful child” as White and blond, which means that, in her imaginary, being White and beautiful are preconditions to being a princess. If that is the case, how does Riding Hood fit in that scenario?

The Mystery of Feiurinha is set in a romanticized fairy tale with ideal race relations and loyal servants. Therefore, the relationship between the White and the Black population and also between the White and the Asian are all crucial to the plot and story to help preserve the

¹³³ “Princesas, unidas, jamás serão vencidas” is a parody of the well-known Chilean chant for social change “El pueblo unido jamás será vencido.” / *The people united will never be defeated.*

¹³⁴ “Era uma vez, há muito tempo atrás, uma menina linda, amada, que vivia numa família feliz.”

protagonist's social status quo. Riding Hood, played by TV comedian Samantha Schmütz, is Cinderella's close friend and confidant. But she is not "family." Riding Hood's appearance clearly contrasts with the princesses. She is about a foot shorter, has darker skin and, although extremely fit in real life, wears a baggy red outfit that hides her shape and makes her look thicker. She is the only one who is single, which suggests that the Encantado princes might have discarded her because they were after an ideal of beauty when they chose who to save and marry.¹³⁵ Cinderella knows Riding Hood is disheartened for not having a prince but lacks sincere empathy for her friend as they talk about the disappearance of Feiurinha:

Cinderella: *Oh, dear, this has never happened before. That's to say that all of us decided to get married and live happily ever-after.*

Riding Hood: *All of us but me, right?*

Cinderella: *Look, a prince is useless . . . Have you noticed that every fairy tale prince only shows up in the end of the little story to give that little kiss . . . because the one who actually faces danger is the princess.*

Cinderella's response might have been intended to comfort Riding Hood, but it is rather patronizing because it reinforces her own position of privilege—she became a princess because she deserved a true love's kiss from a prince, and she is the heroine of her story because she is the

¹³⁵ It is interesting to note that in Pedro Bandeira's novel, the reason Riding Hood does not marry is not because of her appearance but because she is already fulfilled with the company of her grandmother:

Chapeuzinho Vermelho era a mais solteira das amigas . . . e uma das poucas que não era princesa. A história dela tinha terminado dizendo que ela ia viver feliz para sempre ao lado da Vovozinha, mas não falava em nenhum príncipe encantado. Por isso, Chapeuzinho ficou solteirona e encalhada . . .

Little Red Riding Hood was the most single among her friends . . . and one of the only ones who was not a princess. Her story had ended saying that she was going to live happily-ever-after next to Grandma, but it did not say anything about a prince charming. That is why Riding Hood ended up single . . . (12).

one who faced danger. Once again, she fails to recognize that even though Riding Hood also faced danger in her story, she does not have a prince to claim the title of heroism from. If Riding Hood does not have the potential to become a princess, how can she be comforted by a choice she does not have? But Riding Hood seems to believe that Cinderella is sincere in her dismissal of the heroic value of a prince and states: “The only decisive ones are the hunters . . .” But before Riding Hood can complete her sentence, Cinderella has already turned her head away, showing a dismissive attitude toward what Riding Hood had just said or was going to say.¹³⁶ Throughout the film, Cinderella’s treatment of Riding Hood has a tone of insincerity that is not perceived by Riding Hood who seems to be in denial about her position of disadvantage. Whenever she tries to express command for a situation, she is questioned and is unable to stand up for herself.

For example, in the previously described episode, after Rapunzel tells her peers that she remembers that Feiurinha was a happy and beautiful girl, but she cannot remember anything else, the princesses engage on a war of words to argue that her story could not be remembered because it was not as good as their own. Riding Hood is not part of the discussion and, from the corner of the screen, observes the princesses taking, one by one, the center of the stage. Cinderella interrupts the discussion to get the princesses back to topic and warns them that if Feiurinha had broken the spell and vanished, that could potentially happen to them. Unexpectedly, Riding Hood is the only

¹³⁶ Cinderella: “Ai, gente, isso nunca aconteceu. E dizer que todas nós resolvemos nos casar e viver felizes para sempre.”

Riding Hood: “Todas menos eu, né?”

Cinderella: “Príncipe, olha, não serve pra nada . . . Você já notou que todo príncipe de contos de fada só aparece no final da historinha pra dar aquele beijinho . . . porque perigo mesmo quem passa [é a] princesa.”

Riding Hood: “Os únicos decididos mesmo são os caçadores . . .” (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:07:55-00:08:55]).

one who promptly reacts to the possible threat. She stands up, and walks toward the center of the circle of princesses saying: “What happened to Feiurinha could also happen to us, is that right? Are we going to vanish?”.

It is quite unexpected to see Riding Hood react that way because she invites herself to join a conversation that not only had excluded her so far, but also because it is not clear that it even concerns her because she is not a princess. The intrusion is sensed by Snow White who questions Riding Hood right away: “Can you guarantee that Feiurinha has really disappeared?” Riding Hood’s facial expression shows that she was expecting validation from the other princesses, but instead, they all join Snow White, and, with hands-on-hips demand an explanation. Cinderella’s body language is particularly aggressive because she slaps Riding Hood’s shoulder as she asks— “That’s right. Hood, can you really guarantee?”¹³⁷ (figure 29). Then, pointing at Riding Hood with her index finger, she completes: “Where does she live? Where’s her castle?”¹³⁸ Under pressure, Riding Hood fumbles and is silenced.

¹³⁷ Riding Hood: “O que aconteceu com Feiurinha pode acontecer com a gente também, é isso? Nós vamos desaparecer?”

Snow White: “Quem garante que Feiurinha sumiu mesmo?”

Cinderella: “É. Chapéu, quem garante? . . . Onde é que ela mora? Onde tá o castelo dela?” (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:14:29-00:14:54]).



Figure 29. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Cinderella points at Riding Hood with her index finger.

Ironically, Cinderella's (and potentially Xuxa's) apparent confidence is indeed very fragile as she gets upset when her husband is unconvinced about her decision to go to the real world in search for Feiurinha:

Prince: *Look, your Highness is beautiful, blond, intelligent and has everything you need. Why do you care so much about this Feiurinha?*

Cinderella: *The disappearance of Feiurinha put our everlasting happiness in risk. Oh God!*

Prince: *Your Highness is exaggerating. We are going to be happy forever. And it wasn't me who said it. It's written.*¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Prince: "Veja bem, a sua alteza é linda, loira, inteligente e tem tudo o que precisa aqui. O que tanto quer com essa tal de Feiurinha?"
Cinderella: "O sumiço da Feiurinha colocou em risco a nossa felicidade eterna. Meu Deus!"

It is interesting that the husband of twenty-five years sustains that they will live happily forever by reminding her of the elements that made her the perfect candidate to be his wife—“beautiful, blond, intelligent.” But the reassurance given in clear tone by her husband is not sufficient because Cinderella is not as worried about happiness as she is about securing the perpetuity of happiness. While the prince’s perpetual condition is sealed in his blood, Cinderella’s is earned. She is deeply affected by the imminence that the elements that guaranteed her position fade away, and the thought of losing her privilege is unbearable. When happiness is ambition rather than heart, it might be a sign of delusion.

For Stephanie Dennison, Xuxa’s participation in fantastic plotlines lent her “a quality of transcendence” that allowed her to have “legitimate aloofness.” Dennison explains that the timeless characters that populate the world of fairy tales worked to keep Xuxa separated from unpleasant aspects of Brazil’s socio-political reality. For example, Xuxa’s participation in charitable organizations were seen as distanced and with a paternalistic attitude to “the poor.” In fact, in 2016, Xuxa generated controversy for posting a selfie on Facebook where she appears posing from the window of her car with three street children who were juggling at a stop light and asking for money. She was criticized for glamorizing child labor but defended herself saying they were “performing art.” Two years later, she posted another selfie of herself with the same three children, but this time with them inside of her car. Apparently, she gave them a lift, although it is not specified what the circumstances were by which they reconnected. Below the selfie, she explained: “my friends have grown but... still remain my ‘little friends’ of the stop light [and] today

Prince: “A sua alteza está exagerando. Nós seremos felizes para sempre. E não fui eu quem disse. Está escrito” (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:26:18-00:26:44]).

they rode my spaceship.”¹⁴⁰ “Spaceship” is a nickname for her car, which is a reference to the device she used to enter the stage in her children’s TV program from 1986 to 1992.¹⁴¹ The latter episode suggests that the pride Xuxa takes in allowing the children to enter the private space of her car is only possible because it is contained inside of a make-believe rhetoric. That reinforces Dennison’s assertion that Xuxa’s “star text relies on stage-managed dealings with reality that are often backed up by fantastic characters.”

But Tizuka complicates that in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*. Instead of working to keep Cinderella separate from some of the more unpleasant aspects of real life, the film brings them too close to be avoided. In the first leg of her adventure, Cinderella pays a visit to the Fairy Godmother to find out how she could find Feiurinha. She is told she needs to go to the real world to look for a writer who can tell her Feiurinha’s story. The Godmother shows her a portal to the real world—the last period of a book. Xuxa is warned that that was a different place and, even so, decides to go there by jumping into the portal. She ends up in the middle of a busy road in Rio de Janeiro. What follows is an odd filmic sequence. After landing, Cinderella picks herself up and runs to escape from being hit by cars. She is then rescued by a truck driver who pulls her into the open cargo area of his truck. But when the truck pulls over, we realize that the driver is the only person in the truck, meaning that nobody would have been behind the wheel while he was rescuing

¹⁴⁰ Xuxa’s original Facebook entry reads: “João, Pedro e Deivison meus amigos cresceram mas... continuam meus “amiguinhos” do sinal hj andaram na minha nave” (FRED).

¹⁴¹ The opening of the program was an animation of Xuxa travelling on the spaceship first through space and then around planet Earth, which gave a sense of Xuxa as a star from out of this world that looked at all children from above. Before Xuxa entered the stage, the two hundred children that had been selected to participate in each episode did a count down while the spaceship “descended” to the studio. The door opened very slowly and revealed the thin-framed blond from the top of her five-foot-ten, not including high heels, displaying sparkling blue eyes and a big smile. The children cheered enthusiastically.

Cinderella. The film does not give us an explanation for how that was possible. But the oddity of the filmic sequence functions as a prompt for an important dialogue that follows:

Driver: *Oh, Father, what's going on here? Father, enlighten me. For God's sake, what's this? Are you trying to kill us?*

Cinderella: *Coachman . . .*

Driver: *Listen, don't call me coachman.*

Cinderella: *Excuse me, does this carriage go to the real world?*

Driver: *Real world? Hey, auntie, get real, ma'am. For God's sake. Ma'am, you're dressed like a princess. Are you fulfilling a vow, what's that? Isn't it enough that you disrupted my work? I'm working hard in this stinky Rio de Janeiro. What's wrong with you, ma'am?*

Cinderella: *What a stressed-out coachman.*

Driver: *I'm not stressed-out. Ma'am, you don't see the reality of the country. What's wrong with you? I'm working. It's hard work.*¹⁴²

This short minute-long scene is much more significant than it received credit for being. Critics were caught up in the similarity between the entrance to the real world of Cinderella and

¹⁴² Driver: “Oh, meu Pai, o que é que tá acontecendo aqui? Meu Pai, me ilumina. Pelo amor de Deus, o que é que é isso? Quer matar a gente?”

Cinderella: “Cocheiro . . .”

Driver: “Olha aqui, cocheiro não.”

Cinderella: “Por favor, essa carruagem vai até o mundo real?”

Driver: “Mundo real, isso aqui? Oh, minha tia, cai na real, a senhora. Pelo amor de Deus. A senhora tá vestida de princesa. Tá pagando alguma prenda, o que é isso? Não adianta que a senhora já me tirou do meu trabalho? Um suadouro danado, no Rio de Janeiro fedendo. O que é que tá havendo com a senhora?”

Cinderella: “Cocheiro extressado.”

Driver: “Não sou extressado não. A senhora que não tá vendo a realidade do país. Que é que é isso? Tô trabalhando. Um suadouro danado” (*Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* [00:29:05-00:30:05]).

Giselle in Disney's film *Enchanted*,¹⁴³ and did not notice what the scene can tell us about Cinderella's view of the world around her. To begin, we learn from the dialogue between Cinderella and the truck driver that he risks his life to save Cinderella's. And yet, he shows no interest in knowing what she was doing in the middle of the road. He is also not surprised to see a woman whose physical appearance is uncommon in Rio de Janeiro. For him, seeing a woman with that appearance and dressed like that means that she is either bubbleheaded or she is fulfilling a vow. In other words, he sees her as somebody who is having fun, as opposed to him who is working. So, why does he save her if he sees her with contempt? He certainly does not expect to be acknowledged as a hero or rewarded, but perhaps it is in her looks—he might feel compelled to save her because she does not have the appearance of somebody who belongs in the streets of dark Rio de Janeiro.

Cinderella, on the other hand, does see herself as belonging there—after all, she chose to be there when she jumped into the portal—, but she is unable to see that the reality of Rio de

¹⁴³ One critic decried: “[N]ão posso deixar de comentar uma cena que me indignou: a passagem de Cinderela por um portal para o mundo real é uma cópia descarada de *Encantada*.” / *I cannot help commenting on a scene that upset me: Cinderella's passage through a portal to the real world is a shameless copy of Enchanted* (MARTINELLI). Disney's *Enchanted* was released in 2007, two years before the Brazilian film. In *Enchanted*, the protagonist Giselle is pushed into a fountain, which is the portal to the real world in that film, and lands in the middle of Times Square in New York City. It is not uncommon for Brazilian productions to use plotlines from successful US films. However, what is intriguing in this case is that *The Mystery of Feiurinha* is an adaptation of Pedro Bandeira's best-seller from 1986, which was released years before the original screenplay of *Enchanted*, written by Bill Kelly in the mid-1990s (DALY). Kelly says that his premise for the screenplay was “the idea of naked innocence confronting cynicism, fearlessly” (FLORES), which is different from Bandeira's tribute to fairy tales in his book. However, *Enchanted* was only greenlit by Disney in 2005 after assigning director Kevin Lima who requested that Kelly reworked the screenplay according to his own ideas for the film. For Lima, the original screenplay was “very, very dark” so he decided to do it differently and “do it as a loving homage to Disney” (QUINT). The homage consisted of inserting references to several Disney's princesses to Kelly's original screenplay. The result is Giselle, who is a medley of Disney's Cinderella, Snow White, Belle and Sleeping Beauty, who are the precisely the characters in Bandeira's novel. *The Mystery of Feiurinha* was probably very inspired by *Enchanted*, but that film might, as well, have some debt to Brazil.

Janeiro is different from the fairy tale world. She does not see the driver as anything other than a coachman, a servant, and does not acknowledge the good he has done. The irony of this scene is that in her interaction with the working-class man who saves her, Cinderella is forced to experience how “real-life” people perceive her—her behavior is seen as aloofness. This passage ultimately allows for a reflection upon how Xuxa displays “legitimate aloofness” in real life to keep herself separated from unpleasant aspects of Brazil’s socio-political reality, as described by Stephanie Dennison. She is saved by a man who is not a prince who will take her to a fairy tale land and give her a happily-ever-after life, but someone who will tell her to “get real” and “see the reality of the country.” The scene ends with Cinderella lifting her dress up from the floor and walking away from the driver, while he wipes the sweat off of his face and keeps talking about life’s hardships. The shot cuts to a bird-view shot of Cinderella’s and Rapunzel’s husbands, walking up the stairs of the palace and talking about their performance in the soccer match that just ended. That transition reminds us of the reality Cinderella is coming from, and of her perception of reality.

However, we cannot forget that a coachman has great significance in the Cinderella fairy tale. In Charles Perrault’s version, a rat is transformed into the coachman who takes the commoner to meet a prince, and in Disney’s adaptation, the woman’s horse is the one who is transformed into a coachman. But in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Cinderella (and potentially the TV presenter Xuxa) has become a person who is insensitive to the marginalized people who once helped her achieve what she wanted. Curiously, Cinderella’s refusal to listen to the driver also prevents her from noticing that he calls attention to her age. In Brazil, it is very unflattering to be called an “auntie” because it refers to the stereotypical image of a woman who is older but has not been able to get married. What is significant about the way Cinderella reacts in this scene is that, not too long later, she does take notice when a boy asks: “Aren’t you too old to be wearing something like that?”

Cinderella touches the side of her eyes and says: “Am I old?” The boy is a guest at the cruise ship where Cinderella will later meet the writer Pedro. This scene shows that Cinderella is not that aloof and that, in fact, she can be affected by criticism from a stranger. The point is, does she not “hear” the driver’s comment about her because she sees him as from a lower class or is it because she is only willing to accept truths coming out of a child’s mouth who is, ultimately, the reason of her existence?

3.4.2 When Happiness is Heart Rather Than Ambition...

Jerusa’s first screen appearance is prominent. As briefly described earlier, in the opening scene, a medium close-up shot shows her and her boss, the writer Pedro, on the deck of a cruise ship where he lives. The choice of the tight framing is interesting because it allows for an instant recognition of the star who plays Jerusa, the veteran actress Zezé Motta. In this scene, Pedro is upset because he has writer’s block and refuses to eat the food that Jerusa offers him. He acts like a macho man who feels defeated but does not surrender to the wishes of his assistant, and also like a whiny child who wants to be taken care of. In that sense, Jerusa seems more like an elder’s caretaker than an assistant to Pedro. At times, Pedro is harsh with her, but she reacts with surprising gentleness and replies patiently, always with a warm smile. But what seems conventionally shot takes a turn. After Jerusa has insisted, although gently, that Pedro have some coffee, he finally accepts to take a sip. Jerusa then opens a big smile that exposes her perfectly aligned white teeth that shine against her dark skin. The shot seems odd for two reasons. First, the previous shots had been showing a side view of Jerusa (figure 30). Suddenly, her body and face tilt toward the audience so that, instead of facing Pedro, they now face the camera. But her eyes remain with Pedro, wide open and looking sideways (figure 31). It is a slight change to the way she is placed

in the shot but significant enough to evoke a different emotion. Unlike the side view shot that puts the audience in a position of observer of the character, the head-on frontal view of Jerusa makes the audience feel drawn to the character, in other words, interpellated by the character. Peter Weir used this technique multiple times in *The Truman Show* (1998) with the character played by Laura Linney (figure 32). His strategy was to raise awareness of how product placement works in mass media. But what is Jerusa letting the audience know?



Figure 30. A side view shot of Jerusa in the opening scene of *The Mystery of Feiurinha*.



Figure 31. A head-on frontal shot of Jerusa that interpellates the audience in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*.



Figure 32. A head-on frontal shot of Laura Linney's character in *The Truman Show*.

Although very short, this sequence deserves attention because it has an uncanny resemblance to the way Uncle Remus was depicted in Disney's famous, if not controversial, *Song of the South* (1946).¹⁴⁴ Based on the Uncle Remus stories, *Song of the South* featured Black US actor James Baskett whose body language in the film—with his body and face turned to the camera, a big smile and eyes wide open—, became a staple image of Remus (figure 33). But critics were not convinced by Remus's cheerfulness in the context of a film that kept him in a place inferior to Whites. One reviewer decried the film “[for giving] the impression of an idyllic master-slave relationship” (CROWTHER), while another said Remus “cheerfully ‘knew his place’” (BERNSTEIN 222). Likewise, in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Jerusa is the stereotype of the Black female servant who is content in her servility. Zezé Motta's performance is hampered by having to portray the fixed conception of a “mammy”¹⁴⁵ who is usually portrayed as an older woman, heavy, and dark skinned, and who has an idealized figure of a caregiver—she is amiable, loyal, maternal, non-threatening, obedient, and submissive. Accordingly, even though Jerusa has a dignified job as the assistant to a writer, she gets down on her knees to comfort Cinderella's feet with warm water, which suggests that Jerusa is anything but happy with her responsibilities

¹⁴⁴ *Song of the South* is a musical based on the Uncle Remus stories, which the editor and reporter Joel Chandler had published in the *Atlanta Constitution* and in a series of books from 1880 through 1918. Harris had heard the tales as a young man working on a plantation in rural Georgia. The stories were told to him by slaves and later amalgamated into the figure of Remus. Disney's film was controversial because it was praised for showcasing a technological achievement that integrated cartoon characters with live action at the same time that it was denounced for its racism (BERNSTEIN 219-20).

¹⁴⁵ The concept of “mammy” is more commonly found in racial studies of US films, but I believe it is applicable to this Brazilian film. Donald Bogle places mammy's origins in the beginning of 20th century but notes that the role was perfected by Hattie McDaniel in the 1930s, including her Mammy in *Gone with the Wind* (1939) (198).

(figures 34-35). This scene may perpetuate a glorified picture of Black servitude to Whites and damages the fight for equal representations.



Figure 33. James Baskett as Uncle Remus in *Song of the South*.



Figure 34. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Jerusa carries a basin with warm water.



Figure 35. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Jerusa comforts Cinderella's feet.

However, no reviewer complained against the treatment of Jerusa in the film. She managed to give viewers a tolerable dignity because, like Remus, she is a storyteller. In this film, particularly, she is the only one who demonstrates having the power of storytelling, that is, the very secret that rescues Feiurinha from being forgotten. However positive this may sound, it might coincide with what Spike Lee called “a new ‘phenomenon’ [that] has emerged in film in recent years,” that is, the “magical negro”—a Black man or woman who has special insights and some sort of magical power and who serves as a plot device to come to the aid of White protagonists (GONZALEZ). As a matter of fact, we do not know Jerusa out of her role of assistant. We do not know if she has a family of her own or a life outside of her work. She only appears when Pedro needs her, and never by herself. And even her narrative voice, represented in Feiurinha's tale, is taken away from her. Jerusa is the one who reveals Feiurinha's story, but Pedro has to step in to write it in order to guarantee its preservation for posterity and save the day.

