

At War with Ignorance

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Introduction to Cultural Policy

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Know Your Enemy: Japan

- <https://youtu.be/PvcE9D3mn0Q?t=1>

This film has been compiled from
authentic newsreel, official United
Nation, and captured enemy film.

Free use has been made of
certain Japanese motion pictures
with historical backgrounds.

Popular Culture and World Politics



Cultural Diplomacy



Cinematic Cultural Diplomacy Between
the Conceptual Binaries
of East and West
in the Early Cold War Era

Propaganda

“[A]ll cultural sites are powerful arenas in which political struggles take place. [...] Culture is not opposed to politics. Culture is political, and politics is cultural. Knowing how stories function [...] gives us the means to both critique and create politically powerful stories.”

(Weber 2005, 187-8, emphasis in original)

The Cinematic Cold War

1. A form of propaganda
and a Cold War
ideological battlefield

(e.g. Shaw and Youngblood 2010;
Roth-Ey 2011)

2. A form of diplomacy
and a platform for
cooperation

(e.g. Siefert 2012; Siefert 2014;
Kozovoi 2016)

The Cinematic Cold War

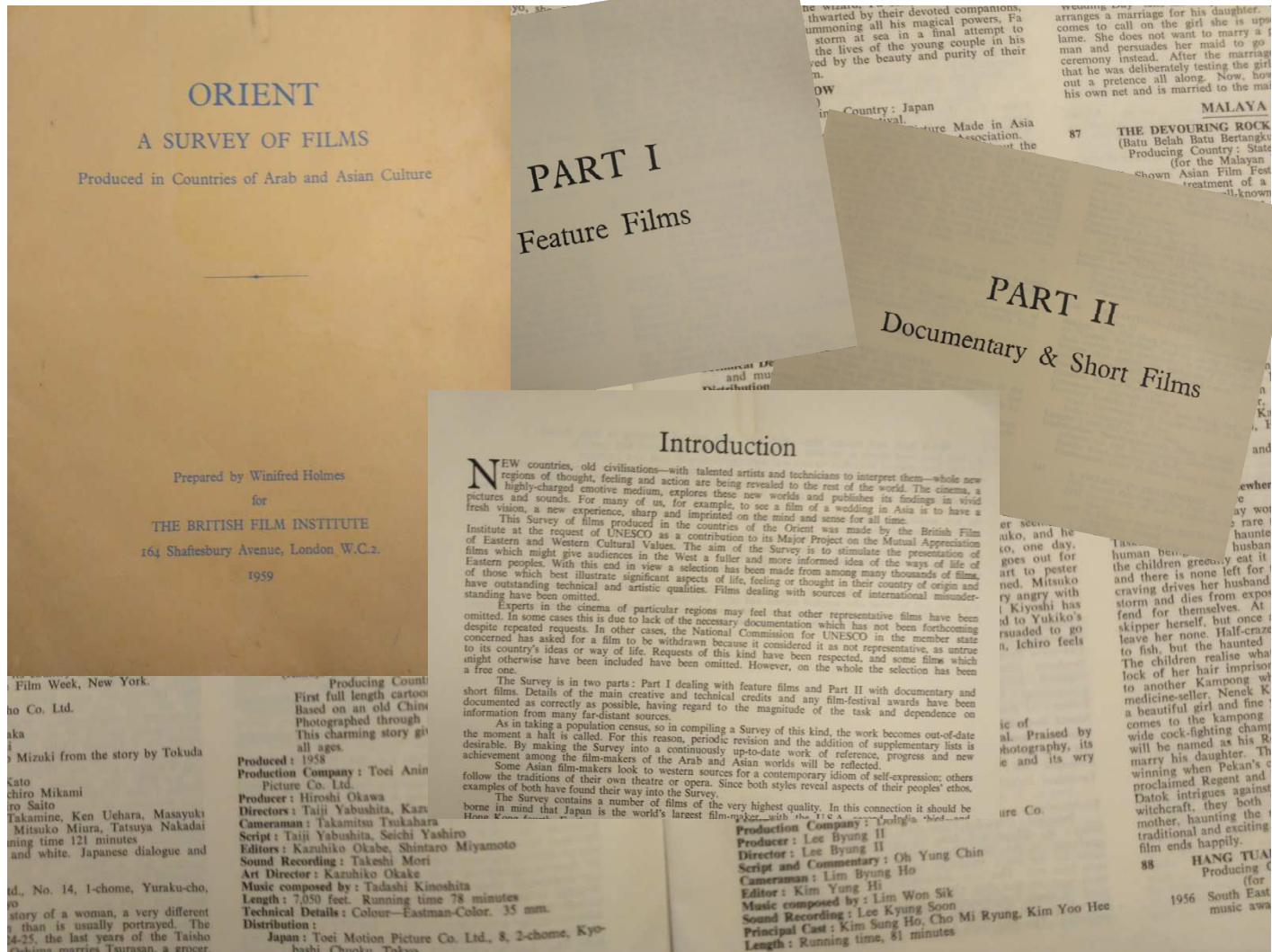
- The Case of UNESCO

“The promotion of mutual understanding between East and West has been adopted by Unesco as a Major Project. The emphasis, during the current period is mainly on enhancing understanding of the East in countries of Western civilisation.”

