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Foxes’ Lantern Show

Snow Crossing is one of several fairy tales that Miyazawa Kenji who is a famous Japanese poet and writer of children’s story could publish before his death. This short story that describes playful communication between human and fox children is well-known in Japan, partly because various Japanese textbooks used in elementary schools pick up or mention this work repeatedly. As a result, many Japanese students must read whole story or at least hear the title in their classrooms. However, there are few people who know the details of “magic lantern show (gentō kai)” appears in Snow Crossing. In this story, brother Shirô and sister Kanko meet a juvenile fox named Konzaburô and get invited to a lantern show held in the fox’s elementary school. “What beautiful weather tonight! The moon is just like a plate made of pearls. The stars are like twinkling dewdrops in a field. And now, the lantern show will start. Do not blink your eyes and do not sneeze, and please completely open your eyes.”1 After Konzaburô’s opening address, curious “foxes’ lantern show” begins.

THOU SHALT NOT DRINK was projected onto the screen in large type.
Then that was replaced with a photograph.


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It depicted a drunk old human being with his hands around some funny round object. They all stamped their feet and sang out...

"Kick kick tap tap, kick kick tap tap
Cold Snow, Packed Snow, Slip and Crunch
The Buns in the Field are Puffy Puff Puff
Tipsy and Tottering is Good Ol’ Taemon
Last Year He Ate a Good Thirty-Eight
Kick kick kick, tap tap tap!"

The lantern show in this story comprises both projection and performance, where spectators dance and sing together with the slide images. It seems more like singing and dancing around a fire than watching images. The foxes’ lantern show is particularly unique because its description does not only reminds us of the spaces and spectators of early cinema that are full of various reactions, but it also shows a slight difference between the two screen practices, magic lantern and early cinema. For Miyazawa, writing a fairy tale is the realization of a utopia recurring in his mind, and its description is just a “mental sketch” for him. However, the description of the foxes’ lantern show in Snow Crossing raises the question of whether some fragments of historical facts may be weaved into this story.

A Western-style magic lantern imported during the Meiji period was called genjō in Japanese, meaning “phantom (音) lamp (燈 iō)” (Fig. 1). After its development in seventeenth-century Europe, the magic lantern was brought to East Asia through trading and by Jesuit missionaries. This optical device was presumably introduced in Japan at the end of the eighteenth century. For example, Connoisseur of Long-nosed Goblin, a textbook for magicians published in 1779, discussed a magic lantern which was called “shadow play glass (kage-e megane)” in this textbook, and described its mechanisms. The magic lantern became popular nationwide during the Meiji period, especially between the 1880s and the 1890s, and myriad lantern shows were held in schoolyards, playhouses, or temples and shrines. Its vast popularity was sometimes called “lantern fever.”
Shōshū wrote, “Maybe, you cannot imagine how deeply folks were astonished, delighted, and moved by this beautiful magic lantern when they saw it for the first time. Because they rarely knew the amusements attached to a lamplight except for boring shadow plays at the time.”

In Japan, the history of the magic lantern was studied, especially in the fields of film history and folk entertainment (geinō). Recently, film historian Iwamoto Kenji published a comprehensive study titled *Centuries of Magic Lantern in Japan: A History of Visual Culture on the Eve of Cinema,* and empirically researched on the relationship between magic lantern and early cinema in Japan from various perspectives. Further, film historian Komatsu Hiroshi highlights that “critical film history should reorganize the prehistory of cinema not as an independent department, but as the continuum of film history, and reconsider cinema through the examination of the connection with the representation that existed before cinematography.” From this viewpoint, he examines the Japanese magic lantern and *Utsushie* lantern shows by applying the concept of “screen practice” proposed by Charles Musser.

In his well-known discussion regarding the strong connection between the magic lantern and early cinema, Musser proposed considering screen culture not only from the viewpoint of technology and images but also from various cultural practices composed of a narrator, performance, musical instruments, sound effects, and so on. This paper examines the screen practices of the magic lantern during the Meiji period inspired by Musser’s viewpoint. In addition to screen practice, this article focuses especially on the lantern show itself, namely the organization of the “space” where lantern images are projected. The magic lantern as cultural practice is not only accompanied by audio-visual stimulus but also formed by the structure of the lantern show, such as the arrangement of the devices, layout of the seats, and instruction of the narrators. The space of the lantern show structurally restricts practices and bodies that exist around the screen.