But here is another interpretation that would be more consistent with Tizuka's overall approach to this film as well as veteran actress Zezé Motta's, who plays Jerusa, lifetime advocacy against racial discrimination on screen.¹⁴⁶ Let us give a further consideration to the described opening scene of the film where Jerusa interacts with Pedro on the deck of the cruise ship and consider that her strange interpellation of the audience is meant to let viewers know that she will be telling them a story. Because Jerusa is ultimately the single character in the film who can reveal Feiurinha's full story, that interpellation could be an invitation to the audience to witness a process of formation of a fairy tale. In the beginning of such a process, which coincides with the beginning of the film, there is an author in crisis who instead of being invested in writing a special story from the heart or, better yet, any story, is obsessed about his inability to write a story. Not unlike

¹⁴⁶ In 1976, Zezé Motta rose to stardom as she played Xica in Cacá Diegues's acclaimed *Xica da Silva*. In the film, Xica is an 18th-century slave in Brazil who seduces a powerful diamond dealer played by Walmor Chagas (*Patriamada*) and rises into high society. With the success of the film, Motta was constantly asked to give interviews but was frustrated because she could not articulate on the significance of being a leading Black actress. So, she took a course on Black culture with Lélia Gonzalez who demanded engagement: "I know why you are here, but I want to make it clear that we don't have time to complain. What we have to do is roll up our sleeves and turn this [situation] around." Motta realized the group was not just young or just Black. In 1984, Motta created with other people from the Black movement, the Black Artist Information and Documentation Center (Cidan), which provided information about who the Black artists were, how many they were and where they were. Currently, the database has more than 500 Black actors. The Center works on initiatives such as a theater course in underprivileged communities that was sponsored by Ruth Cardoso. Motta approached Cardoso with the idea when she was a human rights advisor during her husband President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's first government (1995-1998). Another initiative was promoted by Motta's friend who gave hairdresser's courses in underprivileged communities. Motta says she "noticed the transformation that initiatives like [that] generate in the way people dress and talk," which helped improve their self-esteem. At 75 years-old, Motta believes her self-esteem has improved significantly but she is still not in terms with it. She still recalls that when she was selected to play Xica, a newspaper article printed: "She is an ugly Black woman, but exuberant" (ETERNA).

Cinderella's obsession with preserving her happiness, Pedro is obsessed about preserving his role as an author.¹⁴⁷

Then, one day, characters from fairy tales show up in the cruise ship where Pedro lives and ask him to write a specific story, which only makes his inability to write even more evident. In the meantime, Jerusa serves everybody, not as a gesture of servility but of duty, heart and understanding. She makes everybody feel comfortable—she washes Cinderella's feet that are in constant pain because of her crystal shoes, and feeds and pampers everybody, mostly adults, as if they were children. As everybody gets more relaxed, she reveals that she knows Feiurinha's story. So, all of those adults, while begging her to tell the story, sit down around her to attentively listen to the story (figure 36). As a wise woman who is knowledgeable of all the vices of life, she reinstates the princesses' and Pedro's core by releasing them from their obsessions, invites them in as audience by making them feel comfortable, and tells them a story that is relevant and engaging. Ultimately, she shows that a good story is a story that is in touch with the audience's heart.

¹⁴⁷ That is precisely the characterization of the author in Bandeira's book. That is why it is not surprising when we hear about supporting characters for the first, and only, time in this passage of the book: Rapunzel: É preciso interrogar todos os personagens secundários da história da Feiurinha! . . . Vamos repassar toda a historia da Feiurinha, sem esquecer nenhum detalhe. Depois vai ser fácil localizar os personagens secundários. / *We need to interrogate all the secondary characters in the story of Feiurinha! . . . Let's go over the entire story of Feiurinha, without forgetting any details. Then it will be easy to locate the secondary characters* (BANDEIRA 29-31).



Figure 36. In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, Jerusa's audience surrounds her to listen to Feiurinha's story.

3.5 CONCLUSION

The Mystery of Feiurinha is a film that has aspects that are repeated from one scene to another in ways that are meaningful (despite the fact that they are often not obvious). The film is distinguished by a number of scenes in which racialization figure prominently in one way or another. In this film, racialization conceals the characteristics of a person in an amplified way to make their role in the film easily recognizable. But, as we have seen, their function is more complex than this. They also reveal and expose. The impression that racialization gives us is that their function is to make us aware of the presence of controlled revelation.

The film conveys a suggestion about the role of racial relationships in the film as preconditions for the preservation of stories, and it does so by means of the characters of Confúcia,

Cinderella and Jerusa. Cinderella's failure to please reviewers consists in her failure to relate the purpose of her missions in the film and refer them to a single object supposed to be the reason for them all—her ambition. This would require a capacity that seems to be poorly developed in Cinderella's case, namely, her past. Her way of life involves gliding from one mission to the next, which leaves us with the question: What does she want and why? Multiplicity is indeed Cinderella's problem: her way of life splits relationships into an unordered array of self-contained moments. Confúcia's way is just the opposite. Her attention is fastened on a single object with an unshakable grip that has nothing to do with race—her loyalty to serve the Queen Mother.

What about the princess that lends her name to the title of the film, Princess Feiurinha? In the film, although Feiurinha's future is guaranteed by her prince charming, she is still a child, so she is not old enough to be married and have children. Also, we cannot tell if she will be tall, slim, and good-looking, which we understand are preconditions for the princesses. And this is where Xuxa's real life touches her fairy tale world the closest. Feiurinha is played by her daughter in real life and, therefore, Xuxa needs to secure her future by registering her as a princess. And here comes a paradox: how can she preserve her legacy through the reinforcement of beauty based on a standard her daughter might not have? Unlike Xuxa's Paquitas or her Encantado princesses, Sasha is not an obvious Xuxa look-alike. She is an ethnic other because her father Luciano Szafir has Middle Eastern heritage. And that is precisely where Tizuka sees Sasha may flourish.

Years before the many stories were developed in the film, there was a nine-year-old child, Sasha, who read Pedro Bandeira's book at school. She shared the story with her mother, Xuxa, who decided to adapt it to the screen. Sasha wanted to play the part of Feiurinha, but her mother had envisioned the top model Gisele Bündchen for the part. It took the author Bandeira to convince Xuxa by letting her know that he had imagined a girl like Sasha as Feiurinha when he wrote the

book. Three years later, the daughter-mother vision had become real. Sasha's parents could not help being overwhelmed. While Xuxa said: "I used to watch the scenes on Tizuka's computer and always cried,"¹⁴⁸ the father, Luciano Szafir, stood firmly: "There will be no kiss. I've already talked to the film's production. My daughter is not kissing anyone."¹⁴⁹

The choice of Sasha to play the part of Feiurinha would, expectedly, raise questions such as: How does the process of maturation of a child born under the spotlight work? What does it do to a child to have parents who have high expectations from her to be successful as still a child? How does a child who seems to be legitimately interested in pursuing her parents' career deal with the pressure of inheritance? That is precisely why I chose not to analyze Sasha's performance in the film—she was still a child. Tizuka recalls telling Sasha's parents to chill out for that reason with the authority of someone who has given roles to her own children. Although unnoticed by critics, her son Ilya played the protagonist's son with remarkable credibility in *Patriamada* (figure 37). But, nonetheless, Tizuka wanted Sasha to use her full potential:

I got her a coach and Sasha responded well. After all, she shoots well . . . She doesn't have much sense of what her mother's power represents. And she is a very good student, really. As the school did not release her, she did the scenes in a hurry because she couldn't miss class, she had homework to turn in.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ "Assistia às cenas no computador da Tizuka e chorava sempre" ("Xuxa afirma ter chorado ao ver filme estrelado por Sasha").

¹⁴⁹ "Não vai ter beijo nenhum. Já conversei com a produção do filme. Minha filha não beija ninguém" ("Ciumento, Luciano Szafir veta beijo de Sasha em filme: 'Minha filha não beija'").

¹⁵⁰ "Arranjei uma preparadora para ela e Sasha correspondeu. Além de tudo, ela imprime bem . . . Ela não tem muita noção do que representa o poder da mãe dela. E é muito estudiosa, caxias mesmo. Como a escola não a liberou, ela fazia as cenas correndo, porque não podia perder aula, tinha lição de casa para entregar" ("Tizuka não tinha dinheiro: cortou o dragão").

Tizuka was impressed: “Sasha has unparalleled image power. The camera loves her. No one at this point could do Feiurinha better than her. I speak with the confidence of a film director”¹⁵¹ (figure 38). Sasha might not be a mini Xuxa, but she shares with her mother a responsible work ethics. I would not be surprised if Tizuka had written Confúcia to show a different perspective about star inheritance to Sasha. In any case, Tizuka has shown that Sasha can be the protagonist of her own future.

In *The Mystery of Feiurinha*, images from the past, fact and fiction, described by the three storylines also become intertwined and subverted. Switching back and forth between the fairy-tale kingdom, present-day Rio de Janeiro, the aged fantastic realm, and ultimately by the distracting presence of celebrities, the film confounds the distinction between fantasy and documentary. But instead of a split between fiction and documentary, fantasy and the factual, the mythical and the everyday, Tizuka looks at what is common to all of them—their ongoing processes of formation. As such, the heroines are multiplied as the film moves from Cinderella’s effort to search for Feiurinha’s story, to tell other stories narrated in unconventional ways. Making Xuxa’s last film may as well be described as an expansion of Tizuka’s work into overseen characters and cultures. The next story could be Sasha’s.

¹⁵¹ “Sasha tem um poder de imagem incomparável. A câmera adora ela. Ninguém neste momento poderia fazer Feiurinha melhor que ela. Falo com a certeza de uma diretora de cinema” (“Após crítica a Sasha, autor de ‘Feiurinha’ se desculpa com filha de Xuxa em carta”).



Figure 37. Ilya Yamasaki as the protagonist's son in *Patriamada*.



Figure 38. Sasha on screen with her father in *The Mystery of Feiurinha*.

4.0 APARECIDA: THE MIRACLE

[I] think we have a job that is very religious. The relationship among people, I mean, we work with ritual, with feeling, with emotion, with faith. Cinema is a religion. Making cinema is something . . . that takes you away from your daily life, takes you away from the routine, from a simpler relationship with life and starts to make you live . . . believing in a ponderable, magical. And it works. When you believe, it works.

—Tizuka Yamasaki¹⁵²

The currency that connects our bodies and fuses us into communities is not a rationally elected choice, but a felt compulsion.

—Donovan Schaefer, “What’s Affect Theory?”

4.1 THE PRACTICE OF CINEMA OF EMOTION IN APARECIDA

4.1.1 Why Make *Aparecida*?

In 2009, Tizuka met the producer Gláucia Camargos on a Brasília-Rio flight. Camargos told her that she was preparing a film about Our Lady of Aparecida, the patroness of Brazil, which sparked Tizuka’s interest because she had a few stories about the subject. It was not until a next

¹⁵² “[E]u acho que a gente tem um trabalho que é muito religioso. A relação da gente, quero dizer, a gente trabalha com ritual, com sentimento, com emoção, com a fé. O cinema é uma religião. Fazer cinema é uma coisa . . . que tira do teu cotidiano, tira dos eixos, da relação mais simples com a vida e passa a viver . . . se acreditando num ponderável, no mágico. E dá certo. Quando você acredita, dá certo” (YAMASAKI, “Memória do Cinema”).

meeting that Tizuka would be invited to direct the film and get to share her stories. Tizuka was still finalizing *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* (2009) and already working on her following project, the film *Encantados* (2014), so she was not sure that she wanted to commit to another project at the time. But she decided to take her stories about Aparecida as “signals that she should make the film” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

The first story happened about twelve years earlier, when Tizuka was preparing *Gaijin 2* and she wanted to help her grandmother Titoe Koga who was ninety-six-years old. Titoe was suffering from issues she had experienced with her parents in Japan. Because Titoe was the inspiration for the protagonist Titoe of *Gaijin 1* and 2, we know from *Gaijin 1* that, as a fictional character, Titoe had left her parents in Japan for Brazil after having her marriage arranged by her brother. In *Gaijin 2*, Tizuka shows how Titoe’s parent’s village in Japan had been engulfed in flames and they did not survive. Those might not have been exactly what happened to real life Titoe, but similar kinds of memories might have had to do with her suffering that Tizuka was worried about. So, when Tizuka heard about Mrs. Márcia, a *nisei* who was allegedly an intermediate of Saints on questions about ancestors and was a devotee of Aparecida, she was “a little suspicious” but nevertheless took her grandmother to see her. Mrs. Márcia heard Titoe’s story and prayed for Aparecida’s intervention. Tizuka says that she “didn’t know if [she] believed in that ritual or not, but the result is that this meeting ended [her] grandmother’s suffering” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

Years later, a second episode involving Aparecida happened when Tizuka was at a gas

station near the city of Aparecida and felt that *something*¹⁵³ had moved her head toward a replica of the Aparecida statue. As if in response to a strange instinct, she bought it and asked her daughter to take it to Mrs. Márcia as a gift. Instead of keeping it, Mrs. Márcia blessed it and returned it with a message: “Tell your mother this statue is hers” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

When Camargos offered the direction of *Aparecida* to Tizuka, the director saw it as a third sign that she had to contemplate a deeper engagement with the Saint.¹⁵⁴ Even though she was already working on other projects, Tizuka called Camargos and, as she learned that there still was not a director attached to the project, she was assertive: “I’m the right person to make this film. You will not find any other director with the view of Our Lady of Aparecida that I have . . . This film is mine.”¹⁵⁵ What is it that Tizuka learned from her past experiences with Aparecida that created a view of her that nobody else had? Before looking for answers, let us go back to Titoe and consider what her experience with religion might have been upon her arrival in Brazil. In order to do that, I propose that we take a look at a few paragraphs of Tomoo Handa’s essay on the conception of the Japanese Brazilian esthetic sense.

¹⁵³ In this chapter, I use the term “something” in italics every time I refer to Kathleen Stewart’s idea that ordinary affect emerges when “*something* throws itself together in a moment as an event and a sensation; a something both animated and inhabitable” (1). Those affects “work not through ‘meanings’ per se, but rather in the way that they pick up density and texture as they move through bodies, dreams, dramas, and social wordings of all kinds. Their significance lies in the intensity they build and in what thought and feelings they make possible” (3). That happens because there are ordinary things that “literally hit us or exert a pull on us” (4).

¹⁵⁴ Although not officially a Saint, Brazilians often refer to Our Lady of Aparecida as such.

¹⁵⁵ “Eu sou a pessoa certa para fazer esse filme. Você não vai encontrar nenhum diretor com a visão de Nossa Senhora Aparecida que eu tenho Esse filme é meu” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

4.1.2 The Seeming Absence of Religion Among the Japanese Brazilian

When the prominent sociologist of religion Cândido Procópio Ferreira de Camargo is asked to comment on Handa's essay on the conception of the Japanese Brazilian esthetic sense, he takes the opportunity to describe what he remembered about religion among Japanese immigrants:

I remember that, visiting the houses of Japanese and their descendants, I found images of saints or the imperial family and small oratories, as well as some texts written in beautiful calligraphy and that seemed to indicate some religious meaning, not to mention the temples, where monuments of religion and art can be found. Whether in Shinto or Buddhism, art is given great importance and I would like to ask what would have been the religion's role in the esthetic life of immigrants.¹⁵⁶

As described before, in his essay, Handa mentions different esthetic manifestations in the lives of Japanese immigrants, among which were the esthetic sense found in clothing, food and housing, and in the arts incorporated into daily life such as singing, dancing, instrumental music, theatrical performance, *ikebana*, garden, *bonsai*, *haikai* and *tanka*. But to Camargo's surprise, despite having personally observed the presence of religion and art in the homes of immigrants, which to him were clearly artistic, Handa did not discuss religion as part of his observations of Nikkei esthetic manifestations.

¹⁵⁶ “Lembro-me que, visitando as casas de japoneses e descendentes, encontrava imagens santas ou da família imperial e pequenos oratórios, além de alguns textos escritos com bela caligrafia e que pareciam indicar algum sentido religioso, sem falar dos templos, onde são encontrados monumentos de religião e de arte. Quer no xintoísmo quer no budismo, dá-se a importância à arte e gostaria de perguntar qual teria sido o papel da religião na vida estética do imigrantes” (HANDA 233).

In his response to Camargo's observation, Handa's only comment that addresses it directly is: "because rituals and religious festivals were not general, it cannot be determined what their function in the esthetic life [of the immigrant] would have been."¹⁵⁷ It is a very vague answer for such a careful observer as Handa. A few paragraphs later, however, Handa comments:

[I] would say that the elements of Eastern philosophy, and Japanese philosophy in particular, the further away they are from the values of the Christian civilization, the more they can enrich Brazilian culture as an antithesis of Western and Brazilian values.¹⁵⁸

The Japanese Brazilian immigration scholar Teiiti Suzuki, however, does address Camargo's question in more detail. In his response, he feels compelled to draw upon his memory of his own childhood growing up in Japan to provide a clear picture of what Handa seemingly refuses to describe perhaps because he felt Camargo's perspective was too ingrained by values of the Christian civilization.

Suzuki grew up in a small town of about 50,000 inhabitants located 12 miles away from both Osaka and Kobe, the most urban regions in Japan at the time. He describes how he grew up surrounded by divinities. Aside from Buddhist and Shinto divinities in home sanctuaries, some obscure ones also inhabited the homes—god of the stove top, god of the toilet, god of the main entrance, etc. He would leave his house and find many other deities of communitarian nature in different points of the town, the most important being the guardian god of the city, whose sumptuous sanctuaries were surrounded by a beautiful forest. In the neighborhoods, smaller

¹⁵⁷ "como os rituais e festas religiosas não eram gerais, não se pode determinar qual teria sido sua função na vida estética" (HANDA 234).

¹⁵⁸ "Eu diria que os elementos da filosofia oriental e da filosofia japonesa em particular quanto mais afastados estão dos valores da civilização cristã mais poderão enriquecer a cultura brasileira como antítese dos valores ocidentais e brasileiros" (HANDA 234).

sanctuaries were home to small divinities. They were of Shinto and Buddhist origins, most of them in a very syncretic way. Aside from these divinities, there were also supernatural entities that did not have sanctuaries. They lived in various parts of the city and scared or tricked night walkers. All of that not taking into account a dozen Buddhist temples, which represented the orthodox faith. Each family belonged to a specific temple and social life revolved around those deities of communitarian nature. Festivals took place all year round with each of those divinities as their patrons or with the Buddhist faith as a motive. Outside of the city, phallic-shaped gods of travelers and protective Buddha-deities for children stood along the roads leading to surrounding villages. In the villages, Suzuki felt that religious life was more intensely lived around the festivals, which, in turn, were closely linked to the agricultural cycle (HANDA 234-35).

Suzuki explains that that was an aspect of the psychosocial scenario in which the Japanese immigrant in his native country lived. That cultural context received the first blow when the emigrants embarked to Brazil. They were not recruited by their village or neighborhood. Therefore, families were uprooted from their home community in one stroke and placed on the immigrant ship in what he calls a true “cultural promiscuity.” They were segregated from their deities. The psychosocial world based on community life was destroyed violently. In Brazil, Japanese local deities disappeared. And with them, that psychosocial world, balanced and alive, also disappeared. Thus, the ground was already set for the collapse of an entire cultural complexity that the immigrant had in Japan (HANDA 235).

Now that we have a sense of the communitarian nature of religion practice in Japan and why it could not be reproduced in Brazilian soil, we can consider that perhaps what caught Tizuka’s attention regarding the help that Mrs. Márcia provided Titoe was not only a matter of Aparecida’s possible miraculous intervention. Perhaps Tizuka also recognized that, through her

second experience with Aparecida, there was *something* that attracted millions of people a year to the city of Aparecida that was bigger than the Saint herself—a sense of community. After all, the experience of people who live in the city of Aparecida, or visit it regularly, speaks closely to the community sense of communion that was practiced in Titoe’s Japan. While privately devoted to Japanese divinities at home (figures 39-40), perhaps Mrs. Márcia helped Titoe find, even if only momentarily, her long lost sense of a spiritualized community.



Figure 39. A Shinto sanctuary can be seeing at Yurika and Tizuka’s mother’s house in Atibaia.



Figure 40. A close-up of three Shinto figures on display at Tizuka’s mother’s house in Atibaia.

4.1.3 For a Sense of a Spiritualized Community: Catholicism in the Imaginary of the Nikkei

Like many Brazilian Nikkei, as a child, Tizuka was very curious about the Catholic religiosity that dominated Brazilian society at the time. She used to see her classmates receiving the First Communion, so she decided to receive it too (figure 41). She took preparation classes, went to mass and later introduced the Catholic Church to her mother who became very dedicated to the church. In the 1960s, as she became involved with communist and materialistic ideas of the time, she moved away from the it.¹⁵⁹ But how could a once Catholic enthusiast who no longer identified herself as a believer approach the themes of a conflicted man, a family, a miracle, conversion and faith?

I had never made a film about religion . . . When you direct a film, the first thing you must do is to believe in what you are doing, especially when it comes to religious faith. I have no religion, but after a certain age you begin to cultivate a spiritual side—material things are no longer satisfying, and I pursue this search in my own way. The main theme of *Aparecida: The Miracle* is precisely the question of faith, of conversion. That was the biggest challenge. I have always enjoyed making films on topics I haven't covered—and a lot is discovered during the making. In the process, I asked myself many times about the causes of phenomena such as Our Lady of Aparecida, or Círio of Nazaré. Why do so many

¹⁵⁹ “Quando eu era criança, via meus colegas fazerem a primeira comunhão e também quis fazer. Fiz catecismo, frequentei as missas e, mais tarde, acabei levando minha mãe para a igreja católica! Ela ficou bastante dedicada à igreja enquanto eu a abandonava nos anos 60, atraída pelas idéias comunistas/materialistas da época” (YAMASAKI, “Costumes nipo-brasileiros”).

people share this faith deeply? This mystery interests me, and the film was a way not to decipher the mystery, but to get closer to it.¹⁶⁰



Figure 41. Tizuka on her First Communion.

Filmed over six weeks in São José dos Campos and the city of Aparecida, *Aparecida: The Miracle* (figure 42) has several scenes at the Basilica of Our Lady of Aparecida, which is visited by nine million devotees every year. The one-paragraph of the film summarizes it as:

Marcos (Murilo Rosa), a successful businessman, has everything that money can buy, but he lives in an emotional void and intense clashes with his ex-wife and son Lucas because the two choose to follow artistic paths. A serious accident puts Lucas's life between life

¹⁶⁰ “Eu nunca tinha feito um filme sobre religião . . . Quando você dirige um filme, a primeira coisa é acreditar no que está fazendo, sobretudo quando o tema é a fé religiosa. Não tenho religião, mas depois de uma certa idade você começa a cultivar um lado espiritual—as coisas materiais não satisfazem mais, e exercito essa busca do meu jeito. O tema principal de *Aparecida: O Milagre* é justamente a questão da fé, da conversão. Esse era o maior desafio. Sempre gostei de fazer filmes sobre temas que não abordei—e muita coisa é descoberta durante a realização. Nesse processo, eu me perguntei inúmeras vezes sobre as causas de fenômenos como o de Nossa Senhora Aparecida, ou do Círio de Nazaré. Por que tanta gente compactua profundamente desta fé? Este mistério me interessa, e o filme foi uma forma não de decifrar o mistério, mas de chegar mais perto” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

and death and leads Marcos to relive childhood traumas, evoking his break with Our Lady of Aparecida, whom he blames for his father's death. Desperate at the possibility of losing his son, Marcos relives not only his story but also the story of the emergence of Our Lady of Aparecida, the Patroness of Brazil . . . From the encounter with Our Lady, Marcos's conversion has surprising and exciting consequences on a family that is reunited through the recovery of faith and love.¹⁶¹



Figure 42. Poster of *Aparecida*.