Film “can efficiently serve to promote an understanding of these countries.”

(UNESCO: A proposal for conducting a Survey of Asian Films 1957)

The Orient Catalogue



| Country | Number of Feature Films |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Hong Kong | 5 |
| India | 38 |
| Indonesia | 4 |
| Iraq | 1 |
| Japan | 37 |
| Korea | 1 |
| Malaya | 3 |
| Pakistan | 4 |
| Philippines | 7 |
| Thailand | 1 |
| Tunisia | 1 |
| United Arab Republic | 9 |
| U.S.S.R | 28 |

A Moral Force in Global Politics

*“That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is
in the minds of men that the defences of peace
must be constructed”*

(UNESCO Constitution 1945, Preamble)

Propaganda

“[T]he name propaganda is applied in modern political language as a term of reproach to secret associations for the spread of opinions and principles, which are viewed by most governments with horror and aversion”

(A Dictionary of Science, Literature and Art 1842, 991)

"a systematic form of purposeful persuasion that attempts to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of specified target audiences for ideological, political or commercial purposes through the controlled transmission of one-sided messages (which may or may not be factual) via mass and direct media channels."

(Nelson, Richard Alan 1996, 232-233)

“a conscious process of communicating a specific idea or opinion by any media available in order to persuade people to think and act in a desired manner”

(Taylor, Philip 2003)

The Actors and Their Motives

1. UNESCO

“[T]o stimulate the presentation of films which might give audiences in the West a fuller and more informed idea of the ways of life of Eastern peoples”

(Holmes 1959)

2. BFI

“[O]ur understanding was that the Survey was to be highly selective and only films of the best quality included in it”

(UNESCO. Letter from James Quinn to Dr. H. R. Cassirer. September 24th, 1958)

3. National Commissions

“[T]he National Commission for UNESCO in the member state concerned has asked for a film to be withdrawn because it considered it as not representative, as untrue to its country’s ideas or way of life”

(Holmes 1959)

The Selection

- (a) they have been shown or received awards at recognised international film festivals*
- (b) they have enjoyed box-office success and wide distribution in their own countries or*
- (c) they are of historical importance in the development of the art of the film in the country concerned*

“Films dealing with sources of international misunderstanding have been omitted”

(Holmes 1959)

The Core Ideal

“ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war”

“to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other’s lives”

(The UNESCO Constitution 1945, Preamble)

Peace propaganda

“The propaganda of peace is the work of a variety of social forces through a range of media and cultural forms, and its purpose is to bring society, culture or nation behind a core idea or principle, in this case, the promise of peace and its economic dividends after decades of conflict.”

(McLaughlin & Baker 2010, 11)

Five Rules of Propaganda 1.

“New countries, old civilisations – with talented artists and technicians to interpret them – whole new regions of thought, feeling and action are being revealed to the rest of the world. The cinema, a highly-charged emotive medium, explores these new worlds and publishes its findings in vivid pictures and sounds. For many of us, for example, to see a film of a wedding in Asia is to have a fresh vision, a new experience, sharp and imprinted on the mind and sense for all time.”

The rule of simplification

The Wedding Day

- <https://www.viki.com/videos/217882v-the-wedding-day?q=wedding>

Five Rules of Propaganda 2.

The aim of the Survey is to stimulate the presentation of films which might give audiences in the West a fuller and more informed idea of the ways of life of Eastern peoples. With this end in view a selection has been made from among many thousands of films, of those which best illustrate significant aspects of life, feeling or thought in their country of origin and have outstanding technical and artistic qualities.

the rule of transfusion

Five Rules of Propaganda 3

"The Survey contains a number of films of the very highest quality. In this connection it should be borne in mind that Japan is the world's largest film-maker, with the U.S.A. second, India third, and Hong Kong fourth.

Furthermore, the big film-producing countries of the Orient are not newcomers to the cinema, although it is only recently that their films have received world recognition. As a result of their work, the art of the cinema has been immensely enriched."

The rule of disfiguration

Rashomon

- <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x37rf7a>

Five Rules of Propaganda 4.

"To Western audiences, some of the films listed here will seem strange, even incomprehensible. Yet, except for religious differences, the strangeness is superficial rather than fundamental, lying rather in manners, customs, dress and social behaviour than in anything more profound. Love, marriage, family relationships, the interplay between good and evil are here, as elsewhere, the stuff of most of the stories."

The rule of unanimity

Five Rules of Propaganda 5.

"Despite this underlying similarity, and despite also the difficulty of generalising, there are a few main comparisons which can be made."

The rule of orchestration

Some Concluding Thoughts

- Inspiring hope in people's minds that war and peace are not merely something decided by governments, but something that can be influenced by their own attitudes and knowledge of the world
- Moving away from ideologically argued utopias and towards a more pragmatic argumentation of how the world should be (in order to achieve UNESCO's goal of peace in the minds of men): a world system built on the moral solidarity and mutual understanding of mankind
- Uniting the peoples of the world in a battle against a common enemy: ignorance, prejudice and misinformation.

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