From this perspective, this study focuses on lantern shows held from the 1870s to the 1890s. Previous researches have often emphasized that myriad lantern shows were held in elementary schools in the Meiji period. However, these researches, based on film history or pedagogy, paid little attention to the structure of spaces or the spectators of the show. On the other hand, photo theorist and historian Maekawa Osamu discusses the relationship between the academic usage of the magic lantern and the “reorganization of modern perception” in the context of the slide projection during an art history lecture. Based on Walter Benjamin and Jonathan Crary’s work, Maekawa emphasizes that the magic lantern used during the lecture of art history is the medium “to educate and discipline artistic
perception,” and “under the environment that eliminated extra audio-visual stimulus, its observer is fixed in an immovable position, focuses their attention onto the fore point, keeping a certain distance from the image, waiting for the next stimuli presented before him, and scanning the image at once.” Maintaining their attention during this process “disciplines them for making up a tamed body suited for efficiency in the industrial society.”

In addition to disciplinary aspect of magic lantern mentioned above, this study also focuses on the lantern show as a space filled with various practices. The magic lantern not only makes spectators focus their vision onto the images, but also at the same time, projects images with voice performance, music, songs, and spectators’ physical reaction. However, it does not simply mean the failure of discipline, but another kind of control through various sensations. In the following analysis, “the educational lantern shows” in the latter half of 1880s and “the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows” from 1894 to 1895 are examined. In this article “educational lantern show” means the lantern show using slides of science, history, ethics and so on held during the 1880s to late Meiji periods in order to educate and enlighten its spectators. On the other hand, “Sino-Japanese war lantern show” in this article is the general term for the lantern show projecting slides depicted battles, news, and military stories of Sino-Japanese war held from 1894 to 1895.

Educational Lantern Shows

Tejima Seiichi, a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Education, imported the magic lantern to Japan, and it came to be called “gentô” in the 1870s. According to The Encyclopedia of the Origins of Things and Customs of the Meiji Period, by Ishii Kendô, slides imported at the time consisted of astronomy, natural phenomena, anatomy, and animals, and were used for education. Ishii wrote:

There were also some magic lanterns in our country. They were called utsushi-e or kage-e, namely projected shadows of objects, and provided as entertainment for women and children. Their mechanisms are almost the same as those of today’s gentô lanterns, but slightly different in their quality. However, we can say gentô lanterns are completely new objects imported from the West because they are used for education and other practical uses.

As Ishii said, the utsushi-e lantern show, a Japanese vaudeville (yose) performance that used the magic lantern, existed even during the Edo period. Compared with utsushi-e, which was mainly used in entertainment
programs, *gentō* was entirely new when it was introduced into the education system of the Meiji government. Lanterns imported from the West, such as the North America or England, were collected in an educational museum opened in Ueno Park in 1877. After which, the Ministry of Education asked two photographers and manufacturers, Tsurubuchi Hatsuzō and Nakajima Matsuchi, to start manufacturing domestic products, and distributed them to elementary schools (*jīnjō shōgakkō*) throughout the country. Later, Tejima became the director of the Educational Museum and wrote about the educational use of lanterns and emphasized its importance:

The magic lantern saves the labor of drawing images, and because it clearly projects images, spectators’ understanding becomes much better. If the lantern is exquisitely made, we can use it instead of a microscope, and show the activity of microbes and experiments of physics or chemistry several times larger than the actual size, thus we can plainly demonstrate them for numerous spectators. In comparison with a microscope, which can be used by only one person at a time, its usefulness is clearly understood. Therefore, the magic lantern is most useful and indispensable in its academic usage.

Tejima focused on four advantages of lanterns in this remark: (1) to save the labor of drawing images; (2) to promote spectators’ understanding through clear images; (3) to enlarge the details of objects; and (4) to view the images with many spectators. Accordingly, he concluded that the “magic lantern is most useful and indispensable in its academic usage.” In addition to the statement above, Tejima wrote that this device not only “shows us a part of the subjects that is indispensable for our lives,” but also “provides pleasure for midnight and instructs children through recreations.” He completely understood its ambiguity between education and amusement.