¹⁶¹ “Marcos (Murilo Rosa), um empresário de sucesso, tem tudo que o dinheiro pode comprar, mas vive um vazio afetivo e intensos embates com o filho Lucas (o estreante Jonatas Faro), que opta por seguir um caminho diferente, como artista. Um grave acidente coloca a vida de Lucas em perigo e leva Marcos a reviver traumas da infância, evocando a sua ruptura com Nossa Senhora Aparecida, a quem responsabiliza pela morte do pai. Desesperado diante da possibilidade de perder o filho, Marcos revive não só a sua história como também a história do surgimento de Nossa Senhora Aparecida, a Padroeira do Brasil . . . A partir do encontro com Nossa Senhora, a conversão de Marcos terá consequências surpreendentes e emocionantes sobre uma família que se reencontra através da recuperação da fé e do amor” (*Aparecida: O Milagre* Pressbook).

While the plot's focus appears to be on personal faith and on the dimension of the Saint's affective appeal, I will show that Tizuka's formal approach reveals that her focus is on the affective appeal of the Saint's community made possible by collective faith. In other words, what I call "a sense of a spiritualized community."

4.1.4 Confronting Assumptions and Misconceptions

Reception of *Aparecida* was largely positive but some critics were not convinced about the relevance of some of the characters in the film. Rodolfo Lima was particularly troubled by the main character Marcos:

What I question . . . is the surrender that human beings have at some point in their lives for what is called faith Marcos doubts the Saint's power, since for him she caused the death of his father, and years later—now in the role of the father—he is obliged to surrender and ask for help, precisely to the one whom he rejected in the past. Marcos is practical, he does not believe in miracles The moral of the story that the film preaches is didactic and offers no new element in the homework of Catholic education, and this causes the film to fall into the abyss of obviousness.¹⁶²

¹⁶² "O que me causa questionamentos . . . é a rendição que o ser humano tem em algum momento da sua vida, para o que se chama de fê Marcos duvida do poder da santa, já que para ele, ela causou a morte do pai, e anos depois—ele agora no papel do pai—é obrigado a se render e pedir socorro, justamente para aquela que renegou no passado. Marcos é prático não acredita em milagres A moral da história que o filme prega é didática e não oferece nenhum elemento novo na lição de casa da educação católica, e isso faz com que o filme caia no abismo das obviedades" (RODOLFO LIMA).

My problem with Lima's interpretation of Marcos is that he saw the character's faith as an individual enterprise—as a rationally elected choice made by an individual to his own benefit. As my lengthy reading of particular scenes pertaining Marcos's faith will show, I believe that Lima mistook a community effort for individualistic pragmatism. Moreover, as Donovan Schaefer so candidly puts it, “religion is something bodies are drawn to or repelled by, something they build small or large worlds around, pick up and hold close to them for healing, or transform into instruments of violence and control, or simply forget about and move on” (“Religion as Little Something”). In other words, pragmatism is not really wrong when one looks at religiosity as a phenomenon in constant affective transformation.

4.2 APARECIDA: SHAPES THAT EMERGE FROM WITHIN

4.2.1 Working with *Leitmotifs*: *Hands and Wardrobes*

Until now, I have not discussed how certain elements, either visual or aural, repeat from one scene to another in ways that are meaningful, *leitmotifs*, because they did not play a significant part in Tizuka's formal approaches to her first and second millennium films. In *Aparecida*, however, I find it necessary to explore a number of meaning bearing *leitmotifs* because they are constant reminders of Tizuka's approach to a sense of a spiritualized community.

In *Aparecida*, these *leitmotifs* are often mysterious. Most obviously, the film is distinguished by the presence of religious *motifs* in people's houses, in buildings, in a theatrical act, etc. There are also a number of vehicles, especially luxurious ones, such as Marcos's limousine, Lucas's motorcycle, and Lucas's pick-up truck. Moreover, there are a number of scenes

in which *hands* figure prominently in one way or another. Then, there is the white wardrobe of Marcos's lover Beatriz that contrasts with the black wardrobe of his ex-wife Sonia. Finally, there is a *leitmotif* obviously related to one of the meanings that the *hands* might have—the Saint. I will not be able to discuss all these here, but I will analyze the last two before setting forth an idea that ties them together.

4.2.2 *Hands* and the Sense of a Spiritualized Community

The opening credits roll in front of a collage of images around the basilica. Tall lit up candle lights reveal devotees praying; a panning shot gives a glimpse of the miracle room full of objects from floor to ceiling; devotees walk the pathway to the Saint on their knees; some pray, and others look up in the direction of the Saint and talk to her (figure 43). We see the first prominent *hand* figure in the film—devotees place their hands on the bottom of the richly ornated wall that holds the image of Aparecida behind glass and inside of a golden recess (figures 44-45), perhaps imagining it as an apparatus of direct communication with the Saint's energy, grace or *something*—a way for the Saint to receive their intentions, prayers and appeals. Although numerous, the ocean of devotees is quite quiet, focused on their private and direct, but internalized, communication with the dark-skinned Our Lady who seems to float under her famed blue mantel adorned with Brazilian flags. Although racially, ethnically, perhaps socially and even religiously diverse, the ocean of devotees seems utterly homogeneous; they display their devotion without fear of being interrupted, judged, discouraged—a spiritualized community. Then, an aerial shot from the main cupula of the basilica reveals a mass that resembles the dimension of a mass at St. Peter in the Vatican—a validation of the appeal of the Patroness.



Figure 43. In *Aparecida*, a Nikkei woman prays to the Saint.



Figure 44. The image of the Saint on display in *Aparecida*.



Figure 45. In *Aparecida*, a devotee places his hands on the wall that holds the image of the Saint.

Next, a priest holds the Saint and walks along devotees lined up for a chance to glimpse the statue up close. The priest keeps a tight grip on it. It has been handled with extra care since an iconoclast broke the statue in more than two hundred pieces in 1978. But some devotees' hands make their way around the priest and touch the statue (figure 46). At a different shot, another priest brings the statue closer to a group of officers in uniform, and perhaps important people wearing suits, and invites them to touch it. Despite the preferred treatment, they also knee down and lower their heads, ceremoniously, just like everybody else (figure 47). Inside the basilica, everybody belongs to the same community.



Figure 46. In *Aparecida*, a devotee touches the image of the Saint.



Figure 47. In *Aparecida*, some officers in uniform and well-dressed people have the privilege to touch the Saint.

After experiencing the basilica from the inside, we are gradually taken outside as the camera follows a procession that starts on the grounds of the basilica and goes through the

“Passarela da Fé,” an elevated pathway that connects the basilica to the old shrine that housed the image of Aparecida until 1980 (figure 48). The farther we move from the basilica, the clearer it becomes that it sits on top of a hill surrounded by simply built low rise houses.



Figure 48. In *Aparecida*, pilgrims participate in a procession from the basilica to the old Aparecida shrine.

We are then invited to experience an intimate view of the basilica from the balcony of a young couple’s house (figure 49). Throughout the film, the building’s omnipresence is a constant reminder of the community the people of Aparecida belongs to. The couple’s only child is the boy Marcos, the protagonist of the film, who invites his father for a talk—he wants permission to compete for a spot as a soccer player.

The shot is taken from outside of a window, which serves several purposes (figure 50). At the same time that it highlights the interaction between father and son by framing it, the window strangely opens inwards, which draws attention to the intimate bond between these two characters, while two fish, the very symbol of the first miracle of Aparecida, hang above the father’s head as

if they were stage props. That shot anticipates that the story that is about to be told is a sort of a theatrical construction as imagined by filmmakers who look at it from the outside.



Figure 49. In *Aparecida*, the balcony of the protagonist's parent's house has a view of the basilica.



Figure 50. In *Aparecida*, Marcos talks to his father.

Marcos is a talented soccer player, so the coach of a team invites him to join the team as an official player. But he needs new soccer shoes, which his father cannot afford. However, while playing at the basilica with his friend Sonia, Marcos learns from her that he could ask for Aparecida's help, but not before the two get "married" at the altar. Sonia tells Marcos that Aparecida will only answer his prayer if his issue is serious, so she warns him: "[Y]ou can ask for it but explain it very well, ok?"¹⁶³

Curiously, even though Marcos is raised in a very religious setting where the seriousness of praying for interventions would probably have been introduced to him at that age, it seems new to him. That reinforces the idea that the filmmakers behind the story do not contemplate the Catholic faith from within. Perhaps the main point of the film is not faith *per se*, after all. What follows is even more strange and clearly addressed to the audience. Unbeknownst to Sonia, Marcos lifts up a prosthetic arm that he had been playing with in the direction of his heart and the wooden *hand* seals his promise (figure 51). As Marcos uses somebody else's miracle as a prop, he lets us know of the extent of his openness to Sonia's and the Saint's truth while indicating that that truth is still foreign to his own body.

¹⁶³ "[V]ocê pede mas explica bem explicado pra ela, tá?" (*Aparecida* [00:16:04-00:17:16]).



Figure 51. In *Aparecida*, Marcos uses a wooden hand to seal his promise.

But soon, a tragedy happens. While working on the roof of the basilica, Marcos's father falls and dies. Later in the film, we learn that the father had made a promise to Aparecida to work in the expansion of the basilica, and to live in poverty, if she saved Marcos's life because the baby was born with small chance to survive. But that was unbeknownst to Marcos until he was an adult, so, as a child, he blames the Saint for taking his father's life and gives his back to her. Marcos moves to São José dos Campos¹⁶⁴ to live with his uncle, who is a successful businessman. Thirty-five years later, upon his uncle's death, Marcos is put in charge of his uncle's enterprise Metal Nobre, but not before having married his childhood sweetheart Sonia and having a son, Lucas, with her. While Marcos sustains a lavish lifestyle in São José dos Campos, which includes having

¹⁶⁴ Situated an hour's drive from the city of Aparecida, São José dos Campos is a major city in the State of São Paulo, known as a leading industrial and research hub, with emphasis in aerospace sciences.

the breathtaking and devoted assistant Beatriz always by his side, Sonia and Lucas remain in Aparecida invested in their own business—Sonia as a pianist, and Lucas as an actor. It is Lucas who lets the audience know that the second act of the film is about to start.

4.2.3 *Hands and Individualism*

As Lucas plays the role of a messenger at a street reenactment of Aparecida's miracle, he follows the Brazilian tradition of oral storytelling¹⁶⁵ and sings:

Attention, attention, ladies and gentlemen
To his story that I will tell
Sometime in a forgotten time
Vanished from the river waters
The fishes from the beautiful village of Guaratinguetá

¹⁶⁵ The Brazilian tradition of oral storytelling, or *cordel*, is a genre traditionally from the northeast of Brazil, more specifically, a region known as *sertão*, a large, dry, and impoverished large area (often depicted in Cinema Novo's first phase films), located away from the seaside where the most important cities of the region are. Brought to Brazil by Portuguese colonists, *cordel* stems from the European tradition of ballad and broadside poetry and derives its name from the cord on which the booklets were often suspended for display in open-air fairs. Brazilian *cordel* narratives presented in written form are like fables and explore a wide range of themes, including critiques of local and international current events, heroes, romance, religion, and social banditry, among others. They started as an oral tradition and were sung by poet-improvisers, or *repentistas*, who would create stories on the spot, using action and people around them as inspiration. Listeners used to gather around the singers to hear their poetry, and often interacted with the acts. At least since the nineteenth century, *cordel* has functioned as a source of news, entertainment, and moral counsel. At that time, large part of the population was illiterate so *cordel* was the way poets expressed their sorrows and difficulties and listeners gathered information and heard the news. As *sertão* people migrated to the more economically prosperous cities located in the southeast, the *cordel* became an increasingly urban phenomenon and gained popularity among middle-class readers and university intellectuals ("Literatura de cordel").

It was Count Assumar who was sent by the King of Portugal

To use his iron fists and rule in the gold mines

Assumar wanted fish and the fishermen said

The river was doomed

In anger the count said

All the people I will kill¹⁶⁶

As anticipated by Lucas's song, Marcos degrades his son over his lack of commitment for "serious" work at an after party at Marcos's childhood home. Sympathizing with Lucas, Marcos's girlfriend Beatriz leaves the party. Alone with Marcos, ex-wife Sonia takes the opportunity to confront him: "Lucas is an actor and is very talented You don't like it because he is an artist and makes you think of me." After a few demonstrations of rage towards Marcos, Sonia lays her *hand* on Marcos's shoulder and says: "Find a way to love yourself because otherwise, you will end up alone, just you and Metal Nobre"¹⁶⁷ (figure 52). Marcos is clearly affected by his ex-wife's touch, which makes him close his eyes and feel her energy, her soul, her love or *something*. It is obvious that Marcos is still in love with Sonia and vice-versa. What Sonia seems to be telling Marcos is that what separates them is not Marcos's lover Beatriz or Sonia's career, which she keeps bringing up, but his resistance to embrace who he is, or who he used to be—the small town,

¹⁶⁶ "Atenção, atenção, senhoras e senhores / Pra essa história que eu vou contar / Lá num tempo esquecido / Sumiram das águas do rio / Os peixes da linda vila de Guaratinguetá / Foi o Conde Assumar enviado por o Rei de Portugal / Para usar das mãos de ferro e mandar nas minas de ouro / Assumar queria peixes e os pescadores diziam / Tinha feitiço no rio / Com raiva o conde disse / Povo todo irei matar" (*Aparecida* [00:22:14-00:23:07]).

¹⁶⁷ "O Lucas é um ator e tem muito talento Você não gosta porque ele é um artista e faz você se lembrar de mim Descubra um jeito de se amar porque senão, você vai acabar sozinho, só você e a Metal Nobre." (*Aparecida* [00:30:01-00:31:09]).

open, trusting, and hopeful boy she had married as a fulfillment of a promise made in their childhood.



Figure 52. In *Aparecida*, Sonia places her *hands* on Marcos's shoulder.

In fact, Sonia's career as a pianist does not seem to be a problem for Marcos who, in a later sequence, fantasizes her playing piano for him as a prelude for a romantic encounter. But a closer look at Sonia's *hands* playing the piano, tells us that the story changes. As we see her seductive hands playing piano for Marcos (figure 53), there is a match cut to more sober-looking hands (figure 54). Instead of wearing glimmering bracelets, the hands now wear a single big dark rock ring. The match cut helps us draw a connection between the jewelry as tokens of happier and darker times between Sonia and Marcos, respectively, and serves as a neat summary of the transformation of Sonia's feelings toward Marcos up to that point. The hands wearing the rock are not committed to carnal love but to familial love as they entertain Lucas and his girlfriend Sheila in an innocent way. As such, Sheila applauds Sonia: "Beautiful, Auntie." (*Aparecida* [00:32:25-

00:33:25])). This match cut sequence also introduces us to another important *leitmotif* that will join the *hands* to help us recognize the film's meanings: Sonia and Beatriz's wardrobes.



Figure 53. In *Aparecida*, Sonia plays for Marcos.



Figure 54. In *Aparecida*, Sonia plays for Lucas and his girlfriend Sheila.

4.2.4 *Wardrobes and the Return to a Community*

Beatriz is Marcos's right-hand assistant at Metal Nobre and his lover. She is intelligent, well-spoken, confident, balanced, lovable and competent. For example, when investors visit the Metal Nobre plant, as Marcos is not able to provide them with a promotional material that Lucas had failed to deliver, Beatriz quickly diverts their attention and promises to deliver the material as soon as possible. Beatriz is also beautiful and clearly infatuated with Marcos, but her love for him is not reciprocated. Even so, Beatriz stays by Marcos's side, supporting him at work and with his often-difficult relationship with Lucas and Sonia.

Beatriz's wardrobe reflects the lightness and vibrancy of her personality—she wears glowing white for the most part in the film. She also wears her hair down, flowing and up to date. Sonia sits on a different part of the spectrum. Although strong, independent and successful, she is temperamental, subdued and manipulating. As discussed before, it is evident that love and attraction still exist between her and Marcos, but she clearly resents him and will not take him back unless he complies with her terms. It is not clear what kind of professional support he fails to give her, but it is evident that she disagrees with his insistence on turning their artistically oriented son into a businessman. Like Beatriz, Sonia's wardrobe also reflects her personality. Throughout the film, it is serious and darker, oftentimes black. And her hair is always tied up on a bun—a look that places her in the past.

By looking at Sonia in relation to Beatriz, it seems hard to believe that Marcos would still be infatuated with her, and, even harder, that Beatriz feels attracted to him. One critic observes: “Beatriz is a character who does not say what she came for. She seems to be in love with her boss,

but she gives him up for his family.”¹⁶⁸ Another one says: “Catholicism seems just a backward religion if judged by ‘Aparecida - O Milagre.’ Aside from, of course, the theological innovation that consists in the introduction of the figure of the good lover impersonated by Maria Fernanda Cândido.”¹⁶⁹ To call Maria Fernando Cândido’s character Beatriz a “good lover” suggests that she is deluded about what sort of person Marcos is. If Beatriz’s consciousness is as limited as that, then she would have no wisdom to communicate to Marcos. Her dedication would be the means by which she infects him with her ignorance. But that strongly contradicts her perception of reality that unquestionably helps Marcos to think more imaginatively even if it brings no result. For example, when Marcos realizes Lucas had done a great job creating the promotional material for his company, Beatriz says—“You see, he has talent for the arts. Just like his mother, right? She is also an artist.” Marcos does not realize it, but by describing Sonia and Lucas similarly, Beatriz suggests that Sonia is also an actress. Moments later, Beatriz tells Marcos: “I think it’s not just Lucas who is bothering you. There is something afflicting you and it is not from today.”¹⁷⁰ That prompts Marcos to reflect upon his life beyond his limited everyday matters. On and on, Beatriz seems happier as she poses as a gentle mentor and pushes Marcos forward.

The second critic’s comment suggests that Beatriz pursues Marcos even though he is in love with Sonia. In fact, the film tells us that Marcos will probably not settle down with anyone

¹⁶⁸ “Beatriz é uma personagem que não diz a que veio. Parece estar apaixonada pelo patrão, mas abre mão do amor em prol da família dele (“ESTREIA – ‘Aparecida – O Milagre’ aposta na devoção”).

¹⁶⁹ “O catolicismo parece apenas uma religião atrasada, a julgar por ‘Aparecida - O Milagre’. A não ser, claro, pela inovação teológica que consiste na introdução da figura da boa amante, na pessoa de Maria Fernanda Cândido” (ARAÚJO).

¹⁷⁰ “Tá vendo, ele tem talento pra arte. Puxou a mãe, né? Ela também é artista . . . Eu acho que não é só o Lucas que tá te incomodando. Tem uma aflição dentro de você e não é de hoje” (*Aparecida* [00:35:59-00:38:00]).

other than Sonia. But we can tell that behind the critic's comment there is an assumption that what Beatriz is embarked on here is a practical sort of undertaking to the effect that she is trying to land a husband. After all, she is the one who asks for his hand: "You need a wife. Do you want to marry me?" Moreover, on a few occasions, Beatriz does seem to realize that Marcos will not settle down with her. A different reading would be that perhaps those moments are perceived by Beatriz as isolated and that they do not represent reality. If that is the case, Beatriz could be living in an idealized fantasy. But that would only be true if Beatriz's love were based on her belief that that idealized fantasy was true, and once she realized that that was not the case, she would give up on Marcos in disappointment. But that does not cohere with the last time we see Beatriz in the film, when she watches Marcos reconcile with his wife and son. With tears in her eyes and a smile, she leaves the film with a sense of happiness for Marcos and his family (figures 55-56).



Figure 55. In *Aparecida*, Beatriz smiles as she witnesses Marcos's happiness with his family.



Figure 56. In *Aparecida*, Marcos is filled with joy as his family reconciles.

This scene shows that Beatriz does not seem to have any regret. So perhaps her pursuit of Marcos was not to settle down with him after all. But then, what did Beatriz want? Her actions are difficult to understand if we insist on seeing them as aimed at some normal objective such as financial security.

It is rather curious if we recall that after Beatriz asked Marcos to marry her, he responded enthusiastically: “Do you want me to prove that I can be a good father, a good mother and a good husband?” While he seems to welcome the idea of being a husband again, he never touches the subject again. And more startling, Beatriz never confronts him about it either. Marcos’s inadequate interest in being affectively intimate with Beatriz is complemented by a weakly developed willingness to be seductive on her part, which contradicts what we see. After all, the actress who plays Beatriz has been voted the most beautiful woman of the century in Brazil and is often compared to Sophia Loren. She should be able to seduce with a smile. This trait of Beatriz makes it difficult to attribute any of a wide array of conventional motives to her. In general, her actions

do not seem calculated to entice Marcos into forming a lasting relationship with her at all. Her conduct is mysterious to say the least. In ordinary life, we see love together with other essential features such as sexual desire, vanity, longing for security and comfort, power, etc. One of the things that makes Beatriz a special character is that she is very nearly denuded of all of these things. She simply and purely loves Marcos. It is not the sort of love that makes the ones in love painfully conscious of the fact that they do not possess the loved ones and when they do, the desire fades away. That is not the love Beatriz has. Love here is a desire to contemplate the loved one, to do things for the loved ones, to see them be happy. Although a long-term relationship was desired, there is something that seems to be more satisfying, that symbolizes the union: when Beatriz witnesses the reconciliation and reunion between Marcos and her family, she has a sense of completion to her relationship with Marcos. The film presents Beatriz as a character in whom love exists pure and unconstrained, which is a departure from the normal course of things that usually makes for happiness. While the modern, stable, and confident woman was never an option for Marcos, she proved herself indispensable for helping him return to a community.

4.2.5 *Hands* and the Return to a Spiritualized Community

Marcos's failure to give continuity to a romantic relationship with Beatriz is a culmination of a rather long series of problems he has with relationships. He has problems with his son, with his ex, with his mother and later with the Saint. There is certainly a pattern here. Although loved and embraced by many, Marcos's greatest problem seems to be his inability to trust anyone but himself—he refuses to belong to a community and takes pride for being self-made and self-sufficient. There is a deep truth in the comment Sonia makes—"you will end up alone"—, but that does not scare him because he is already very alone.

