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## KENJI MIZOGUCHI

### WAGA KOI WA MOENU

(MY LOVE HAS BEEN BURNING)

Producers:	ITOYA Hisao, SHIMAZU Kiyoshi
Director:	MIZOGUCHI Kenji
Script:	YODA Yoshikata, SHINDO Kaneto
Based on:	An original story (based on fact) by NODA Kogo
Photography:	SUGIYAMA Kohei
Lighting:	TERADA Shigeo
Art Director:	MIZUTANI Hiroshi
Set Design:	YAMAGUCHI Sueyoshi
Costumes:	NAKAMURA Tsuma
Music:	ITO Senji, played by Shochiku Kyoto Orchestra
Sound:	TAKAHASHI Taro
Songs:	<u>WAGA KOI WA MOENU</u> by UEHARA Gento & TAKAHASHI Kikutaro, sung by TSUMURA Ken
	AI NO TOMOSHIBI by ITO Senji & MATSUMURA Mataichi, sung by SAYOMIYA Takako
Historical Research:	KAI Sunao

### CAST:

Hirayama Eiko .....	TANAKA Kinuyo
Chiyo .....	MITO Mitsuko
Kishida Toshiko .....	MIYABE Kuniko
Omoi Kentaro .....	SUGAI Ichiro
Prime Minister Inagaki .....	SENDA Koreya
Councillor Ito .....	TONO Eijiro
Hayase Ryuzo .....	OZAWA Eitaro
Chief at Filature .....	HAMADA Torahiko
Sakazaki Takeshi .....	SHIMIZU Masao
Guard .....	UNO Jukichi
Eiko's Mother .....	HIRANO Ikuko
Eiko's Father .....	ARAKI Shinobu

1949

Japan

Shochiku, Kyoto

WAGA KOI WA MOENU has in more ways than one a central position in Mizoguchi's suite of feminist films of the late '40s and early '50s, which stretches from JOSEI NO SHORI (THE VICTOYR OF WOMEN) to SAIKAKU ICHIDAI ONNA (THE LIFE OF OHARU). The film is drawn from the autobiography of Kageyama Hideko, a late 19th century pioneer in the fight for women's rights in Japan. Kageyama's book, Mekake No Hanshogai (Half a Lifetime As A Mistress), provides the model for the film's central character, much of the contemporary political background, and a number of the film's plot details. In her book, Kageyama presents herself as a woman who behaved in as masculine a fashion as possible; Mizoguchi's chief departure from his source was, therefore, his 'feminisation' of his own character Hirayama Eiko.

The notion of party politics had a long and difficult struggle to gain acceptance in

- P.T.O. -



Japan. The first attempts to form organisations in opposition to the national government were widely viewed as something like treason against the state, not least because they came hard on the heels of the Seinan civil war (background to the action of Mizoguchi's MARIA NO OYUKI - OYUKI THE VIRGIN). The national government under the Emperor Meiji was very well aware that Japan was backward by international standards, and felt that only strong, patriarchal rule could bring the country up to a level of modernity and prosperity commensurate with western countries.

Liberal demands for representative government countered by asserting that such a reform was essential in any programme to 'modernise' Japan. Early support for them was scattered, but the strong nationalist bias of their argument won over more and more of the Japanese middle-class, many of whom were benefitting from the introduction of compulsory education in 1872. But police raids on early political campaign meetings (such as are seen in the opening scenes of the film) did actually occur quite often.

The first group that organised itself into a small political party was the Jiyuto (Freedom Party...the English term 'Liberal' is a more accurate translation, but its connotations are distinctly misleading). It was fundamentally a party of middle-class capitalists anxious to defend their own interests, although many of its younger members were vocal on the subjects of citizen's rights in general and women's rights in particular. The Jiyuto was joined in 1881 by the Kaishinto (Progressive Party), founded by ex-government member Okuma Shigenobu, which had an even stronger capitalist bias. The two 'opposition' parties were as hostile to each other as to the national government, and their internecine tensions made it relatively easy for the government to suppress them. But both parties survived, tenuously, under various names, and are the ancestors of the two conservative parties in post-war Japanese politics.

It is interesting to note the broad similarity between the plots of WAGA KOI WA MOENU and one of Mizoguchi's earliest (and therefore lost) films HAIZAN NO UTA WA KANASHI (SAD IS THE SONG OF DEFEAT). The latter was made in 1923, and was the first of Mizoguchi's films to attract any critical attention. It concerns a young woman who leaves her home in a village to follow her student boyfriend to Tokyo; she returns home, chastened, when he rejects her. The 1923 film, of course, has no feminist bias. The girl is welcomed back by her step-father, who eventually takes her away from the village to help her forget.

- Tony Rayns -

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NOTE: Credits on the programme notes for the Mizoguchi Retrospective respect Japanese practice in printing SURNAMES first and personal or given names second.

Publication of the BFI Occasional Publications booklet on Mizoguchi has been unavoidably delayed. It will appear as soon as possible.