The educational role of lanterns became clear during the lantern show that was sponsored by Ōki Takatō, the then Minister of Education, and held at Shūbunkan Hall within the Ministry of Education on March 13, 1884. The program of the show included six sections: (1) utility of the magic lantern, its outline, lanterns created in Japan, and a preview of the slides [*eiga*]; (2) preview of the microscopic lantern and projection of several kinds of living things; (3) architecture related to education; (4) variations of geological features; (5) outline of the structure of the human body; and (6) celestial phenomena. Explanations during each section were provided by
Tejima and the four other narrators (*setsumeisha*). The show focused on the instruction of Western science with novel technology, and the "microscopic lantern" was the newest projection technique that could enlarge the view of the microscope. Among the various components of this lantern show, it is worth focusing especially on the spatial structure, disposition of the device, and performance of the narrator. Space and device in this show are described as follows:

The magic lantern and its attachments were arranged in the center of the hall, and a folding screen (*byobu*) surrounded and covered them except the front of the projector. Inside the folding screen was where the person operated magic lantern. The device projected and enlarged the image of things to about 4 meters of the white screen above a wall that is about 4.5 meters away from the lantern. Outside the folding screen, there were roughly a hundred chairs that were arranged in a semi-circle on both sides, and the spectators took their seats.

Further, the performance of the "narrator" is described as follows:

Every time the slide was projected, the narrator stood beside the screen, talked about the slide using a pointer, and explained it in detail. Therefore, there was the benefit that even women and children could easily grasp the point.

It is quite important that the space of this lantern show was organized to create a certain order. Namely, the device and the operator were surrounded by the folding screen and were completely hidden from the observers' view. Because the chairs were arranged in a semi-circle and the spectators were engaged by the instruction, every eye focused on the slide. Bright images projected by the lantern were separated from the seats and caught their eyes in the dark. The narrator stood by the slide image, discussed it in detail with a thin stick, and controlled the spectators' attention. In the lantern show at Shūbunkan Hall, image, space, and device were integrated and controlled the spectators' visual attention.

There are several *nishikie* woodblock prints depicting
educational lantern shows. For example, a nishkie titled Board Game of School Arts depicts a lantern lecture in an elementary school (Fig. 2). In this woodblock print, every student sat down in an orderly manner and concentrated on the screen in front, except a girl in the front row. The slide image is projected and enlarged in the dark and attracts students’ attention. The teacher stands beside the screen and shows where to look by using a pointer.

It is said that private companies started to sell relatively cheap devices; as a result, schools and educational societies started buying lanterns, and educational lantern shows spread throughout the country during the second half of the 1880s. Indeed, in 1886 “an anatomical chart, pictures of the earth and celestial bodies, and so on” were projected in “the ceremony of lantern review” at the educational meeting place in Kuji city in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1886, and Koga Elementary School in Fukushima Prefecture bought a magic lantern and held an educational lantern show in Wakamatsu School, which was attended by more than 700 people. In addition, an educational lantern show about “astronomy, physiology, geography, and history” was held at Katsuyama Elementary School in Ehime Prefecture and the educational association of Anno county in Mie Prefecture started lending lanterns; as a result, many educational lantern shows were held during 1887. During the 1880s, the literacy rate was low in the rural district, and the magic lantern that enabled enlightenment with images and voice was enthusiastically introduced for illiterate people, including children and women.

According to the article at that time, spectators often quietly watched the slide images during these educational lantern shows. For example, the educational lantern show that was held at Irunishi School in Iruma county in Saitama Prefecture was reported in Journal of Education in Saitama in 1886:

Teacher Hijikata first projected the slides on physiology, astronomy, geography, famous sights, and so on by the portable device, and explained earnestly with some chat and humor, so members would not be tired. The show climaxed without people knowing and even the old born in the Tenpō period [1830–44] seemed impressed by the speed of the progress of education. The show ended at 30 minutes past midnight and everybody regretfully went home.

Projected slides such as “physiology, astronomy, geography, and famous sights” are similar to those projected at the lantern show held at Shūbunkan Hall; however, a teacher took charge of the narrator in this show. When an
organizer started the show, it was reported that the place was “quiet, and nobody spoke a word,” even though the school was filled with about 300 people.