Other characters' way in the film work in the opposite way. They all have their own problems, but their core is fastened on a single object with unshakable grip—their faith in the community under the mantle of the Saint. While Marcos refuses to listen to other people and, therefore, does not know their circumstances, they know him and trust that he will open his heart to Aparecida. That is a hard place to be for a man used to be always in charge. Things get even more complicated for Marcos when, after having a big fight with Lucas, his son leaves their house riding his motorcycle deranged. Beatriz senses a potential threat to Lucas's life and warns Marcos: "Don't let him out like that. Ask him to come back."¹⁷¹ But her words are muffled by Marcos's rage. Fearing for his isolation, she says: "And if he doesn't come back, you'll end up losing everyone who loves you, Marcos."¹⁷² But Marcos is intransigent: "I need to be alone."¹⁷³ (*Aparecida* [00:42:52-00:44:58]).

Alone in Lucas's bedroom, Marcos sees an image of Aparecida and turns her the other way around (figure 57). In the meantime, Lucas flies on a rainy road, falls and hits his head. He is hospitalized. Marcos rushes to the hospital. Lucas fights for his life.

¹⁷¹ "Não deixa ele sair desse jeito. Pedre pra ele voltar."

¹⁷² "E se ele não voltar, voce vai acabar perdendo todo mundo que te ama, Marcos."

¹⁷³ "Eu quero ficar sozinho."



Figure 57. In *Aparecida*, Marcos turns the image of the Saint the other way around.

In the hospital, Beatriz reminds Marcos to call Sonia, who arrives to the hospital only to blame Marcos for not listening to their son. Lucas is induced to a coma with little chance to survive. Marcos goes see his mother who tells him he needs to trust others and asks him to pray for

Aparecida's intervention. Marcos listens to his mother, goes to the basilica and places his hands on the bottom of the wall that holds the image of the Saint (figure 58). Instead of asking for her intervention, he tells her:

What do you still want from me? If you have power, it is a power to destroy. You killed my father and now you want to take my son from me? I hate you. I hate you . . . I'm talking to an image of clay as if she could hear me.¹⁷⁴



Figure 58. In *Aparecida*, Marcos places his hands on the wall that holds the image of the Saint.

Back in the hospital, Sonia changes her tone and tells Marcos that the accident was not his fault but a fatality. Then, Beatriz tells Marcos he needs to talk to his son. As Marcos starts listening to people, he follows Beatriz's advice and talks to his son's motionless body:

¹⁷⁴ “O que é que você quer de mim ainda? Se você tem poder, é poder de destruir. Você matou o meu pai e agora quer arrancar o meu filho de mim? Eu te odeio. Eu te odeio . . . Eu tô falando com uma imagem de barro como se ela pudesse me ouvir” (*Aparecida* [00:55:37-00:56:14]).

I didn't know how to love you, my son. I didn't know how to hear you. I don't know how to save your life but forgive me. I love you very much, my son. I never told you that before, but I love you so much. And you are my son. My only son. Don't die, okay? Please. Don't die.¹⁷⁵

Sonia enters the frame from behind and massages his shoulder. Her *hands* move sensuously inviting Marcos back to her life. Then she kisses Lucas's hand (figures 59-60). Marcos's mother enters the room and repeats her plea: "Ask her to intercede with Jesus and save Lucas's life"¹⁷⁶ (*Aparecida* [01:02:06-01:03:49]).



Figure 59. In *Aparecida*, Sonia massages Marcos's shoulder as he talks to their son's motionless body.

¹⁷⁵ "Eu não soube te amar, meu filho. Eu não soube te ouvir. Não sei como fazer pra salvar a sua vida mas me perdoa. Eu te amo muito, meu filho. Eu nunca te falei isso antes mas eu te amo muito. E você é meu filho. Meu único filho. Não morre não, tá? Por favor. Não morre."

¹⁷⁶ "Pede a ela pra interceder junto a Jesus e salvar a vida de Lucas."



Figure 60. In *Aparecida*, Sonia joins Marcos's pain and kisses their son's hand.

Marcos listens to his mother's advice and drives to the margins of the Paraíba do Sul river. He puts his *hands* together and asks Aparecida to save his son (figure 61). Then, Aparecida's fish miracle unfolds before Marcos's eyes in the form of a flashback dramatization. Instead of experiencing it as a spectator, Marcos participates as a character and tries to save his son, who incarnates as a fisherman about to be hanged by officers unhappy with the lack of fish. But all the violence stops when Aparecida's statue shows up in another fisherman's net that fills with fish.

The flashback dramatization symbolizes a revelation that puts in context Marcos's actual personal drama. The next morning, Marcos finds himself alone in the field where the revelation took place during the night. He looks around but there is no sign of the previous night's commotion. But he senses there is something there. He feels a *hand* touching his shoulder (figure 61). He turns around and sees Aparecida who then embraces him under her mantle (figure 62).

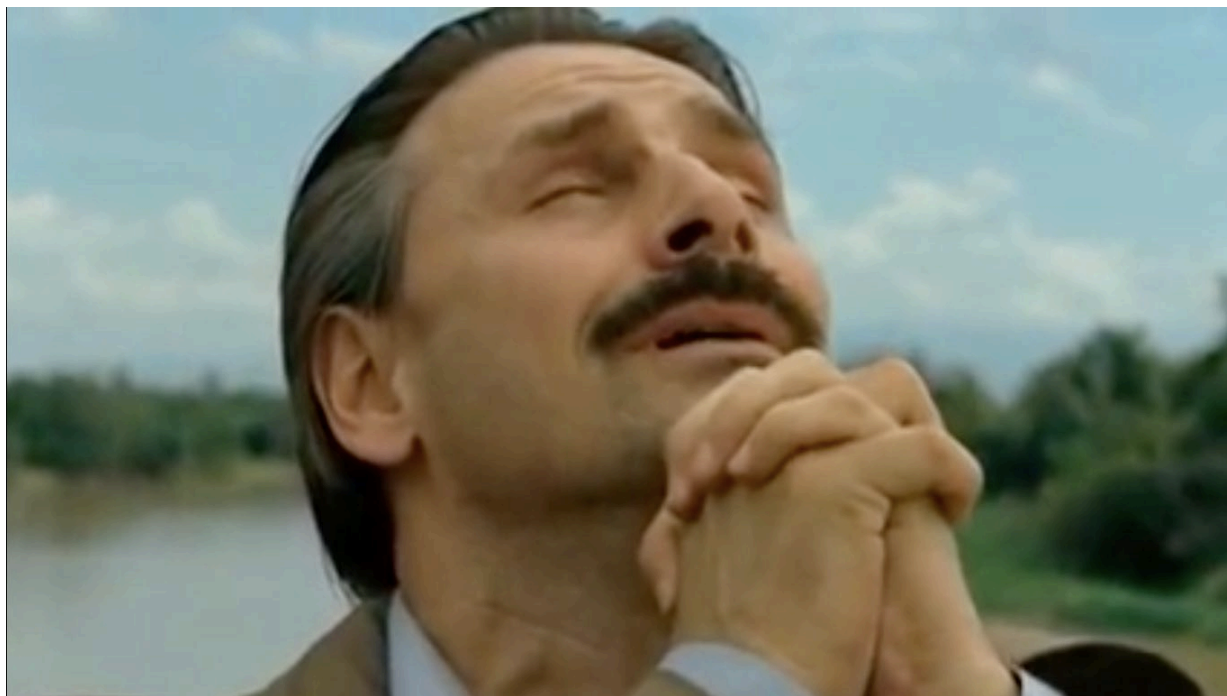


Figure 61. In *Aparecida*, Marcos pleads for the Saint's intervention.



Figure 62. In *Aparecida*, the Saint materializes and touches Marcos's shoulder.

In the last scene of the film, Sonia, Lucas and Marcos participate in a ceremony to celebrate Aparecida for the grace of saving Lucas's life. They also celebrate the Saint's materialization for Marcos and his return to their town's spiritualized community (figure 63).



Figure 63. In *Aparecida*, Lucas and his parents celebrate his miraculous recovery and the Saint's materialization to his father.

4.3 CONCLUSION

As we have seen, different characters in the film have what Marcos lacks and needs, and they communicate what they know to him in different ways. In their own ways, they recount certain individual experiences he has already had, and which in some sense he already knows, in such a way that they are now related to one another as parts of a meaningful whole. But more than that, this sort of knowledge is not limited to the cognitive aspect of human nature but rather could be seen as deeply involved with will and affection. That is why it is appropriate that the communicated

knowledge has some very practical consequences as well. This knowledge comes to Marcos just as he is in the process of “talking about his son in the past.” But who are the players in this revelation? The not so obvious ones are the filmmakers. That is one way of explaining the *leitmotifs* I described. The fact that there are persistent images of *hands* and color-coded wardrobes for Marcos’s lovers suggest that many characters are in effect more than participants in Marcos’s journey—they are supporters of a theatrical presentation. The appearance of *hands* and the differentiation of wardrobes contribute to an artful reconstruction of events that are purposeful for Tizuka.

Those carefully constructed images are charged with meaning that can represent artifice and also illusion. However, they can also have the meaning of revelation, as they might, for instance, when a *hand* draws attention to something that had been invisible, namely the Saint. Thus, Tizuka’s insistence with the producers to reveal and materialize the Saint in the film. The role those images play in the film can best be characterized as revelation through artifice. The hands and the wardrobes bracket versions of events that represent Tizuka’s personal point of view. Consequently, the film underscores how alien her point of view might be for a Catholic audience. After all, not only Tizuka does not identify herself as religious but also comes from a culture whose affective relationship with the spiritual world—the notion of Japan’s non-sectarian spiritualized communities—is distinct for many Brazilians. Nevertheless, precisely because it might represent Tizuka’s point of view, the film supplies Marcos with what could be the solution for his troubles—a spiritualized community.

5.0 ENCANTADOS

When I went to the Amazon for the first time, I realized how small I am as a human being in comparison to all that exuberance. The only image I had of the Amazon River was from watching television. Then, I realized that the Amazon that populates our minds is not the real one. This is a much bigger, more challenging one. And this Amazon that nobody knows can end . . . because the loss occurs not only with deforestation or biopiracy, but with the degradation of peoples and their culture.¹⁷⁷

It's not just a matter of defending the forest, but the spiritual entities [that populate it]. If the Amazon is destroyed, so is the soul of Brazil.¹⁷⁸

It was by making movies that I brought my ancestors back.¹⁷⁹

—Tizuka Yamasaki

¹⁷⁷ “Quando fui para a Amazônia pela primeira vez, eu me dei conta da minha pequeníssima dimensão como ser humano diante daquela exuberância toda. A única imagem que tinha do rio Amazonas vinha da televisão. Então, percebi que a Amazônia que povoa nossas mentes não é a verdadeira. Esta é muito maior, mais desafiadora. E essa Amazônia que ninguém conhece pode acabar . . . porque a perda não ocorre apenas com o desmatamento ou a biopirataria, mas com a degradação dos povos e da sua cultura” (YAMASAKI, “Foi fazendo cinema”).

¹⁷⁸ “Não é uma questão de defender só a floresta, mas às entidades espirituais, se destruírem a Amazônia vão destruir a alma do Brasil” (“Diretora Tizuka Yamazaki [sic] fala sobre processo de gravação de Encantados”).

¹⁷⁹ “Foi fazendo cinema que resgatei meus antepassados.”

5.1 THE PRACTICE OF CINEMA OF EMOTION IN *ENCANTADOS*

5.1.1 A Film Made at Nature's Pace

In 2017, Tizuka's latest feature-length narrative film *Encantados*¹⁸⁰ was released in the theaters. The film had been ready and printed since 2014, but the cost of theatrical release in Brazil was so high that it had to be shelved for three whole years. For Tizuka, the difficulty to find investors had to do with the content of the film—"a very strange topic for the local market."¹⁸¹ The film is a depiction of the process of self-knowledge of twelve-year-old Zeneida Lima as she learns about her gift for *pajelança cabocla*, the shamanistic practice of Amazon indigenous populations. The film was inspired by real life Zeneida Lima's autobiography *The Mystic World of the Caruanas of Marajó Island* (*O Mundo Místico dos Caruanas da Ilha do Marajó*, 1993).

It took viewers almost two decades to see the film since Tizuka first told the press she was working on a film about Amazonian culture. It was in the late 1990s that Tizuka was in the Amazon for the first time, doing pre-production work for the soap opera *Amazônia*¹⁸² in Manaus, the capital of the State of Amazonas. At that time, Zeneida's daughter gave Tizuka a copy of her mother's book. After a few years learning about Amazonian cultures from Zeneida, Tizuka began working on a film adaptation.

¹⁸⁰ In English, the producers use the title *Enchanted Amazon Island* for the film, but here I prefer to use the original title in Portuguese *Encantados*, so that there is no confusion with the Disney movie *Enchanted* (Kevin Lima, 2007).

¹⁸¹ "O filme tem uma temática muito estranha para o mercado tradicional" (RÉ).

¹⁸² Tizuka directed 162 episodes of the soap opera that ran from December 10, 1991, through June 29, 1992 (RIVERA).

In 2003, with the screenplay ready and while raising funds to shoot the film, Tizuka started location scouting on Marajó Island, a large Amazon River delta island in the Brazilian state of Pará where Zeneida was born (MAMCASZ). A few years later, in 2006, Tizuka took her film crew to Pará to work on pre-production. Between 2008 and 2009, the film was shot in Pará's capital Belém, in the town of Soure on Marajó Island, in Mexiana Islands, and in Combu Island (figure 64). Tizuka edited the film but could not finish it. Without the authorization from Brazil's regulatory agency Ancine to raise more funds, she had to set the project aside. In the meantime, she shot *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha* (2009) and *Aparecida* (2010) and went back to the Amazonian region to shoot an episode called "The Underage from the Amazon" for the television series *As Brasileiras* (2012). By 2014, the film had finally been completed and started showing in festivals. It notably won Best Film in the Youth Festival category of the 38th São Paulo International Film Festival that year (RÉ). It was only three years later, in 2017, that the Brazilian audience was going to see the film in theaters. About the long process that took her to make the film, Tizuka says:

I can't go by my pace as a director and a producer. This film was made influenced by the spirits of nature. I have to go by the pace of the spirits. To understand this takes a while . . . There were several comings and goings, a lot of interaction, intimacy. It is about what is not written down, [it is in] the exchange of looks, [in] the touch of skin to skin. I wouldn't be able to get there, meet Zeneida, and shoot a year later. That would have been impossible.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ "Não posso ir no meu tempo de realizadora e produtora. Esse filme foi feito influenciado pelos espíritos da natureza. Tenho de ir no tempo dos espíritos. Compreender isso é algo bastante demorado Foram diversas idas e vindas, muita convivência, intimidade. É o que não está escrito, a troca de olhares, o toque de pele com pele. Não dava para chegar, conhecer a Zeneida, e um ano depois filmar. Seria impossível" (MÜLLER).

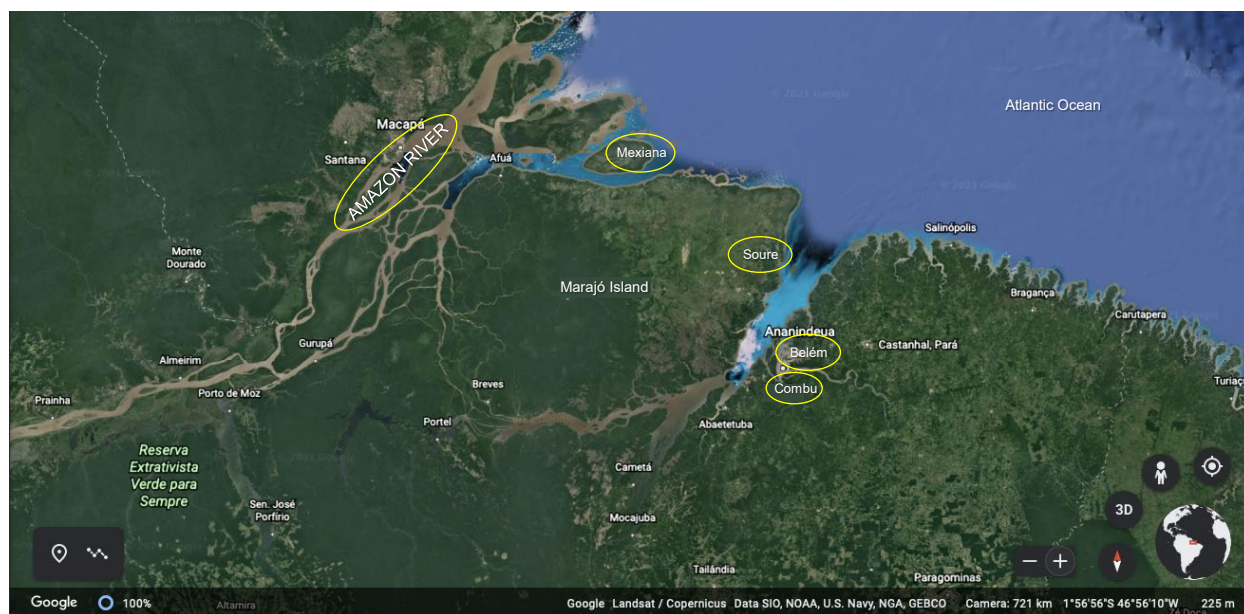
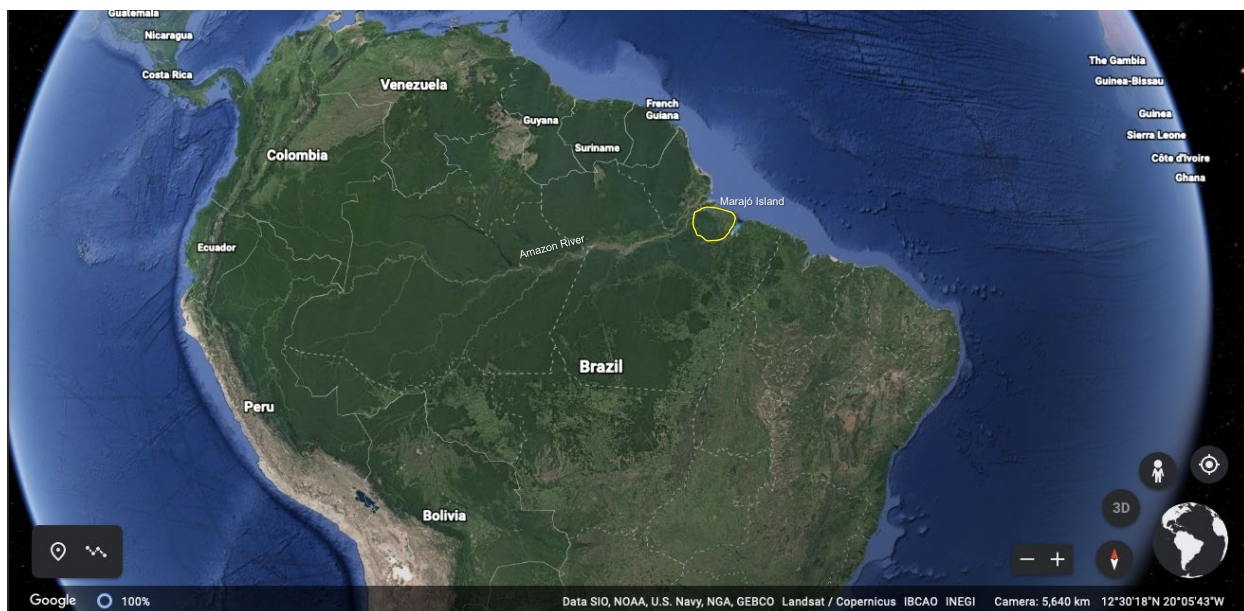


Figure 64. Google maps showing the location of Marajó Island and other *Encantados* shooting locations.

It seems that Tizuka willingly took the time to make a film that would respect “spirits of nature’s pace,” which is a notion that she associates with Zeneida’s practices and beliefs. She definitely implies that her vision for the film was not clear nor deep since the beginning and that her learning process was based on a tight and intimate relationship with Zeneida. But aside from

the friendship and fondness for Amazonian cultures, is there an unspoken motivation that led Tizuka to pursue such a challenging and time-consuming project? What is *Encantados* for Tizuka?

We might find a clue if we look at some key establishing moments in *Encantados* along with some key establishing moments in *Gaijin I*. To recall, in *Gaijin I*, upon arrival in Brazil, Titoe and other immigrants who were assigned to the same plantation farm are relocated on carriages pulled by animals through dirt roads. The long trip gives a sense of the remoteness and isolation of her new reality. When their carriage gets stuck, despite wearing a light-colored dress, Titoe has to step in the mud. But the most discouraging realization happens when Titoe arrives at her colony house and touches the worn-out wattle and daub walls, which creates a sense of special vulnerability. The little regard for the immigrant's dignity is felt shortly thereafter when they are mistreated and exploited by the farm labor handlers. But Titoe's resilience and desire to express her emotions is observed when she smiles as she recalls participating in a festival dance back in Japan. And finally, the birth of her child represents a new generation of Japanese, one that is born Brazilian (figure 65).

If in *Gaijin I* Tizuka's depicts a strong woman's struggles, self-knowledge, and accomplishments during the initial phase of her journey as an immigrant, through almost perfect match frames Tizuka tells us that *Encantados* is about another strong woman's struggles, self-knowledge, and accomplishments during the initial phase of her journey as a *pajé* (figure 66). However, although illustrative, such a parallelism between the two films is not absolutely necessary for the comprehension of *Encantados*'s plot. So, why would Tizuka go through the trouble of match framing so many sequences? Perhaps to remind the viewer that her sense of duty with her heritage has been expanded. In *Encantados*, Zeneida's story about a woman who is called to honor her ancestors' legacy is only possible through Tizuka's ancestor's legacy.



