

Weekly Japanese Cinema Report

Film: Tampopo

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Japanese 310 - 01

February 11, 2014

✓ In the film Tampopo, there were quite a few elements that can be tied in with the Japanese culture. Tampopo is a food movie and the main character of this film is the ramen noodles and all the other authentic Japanese dishes. As we saw in the Japanese film Tampopo, ramen is a big part of Japanese cuisine and culture. For example, we saw short clips of different families having either noodles or other Japanese dishes at home or at restaurants. This film focuses on Tampopo's story for the most part and also shows four short clips on stories involving food on different levels. Tampopo's story was focused on improving her ramen noodle business and in order to do so Goro a trucker became her teacher. Both Tampopo and Goro went to a couple of noodle restaurants in order to get ideas. In one of the scenes after looking for the perfect noodle recipe she cooked noodles for Goro, his helper, the interior designer and two other guys. After failing so many tries she finally got the perfect ramen soup, in the end the guys approved. This film focused on food as their main character and for that reason that is how I think it tied with Japanese culture through food.

✓ One of the first short stories focuses on a dying housewife who gets up from her deathbed to cook a quick last minute meal for her husband and kids before passing away. Another short clip was about a big group of women's etiquette class who were being taught how to eat their noodles properly. The third clip was about an old lady who walked in to a convenient store and started squeezing food; she was obsessed with touching and squeezing food items. Last but not least the most outrageous clip was the opening scene with the elegant gangster in the white suit and his girlfriend who had very erotic and kinky ways to consume their food. For example, in one of the very first scenes the gangster and his girlfriend called for room service and once they got their food, they started erotically playing with the food. The gangster sprinkled salt and squeezed lemon juice onto her nipple and licked it off and then she placed her breast inside a

bowl and he also licked that off. In conclusion, all these clips have one thing in common which is the Japanese culture and cuisine and also the interesting interaction between the characters and the food they consumed.

✓ The storyline on this movie was about the joys of food and the different ways of enjoying those typical Japanese dishes. Although, the main story was about Goro a trucker who pretty much became Tampopo's teacher and helped improve her noodle soup restaurant. Goro took her to a number of restaurants in order for Tampopo to experience the different atmospheres, noodle recipes and clientele. Although Tampopo was the main story it did include a few short clips that also focused on the importance of food in the Japanese culture. Unlike Gojira this movie was filmed in the 1980s when there was much better technology to work with. In my opinion the directors and creators of this movie did not really have to be as creative when it came to the special effects, since they had computers to create sounds and green screen effects. One thing I did notice was that the camera angle focused more on their eye and facial expressions.

✓ One thing I did notice when trying to relate the movie to my own life experiences is that like Japanese cuisine their food consists of ramen noodles and having small restaurants that sells them and I compared it to the Mexican cuisine who also sells their tacos in small stands or restaurants. Also one big thing that I did notice in the movie that can compare to Mexican traditions is that people tend to think that women cannot be great cooks; however, Tampopo proved them otherwise. In my opinion, I think we can all relate to food in one way or another.

✓ The movie was very interesting to watch, at first it seemed a bit boring and then it got awkward to watch in class with the erotic scenes but it actually kept me very entertained. I have never watched such an interesting movie and specially a movie about food. It was also very interesting to watch the different approaches towards food, some enjoy having hot sex and

playing with food while others enjoy poking and squeezing food. All in all, in a scale of 1 to 5, I rate this movie a 3 it was an interesting movie to watch but I'm not sure if I am a big fan of the food movie genre.

Good work 5