Clearly, the educational lantern show held in Saitama Prefecture was not exceptional according to two other educational lantern shows reported in Magazine of Educational Association in Kanagawa Prefecture in 1888. An article in the magazine reported on the educational lantern show held in Inoguchi School in Ashigara county in Kanagawa Prefecture on November 14, 1888. Several hundred visitors, including students and their parents attended the show, and the slides of “the evidence around Meiji Restoration,” “history, geography, physics, physiology, home education, and so on” were projected, and the operator and teacher explained them. The place was “very quiet as if nobody existed,” and when the picture of the Meiji Emperor (Goshinei) was projected, “all the spectators became silent as if the Emperor was present.”30 In addition, the educational lantern show held at Tadekawa School in Kouza county on September 19, 1888 was reported as follows: “because no less than four hundred people came to watch, the schoolhouse was extremely crowded” and “pictures of morals, geography, history, physiology, and so on, were projected” and explained. Partly because a police officer attended this show, the spectators quietly looked at the magic lantern and the “whole school was silent as if nobody existed.”30

In this way, the educational lantern show focuses spectators’ attention toward the projected image and efficiently disciplines them. However, “the discipline of the eye” (which means to discipline spectators through their vision) was not simply forced by the device. The article that appeared in Eisai Shinshi Magazine, a popular contribution magazine at the time, was about the attraction of the magic lantern during 1890. This article depicted the visual experience as if traveling from one slide to another with the “infinite pleasure” brought by the magic lantern:

It is only a magic lantern that enables a person to enjoy infinite pleasure by nothing but a fragment of white screen. In a moment, it makes us play among cherry blossoms in full bloom at Enryakuji Temple, enjoying ourselves boating at the Sumida River, ...Or, we visit the East, at the next moment, we are already in London. After we leave London, then, arrive at the East, moving from place to place as quickly as lightning. And then, things on the screen seem real, but we cannot stop their vanishing however we want to deny. It is only a temporal phantom.31
This contribution was regarding the visual images flickering on “a fragment of white screen” in the absence of a narrator, device, or spectators. In this show, the scenery (maybe the photographic slides) is connected “in a moment” when the slide is displaced. Even if the spectator wants to stop the vision, the “temporal phantom” soon vanishes. However, spectators are driven to focus on this phantom image and experience the reality as if they actually visit the place.

In comparison with the spectators who cannot freely move and have to concentrate on the slides in the lantern show, the phantasmagoric images float away from now and here. Displacement of the slide does not merely connect the distant scenery at once, but also successively exchanges and reconstructs visual fragments, making spectators follow the visual flow, and mechanically reorganizes their vision differently from the external world. This “temporal phantom” constructs a virtual reality, and spectators visually devote themselves to the virtual reality because of its “infinite pleasure.”

Sino-Japanese War Lantern Shows

Previous research indicated that lantern shows held in schools began to transform around the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. Yamamoto and Konno called this transformation “a conversion from the encouragement of education to the promotion of military affairs.” They highlighted that the subjects of the slides projected in lantern shows changed from education and morals to warfare; however, in the following discussion, this article try to clarify that not only the subjects of the slides but also the spectators and spaces of lantern shows began to change at the time. According to journalist and writer Ubukata Toshirō, “the Sino-Japanese War lantern show” held in Gunma Prefecture in his childhood was different from the educational lantern shows discussed above:

The 2nd floor of the large paper mill factory was full of people, so there was no space even for a crawling ant. The room was completely dark. A white and round shadow was projected in front. It took a lot of time to arrange the lantern device. I was in a sweat, and my foot was hurting because of the wooden floor. Somebody said with anger not to push him, a woman talked in a shrill voice, and someone giggled. “Hush, hush!” I heard the voice that tried to control the crowd. Before long, a picture of Nijubashi Bridge was projected. Crowds were surprised, up roared, and shouted banzai.
At that time, lantern shows lagged behind newspapers with respect to the speed and accuracy of information regarding the Sino-Japanese War. People could get photographs of the war through magazines such as *Records of Sino-Japanese War* (*Nissin Sensō Jikki*) that emerged and became popular during that period. Therefore, the spectators of lantern shows had information about the Sino-Japanese War before attending the shows. However, there was one thing that did not exist in print media but existed in the lantern shows: communication on the spot and mediated by projected images. Information about the war that they got from print media was reconfirmed and reconstructed as public events in the lantern show. In an event like the lantern show written by Ubukata, spectators who looked forward to seeing the projection were excited and even shouted for the images.