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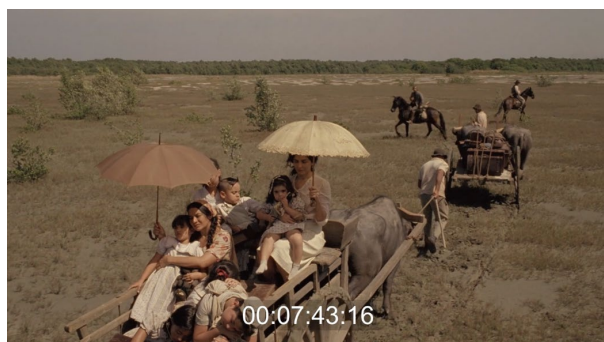


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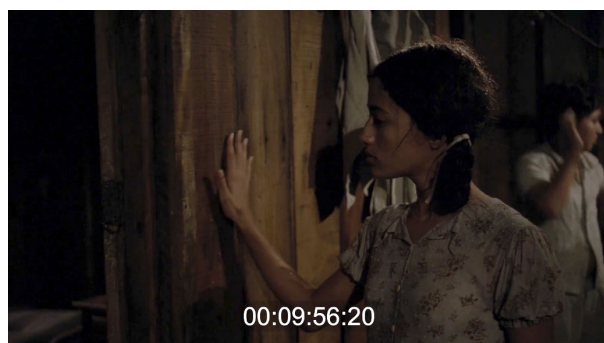
Figure 65. Scenes from *Gaijin 1*.



1



2



3



4



5



6

Figure 66. Scenes from *Encantados*.

5.1.2 A Call to Preserve Shared Experiences

5.1.2.1 Zeneida's Indigenous Heritage Up to *Encantados*

Zeneida Lima was born on Marajó Island. According to archaeological studies that have intrigued researchers from all over the world, small groups of hunters occupied the island during

pre-Columbian times, dating back to 10,000 years before our time. At least 1,300 years ago, riverbanks and forests were already densely occupied with agriculture and pottery making, which were integrated in extensive intercommunity networks that survived colonization (LEANDRO LIMA).

When Zeneida was eleven years old, her mother noticed that some unusual changes were happening to the girl, which she attributed to a gift for *pajelança* and her own indigenous blood. So, she took the girl to see real life Master Mundico who, for a year, mentored her in developing her abilities to protect and heal. At sixteen years old and already married, Zeneida moved to Rio de Janeiro where she had four biological and ten adopted children. She did not practice *pajelança* for twenty-seven years until she went back to the island. Those three decades had changed the *pajelança* she knew—the renewed practice had increasingly assimilated other spiritual practices and beliefs. According to Zeneida, *pajelança* is:

The encounter of man with the energies of Nature, the *encantados* or *caruanas*. The *pajé* is nothing more than an instrument for the manifestation of the *caruanas*, energies living under the waters. The *pajé* promotes the rise of *encantados* to Earth to help the living with their illnesses or difficulties.”¹⁸⁴

It is believed that that view of *pajelança* was the traditional *marajoara* one, which had to be inherited through blood and, in a matriarchal culture, was often passed down from women to women. For staying with the tradition, Zeneida has been named the last *caboclo pajé* of Marajó

¹⁸⁴ “[O] encontro do homem com as energias da Natureza, os Encantados ou Caruanas. O Pajé nada mais é que um instrumento para a manifestação dos Caruanas, energias viventes sob as águas. É ele que propicia a vinda dos Encantados em Terra para auxiliar os viventes em suas doenças ou dificuldades” (“A Pajelança”).

(“A Pajelança”). Concerned about the disappearance of her non-syncretic, traditionally indigenous practice, and moved by a desire to leave behind the history of her people’s past and legacy from her point of view, Zeneida wrote her book (“Projeto Generosidade”). Thus, *Encantados* is not a film about the process of transformation of a girl into an *encantado* native inhabitant of the Amazon, but about a girl who has been an inhabitant of the land for thousands of years. Why is this important? Because it places her in a past prior to colonization and prior to a nation that excluded her people’s civilization in its formation.

5.1.2.2 Tizuka’s Japanese Heritage Up to *Encantados*

Although the questions of her heritage were evidently present in many of her films leading up to *Encantados*, Tizuka avoided being associated with a Japanese cinematic approach. In the past, she has firmly disagreed with any parallelism made between her work and Akira Kurosawa’s work, preferring instead to assert that she had been influenced by the culture but not the cinema. She has also repeatedly said that she was influenced by Brazilian cinema itself and that, growing up, she used to watch Olga Futemma’s films in her hometown of Atibaia.¹⁸⁵

With her latest film, however, her tone changes as she faces a new challenge: How can a narrative story about real life people who are very little known and understood be told? During a screening of *Encantados*, Tizuka shares her approach with a reporter:

¹⁸⁵ Futemma is a Brazilian *nisei* who held a long-lasting career at the Brazilian Cinematheque. As a recent graduate from the film program at the University of São Paulo, she landed a job as a technician in the film collection at the Cinematheque and, thirty years later, was appointed the director of the institution. Between 1974 and 1989, she directed about five short films, among them the memorable *Green Tea and Rice* (*Chá Verde e Arroz*, 1989), which might be Tizuka’s favorite of hers. In the film, Futemma portrays an immigrant projectionist who screens films in Japanese communities in the countryside of the state of São Paulo, which was a common practice in the first decades of cinema viewing among immigrants.

What makes cinema interesting is to present originality. It is easy to forget the audiovisual and make literature. We have a great influence from the literary format in the way we tell stories. It is a component of Western culture. It is not like the Chinese, the Japanese, in short, the Asians, who have a completely different, more audiovisual, dramaturgical process. To abandon this literary narrative in order to be dramaturgical is a very difficult process . . . I did not want to make a didactic film, nor a documentary about *pajelança*. I had to come up with something that would delight the audience and, at the same time, to understand what this universe is. It was difficult because it was a new subject.¹⁸⁶

What does such an apparent rapprochement to her ancient roots mean? It does sound like she means that only an Asian esthetic, an “other” esthetic, is able to translate to the screen the “otherness” of Zeneida Lima’s story in an entertaining way. Moreover, she reminds everybody that she is the most prominent and the last filmmaker of the *nisei* tradition. That is, with undebatable authority built during four decades of filmmaking, she is the only filmmaker who can incarnate a pure Nikkei esthetic and, like Zeneida, leave behind the history of her people’s past and legacy from her point of view.

Also, in her statement, Tizuka seems to wish to move closer to the more Asian, more audiovisual, “Eastern” dramaturgical approach because of a perceived saturation and limitation of the “Western” literary narrative tradition. Adopting a “Western” style was a common practice

¹⁸⁶ “O interessante do cinema é trazer originalidade. É fácil esquecer o audiovisual e fazer literatura. Temos uma influência muito grande do formato literário nesse sentido de contar histórias. É um componente da cultura ocidental, não é como os chineses, os japoneses, enfim, os asiáticos, que têm um processo completamente diferente, mais audiovisual, de dramaturgia. Abandonar essa narrativa literária, a fim de entrar na da dramaturgia, é um processo muito difícil . . . Não queria fazer um filme didático, tampouco um documentário sobre a pajelança. Precisava trazer alguma coisa que encantasse o público e, ao mesmo tempo, entender o que é esse universo. Foi difícil porque era um assunto novo” (MÜLLER).

among the immigrant in an effort to assimilate the Brazilian culture. Having lived through post-war years when the Nikkei had limited choice other than settling in Brazil, Tizuka knew that to be able to be understood was determinant for the Nikkei to become a legitimate part of the Brazilian nation. So the stories in *Gaijin 1* and *Gaijin 2* naturally had to be told in a “Western” narrative tradition. However, after years doing it, the Nikkei ends up recognizing a certain self-imposed isolation. After all, to remain in the “Western” style is to admit a unilateral contract that keeps them in the margins.

In *Encantados*, Tizuka chooses to approach the film with her “inherited” Asian audiovisual approach to promote the preservation of an ancient culture that has survived colonization, cultural appropriation, and massacre. That way, Tizuka inserts the Japanese Brazilian in the country’s historical narrative in a renewed way. She belatedly validates the ethnic presence of the Japanese Brazilian minority as she authenticates her Japanese Brazilian uniqueness within the Brazilian national ideology. It is a proposal for a new formulation of national identity made possible through the collaboration between two unique but equally Brazilian cultures.

5.1.3 A Promising Space in the Intersection Between *Marajoara* and Japanese Sensibilities

Is she not interested in my book? I’m going to cover that Japanese woman with water.

—Zeneida Lima¹⁸⁷

Although today in Brazil very few people speak Tupi or Guarani, with the exception of pure natives . . . [T]upi

¹⁸⁷ “[N]ão está interessada pelo meu livro, vou mandar água para aquela japonesa” (“Tizuka Yamasaki grava novo filme”).

*remains alive particularly graciously, sweetly and shiny
in the names of Brazilian women.*

—Rokurô Kôyama¹⁸⁸

Tizuka claims that Zeneida Lima “found” her to adapt her autobiography *The Mystic World of the Caruanas of Marajó Island* (1993) to the big screen, and not the other way around, as one would assume. After all, that story’s popularity had just skyrocketed as the Samba School Beija-Flor used the book’s plot as the theme of their 1998 parade, which won the Rio de Janeiro Carnaval competition.¹⁸⁹ But as the story goes, soon thereafter, Zeneida heard about this “Japanese” filmmaker who was scouting locations in the Amazon and asked her daughter to give the director a copy of her book. At first, the book did not spark Tizuka’s interest so she gave it to her business partner Maria Cena who read it and convinced Tizuka it was a must read, and she did (“Tizuka prepara Amazônia Caruana”). Tizuka was fascinated by Zeneida’s story. From that point on, she opened her heart, and mind, to what would become a deep friendship and relationship of trust between the two women. But what was it that Zeneida sensed in Tizuka that gave her the confidence that she was the right person to film her story?

I have mentioned before that in 2012, while waiting for the opportunity to raise funds to finalize *Encantados*, Tizuka went back to the Amazonian region to shoot an episode for a television series. During that time, she visited the town of Parintins and had access to some recovered footage from the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants to the Amazonian region in 1929 (“Tizuka é

¹⁸⁸ “Embora hoje em dia no Brasil muitos poucos falem tupi ou guarani, com exceção dos primitivos puros . . . [t]upi vive especialmente de modo belo, doce e brilhante nos nomes das mulheres brasileiras” (KÔYAMA, 14).

¹⁸⁹ The title of Beija-Flor’s parade was “Pará, the Mystic World of the Caruanas in the Waters of Patu-Anu” (“Pará o Mundo Místico dos Caruanas nas Águas do Patu-Anu”) (“A Pajé Educadora”).

destaque”). According to Ken Nishikido, they were sponsored by the company Amazon Kogyo to produce the beverage *guaraná*, derived from fruit of the same name. In 1931, graduates from the Japanese Higher School of Colonization arrived to cultivate Indian jute, which was the raw material to pack coffee beans, Brazil’s main export product. Amazonians were pleased by the Japanese contribution to local economy as well as their overall attitude, and trusted them (37). Perhaps Zeneida shared that view and saw in Tizuka a representative of the Japanese work ethic.

Although it is unquestionable today that Tizuka is a great admirer and advocate of Amazonian cultures and peoples, my suspicion is that she was already fond of indigenous and *caboclo* cultures prior to stepping foot in the Amazon and meeting Zeneida. When her daughter was born in the late 1980s, she named her Naína. A quick search on the origins of the name in Brazil tells us that Naina can be of Hindi origin (pronounced nu-hy-naa) and mean “Eyes,” or of Arabic origin (pronounced na-ay-na) and mean “Peaceful” (“Naina”). Tizuka’s daughter’s name, however, has an accent (') on the /i/ and would, therefore, be pronounced nuh-ee-nuh. Although not a common Brazilian name, Naína is often a nickname for one of the Brazil’s most popular girl’s name, Janaína, which is believed to be of either African or syncretic African and indigenous origin (“Janaina”). But why is this particular information about Tizuka’s private life relevant? Because since the first generation of Nikkeis in Brazil, there has been a trend to give indigenous inspired names to the children, which is understood to serve as both an incorporation of Brazilian identity and a differentiation from Japanese origins.¹⁹⁰ In fact, the Japanese fascination with

¹⁹⁰ When I was growing up in São Paulo, I had among my family friends Cecy, Tainã, Iara, Iracema, and the list goes on.

indigenous language, particularly with the widely spoken Tupi, dates back to the first days of Japanese immigration, most notably in Rokurô Kôyama's work.

5.1.3.1 Kôyama's Tupi: (Re)Writing the History of His Ancestors and His Own

According to Shuhei Hosokawa, Rokurô Kôyama (1886, Kumamoto-1976, São Paulo) immigrated to Brazil in 1908 on board the *Kasato Maru*. Having studied Spanish in Japan, he was one of the four interpreters on that first ship of immigrants. He also became known as the “father of Nikkei journalism” as he created a newspaper while on *Kasato Maru*. In 1921, already in São Paulo, he created the newspaper *Seishû Shinpô* (*São Paulo Weekly News*), which he ran until 1941 when the Brazilian government forbade any publications in foreign languages because of the World War II (28).

When he first arrived in Brazil, Kôyama was intrigued by the physical similarity between the Tupi and the Japanese: “When we see each other and interact, we smile at one another more peacefully than at the Europeans. Did the Japanese and the Tupi-Guarani originally come from the same Polynesian roots? Were we separated and met again after four hundred years?”¹⁹¹ Based on the Tupis' respectful attitude toward their ancestors, Kôyama skillfully related it with the Japanese folkloric belief system of ancestral veneration that forms the basis of Shinto, the Japanese national religion. The definition of the Tupi as “ancestral” convinced Kôyama of the mythological relationship between the two races. He then became obsessed with the relationship between the Tupi and the Japanese languages, which he sustained had originated from the same common

¹⁹¹ “Quando nos encontramos e nos relacionamos, sorrimos uns aos outros mais pacificamente do que para os europeus. Será que os japoneses e os tupi-guaranis originalmente vieram da mesma semente polinésia? Será que nos encontramos de novo após quatrocentos anos?” (KÔYAMA 280).

Polynesian source. Since the beginning of the immigration years, Kôyama was concerned about how the newly arrived would become legitimate part of the Brazilian nation. His notion of a Tupi-Japanese language provided a narrative of origin and anchored the doubly marginalized position of the Nikkei community both in Japan and in Brazil (HOSOKAWA 26-27).

Kôyama's first experimentation with a Tupi-Japanese language was to establish a shared past between the two to prove that he, as a Japanese, and the Tupi already "knew" each other because of their common Polynesian roots. Kôyama associated composed words in Tupi with the composition of Japanese, and Chinese, ideograms. For example, *pira* (fish) + *juba* (gold) = *pirajuba* (gold fish). Many Japanese ideograms have similar semantic constructions, which are based on the combination of elements on the left and on the right. For example, an element on the left that designates "person" + another one on the right that designates "sir" = living. The ideogram structure for "living," then, implies that the word means being a landlord in an occupied space. Kôyama's conviction was reinforced by a number of Tupi words that had sounds that he believed corresponded to Japanese semantics and/or phonetics. For example, the word *tori* means "a kind of bird" in Tupi and "bird" in Japanese. By working with Tupi and Japanese in such ways, Kôyama suggested that perhaps due to their common origin, the Tupi and the Japanese perceived the world in similar ways (HOSOKAWA 33-34).

Kôyama's following experimentation was to legitimize the creation of the shared past between the Tupi and the Japanese by showing that he "knew" about it because of an emotional investment that allowed him to "feel" it. Twenty years after that first experiment, Kôyama took a very challenging attitude towards "modern linguistics" with this new experiment. He proposed an alternative method based on the fact that "Western" linguistics and phonology did not exist ten thousand years ago when Tupi was broadly spoken, and that Japanese phonology was created only

two hundred years ago through imitation of the West. He questions the point of comparing the non-literate Tupi and Japanese languages according to those linguistic laws and promotes closing the books and listening to the sounds of the Tupi language to feel the correspondence between sound and meaning (HOSOKAWA 35).

Kôyama's idea came from an epiphany. He first wondered why the expression *iko* had the same meanings—come on!—both in Tupi and in Japanese. According to the Tupi-Japanese dictionary, *i* in Tupi means water and *ko* means “here,” “to hit,” “to stomp,” “to shelter,” “to feed the thirsty,” etc. With that information in mind, he remembered that once during his pioneer years, he was cutting trees in the forest and became very thirsty. So, he drank water from a ravine and felt a great satisfaction. “This is a sound language that humans speak,” he realized. For Hosokawa, this episode conveys a moment of revelation in which the immediate link between sound, meaning and referent is recognized through an unexpected sensorial shock. However, Kôyama's discovery was not based on the immediate apprehension of sensory data, but on a late memory of it. His moment in the distant past became retrospectively Tupi and assured him of a link between his personal existence and two thousand years of previous history. The way he “felt,” he was touched and gave meaning were vital to the way he built his Tupi universe. Writing about the Tupi was not so much intended to investigate the “other” as it was an act of writing his own history from an ancestral point of view. His view of the Tupi allowed him to emphasize the priority of the senses over reason, of intuition over logic. His approach can, therefore, be understood as “affective science” (HOSOKAWA 35-37). Kôyama's novel approach was more selective and would only be for those who, like himself, could “feel” the sound and visual symbolism hidden in what was being represented.

5.1.3.2 Tizuka's *Pajelança*: (Re)Writing the History of Her Ancestors and Her Own

Not unlike Kôyama, through her interactions with Zeneida, perhaps Tizuka realized that the Japanese and *marajoaras* perceived the world in similar non-Western ways. Perhaps she already “knew” the *marajoara* culture before being exposed to it, and thus decided that an alternative to a limiting literary narrative would be to approximate her cinematic language to an Asian esthetic. And the justification for that would be the ancestral condition of their cultures that had already legitimized the prioritization of the senses over reason, of intuition over formal logic, of drama over literary narrative. Like Kôyama, Tizuka had the necessary emotional investment to “know” the *marajoara* culture.

Curiously, not unlike Kôyama, who said that his knowledge of the Tupi language was due to fifty years of pioneering life in primitive forests and colonial life but that, in fact, he had always mainly lived in cities, Tizuka never really lived in the Amazon region only spending short periods of time working in the area. Additionally, there are many aspects of the Tupi language that Kôyama omitted in his studies, particularly those related to sexuality and notions of cannibalism. Likewise, Tizuka conveniently avoided using parts of Zeneida's book:

[I]n relation to the book, I used a small part of it We discussed a lot about what period of her life we would tell. We opted for this fragment. I was interested in *pajelança* and how it was reflected in the family. We were also selecting things that the public could understand more easily. I avoided components that would make the viewer feel lost like, for example, the blue men . . .¹⁹²

¹⁹² “[E]m relação ao livro, utilizei uma parte pequena Discutimos bastante que momento da vida dela contaríamos. Optamos por esse recorte. Interessou-me a pajelança e como isso se refletia na família. Fomos pegando, também, coisas que o público pudesse entender com mais facilidade. Evitei colocar

Tizuka could have applied her esthetic vision to any point in the book, but she did not. She excluded moments that did not illuminate her ideological view, such as the mentioned blue men, perhaps because they were very foreign even from an “Eastern” perspective. Ironically, Tizuka’s view of *pajelança* and her choice of what aspect of it reaches the screen, inevitably questions the viability and the limits of her Asian representativeness.

Tizuka does not want her cinematic language to be stuck as foreign. One way to escape this entrapment is to show that the language of the Brazilian is just as entrapped as hers if it is not able to understand a language that is equidistant from each one of them—the *marajoara*. Tizuka has always been sensitive to the question of others’ feelings. If anything, *Encantados*’ novelty lies in the way it addresses the difficulty of representing indigenous cosmovision by depicting how to “feel” from the indigenous point of view—a difficulty that Tizuka has been addressing repeatedly through her representation of Japanese Brazilian worldviews.

5.1.4 Confronting Assumptions and Misconceptions

Encantados took so long to reach the theaters and so many stories had been circulating about the fate of the film, including that Tizuka had kept production money to herself,¹⁹³ that the

componentes que fizessem o espectador fica boiando, como, por exemplo, os homens azuis . . .” (MÜLLER).

¹⁹³ “Ouvi muita fofoca sobre o filme não estar pronto. Tive um apoio enorme do governo do Pará. Mas, mesmo aqui, existia um tititi de que peguei o dinheiro e não terminei. Estava um pouco nesse nível. Fiz uma sessão para o governador, exatamente para mostrar que o filme realmente estava pronto, explicando depois o que acontecia, dizendo que precisávamos arrumar verba para distribuição, que carecíamos de apoio.” / *I heard a lot of gossip about the film not being ready. I had enormous support from the government of the State of Pará. But even there, there was a gossip that I took the money and didn't finish the film. It was a bit on that level. I did a screening session for the governor, just to show that the film*

overall tone of press coverage was of relief. But some reviewers were also enthusiastic about the photography of the film, whereas others applauded Tizuka's thematic ambition. Even so, most often than not, they overlooked important aspects of the film. A review by the website *Adoro Cinema* written by experienced journalist Taiani Mendes, particularly stands out. The website is potentially a powerful opinion-maker. As Brazil's most accessed online portal about cinema—with an impressive 6.1 million monthly visitors, 52 million monthly pageviews and 2 million social media followers—the impact of a negative review by this company could not be ignored. Curiously, Mendes's review regarded as flawed, two of the most meaningful aspects of the film. This is what it said:

The character's process of maturity goes through clarifying her connection with the forest and understanding the visions that make her look crazy. It is then followed by the most fantastic and mystical side of the plot: the explanation about these *caruanas* (or enchanted), *Anhanga*, *pajelança* and predestination. It is a huge challenge to overcome the label of cultural superstition—which is even used in the film by Zeneida's mother—, especially taking into account the fact that “Brazil does not know Brazil” and everything shown is little known outside of [the State of] Pará. Tizuka, however, manages to offer a kind of initiation to the viewers and, although it is practically impossible to absorb all the information and to understand with precision all the terms and entities, the fundamental thing is transmitted, the transformative process of the protagonist through the immensurable force of nature Interesting history and important teaching alone,

was really ready, and explained what was going to happen next, and told him that we needed to find funds for distribution, and we needed support (MÜLLER).

however, do not make quality cinema and *Encantados* is hampered in particular by the truncated and unsubtle montage, which destroys the rhythm of the plot. There is a huge waiting time and all the important events come in an avalanche with no time to breathe. The choice for the narrative of Zeneida's life from an indefinite point of view is also strange . . .¹⁹⁴

As the reviewer rightly points out, many terms and entities in *Encantados* are little known outside the Amazonian region. And if known, they are indeed often taken as cultural superstition. Let me give a more contextualized description of the plot to illustrate the breadth of what the review calls “the most fantastic and mystical side of the plot.” In the film, twelve-year-old Zeneida and her seven siblings are born in Belém, the capital of Pará, in the northern region of Brazil. They are the illegitimate children of Zezé and her lover, the powerful landowner Angelino, who is an incarnation of a White patriarchal man—he treats his family as property and exploits his land without any concern for the environment. When Angelino decides to enter politics, he sends his family and the family's maid Cotinha to live in his secluded farm *Independência* in Marajó, an island in the Amazon River delta, because he fears that the existence of an illegitimate family

¹⁹⁴ “O amadurecimento da personagem passa pelo esclarecimento de sua ligação com a floresta e o entendimento das visões que a dão fama de louca, e assim entra-se no campo mais fantástico e místico da trama: a explicação do que são os tais caruanas (ou encantados), Anhangá, a pajelança e a predestinação. É um enorme desafio superar o rótulo da credice—que inclusive é usado no filme pela mãe de Zeneida—, principalmente levando em consideração o fato de que ‘o Brasil não conhece o Brasil’ e tudo mostrado é bem pouco comentado fora do Pará. Tizuka, porém, consegue oferecer uma espécie de iniciação aos espectadores e, ainda que seja praticamente impossível absorver todas as informações e entender com exatidão todos os termos e entidades, o fundamental é transmitido, o processo transformador da protagonista através da imensurável força da natureza . . . História interessante e ensinamento importante, no entanto, por si só não fazem cinema de qualidade e *Encantados* é prejudicado em especial pela montagem truncada e nada sutil, que destrói o ritmo da trama. Há como que um enorme compasso de espera e todos os acontecimentos marcantes vêm numa avalanche sem tempo de respiro. Causa estranhamento também que a opção seja pela narrativa da vida de Zeneida por ponto de vista indefinido . . .” (MENDES).

might put his aspirations in jeopardy. He is especially concerned about his oldest daughter Zeneida, whom he regards as *desmiolada* (crazy) because of her strange behavior—she hears voices and talks to herself. Her parents see her behavior as rebellion and constantly reprimand her. But Cotinha, who is a Marajó Island native and has knowledge of indigenous cosmologies, does not think the girl is crazy, but gifted.