Such reactions were often depicted in the pictures of Sino-Japanese War lantern shows. For example, a front cover of *Sino-Japanese War Lantern Show* shows the boys who shouted and raised their hands (Fig. 3). Moreover, on a cover of *Illustrated Magazine for Pictorial Puzzle of Sino-Japanese Magic Lantern* (Fig. 4), there is a spectator who claps for a slide of a bugler on the battlefield. It was a clear contrast to the quiet spectators at the educational lantern shows. Such lively and crowded spaces were controlled by a narrator called “benshi” (the given name also applied for narrators of cinematograph later). Ubukata wrote,

Benshi’s performance was quite good. He talked about something adequate for the occasion and moved the audience. After he explained the slides from start to the end, he began to talk;

“Gentlemen, do you know what kind of situation we are in today?”

I still remember his words, such as, “It is not the time for playing the Chinese lute or Bamboo flute easily.” He lamented sometimes with humor.

He is not just a narrator. His job is not merely to explain the slides in
plain speech. The benshi is a mediator who balances out the atmosphere of
the lantern show and excites the spectators by his skillful performance. In
contrast to narrators who just gave a stereotyped explanation, the benshi
talked about “something adequate for the occasion.” Further, he ad-libs by
saying, “it is not the time for playing the Chinese lute or Bamboo flute
easily.” As a result, the benshi himself became an attraction of the lantern
shows; for example, Ubukata remembered the performance of the benshi in
more detail than the subjects of slides.

The Sino-Japanese War lantern shows were different than educational
lantern shows in many ways, even though both were often held in schools.
According to educational statistics published by Ehime Prefecture, “the
wartime lecture and lantern show” was held 1250 times in 1894 and 1046
times in 1895 at elementary schools in this prefecture. These Sino-
Japanese War lantern shows were held not just for amusement but for
“education of militarism (syōbu kyōiku)” by teachers or educational
associations, and situated as a part of educational activities that occur in
schools.

There are other details of the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows. An
article printed in Eisai Shinshi Magazine reported on the lantern show held
at an elementary school in Ibaraki Prefecture as follows. On October 8,
1894, at about 6 p.m., hundreds of people gathered to see the show and the
place was full. After the opening address, nearly 100 slides were projected.
The subjects were well-known events repeatedly reported in newspapers
and magazines at the time, such as “the violent death of Kim Ok-gyun” or
“The Battle of Pungdo.” Among the descriptions in the article, it is worth to
focus on the performance of the benshi and the reaction of the spectators.

Because the benshi individually explained 100 slides with
enthusiasm and lament, the audience sometimes shed tears
with sorrow, and sometimes held their arms with anger.

The role of the benshi is not just a narrator in the show. His enthusiastic
talk directly affects the spectators’ emotions and makes them shed tears or
get angry. Because of the integration of the benshi’s skillful voice
performance and the visual stimulus aroused by the lantern images,
spectators devoted themselves to the show and were involved in the
spectacle.

When the show came into the section of the Battle of
Seonghwan and Japanese soldiers occupied them, the
audiences were high-spirited, could not stop clapping and
stamping, and shouted "splendid and magnificent!"\textsuperscript{40}

According to the report, when the show came to its climax, the victory in the Battle of Seonghwan, spectators simultaneously had strong reactions such as clapping, stamping, and shouting. They were involved in an uplift of emotions. The article reported that a policeman told them to break up at midnight. The opening was 6 p.m., therefore, the show went on for at least six hours. The case introduced above is not necessarily a peculiar one. According to another contribution in \textit{Eisai Shinshi Magazine}, the Sino-Japanese War lantern show held at a school in Fukushima Prefecture was quite similar in many ways.