When the family settles at Angelino's farm, Nature recruits an *encantado* (a “soul of the forest” [*espírito da mata*] or *caruana*) to confront them and protect Nature from *Anhangá*, an entity that punishes whatever unbalances the environment. This *encantado* is Antônio, an indigenous man who sometimes takes the form of a serpent. Antônio and Zeneida fall in love so that instead of rejecting the girl for being the settler's daughter, he defies Nature's laws and the girl's parents who take him as a threat. For Angelino, Antônio is an enemy, a trespasser, and a thief. For Zeneida's mother, a devout Catholic, Antônio's “primitive” behaviors are a bad influence and might worsen her daughter's enigmatic condition. But Zeneida is infatuated and, the more she is influenced by the negativity of the surroundings, the more she loses her mind and enters a stage of intense disharmony. This condition is only reversed when she fulfills her destiny by assuming her inherited gift for *pajelança*, the indigenous shamanism of Marajó Island.

5.1.4.1 Zeneida's Processes

Few of the most misunderstood aspects of the plot are what *Adoro Cinema* described as “the character's process of maturity” through a “transformative process [into a *pajé*].” First, the statements parallel this fragment of Zeneida's childhood depicted in the film with an implied transition to adulthood, perhaps because of her romantic interest for Antônio or the responsibility that she assumes as a *pajé*. However, there is no indication throughout the film that Zeneida gradually behaves as an older person. To the contrary, since the beginning of the film she presents

a level of maturity that might even be beyond her age—although she perceives the world in an unorthodox way, with an ability to see, hear and feel more than the average person, she is never afraid. Tizuka's depiction of Zeneida is of a mature and dignified twelve-year-old who might be eager to find explanations for her condition, but who never questions herself.

A second misunderstanding is the way the review describes the plot as Zeneida's "transformative process [into a *pajé*]," which provides a wrong information of who is eligible to be a *pajé*. The gift to be a *pajé* is inherited from ancestors, so nobody can become a *pajé* solely through determination or practice. Zeneida does not have to go through a transformation into a *pajé* because she already *is* one by inheritance. What she does go through is a process of understanding her gift and of developing and choosing to put it into practice.

5.1.4.2 Indefinite Narrative Point of View

Another aspect of the film that *Adoro Cinema* was not sold on is what is calls "the choice for the narrative of Zeneida's life from an indefinite point of view." But, as we have previously seen in other Tizuka's films, the employment of shifting point of views has a great importance in the director's work. By bridging different narrative voices, Tizuka allows the participation of a number of different views and perceptions that ultimately invites the emergence of different truths. In *Encantados*, the display of many places of enunciation is not only welcome but is also absolutely necessary. For example, we have the usual soliloquizing voice personified by Zeneida's family maid Cotinha. As a native of Marajó Island, she is a much-needed voice of authority about *marajoara* customs and beliefs. We also have Zeneida's inner thoughts, her monologue, which is a strategy that Tizuka has employed since *Gaijin I* notably with the protagonist of that film Titoe. And then we have a new strategy that Tizuka employs in order to better characterize how Zeneida is feeling at the moment. Because no director can assume that the viewer has enough knowledge

about indigenous cosmologies to the point of recognizing its epistemological dimensions, she invests in values of representation that are unique to cinema that can be recognizable through an in-depth study of her filmic language but that can also be simply “felt.”

The experience of this feeling, however, is not through an affective relationship that is created between the character and the viewer, but by a radical use of the audio and video tracks. For example, a video track might show us that Zeneida is perceiving something unusual going on in her surroundings. If no words can describe it, we do not hear any monologue representing her inner thoughts. However, the audio track will let us know that she is feeling anxious and agitates through the deep and loud sound of her heartbeat. At a different moment, the audio track might indicate us that Zeneida privileges Nature’s “voice” by muffling human’s talk.

In *Encantados*, the elaborate and embellished melodramatic experiences in Tizuka’s previous films take on a different rhythm and form. The difference is that here, the abstracted action tale based on extreme melodramatic tone does not control the form. Although melodrama remains a main trait of Tizuka’s sensibility, there is an increasing emergence of concern with the form determining the point of view.

5.1.4.3 Brazil Does Not Know Brazil

A big issue with a definite narrative point of view in indigenous-themed films is that, very often, it privileges non-indigenous point of views. They remain with the idea of the indigenous as either noble savages or mythologically charged national symbols that, ultimately, caters to non-indigenous imaginary. In fact, the difficulty of representing indigenous point of views has been addressed by films in the past. For example, as Richard Peña observes, Nelson Pereira dos Santos’s acclaimed *How Tasty Was My Little Frenchman* (*Como Era Gostoso o Meu Francês*, 1971) avoids any sort of simple presentation of the indigenous point of view by taking a multi-perspective

approach in which the camera stays away from the point of view of *any* character (193). The reluctance to represent indigenous point of view by such a lucid and experienced director as dos Santos reflects how little is still known about how indigenous people think and feel. Part of it is due to the difficulty to deal with the sense of otherness toward indigenous populations and what the *Adoro Cinema* reviewer described as the “huge challenge to overcome the label of cultural superstition.”

But how could we approach our understanding of indigenous populations so that their point of view can be presented in non-superstitious ways? That is the challenge that Tizuka takes to herself. The result is that *Encantados* deals with these questions in the most sympathetic way. First, it addresses outdated concepts of mythologically charged nationalisms by refusing trending syncretic approaches that blur the originality of Brazil’s indigenous populations. Secondly, it invites the viewer to experience how indigenous people “feel,” which is unavoidably informed by how they think.

5.2 FOR A PARTICIPATION IN BRAZILIAN FOUNDATIONAL NARRATIVES

Brazilian civilization is not linked to the indigenous element, nor has received any influence from it; and that is enough not to seek the titles of our literary personality among the defeated tribes.

—Machado de Assis¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ “[A] civilização brasileira não está ligada ao elemento indígena, nem dele recebeu influxo algum; e isso basta para não ir buscar entre as tribos vencidas os títulos da nossa personalidade literária” (ASSIS, “Instinto de nacionalidade” 2).

To update the place of indigenous people in history is to reposition the “caboclo pajelança” as an “indigenous” cultural expression. It implies problematizing classical studies . . . that [interpreted] “caboclo pajelança” as a syncretic cultural practice associated with racial miscegenation in the rural Amazon.

—Leando Mahalem de Lima¹⁹⁶

5.2.1 The Insufficiency of Foundational Fictions

We could think of *Encantados* as an allusion to the much-commented narrative concept, that of “foundational fiction,” notably discussed by Doris Sommer. She identified a group of Latin American novels in which “eroticism and nationalism become figures for each other” so that “the rhetorical relationship between heterosexual passion and hegemonic states functions as a mutual allegory” (31). One of the constitutive figures of this mode of narrative is procreation between lovers of different races, wherein the child produced represents the idealistic vision of a people united by the peaceful synthesis of original ethnic groups, that is White, Black and indigenous peoples, many times antagonistic and unequal in historical reality (77-78).

5.2.1.1 The Absence of Intimate Feeling in Foundational Fictions

In Brazil, ever since José de Alencar popularized the nationalist literary program in the mid-nineteenth century, it has been reviewed and scrutinized. Paul Dixon reminds us of a

¹⁹⁶ “[A]tualizar o lugar dos indígenas na história é reposicionar a ‘pajelança cabocla’ como uma expressão cultural ‘indígena’. Implica problematizar estudos clássicos . . . que [interpretaram] a ‘pajelança cabocla’ como prática cultural sincrética associada à mestiçagem racial na Amazônia rural” (LEANDRO LIMA 67).

remarkable point made by Machado de Assis when the author argued in “Instinto da nacionalidade” (1873) that the literary program was insufficient because the characterization of the native was made without an “intimate feeling” typical of Brazilian psychology. For Assis, this “intimate feeling” was only possible by a deep knowledge of the inner space of the character, that is, an understanding of the diversity of the character on the part of the writer, which lacked on his precursors. For that reason, Assis stayed away from including indigenous characters as part of his narratives about Brazilian society. But there is another point that is only implicitly present in Assis’s thoughts on the Indianist narrative. Even though many romantic novels describe how Nature is an essential presence in indigenous life (as seen in José de Alencar’s *Iracema*, for example), a direct connection between how Nature could have contributed to facilitate the romantic relationships that form the nation has not been made. For example, Sommer discusses why the nationalist literary program in Brazil left out the “intimate feeling” of the native but does not discuss how Nature as agent was ignored.

Like Sommer’s foundational fictions, *Encantados* has a preference for indigenous people as the ancestors of Brazilian people. In the film, Zeneida’s parents have always been regarded as White, but as the girl looks for explanations for her inherited gift for *pajelança*, she finds out her mother has indigenous blood. As the girl develops her gift, she is able to save her brother from dying during her mother’s complicated delivery, which secures and confirms the viability of a future of another generation of White-indigenous population. However, while Tizuka does not abandon the idea that the past and the future need to be heterogeneous, there is evidence in her film that she is skeptical that the way the union between White and indigenous cultures has been portrayed in the past accurately depicts the indigenous contribution to the nation’s historical past.

In *Encantados*, Tizuka recognizes the role of Nature as intrinsically part of the indigenous “intimate feeling.” For that, she counts on many authorities on indigenous cosmologies such as the *encantado* Antônio, the family maid Cotinha and the *pajé* Mundinho. Antônio is a Nature-sent creature with the mission to expel the White invaders who are endangering Amazonian land and peoples. As an *encantado*, sometimes he takes the form of an indigenous man and sometimes of a serpent, both of which Zeneida loves. It is only for him that she confronts her family’s wishes and disappears from their site for days to open her heart to a new engagement with Nature. On her part, as a native inhabitant of the Marajó Island, a *marajoara*, Cotinha facilitates Zeneida’s recognition of her unusual communication with Nature as signs of her gift. Finally, Master Mundinho, a *pajé* who “knew” that Zeneida was gifted as she was coming out of her mother’s womb, walks the girl through conceptual understandings of *pajelança* and ultimately trains the girl when she is ready to be a *pajé*.

5.2.2 For an Epistemological Alliance

According to Lara Dotson-Renta, the past’s romantic involvements “are now creating postnational identities” that are shifting away from the paradigm of intimacy and nationalism seen before. They are expanding Sommer’s concept of foundation fictions by, for example, acknowledging homosexual relationships as well as kinship attachments that replace traditional marital arrangements (15). Along those lines, the fruit of the love between Zeneida and Antônio is not a new racially coded generation. After all, Zeneida is only a twelve-year-old child. Therefore, there is no expectation for a biological hybrid species between the human Zeneida and the serpent-man. But something new is born out of that relationship. Antônio sacrifices his mission by falling in love with the White invader’s daughter. And through Antônio’s love, Zeneida is motivated to

understand and accept her gift for *pajelança*, which gives her the ability to cure. So, when her heavily pregnant mother is on the brink of dying due to delivery complications and no medical attention can be sought at the secluded *Independência* farm, it is Zeneida's *pajelança* that will save both her mother and her newborn brother. In Tizuka's version of a foundational fiction, the fruit of the interracial love between Zeneida's White father and her indigenous mother is only possible through the intervention of Zeneida's indigenous knowledge. In *Encantados*, erotic hybridity is replaced by epistemological alliance.

It is clear in *Encantados* that Tizuka is concerned about the depiction of the lack of knowledge and recognition of the indigenous culture as an epistemological actor. So she raises awareness by representing the process of transformation of the understanding of indigenous wisdom. She first addresses the issue by exposing topics that the audience can easily relate to, such as deforestation, patriarchy in Brazilian society, and ideological alienation that depicts the indigenous as primitive and opposed to progress. Then, she invites us to consider broadening our views by offering the perspective of indigenous people on those topics, including how they work with Nature to protect the planet, notwithstanding human-demarcated areas. The "postnational identities" that *Encantados* proposes are not about hybrid humans, and certainly not about human-animal hybrids, but about the possibility of an exchange of knowledge between humans and Nature, mediated by those people who are able to communicate with Nature. In other words, the film proposes that indigenous wisdom is essential in discussions about the past and the future of

national identities, but it is crucial that it is understood that indigenous worldview does not correspond to “Western” view.¹⁹⁷

But how can affective indigenous elements be evidenced by filmic language and how can indigenous cosmologies be portrayed in light of indigenous view of humans? Moreover, how can a filmmaker like Tizuka who is not Amazonian and has only been exposed to Amazonian cultures and traditions in the late 1990s be qualified to depict with dignity something as complicated as how indigenous epistemology informs a particular way of seeing, hearing and feeling?

5.3 ENCANTADOS: SHAPES THAT EMERGE FROM WITHIN

As mentioned before, a reviewer has noticed that the viewing experience of *Encantados* can be frustrating because the film does not seem to flow smoothly. One of the reasons for that is that non-recognizable, non-identifiable, “strange” moments are constantly interrupting the narrative linearity of the film. But if we take Viktor Shklovsky’s concept of *defamiliarization* and look at the “strange” moments in the film as means of changing our perception of the ordinary, we can recognize why they are necessary. Shklovsky’s perception of an object goes from vision to

¹⁹⁷ The perspective of indigenous cosmologies has been debated for over two decades in Brazil. One of the most important authorities on the topic is Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, an anthropologist who advocates for a redefinition of the classical categories of “nature,” “culture,” and “supernature.” The redefinition is based on the way in which Amazonian cosmologies view humans, animals and spirits relating to themselves and other beings, which contrasts with the “Western” view. Castro’s study argues in particular that the antinomy between two characterizations of indigenous thought—*ethnocentrism* and *animism*—can only be overcome if the difference between the spiritual and corporal aspects of beings are given importance. While denying attributes and rights of humanity over beings of other species, those indigenous thoughts extend human qualities and rights to beings of other species.

recognition, and a work of art dies when it becomes recognizable as something automatized. But art allows objects that do not want to acquire the status of routine recognition to be removed from that realm. One of the devices that he proposes is the “estrangement” of objects by “unfamiliarizing” and complicating their form and by making perception long and “laborious” (6). For Shklovsky, the purpose of an “estranged” image is not to approximate our understanding of what this image stands for, but to allow us to perceive the object in a special way—a “vision” of the object instead of mere recognition of it (10). In *Encantados*, Tizuka emphasizes the unfamiliarity in the form to suspend viewer’s automatized, and possibly apathetical, perception of everyday life.

5.3.1 The Bleeding Tree and the Humanization of Nature

In one of the beginning scenes at the *Independência* farm, the girl Zeneida is strolling in the woods of her father’s property by herself. She is enjoying the views and sounds of the nature that surrounds her when she sees a group of men ordered by her father’s foremen cutting trees down. A close-up shot of her face shows she is caught off-guard. Clearly in shock, she hears a muffled sound of monkeys screaming in agony. Then we “hear” her thinking—“It’s bleeding”—even though her point of view shows us that what she sees is a close-up of a dry tree stump. We all know that trees do not bleed, at least not literally the way humans and animals do. We have seen trees being bled by rubber tappers in the literature of the “*novela de la tierra*,” which explored the influence of nature on country people, but as a figure of speech. If we choose to take “*novela de la tierra*” as reference, we could look at the representation operating here as a value shared with literature, that is, as a metaphor. However, if we keep in mind that Tizuka deliberately said that

she wanted to stay away from literary narratives, so we should look for an indigenous explanation for it.

In fact, seeing a tree bleed is plausible through an indigenous perspective.¹⁹⁸ As Zeneida develops her gift for *pajelança*, she can see beyond the understanding of humans that trees do not bleed. As a *pajé*, she sees the tree as a human. And since all humans bleed, Zeneida's reaction when she sees the cut down tree—"It's bleeding"—is justified. Thus, what would normally be read as a metaphorical representation can be recognized as an ontological perspective, a metaphysical conception that is not just rhetorical nor cultural. The feeling we have when we do not identify with Zeneida saying that the tree is bleeding can be a powerful agent of a new knowledge. By making strange our perception of the tree, Tizuka strikes our emotions and invites us to join an indigenous worldview where humans and Nature are seen as equals.

5.3.2 Character Multiplication, Non-Corporeal Representation and Indigenous Perspective

Extreme versions of estrangement were notably deployed by experimental filmmaking practices. In the US, Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) has been regarded as one of

¹⁹⁸ According to Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, there is an indigenous theory according to which the way indigenous populations, as humans, see animals and other creatures of the universe (gods, spirits, dead people, weather phenomena, vegetables, and even objects) is not very different from the way those creatures see humans and see themselves. Usually, a human in normal condition sees another human as a human, an animal as an animal, and spirits (in the case they see them) as spirits. On the other hand, animals and spirits see humans as animals (as in prey), and prey animals see humans as either spirits or animals that are predators. Moreover, animals and spirits see each other as humans and, therefore, experience human habits. For example, they see their food as human food (jaguars see blood as beer, for example), and their corporal attributes (such as feathers, claws, beaks, etc.) as ornament. Their social system is also organized in the same fashion as human institutions—they have chiefs, shamans, rites, etc. In indigenous culture, the communication and management of these perspectives is done by shamans.

the most influential experimental films in American cinema. A sequence of scenes in *Encantados*, that precedes the cut-down-tree scene just described, might allude to certain values of representation in that film. In the first scene of the sequence, Zeneida meets Antônio for the first time in the river that runs through her father's *Independência* farm. From the top of a boat, she engages on a conversation with Antônio and then, following his invitation, she jumps into the water. After the two have chatted in the water for a while, Antônio swims away and Zeneida is left with a smile in her face, clearly infatuated. Still in the water, she lays her head back against the boat and closes her eyes (figure 67). The scene cuts into a different scene—a clearing where we see Zeneida riding a horse. Another version of the girl enters the frame. The second Zeneida laughs full of joy and runs along with her other self who is riding the horse (figure 68). A sequence of shot-countershots shows that the two versions of Zeneida share a moment of happiness with each other.



Figure 67. In *Encantados*, Zeneida closes her eyes after her encounter with Antônio.



Figure 68. In *Encantados*, a Zeneida on foot interacts with a second version of herself riding a horse.

In *Meshes of the Afternoon*, there is a sequence of scenes where we also see multiple versions of the character—a housewife entrapped in marriage, portrayed by Deren herself (figure 69). In that film, the multiple-version-of-self scene is also preceded by Deren closing her eyes, which may suggest that the image of multiple selves is framed inside of a dream. Deren’s multiplied bodies not only look exactly the same but also move the same way. In Tizuka’s film, the two Zeneidas look the same, but the fact that one rides a horse differentiates the two—they have different heights and move in different ways. But they both move in the same direction and parallel to each other. There is no conflict between them. Unlike the two happy Zeneidas, Deren’s multiplied versions have been interpreted as conflicted versions of the self, deciding if they will set the woman’s body free from marriage entrapment through suicide. But an indigenous cosmovision would see such multiplication of bodies in a different way.



Figure 69. In *Meshes of the Afternoon*, Maya Deren assumes multiple identities.

According to Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, in indigenous cosmologies the corporal appearance of a species is just a “piece of clothing” that hides a human form that is only visible for species alike or to shamans. In other words, all creatures that inhabit the world are humans that look different because they wear different pieces of clothing.¹⁹⁹ Then, if we read the scene in *Encantados* through the indigenous perspective, we can consider that the two Zeneidas are not representative of two identities but the same one made visible in two different forms—the first as

¹⁹⁹ A reading of Deren’s film from the indigenous perspective would not interpret the multiple bodies as depiction of multiple identities because Deren’s bodies look exactly the same, therefore, they could not be representing difference. But there are other elements in the scene that could be representing multiple forms of the character. Throughout the film, we see Deren interacting with different objects that are strategically placed in the *mise-en-scène*—a white flower, a telephone, a mirror, a knife, etc. Deren’s interaction with the white flower, when she picks it up, holds it, and lays it down, for example, has been read as symbolic of the repression inflicted upon the character. From the indigenous perspective, on the other hand, those objects could be representing Deren’s conflicted soul that makes itself visible through different bodies (the white flower, the telephone, the mirror and the knife).

Zeneida as the girl we know and the second as Zeneida as perhaps an *amazona*, a female horse rider.²⁰⁰ We are certainly tempted to interpret this scene as a dream because of the establishing shot of Zeneida closing her eyes. However, a strange new element follows. What we thought was a scene of a Zeneida running and a second Zeneida riding a horse, is revealed to be a scene with a third participant. At the end of the scene, the camera that has been following the two Zeneidas moving in parallel through a dolly shot takes us by surprise when it seems to take a life of its own. The dolly shot is elevated by a crane and suggests a case of a “third-person” offscreen point of view from above (figure 70). The shot then cuts to birds—first a flock of red birds and then to two toucans—, which suggests that it could have been the point of view of a bird that flew up. But then, it cuts to a close-up of a serpent (perhaps Antônio) on top of a tree. From his point of view, we learn that he has been watching Zeneida, who is not in the water anymore but walking through the woods (figure 71). With this scene, Tizuka invites us to reconsider multi-corporeal existence and non-corporeal representation by showing us how she understands indigenous knowledge.

²⁰⁰ According to Dad Squarisi, when the Spanish soldier Francisco de Orellana discovered the North of Brazil in the 16th century, he reportedly pitched battles with female warriors on horseback, whom he likened to the Amazons of Greek mythology. Thus, the name of the river, *Amazonas*, and the name of female horse riders in Portuguese, *amazona*.



Figure 70. A third-person point of view shot in *Encantados*.



Figure 71. In *Encantados*, a serpent watches Zeneida.

5.3.3 Camera Movement and an Invitation to Be Enchanted

As we have seen, the camera is also capable of generating estrangement through the way it captures a shot. Let us look at a scene with unusual camera work and consider what that might represent. In this scene, Zeneida is forbidden to see Antônio, so she spends time by herself on the porch of the farmhouse. There are two positions in this scene where cameras 1 and 2 are located. In the first one, we see what Zeneida is doing, meaning that the focus of camera 1 is on her—camera 1 *watches* the girl. In the second position, we have the girl's point of view so camera 2 *shows what she sees*. The scene is set up as follows: camera 1 makes a close-up of Zeneida and we see her head facing down. Then she lifts her head up toward the sky. Through camera 2, we see the roof of the porch. Then, camera 1 starts tilting up, making a movement that turns the *mise-en-scène* upside down. Camera 2 footage is intercut to show us how Zeneida experiences the movement (figure 72).

This unusual sequence has two effects. First, it disorients the spectator. Second, it determines human relations between the filmmaker, the subject of the film, and the spectator, which needs to be looked at with cautiousness, as André Bazin would recommend. As the camera and the filmmakers behind the camera make their existence abruptly noticeable to the audience, it reveals the fabricated nature of the film, interrupts fantasy, and cuts in on desire. Such a move gives rise to ethical questions. Is it fair to remove viewers' experience with fantasy after having involved them with it? But Tizuka seems to take such an approach to give viewers the opportunity

to think critically about the dreams that films offer them, instead of accepting them passively, which is a reasoning that Bazin would support.²⁰¹

In the described scene, the centrality of the shot changes from the subject of the film to the filmmakers behind the camera. That is, the relationship between the subject and the camera becomes more prominent than the relationship between elements in the *mise-en-scène*. As a result, the representation of Zeneida's point of view through the sudden centrality of the camera cannot be ignored. Tizuka's bold move informs the viewer, explicitly, that the character is going through an important process of transformation. Through the disorientation caused by the camera's tilt, Tizuka redirects the spectator's perception of the film to match what Zeneida must be feeling as she advances in her understanding of indigenous cosmology. In the following shot, we see Zeneida lying on the porch floor and, with her eyes on the river where Antônio might be, the girl makes a movement taking her arms upwards (figure 73). This gesture, which could go unnoticed by an inattentive audience, is loaded with indigenous cultural value. To understand the meaning of the arms' movement, let us look at a description that Raul Prazeres, the son of real-life *pajé* Zeneida Lima, makes of a ritual that old *pajés* of Marajó Island used to perform:

²⁰¹ For Bazin, as Marco Grosoli explains, the notion of reality offered by films cannot be merely limited to "what we find out there." Bazin pays a lot of attention to social, cultural, national and economical contexts. For him, cinema is a quintessential realist medium because it can grasp different realities. But Grosoli reminds us that for Bazin, fantasies must be handled with care:

Producers and filmmakers have a great responsibility: they literally hold people's desires in their hands, since desire is not inside people, but rather in the outside form of its patent formulation. They do not have to guess what dreams could fit people's desires better: they invent people's desires instead . . . [F]or Bazin film criticism should help the audience form its own critical conscience, rather than providing a ready-made one or merely judging films. A film critic should educate [moviegoers] to responsibly and consciously deal with the dreams that are offered to [them]. And this is possible only by getting to know how those dreams work, that is, every formal, technical, social and esthetic aspect of cinema (4).

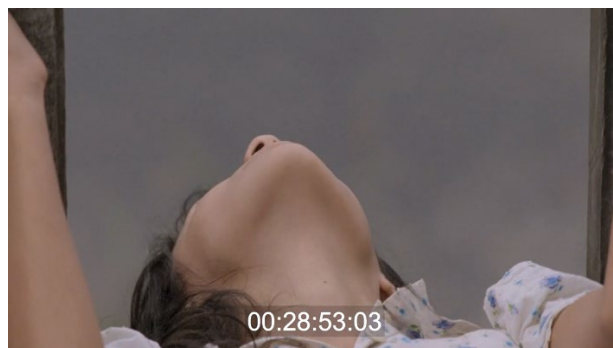
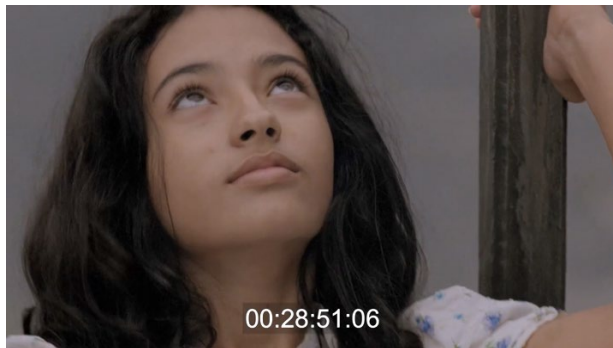
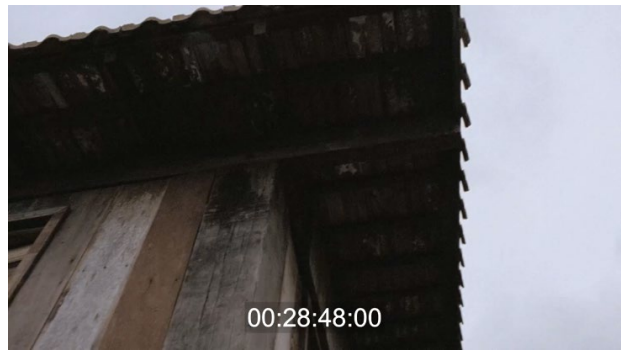
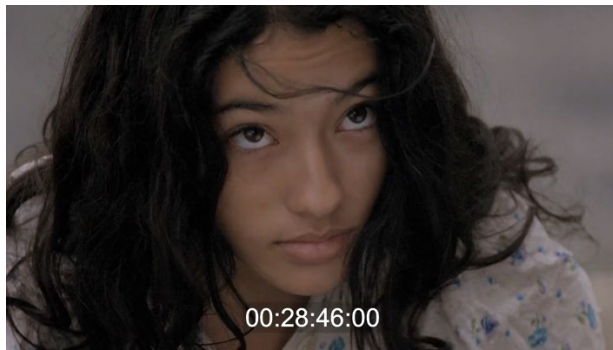


Figure 72. Camera 1 (left) and camera 2 (right) show Zeneida's close-up and pov, respectively.

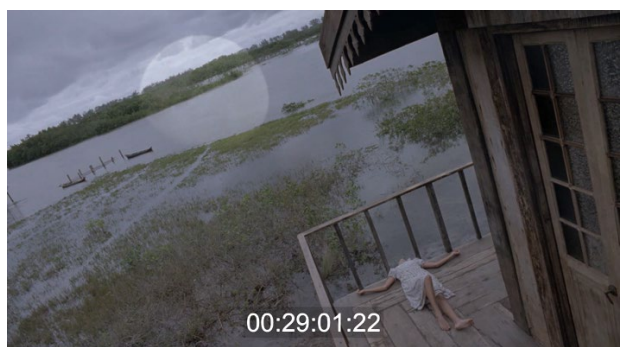


Figure 73. Zeneida makes a movement taking her arms upwards.

During this ritual, this ceremony, the indigenous participants . . . stayed like this, in this position, they were “sunken,” and sent to the bottom [of the river] to become enchanted. And since for them the death factor did not exist, after they were “sunken” they stayed in Auí, in the world of Auí, at the bottom of the waters. When a shaman finished all the ritual, he called for energies and [the indigenous participants] returned to earth, so that their relatives and other people could participate in that ceremony, in that celebration.²⁰²

Prazeres also explains that in order to send the indigenous participants to the bottom of the waters, the *pajés* made a movement with their arms facing down. And when they brought them back to the surface, they made a movement with their arms facing upwards.

In the film, as Zeneida moves her arms upwards, she could be practicing how to bring indigenous participants to the surface after they had become enchanted. However, the fact that Zeneida’s point of view is upside down, that would invert the direction of her arms. Therefore, Zeneida’s arm movement would mean that she would be sending the participant to the bottom of the waters. But who is this participant that the *pajé*-in-training Zeneida could be sending to become enchanted? If we take into account that the tilting of the camera had determined a relation between the filmmakers behind the camera, the character and the audience, we could consider that the participant that Zeneida sends to the bottom of the waters is the audience. That is, this scene could represent Tizuka’s invitation for the audience to be enchanted.

²⁰² “No ritual, na cerimônia eram os índios que faziam . . . É, eles ficavam assim, nessa posição, eles eram ‘afundiados’, e mandados pro Fundo, pra virarem encantados. E como para eles não existia o fator morte, quando eles eram ‘afundiados’ eles ficavam em Auí, no mundo de Auí, no fundo das águas. Quando um pajé fazia todo o ritual ele chamava essas energias e ele voltava pra terra, pros parentes, e as pessoas participarem daquela cerimônia, daquela festa” (CAVALCANTE 131).

5.3.4 Inter-Species Relationship

In the next scene in the film, the audience ends up in the water witnessing an encounter between Zeneida and Antônio in a scene depicted in a strikingly similar fashion as another film about an inter-species relationship—Guillermo del Toro’s *The Shape of Water* (figures 74 and 75). Curiously, Tizuka and del Toro’s films premiered six days apart. Let me describe the representation of the lovers’ first intimate encounter in each film to contrast the nature of the two inter-species relationships.



Figure 74. In *Encantados*, Antônio and Zeneida kiss underwater.



Figure 75. In *The Shape of Water*, the water creature and the cleaning lady kiss underwater.

In *The Shape of Water*, a cleaning lady falls in love with a water creature captured from a South American river that is held captive in the laboratory where she works. She frees him from captivity and hides him in her apartment, where they become intimate. Because the creature breathes better in water, the woman fills a room with water in preparation for a sexual encounter. They embrace flesh-to-flesh and their bodies intertwine. The skin of the creature glows in the water. The special effects bring magic to the moment. While the environment for the encounter is certainly unusual, the depiction of the consummation is ordinary. The next day, the cleaning lady describes the night before to her colleague at work and uses her hands to mimic how the creature's penis erects from his body. Aside from being an inter-species sexual encounter, the description does not surprise the colleague, or the audience, because it replicates how two humans would have sex. In del Toro's film, the inter-species intimacy caters to the dominant culture's erotic fantasies.

In *Encantados*, the first intimate encounter between Zeneida and Antônio looks innocent, to say the least, if compared to the scene from *The Shape of Water*. Zeneida is at a party at her

father's property. She is forbidden from seeing Antônio, but she hears a particular sound that Antônio makes to call her. She meets him on a deck of a pier. The two are alone but, instead of behaving passionately, they lock eye-to-eye and engage in a circular movement, with the palm of their hands open in the level of their faces but not touching each other. They dance. There are no special effects. Just their movement surrounds an erotic space between their bodies, which is not visible and yet is present (figure 76). Their dance is probably inspired by *marajoara* Lundu²⁰³ (figure 77). Instead of the hybridizing fusion conveyed by the inter-species encounter in *The Shape of Water*, the inter-species intimate encounter in *Enchanted* suggests an alliance between the West and the indigenous through Zeneida's understanding and embodiment of indigenous culture.

²⁰³ According to the journalist and music critic José Ramos Tinhorão, Lundu has its origins in the word *calundu*: an African cult practiced in Brazil during the colonial period and identified by many historians as the initial formation of Candomblé. Lundu is believed to be a combination of African *umbigada* and European fandango. Considered to be the first Afro-Brazilian musical genre, Lundu represented the courting between couples that took place around of drums. The dance began with the woman going to the center of the circle, dancing in a sensual and provocative way and thus gaining the attention of the man who would follow her steps. After charming and refusing, the woman ends up accepting the man's company, which means that a romantic relationship is established. The dancers' bodies perform gestures and movements that elucidate meanings from historical-sociocultural contexts in an expressive and dynamic language. The song with a swaying rhythm, accompanied by verses, had a humorous appeal and a certain "loveness." Lundu raises the issue of a censored aspect of the history of colonial culture in Brazil—the theme of the game of seduction between the Black enslaved and the colonizer lady (so called *sinhá*, *nhanhá* or *iaia*), and from this relationship we see a discourse of desire and violence in which this woman who, at the same time that despises this man, wants to be intimate with him (ARMELIN).



Figure 76. In *Encantados*, Antônio and Zeneida have a romantic encounter.



Figure 77. A Lundu dance performance.

5.4 WHEN THE MYSTICAL SERVES TO INFORM A LARGER SOCIETAL MATTER

5.4.1 *Encantados* and the Urge to be Seen and Heard

As earlier mentioned, Machado de Assis warns that we should not “seek the titles of our literary personality” among indigenous characters because “Brazilian civilization is not linked to the indigenous element, nor has received any influence from it” (“Instinto de nacionalidade”). Likewise, Assis found the idea of a foundational national narrative to be insufficient because the program excluded Black people as one of the protagonists of the nation’s foundation. In his study of Assis’s “Sabina,” Paul Dixon shows how the author claims Black people’s spot in the creation of the national narrative. In this poem, the character Sabina is the mulatta daughter of a Black slave

woman who is seduced by her master's son. She becomes pregnant but discovers that the lover is married and decides to kill herself. However, at the decisive moment, she changes her mind and, by refusing suicide, allows the birth of a Black and White mixed-race generation. As Dixon observes, in addition to claiming the Black people's spot as an ancestor of the Brazilian people, "Sabina" also contributes as a criticism of the myth of *mestiçagem* as a happy result of a mutual love between representatives of different races. Likewise, Tizuka's film offers a particular argument about the participation of the Black race in the future of the nation.

Tizuka presents two types of Black characters in the film. The first is represented by Damião, the landowner Angelino's foreman. Despite being an overseer of Angelino, he shows a certain amount of sensitivity—he gives orders, but he is not oppressor of his subordinates, he has romantic feelings for Cotinha, and he worries about Zeneida when she disappears from the farm. But his character does not stand out in the plot because he does not have a voice or behavior that adds to or changes the course of the plot—he does not fight for oppressed people, his feelings for Cotinha do not result in a relationship with her, and he does not find Zeneida when she disappears from the farm. Damião does not pose any threat to the normal course of the story or to the expectation of the viewer. The second type is a group of Black employees of Angelino's farmhouse who not only do not stand out like Damião but also do not speak and hardly move. Their physical presence is particularly evident in a scene that follows Zeneida's disappearance from the farm where Angelino is convinced that Antônio had kidnapped his daughter and is getting ready to hunt him down.

In the scene, a tracking shot follows Angelino who is walking and trying to get away from Cotinha who wants him to listen to her side of the story. She thinks that the girl has been enchanted, meaning that she has been taken to the bottom of the waters because she was predestined to be a

pajé. But Angelino does not want to believe her, nor does his wife Zezé who is desperate about her daughter's disappearance. The Black employees' participation in this scene is to stand still in the background. Even though a highly emotional moment unfolds before their eyes, they just watch without reacting to it or interfering. Knowing the personality of Angelino, one can assume that the group did not want to interfere to avoid trouble with the boss. But it seems that Tizuka purposely inserts them in the *mise-en-scène* on the margins of the action. If this is the case, she would be using a strategy similar to Machado de Assis's realism to criticize the absence of Black people in the Indianist esthetic.

A more careful consideration of the filmic language of the described scene points to how Tizuka's strategy plays out. In the scene, Tizuka uses the deep focus feature. That is, all objects in the *mise-en-scène* are in focus, clearly visible, regardless of their distance from the camera lenses. This type of feature creates the impression of a detailed, layered world that, at first glance, does not privilege any action. The director, however, is able to take advantage of this feature to guide the viewer's gaze not unlike how Orson Welles worked out a scene in his celebrated *Citizen Kane* (1941). As Shelley Farmer analyzes Welles's scene, two people talk in the foreground while other people work and murmur in the background. As everyone is in focus, the plan does not privilege any character and the viewer has the possibility to choose what to pay attention to. But when the subject of the discussion becomes crucial, the people in the background interrupt what they are doing to pay attention to the conversation. Thus, the perception of the *mise-en-scène*, which seemed to be democratic, is, in fact, guided by Welles.

Unlike Welles's scene in which the director manipulates the competition between different movements and voices to guide the viewer's gaze, in Tizuka's scene, the Black characters do not seem to be witnessing the same scene as the viewer. They stand still from start to finish. The first

one has his arms crossed and practically does not move. The second has his hands together in front of his body and only moves a little to straighten his body on his feet. The third has his hands behind his back and, like the first, does not move. The fourth, a woman, moves a little, but her movements do not match the scene—she wipes her hands with a cloth throughout the shot and when her head turns to the side, it looks to a point outside the *mise-en-scène* that does not add any new information to the scene (figure 78). In this scene, there is no competition between movements and voices. The bodies of the Black employees are present, but they are made invisible by the absence of movements and voice. Unlike regular film extras who are seen as necessary to support a scene through their presence even though they do not speak, Tizuka's characters are impotent and reflect how complicated it is to include the Black people in the foundational narrative. But Tizuka includes them to remind us of something unavoidable—their spectral presence.





Figure 78. In *Encantados*, Black characters stand still and quiet throughout the scene.

5.4.2 The Unavoidable Spectral Presence

One who “dies unexpectedly,” such as the hanged, drowned or thrown, is left wandering around and moves to the category of specters called “visions.”

—Leando Mahalem de Lima²⁰⁴

According to Alberto Ribas-Casasayas and Amanda Petersen, the spectral presence is a manifestation of a demand from the victims of traumatic historical events, something unfinished and ostensibly unresolvable by material means (2). Here, I propose a reading of Jo Labanyi's

²⁰⁴ “[A]quele que ‘morre sem esperar’, como o enforcado, o afogado ou o atirado, fica vagando por terra e passa à categoria dos espectros que chamam de ‘visagens’” (70).

“haunting aesthetics” as discussed by Ribas-Casasayas and Petersen, to show how the spectral presence in *Encantados* imposes resistance to the foundational Indianist narrative through the impossibility of a realistic and empathic representation of the Black race.

Labanyi's “haunting aesthetics” represents a strategy that challenges the negation of the past and the inability to incorporate it productively. According to Labanyi, “it is only by capturing the *resistances of narrativization* that representations of the past can convey something of the emotional charge which that past continues to hold today for those for whom it remains unfinished business.” Labanyi's esthetics proposes a strategy that “listens to the voices from the past that have not previously been allowed a hearing” (Ribas-Casasayas and Petersen 8). It is a strategy that “listens” to voices, as opposed to imposing itself on the victims or speaking for them. It is a strategy that listens to ghosts. However, according to María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren, we must avoid taking the figure of the ghost as simply a phenomenon that requires empirical verification. The ghost must be seen as “conceptual metaphor capable of bringing to light and opening up to analysis, hidden, disavowed, and neglected aspects of the social and cultural realm, past and present”—a tool for understanding the “other” perspective (21).

Blanco and Peeren follow the line of thought of Jacques Derrida who pursues the spectral figure that haunts like a ghost and, through this haunting, demands justice, or at least an answer (9). In Bernard Stiegler's explanation of Derrida's idea of the future belonging to the specters of the past, he explains an intriguing analogy with the cinematographic image where Derrida suggests that cinematic ghosts were already part of the future when their images were captured by the camera. While the captured image addresses and interpellates the viewer, the viewers cannot “exchange or meet a glance” and, this way, they experience how it feels to be “other.” For Derrida, only a ghost is capable of producing this experience in the viewer. Jo Labanyi, on the other hand,

proposes a vision of the past that manifests its *dark points* without considering it as “an *ineffable* or *nearly sacred* experience whose only possible contact would be emotional.” For her, cinematic language that rejects realist esthetic and embraces metaphor has more validity than realistic and empathic representations of the past that “force the viewer to experience the past detached from the present” (Ribas-Casasayas and Petersen 8). Her esthetic proposal, therefore, operates with a deliberately unrealistic approach that recognizes the difficulty of narrativizing the past. And that is precisely the approach that Tizuka takes in the scene with the group of Black employees.

Encantados is a film that refuses to confront what has become spectral only through lamentation. Through the emphasis on the silence and immobility of the Black characters that the deep focus feature allows for, the film offers a way into a world still muted and still. Thus, Tizuka criticizes the myth of Black social integration as a result of the abolition of slavery. In relation to the dominant narrative criticized by Machado de Assis, which idealizes miscegenation with the indigenous people and tends to exclude the Black people, *Encantados* offers an effective correction, a demonstration of the need for a critical cultural foundation and a radical esthetic approach.

5.5 ENCANTADOS AND THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET

5.5.1 *Encantados* and the Future of the Planet

One last observation needs to be made about a heightened concern that *Encantados* addresses and that has been a trend among engaged filmmakers—the environment. In Brazil, the growth of film festivals that focus on films that address questions related to the environment as a

central topic has been significant.²⁰⁵ But some film critics have identified some problems with that trend. Speaking at the International Environmental Film Festival (FICA) in 2003, renowned film scholar Ismail Xavier expressed concern about environmental films that are praised because they raise questions that are considered urgent from political and ideological standpoints even though they are cinematically limited. For Xavier, the problem is that a cinematically limited film does not have the same capacity to inspire reflection as a film that integrates the esthetic. In other words, the ability of a film to generate discussion and remain relevant relies on the rigor of its construction. Other scholars have a different view. For T. J. Demos, in times of urgency, it is more important for arts to generate reflection, to give form to an issue, than to focus solely on the esthetic.²⁰⁶

Through a rigorous esthetic presence despite the lack of access to sophisticated means of production, *Encantados* addresses the question of environment in an uncommon way—from both anthropocentric and Amazonian non-anthropocentric indigenous viewpoints. By doing to, the film raises questions that defy the “Western” approach to Nature we are used to. For example, we learn from Cotinha that the *encantado* Antônio is the most feared type of Nature-sent entity because he is violent so when he comes across equally violent White settlers who hurt Nature, the result of the confrontation is death. The plot of *Encantados*, however, complicates the predator/prey relationship as it invites us to consider different perspectives at play. What would happen if each side understood that their perspective of the other is more similar than different? After all, both

²⁰⁵ The state of Goiás in Brazil hosts the International Environmental Film Festival (FICA), one of the best regarded of its kind in Latin America. According to the Green Film Network, in 2017, the festival offered the largest award for environmental films in Latin America: over US \$75,000.00 in prizes.