This lantern show in Fukushima was held in October 1894 around the same time as the Ibaraki show. According to the report, a vast green arch was erected in front of the school gate similar to a festival, the national flag was raised, and large paper lanterns with "lantern show for patriotism and militarism (Aikoku shōbu gentō kai)" were shown in big letters.\textsuperscript{41} The place was "extremely crowded with several hundred people," accordingly, the show started and lantern images were projected. "First, a map of Japan, Qing, and Korea was projected and borders among these countries were shown. Next, the conquest [invasion] of Korea led by Empress Jingu was shown, and then the reason Toyotomi Hideyoshi dispatched troops to Korea was discussed. In addition, about several hundred slides were projected and discussed." An interesting point is the description of the benshi and the spectators:

Because the benshi enthusiastically explained Qing’s arrogance, audiences sometimes wept with a lament and tragic feeling, sometimes could not stop clenching their fists and grinding their teeth... When the picture of the fall of Pyongyang was projected, I thought Japanese soldiers were truly valiant and daring, and the slide was filled with bravery. Spectators could not stop clapping and stamping. Every time a slide moved to another, applause shook the entire schoolhouse.\textsuperscript{42}

In this show, the enthusiastic talk of the benshi created an emotional reaction and drove spectators to involve themselves in the spectacle through applause or shouting. The excitement of the spectators reached the level such that "applause shook the entire schoolhouse." The article reported that "students sang the military song for the conquest of Qing accompanied by instruments, and shouted banzai for the State and for the Army and Navy" at
the end of the show." Therefore, students were not only "spectators" who sat and watched the show but also "performers" who sang and played songs by themselves. The show ended at midnight.

In fact, there were several variations of Sino-Japanese War lantern shows in each region. For example, the "lantern show of the Sino-Japanese war picture" was held in 1895 at Okutsu Elementary school in Ehime Prefecture. The night of the show, the schoolhouse was filled with crowds, and some people even stood in the schoolyard at the opening time, 6 p.m. Slides that depicted "the landing of our soldiers to the negotiation of Minister Ōtori," "the Battle of Seonghwan and Pungdo," "the fierce fight at Pyongyang," and "the Battle of Yalu River" were projected. In this show, students were not just spectators, either.

When the show reached the scene of marching soldiers, students played military songs for the conquest of Qing by raising their voices. And when the portrait of the Emperor was projected, students very quietly sang the national anthem Kimigayo. Their song made audiences deeply understand our soldiers' strong patriotism and loyalty, and aroused their hostility against Qing."

In this show, the auditory stimulus such as military songs or national anthem and the physical participation of students by singing songs came to the fore of the show. As a result, the emotions of the spectators reached a climax and converged in one direction. The article reported that the show ended at 10 p.m.

Even if lantern shows had an aspect of space to control spectators through sensory stimulus, it would be an oversimplification if merely the aspects of the collectivity and homogeneity of the spectators' reactions are focused. In spite of educational and contribution magazines that emphasized the unification of the spectators, some novels and memoirs wrote about different kinds of spectators in lantern shows. For example, an autobiographical novel First Lesson, by Osanai Kaoru, a theater director and playwright suggests the existence of more diverse and discursive spectators. In this novel, a lantern show is held at the school playground one night after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. The space and spectators of the show are described as follows:

When the picture of a brave fight of Captain Matsuzaki was projected, all the male students stood up, and sang a song: "River in Anjō is easy to pass by
That reputation would be useless? ..."
When the picture of a field hospital was projected, all the female students stood up and sang:
"The sound of rifles is going away
The singing of insects only remains..."45

Here, the magic lantern is surrounded by singing voices. Standing and singing alternately by the students may have been planned in advance; however, not all the spectators are integrated into an emotional uplift through the visual sensation of projected images and the auditory stimulus of singing voices.

I tried to catch only the voice of Okami-san among the chorus of students.
It was a little bright because of the projected picture. Okami-san standing there seemed pale, but her figure looked clear.46

He never watches the lantern images; nevertheless, he stands in the middle of space of the Sino-Japanese War lantern show. The light of the lantern not only kept spectators to focus on images projected forward, but also led their attention distracted by illuminating the surroundings. Children freely dodged the intention of discipline, and appropriated their attention toward a different purpose. The spectator is not the only one who does not see the lantern in this show.

Before I knew it, I saw Fujimura’s younger brother go near Okami-san and lean on her lap.
Okami-san brought her mouth near the ear of Fujimura’s brother and whispered something in his ear. Then, he looked at his elder brother with a big smile. Fujimura looked at his brother’s smiling face, then looked at Okami-san’s face and smiled.47

These spectators “exchange meaningless smiles” in this show. The lantern show not only encouraged homogeneous spectators and nationalistic uplift through the control of perception but also consisted of various reactions dodging such intention of control. It was just a childish reaction, but that is the reason they could avoid the control of perception. First Lesson is sometimes called an “autobiographical work,” but in fact is fiction. However, we could catch a glimpse of possibility of various spectators of the lantern show that could not be recorded by educational or
contribution magazines, or handbooks for educators.