²⁰⁶ T. J. Demos discussed the urgency of environmental awareness during his lecture “Against the Anthropocene: Visual Culture and Environment Today” at the University of Pittsburgh in March 2016.

humans and Nature are protecting what they love. The problem is that humans tend to look at humans' protective violence as rational, whereas they look at Nature's violence as irrational. What if there was another type of relationship between humans and Nature that was more fruitful, one that was not based on dismissal but on exchange of knowledge to serve the purpose of protecting all?

Curiously, *Encantados* has not had notable presence in environmental film festivals even though the film shows that we need to live sustainably on this planet and that includes listening to the populations that have traditionally had sustainable relationships with Nature. But as humans put all of Earth's systems under pressure, and it becomes clearer that climate change is just one symptom of a larger challenge, hopefully different knowledge, such as the indigenous, will be brought to the table to deescalate the common threat to the future of the planet.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

Someone says, don't worry about details, just get the stories. Someone else says, get the details and the hard facts, and then you can build a case for a story. Someone says a good story helps you to remember, but someone else says everyone remembers differently. Everyone's got a version of the same story, or maybe there's no such thing as the same story; it's a different story every time.

—Karen Tei Yamashita, *I Hotel*

I don't believe for a minute that I am going to save the world—but if we have a few hundred million people saying "I can make a difference," we will.

—David Suzuki

I think that, especially as famous people that we are, we have a duty to speak through a filter of professionalism and emotional intelligence, but sometimes what we need is to go crazy and make clear what we have inside our heads. There are times when we don't have time to play any games.

—John Boyega²⁰⁷

As the first critical study that examines Tizuka's four post-2000 films, this dissertation discusses the representative possibilities of emotion in those films from the unique perspective of a Brazilian filmmaker of Japanese ancestry. I have explored how those films are, in many ways,

²⁰⁷ “Creo que, especialmente como personas famosas que somos, tenemos el deber de hablar a través del filtro de la profesionalidad y la inteligencia emocional, pero, a veces, lo que necesitamos es volvernos locos y dejar claro lo que tenemos en nuestras cabezas. Hay veces en que no tenemos tiempo para jugar a ningún juego” (MUÑOZ).

misinterpreted by critics and misunderstood by viewers, only to emerge as powerful invitations to reconsider the way Brazilians relate to each other. I also put those films in dialogue with writings of frequently quoted early intellectuals on Japanese immigration.

That approach is necessary because, aside from *Gaijin I*, Tizuka's work has largely been neglected as representative of a Japanese sense of esthetic or of Nikkei way of life and culture. For example, the Nikkei intellectual community in São Paulo, which is mostly represented by *nisei* and *sansei*, does not sufficiently value enough historical, cultural, and esthetical significance of Tizuka's work in relation to her heritage in discussions about Nikkei artistic legacy. Instead, they prefer to emphasize the authorial, and somewhat conventional, work of Olga Futemma, a Brazilian *nisei* who made five short films depicting everyday moments and stories of immigrants, particularly those from Okinawa. A surprising proof of that is that in Alexandre Kishimoto's *Cinema japonês na Liberdade* (2013), which explores the moviegoing experience of the Nikkei in the theaters of the neighborhood of Liberdade in São Paulo, the author makes no reference to Tizuka's thoughts, even though he includes lengthy quotes from interviews given by Futemma and even by non-Nikkei filmmakers such as Carlos Reichenbach. Curiously, Futemma's *Green Tea and Rice* (*Chá Verde e Arroz*, 1989), a depiction of an immigrant projectionist who screens films in Japanese communities in the countryside of the state of São Paulo, might be reminiscent of Tizuka's *Gaijin I*. In a future project, I will put Tizuka's films in conversation with Futemma's short films as well as other Nikkei filmmakers who are considered to be representative of Nikkei esthetic practice, such as Yppe Nakashima (1926-1974) whose *Piconzé* (1973) is considered one of the three first animated feature-length films produced in Brazil (figure 77). Nakashima's work includes two decades worth of animated films that star characters based on Brazilian legends and folklore.



Figure 79. Study of characters for *Piconzé* and excerpt from the film.

As I think about how I can deepen the conversation and how I can develop this project beyond the realm of cinema and Brazilian borders, I think that a book that includes diverse creative projects from different communities around the world that are also governed by Nikkei heritage is the next step to expanding a theory of shapes of Nikkei feelings. A Brazilian artist whose work

deserves special attention and would closely dialogue with Tizuka is Haruo Ohara (1909-1999). A first-generation immigrant who arrived in Brazil in 1927 and was settled at a *colônia* in the State of Paraná (like the one Tizuka depicted in *Gaijin 2*), Ohara's personal archive of 20,000 photographs reveals the lives of a pioneering generation of migrants in the State of Paraná. University of Tokyo's Ryuta Imafuku describes Ohara's photography as "only bestowing beauty and dignity upon the lives that people trusted him with" ("Haruo Ohara Fotografias"). Interestingly, studies seem to focus on the photographs that depict the lives of Japanese immigrants and, therefore, his depiction of other ethnicities is scarcely studied. A quick look at the two pictures that I include here, however, reveals an intentionality that cannot be ignored: in figure 78, the two girls in focus against a background out of focus indicates that the girls are the most important part of this picture. In figure 79, on the other hand, the three people are as in focus as their surroundings, which does not privilege any of them, so the viewer can choose what is important.



Figure 80. *Menina com Flores* (*Girl with Flowers*, c. 1950) by Haruo Ohara.



Figure 81. *Cafezal (Coffee Plantation, c. 1950)* by Haruo Ohara.

Two artists from outside of Brazil that I would include are inevitably Karen Tei Yamashita and David Suzuki. An accomplished author of seven books including National Book Award finalist *I Hotel* (2010) and *Circle K Cycles* (2001), which I have frequently quoted in this dissertation, Northern Californian Yamashita is considered “one of the most masterful contemporary American authors” by Paul Yamazaki, the principal buyer of legendary City Lights Bookseller in San Francisco, CA (MCCMURTRIE). As observed by Jean Vengua Gier and Carla Alicia Tejeda upon completing an interview with Yamashita, her work goes “through tropes of mapping, mobility, and communications (both high and low-tech) [that] address the issues that inform the imperatives behind a number of disciplines (Asian American studies, border and cultural studies, postcolonial studies, cultural geography) concerned with postmodern ethnicities and national identity.” From a different field but similarly accomplished, Canadian David Suzuki is a widely recognizable geneticist and environmentalist who has been the host of CBC’s TV series *The Nature of Things* for the past sixty years. Once a child in a Canadian relocation camp for

Japanese, his views on the environment, race relations, history, media, and heritage emerge while he shares his scientific understanding of the world.

Brazilian, North American, and Canadian by birth and heart, but inevitably Japanese by upbringing and look, these three artists are often seen as outsiders, sometimes by chance, and at other times by choice. Like Tizuka, even at the moments of their greatest achievements, they are notable because the world around them sees them as Japanese. Therefore, the overarching question that I envision that their work could help answer is: How can their work represent their nationalities rather than just belonging to them?

Another significant point that this dissertation makes about Tizuka's millennium work is that it invites us to reconsider the legacy of the so-called Cinema of Emotion. As we know, it was a term often used to describe the filmmaker's films of the 1980s that were considered relatable to viewers in their melodramatic approach. By introducing the Nikkei perspective in the discussion of those early films and showing how later films dialogue with them from such a perspective, we realize that the question of emotion gradually moves from the realm of the storyline into the form. As we have seen, in the course of that motion, Cinema of Emotion changes. Charged with a critical view on their lives, characters gradually convey their emotion in different ways. If in the 1980s they close their ears to avoid hearing what they do not want to and in the 1990s they scream to compete with surrounding noise, in the millennium films unwanted sound is muffled on the editing table through the muting of an audio track. Thinking carefully about that progression, the attentive viewer realizes that below the surface of romantic plots and beautiful photography lie a myriad of points of discussions that confront common racial, ethnical, cultural, and epistemological markers. Like her previous films, Tizuka's millennium films remain conventional in her commitment to exploring the limits of emotion. However, in the past such exercise was mostly suggestive and did

not interfere with the intelligibility of the films. In the millennium films, Tizuka does not play games anymore and sacrifices the smoothness of her films to deliberately convey the exercise of emotion in the form.

I recognize that this dissertation might be seen as overly optimistic about Tizuka's work. In fact, I do not spend much time scrutinizing the side of her work that could have a negative impact on the viewing experience. For example, in my analysis of the royal servant Confúcia in *Xuxa in The Mystery of Feiurinha*, I do not discuss how the heavily stereotypical treatment of the character can potentially be interpreted as a permission to stereotype Asians. Personally, I do not feel comfortable watching Confúcia on the screen because that is not the way I want to be gazed at as an Asian Brazilian. However, I understand that Tizuka has a strong view toward the passiveness of Japanese Brazilian culture, which does not encourage their people to defend themselves against racism. Instead, the culture teaches that Japanese Brazilians should be proud to be Japanese. That is precisely why Confúcia is needed—by taking pride to the extreme, Tizuka exposes the damaging effects of extremist views.

My intention is not that this project is taken as a final word on Tizuka's millennium films but as an alternative way of perceiving them—one that is sensitive to the views and modes of expression of a Brazilian artist strongly marked by her heritage. Hopefully, it allows for a more rewarding viewing experience of Tizuka's work.

APPENDIX A

A.1 FILMOGRAPHY

Feature-Length Narrative Films as a Crew Member

O Amuleto de Ogum (1974, Nelson Pereira dos Santos), assistant director.

Soledade (1975, Paulo Thiago), still photographer.

Tenda dos Milagres (1976, Nelson Pereira dos Santos), scenography.

A Idade da Terra (1978, Glauber Rocha), assistant director and producer.

Bete Balanço (1984, Leal Rodrigues), executive producer and producer.

Feature-Length Narrative Films as a Director

Gaijin, Caminhos da Liberdade (1980)

Release: March 24, 1980 / Santos, Festival Studio Atlântico

Production Company: CPC - Centro de Produção e Comunicação

Co-production Company: Embrafilme

Production: Cacá Diniz

Distribution: Embrafilme, Unifilm

Story: Tizuka Yamasaki, Jorge Durán

Screenplay: Tizuka Yamasaki, Jorge Durán

Direction of Production: Lael Rodrigues

Executive Production: Cacá Diniz

Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki

Direction of Photography: Edgar Moura

Direction of Sound: Juarez Dagoberto

Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki

Editing: Lael Rodrigues, Vera Freire, Antônio Pacheco

Awards:

•Melhor filme; Melhor trilha sonora para Neschling, John; Melhor cenografia para Yamasaki, Yurika; Melhor ator coadjuvante para Dumont, José; Melhor roteiro para Durán, Jorge e Yamasaki, Tizuka no Festival de Gramado, 8, 1980, RS

•Prêmio Air France de Cinema, 14, 1980, RJ e Prêmio Especial de Direção para Yamasaki, Tizuka

- Margarida de Prata da CNBB, 1980 - Conferência Nacional dos Bispos do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, RJ
- Melhor cenografia para Yamasaki, Yurika pela APCA, 1981 - Associação Paulista de Críticos de Arte, SP
- Troféu Curumim pelo Clube de Cinema de Marília, 1980, SP
- Grande Prêmio Coral e Melhor Filme de Ficção no Festival de Havana, 2, 1981, Havana – CU
- Prêmio George Sadoul no Festival de Paris, 1980 – FR
- Menção honrosa na Quinzena dos Realizados no Festival de Cannes, 33, 1980 – FR
- Menção honrosa no Film-Expo-Filmex, 1981, Los Angeles – US
- Melhor filme (escolha do público) no Festival de Bruxelas, 1981 – BE

(Source: Cinemateca)

Box Office: n/a

Tickets Sold: 751,000

(Source: Ancine)

Parahyba Mulher Macho (1983)

Release: September 15, 1983 / São Paulo, Circuito Ipiranga 1, Astor

Production Company: CPC

Co-production Company: Embrafilme, Sky Light Cinema

Production: Cacá Diniz, Luiz Carlos Lacerda, Ruth Figueiredo Albuquerque

Distribution: Embrafilme

Story: Tizuka Yamasaki, José Joffily Filho

Screenplay: Tizuka Yamasaki, Jorge Durán

Direction of Production: Lael Rodrigues

Executive Production: Liane Muhlenberg

Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki

Direction of Photography: Edgar Moura

Direction of Sound: Juarez Dagoberto

Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki

Editing: Lael Rodrigues

Awards:

- Prêmio de Melhor Fotografia para Moura, Edgar, Melhor Cenografia para Yamasaki, Yurika, Melhor Trilha Sonora para Goulart, Walter, Costa, Juarez Dagoberto da e Rodrigues, Lael, Melhor Técnico de Som para Costa, Juarez Dagoberto da e Melhor Longa-Metragem, Júri Popular no Festival de Brasília, 16, 1983, Brasília – DF
- Melhor direção, Melhor atriz e Melhor filme no Festival de Cartagena, 22, 1983 – CO
- Grande Prêmio do Júri no Festival de Biarritz, 5, 1983 – FR
- Prêmio Especial do Júri Popular da Associação dos Críticos de Andaluzia, 1983 – ES
- Prêmio da Conferência dos Cineclubes e Prêmio Especial do Júri no Festival de Huelva, 9, 1983 – ES
- Melhor interpretação feminina no Festival de Havana, 5, 1983 – CU
- Prêmio Especial de Teatro de Camera de Cartagena

(Source: Cinemateca)

Box Office: n/a

Tickets Sold: 1,1 million

(Source: Ancine)

Patriamada (1985)

Release: 1985 / Rio de Janeiro, Roxy

Production Company: CPC

Production: Cacá Diniz, Lael Rodrigues

Distribution: Embrafilme

Story: n/a

Screenplay: Tizuka Yamasaki, Alcione Araújo

Direction of Production: Rossy Caetano

Executive Production: Elizeu Ewald

Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki

Direction of Photography: Edgar Moura

Direction of Sound: n/a

Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki

Editing: Tizuka Yamasaki, Michael Cristian

Awards:

•Melhor som para Romeu Quinto Jr. e Lício Marcos de Oliveira no Festival de Gramado, 13, 1985 - Gramado, RS

•Prêmio de Honra no Festival de Biarritz, 7, 1985 – FR

(Source: Cinemateca)

Box Office: n/a

Tickets Sold: n/a

Lua de Cristal (1990)

Release: June 21, 1990 / Liberty

Production Company: Dreamvision Film and Video Prod, Xuxa Produções, Columbia Tristar

Co-production Company: Art Filmes, Ponto Filmes

Production: Diler Trindade

Distribution: Columbia Tristar

Story: Patrícia Travassos

Screenplay: Luíz Carlos Góes, Yoya Wurch, Cacá Diniz

Direction of Production: Flávio Chaves

Executive Production: Cacá Diniz, Marta Passos

Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki

Direction of Photography: Edgar Moura

Direction of Sound: Toninho Muricy

Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki

Editing: Ana Diniz, Marco Antonio Cury

Sound Editing: José Louzeiro, Carlos Cox

(Source: Cinemateca)

Box Office: n/a

Tickets Sold: 4,178,165

(Source: Ancine)

Fica Comigo (1996)

Release: 1996 / MIS

Production Company: Villa Vitória Cinematográfica

Co-production Company: Quanta, Sky Light
Production: Heraldo Born
Distribution: Riofilme, Prefeitura Rio Cidade Maravilhosa
Story: Tizuka Yamasaki, Cacá Diniz, Heraldo Born
Screenplay: Jorge Durán
Direction of Production: Tininho Fonseca
Executive Production: Cacá Diniz
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Flávio Ferreira
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Sound Editing: José Louzeiro, Carlos Cox
Editing: Vera Freire
Awards:
•Melhor Atriz para Rigueira, Luciana no Festival de Gramado, 24, 1996
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$13,000 *reais*
Tickets Sold: 2,000
(Source: Ancine)

O Noviço Rebelde (1997)
Release: 1997
Production Company: Renato Aragão Produções Artísticas
Distribution: n/a
Story: Renato Aragão
Screenplay: Renato Aragão
Direction of Production: Renato Tilhe
Executive Production: Cacá Diniz
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Cezar Moraes
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Sound Editing: Carlos Cox
Editing: Diana Vasconcellos
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$6,000,000 *reais*
Tickets Sold: 1.5 million
(Source: Ancine)

Xuxa Requebra (1999)
Release: 1999
Production Company: Xuxa Produções
Co-production Company: Diler Associados
Production: Diler Trindade
Distribution: Fox Film do Brasil
Story: Wagner de Assis

Screenplay: Evandro Mesquita
Direction of Production: Marta Passos
Exec Production: Flávio Chaves
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Cezar Moraes
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Sound Editing: Carlos Cox, Simone Petrillo, José Louzeiro
Editing: Diana Vasconcellos
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$8.1 million *reais*
Tickets Sold: 2,074,461
(Source: Ancine)

Xuxa Popstar (2000)

Release: 2000
Production Company: Xuxa Produções, Diler e Associados, Warner Bros Pictures
Production: Diler Trindade
Distribution: n/a
Story: n/a
Screenplay: Vivian Perl, Wagner de Assis
Direction of Production: Jane Guerra Peixe
Exec Production: Marta Passos
Direction: Paulo Sérgio Almeida, Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Cezar Moraes
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro, Nonô Coelho
Direction of Art: Paulo Flaksman
Sound Editing: Carlos Cox, Simone Petrillo, José Louzeiro, Maria Muricy
Editing: João Paulo Carvalho
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$9.6 million *reais*
Tickets Sold: 2,394,326
(Source: Ancine)

Gaijin, Ama-me Como Sou (2005)

Release: 2005 / Rio
Production Company: Scena Filmes
Co-production Company: Ara Films, Rio Prefeitura Culturas Riofilme, Quanta, Raghnx Produce
Production: Cacá Diniz, Tizuka Yamasaki, Sérgio Takao Sato
Exec Production: Flavio Chaves
Story: Tizuka Yamasaki, Cacá Diniz
Screenplay: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Edgar Moura, Jacques Cheuiche, Eloisa Azevedo Passos
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki

Editing: Diana Vasconcellos, Karen Akerman
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$388,000 *reais*
Tickets Sold: 52,000
(Source: Ancine)

Xuxa em O Mistério de Feiurinha (2009)

Release: 2009 / Rio
Production Company: Xuxa Produções, Conspiração Filmes, Moonshot Pictures, Globo Filmes
Co-production Company: Teleimage
Production: Xuxa Meneghel, Mônica Muniz, Luiz Cláudio Lopes Moreira
Executive Production: Eliana Soárez, Ricardo Rangel, Pedro Buarque de Hollanda
Distribution Company: Play Arte
Screenplay: Cláudio Lobato, Gabriela Amaral
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: André Horta
Direction of Sound: Jorge Saldanha
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Editing: Eduardo Hartung
Sound Editing: Maria Muricy
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$8,484, 823 *reais*
Tickets Sold: 1,307,135
(Source: Ancine)

Aparecida: O Milagre (2010)

Release: December 17, 2010
Production Company: Vitória Produções Cinematográficas Ltda
Co-production Company: Paramount Pictures, Globo Filmes, Riofilme
Production: Gláucia Camargos, Paulo Thiago
Exec Production: Pimenta Jr.
Distribution Company: Paramount
Story: Marco Schiavon
Screenplay: Marco Schiavon, Carlos Gregório, Pedro Antonio, Paulo Halm
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Luis Abramo
Direction of Sound: Jorge Saldanha
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Editing: Eduardo Hartung
(Source: Cinemateca)
Box Office: \$1.8 million
Tickets Sold: 243,000
(Source: Ancine)

Encantados (2014)

Release: September 30, 2014 / Rio de Janeiro, Festival do Rio, Sala: Estação Rio 1

Production Company: Scena Filmes
Co-production: Globo Filmes
Production: Cacá Diniz, Tizuka Yamasaki, Alvenir Coimbra
Direction of Production: Jessel Buss
Executive Production: Fabrício Coimbra
Distribution: H2O
Direction: Tizuka Yamasaki
Story: Tizuka Yamasaki
Screenplay: Victor Navas, Tizuka Yamasaki
Direction of Photography: Antônio Luiz M. Soares
Direction of Sound: José Louzeiro
Direction of Art: Yurika Yamasaki
Editing: Tainá Diniz, Marta Luz
Awards:
•Prêmio da Juventude para Melhor Filme Brasileiro para a Diretora Yamazaki, Tizuka na Mostra Internacional de Cinema de São Paulo, 2014
•Prêmio Melhor Direção no Festival del Cinema Latino Americano di Trieste, Italia, 2016
(Source: Brazilian Cinematheque)
Box Office: \$44,000 *reais*
Tickets Sold: 3,000
(Source: Ancine)

Short-Length Films

Equipe de Direção: Filme Aula, 1970, co-director with Cecil Thiré.

Mouros e Cristãos, 1972.

Bon Odori, 1973, co-director with Lael Rodrigues.

Viva 24 de Maio, 1978, co-director with Edgar Moura.

Cinema: Embaixador do Brasil, 1981.

Álcool: Alternativa para o Futuro, 1981.

A Embaixada do Cinema, 1982.

Cinex, 1982.

Inimá de Paula, 1991.

O Barato é Ser Careta, 2000.

A.2 OTHER WORKS

TV Series

O Pagador de Promessas, 1988, director of 12 episodes.

A Madona de Cedro, 1994, director of 20 episodes.

As Brasileiras, 2012, director of the episode “The Underage from the Amazon.”

Soap Operas

Kananga do Japão, 1989, director of 205 episodes.

Amazônia, 1992, director of 144 episodes.

Metamorphoses, 2004, director of 24 episodes.

Operas

Madame Butterfly, 1988, director.

Árias, 1994, co-director with Sylvia Klein.

La Bohème (1996), director.

Play

Memórias de Embornal (1995), co-director with Jackson Antunes.

Documentary for Museum Exhibition

Tomie, 2014, director.

Made-for-TV Narrative Film

1817, A Revolução Esquecida, 2017, director.

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