**Lantern Shows as Marginal Art**

This article has discussed the space and spectators of educational lantern shows and Sino-Japanese War lantern shows during the 1880s and the 1890s. First, the magic lantern was introduced in the Meiji education system as an educational device because it encouraged spectators' understanding through its clear, enlarged images that showed the details of things and shared the images with hundreds of people. It educated spectators through visual information and entertainment. However, this was not the only role this device played in the Meiji period. In educational lantern shows, the magic lantern became a device to control spectators' attention through its arrangement, the structure of the space, and the voice and instructions of the narrators. Moreover, lantern images controlled spectators' eyes through the exchange, connection, and reorganization of fragmented vision.

On the other hand, the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows created physical and emotional reactions in spectators. They shouted banzai, clapped and stamped. Or, they sometimes sang military songs and played musical instruments. Spectators of the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows not only looked at the slides but also actively participated in the programs. Second, the voice performance of the benshi was an important element of the show. In spite of the narrators in the educational lantern shows, the benshi not only explained the slides, but also controlled the emotions and reactions of the spectators through skillful and enthusiastic talk. Third, auditory stimuli such as music, songs, and voice performance of the benshi became a focus of the shows. These characteristics led spectators to an emotional uplift in the festival-like environment.

Consequently, the magic lantern was mainly introduced into elementary schools to make students concentrate on vision and discipline their eyes. However, it became a device that controlled students' reactions through multi-sensory effects and performances during the 1890s. In addition, this article emphasized that magic lantern was not merely device for controlling perception. Lantern shows were filled with various reactions that dodged such control.

Based on the discussion so far, let us reexamine the “Foxes’ Lantern Show” for a while.

The whistle whistled.
THOU SHALT NOT MAKE LIGHT OF TRAPS appeared on the sheet in large lettering before it was replaced by a picture.
It pictured Konbei the fox with his left foot caught in a trap.
"Yelpy Fox, Little Fox, just last year Konbei the fox stuck his foot in a trap.
Yelp yelp thump thump, yelp yelp yelp!"  

The subjects of slides such as "THOU SHALT NOT DRINK" or "THOU SHALT NOT MAKE LIGHT OF TRAPS" show that the foxes' lantern show also focused on education and moral, and it was held at schools. In that sense, it is quite similar to the educational lantern shows held during the 1880s. However, the foxes' lantern show is a space that is filled with physical reactions such as singing, stamping, and shouting. It requires its spectators to "completely open their eyes" without blinking but at the same time, it is filled with spectators singing and stamping. After all, these multi-sensory stimuli and the participation of spectators resulted in an emotional uplift.

"Well, everybody, that concludes tonight's magic lantern show. There is something that you all must truly take to heart tonight. And that is the fact that two children of human beings, both clever and not in the least drunk, have been kind enough to eat food made by foxes. I believe that in the future you, as adults, will neither tell lies nor be envious of others, and that the bad reputation of us foxes up till now will be a thing of the past. This concludes my closing remarks."

The pupils were moved down to the last fox, raising both paws and rushing to their feet. And their cheeks glittered with tears.

Such elation and reactions of spectators are similar to the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows. However, the "Foxes' Lantern Show," where foxes and human children are sympathetic to each other is the place where humans and non-humans, who routinely passed each other, playfully collaborate together. Therefore, the foxes' lantern show is an event located somewhere between the educational lantern show and the Sino-Japanese War lantern show, but nowhere in actual history.

Miyazawa Kenji wrote about his life after retirement as a teacher in Iwate Nippo Newspaper in 1926, the year A Page of Madness (Kurutta ichi peijji) was released by the avant-garde group of artists "School of New Perceptions (Shinkankaku-ha)". In this article, he hoped to cultivate land in the Hanamaki area and "live a life united with arts" for about half a year. Art he also planned to "hold a lantern show every week," and have a record
concert once a month.\textsuperscript{51}

If these words were realized, what kind of event did Miyazawa’s lantern show become? It would not be similar to the control of perception or the film made by modernists, but it may be the “life unified with arts” or the lantern show as a “marginal art.”\textsuperscript{52}

Notes


2. Ibid., 121. This quotation refers to the English translation by Roger Pulvers.


10. Charles Musser, The Emergence of Cinema: The American Screen to 1907 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). On the other hand, Erkki Huhtamo extends the concept of "screen" and discusses not only magic lanterns and cinema, but also panoramas, shadow plays, and even mobile phones as screens. Erkki Huhtamo, "Elements of Screenology: Toward an Archaeology of the Screen," ICONICS 7 (2004): 31–82.


14. This article mainly examines the descriptions of the articles about lantern shows printed in educational and contribution magazines that have not been examined in film history. Lantern shows held outside of schools such as theaters, shrines, or homes should be examined in future research.


19. Ibid., 52–53. People called lantern slides and projected images “Eiga” (Japanese name for Cinema and Film) at the time.

20. Yomiuri Newspaper reported that this “microscopic lantern” was opened to the public in a crystal palace in London. Yomiuri Newspaper March 01, 1884.


22. Ibid.

23. Inoue Tankei, Board Game of School Arts [Gakkō giget sugoroku] (Matsuno Yonejirō, 1887).

24. However, we have to notice that Board Game of School Arts is a kind of “woodblock prints for education (kyōiku nishiki).” Therefore, this woodblock print depicted the norm for the way of seeing lantern images in class rooms more than actual condition of lecture using magic lantern.


30. Ibid. 8, 1888, 437.

31. Eisai Shinshi 696, 1890, 4.


38. Ehime Prefecture (ed), *Wartime Education in This Prefecture* [Honken ni okeru senji kyōiku] (Department of Interior of Ehime Prefecture, 1907), 63–64.
40. Ibid., 5–6.
42. *Eisai Shinshī* 907 (1895): 5.
43. Ibid.
44. *Journal of Education in Aichi* 92, 1895, 17.
46. Ibid., 393.
47. Ibid., 394.
48. Of course, there were various lantern shows other than these two types listed above. In addition, it was not simply a change from the former to the latter. See Lu Xun, “Teacher Fujino [Fujino sensei]” in *The True Story of Ah Q and Teacher Fujino* [A Q seiden, Fujino sensei] (Kōdansha, 1998), 266.
50. Ibid, 124. This quotation refers to the English translation by Roger Pulvers.
51. *Iwate Nippo Newspaper* April 1, 1926.
52. Tsurumi Shunsuke discussed that aesthetic experience is much broader than the experience brought by “Pure Art” or “Popular Art,” and in addition to the two art forms, “Marginal Art” exists in the boundary area between arts and daily life, created by non-professionals and enjoyed by amateurs. Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Study of Marginal Art* [Genkai geijutsu ron] (Chikuma shobō, 1999), 10–88. “Marginal Art” could be the third path to consider a different path than the two possible paths of modern perception, autonomy of vision in modernism (“Pure Art” in Tsurumi’s term) and standardization of vision in mass culture (“Popular Art”) that Jonathan Crary suggested in his work. See Crary, 219.
ABSTRACTS


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This article analyzes the magic lantern show and its spectators during late nineteenth-century Japan, through an examination of two types of lantern shows and their different spectators.

In Japan, magic lanterns (gentô) began to be used as an educational tool during lectures in elementary schools in the late 1880s. During these educational lantern shows (Kyôiku gentô kai), the devices, the lecturer’s explanation and the instructions were managed in such a way that the students were encouraged to concentrate on the projected images in silence.

However, during Sino-Japanese War lantern shows (Nisshin sensô gentô kai), which were held between 1894 and 1895, the spectators clapped their hands, shouted banzai, sang military songs, and even played music instruments. In addition, the role of the benshi in the Sino-Japanese War lantern shows was different to that of the lecturer who merely gave instructions using slides and textbooks in the educational lantern shows. Indeed, the benshi’s skill in narrating and performing had a direct effect on the spectators’ emotions and reaction. Moreover, auditory stimuli such as music, songs, and narration all helped to keep their attention during the shows.

These two types of lantern shows were completely different in terms of the spectators’ reaction. However, they were similar in that they were both organized to produce a homogeneous reaction by managing the spectators’ perception.