Target Hollywood! Examining Japan's Film Import Ban in the 1930s

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Abstract
In the 1930s Hollywood enjoyed a popular following in the Japanese film market, accounting for almost 90 per cent of imported sound films. Against a backdrop of emerging political tensions and war in China, the Japanese government announced in 1937 that it would place a ban on Hollywood film imports. This was a move that ushered in a new era of protectionism for Japan's emerging film industry. Following this decision, Hollywood studios engaged with Tokyo and sought an agreement to ease the new restrictions. After a period of intense discussions, the Japanese government agreed to lift the ban albeit with certain conditions. This paper examines protectionism in the Japanese film market and considers the impact of political forces, both domestic and international, on the decisions made. It will show that economic factors were mostly behind the decision to implement the ban and therefore facilitated the reaching of an agreement between the two sides. Furthermore, the interests of the domestic film industry who would benefit from the import of Hollywood films helped lift the ban.

In 1932, a remarkable event occurred that would sum up the challenging situation Hollywood was faced with in the Japanese film market. The comic actor Charlie Chaplin was visiting Tokyo as part of his world tour to meet and greet fans. Japanese audiences, like many others around the world, were great followers of Hollywood films and Chaplin in particular. Many ordinary people as well as a few high-level politicians were very eager to welcome his appearance. Some companies even sought to profit from his endorsement of their products. Unfortunately, the ultra-nationalist secret society known as the 'Blood-pledge Corps' was less than welcoming and actually plotted to assassinate the Hollywood star during his visit. By killing Chaplin, they hoped it would create international outrage and provoke the United States into a war with Japan. Furthermore, such an action they believed would help them to overthrow the civilian government and militarize Japanese society (Large, 2001; Silverberg, 2006). As it emerged, the assassination attempt failed, but Japan became embroiled in political debates over what should be shown on its screens. Many on the right believed that it should be dedicated to domestic films that promoted a national spirit, while others favoured the current open market where Hollywood blockbusters were screened next to domestic ones. In fact, this was a continuation of a long debate that had been ongoing since the 1920s about how to embrace the influx of Hollywood films (Bernardi, 2001). In 1924, the Japanese film industry even launched a boycott of Hollywood films from being screened at cinemas, an effort that ultimately failed as audiences defied the boycott and continued to watch these blockbusters (Itatsu, 2008). As the debate intensified, the domestic film industry and the viewing public were increasingly at the heart of how nationalists in Japan viewed the state and the role society played within it, there was a sense that a new approach had to be adopted.

In September 1937, a few months after the Japanese invasion of China, Japan's Finance Ministry announced a ban on all imported films as well as a freeze on foreign revenues amassed by US film studios from leaving the country (Tosaka, 2003b; Welky, 2009). Although not defined as such, this policy was specifically directed against Hollywood given that it dominated the foreign film market in Japan. According to some estimates, their blockbusters accounted for almost 80 per cent of the Japanese foreign film market (Thompson, 1985). This move by the Finance Ministry seemed to catch Hollywood by surprise who then sought to regain entry into a market that was arguably one of the largest and most promising in Asia. What followed was intense negotiations between Hollywood representatives and the Japanese government with a deal finally being agreed almost a year later in the summer of 1938. Known as the Kubo Agreement, Hollywood films were allowed back in (limited to 250 films per year) and the frozen revenues could go back to the US on the condition that they were held in a Japanese foreign exchange bank for three years (Welky, 2009). Although Hollywood films were back on Japanese screens, protectionist measures would remain in place with a quota as well as other censorship restrictions. These would be solidified with the 1939 Film Law. Still, US films remained popular and were the highest earners for exhibitors. It would not be until the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941 that Hollywood films would be banned completely from movie theatres (Tosaka, 2003a).

This presents two questions, why did Japan impose the 1937 film ban and how was an agreement reached that resolved the issue? To answer these questions, this paper

explores both the international and domestic factors related to the implementation of the ban. While for the Kubo agreement it considers the influence of domestic factors on its outcome. In this regard, it considers how the two sides were able to balance the considerable opposition to lifting the ban. As part of the methodology in understanding these domestic factors that influenced negotiations and the subsequent Kubo agreement, this paper adopts Robert Putnam's Two-Level Game Theory (Putnam, 1988).

The findings in this paper will have important implications for understanding protectionism in the cultural industries as a way to offset the dominance of Hollywood and how international politics as well as domestic political interests influence cultural practices.

In order to address the case of Japan's film import ban, this paper is divided into the following sections. The first will explore the literature on the topic of Japan's film market and the ban, the second provides an overview of the motivations behind the ban, the third and fourth outline how the domestic factors shaped negotiations and the subsequent agreement. Finally, the last section provides a summary of the main points and considers areas for further discussion and research.

Literature review

The course of pre-war Japan's film policies has been the focus of a number of studies that have mainly looked at the development of the industry (Gerow, 2009, 2010; Standish, 2006). Much of this scholarship has tied it in with the concepts of modernity and the formation of a new identity. Gerow (2010), in particular has looked at the Pure Film Movement throughout the 1910s and 1920s and its linkages with changes in society, particularly with an increasingly urban population. The Pure Film Movement sought to change approaches to film making by embracing new techniques adopted from Hollywood in terms of narrative and technical production. In this sense, it shows that Japanese audiences had sophisticated tastes in terms of the films they watched and therefore favoured high-quality productions. He has also placed it within the debate at the time on what should be shown on Japanese screens, but his study does not cover the 1930s as the state became more interventionist nor does it examine the film import ban.

US films dominated Japanese screens after the end of the First World War as they replaced European productions that were becoming less popular in the market. From its humble origins, the Japanese film industry was able to surpass Hollywood by 1927 in terms of domestic market share (Thompson, 1985). Given that the film companies in Europe had struggled to regain a significant share of their home markets after the First World War, this was an important achievement. And with relatively few protectionist measures in place, the success of Japan's film industry highlights its efficiency. This transition in market share came at a crucial time when Hollywood began to release its first sound films known as 'talkies'. The adaption to sound pictures was a slow process in Japan during the 1930s. At the same time,

after decades of limited interest, the government became more interventionist in the film industry from the late 1920s (Tosaka, 2003a).

The reasons behind the import ban have been the focus of several studies on Japan's film policies. Tosaka (2003b) has covered it extensively as well as the broader involvement of Hollywood in Japan. In his descriptive account on anti-Americanism and film import controls (Tosaka, 2003a), he outlines the role of ideology in the imposition of the 1937 film ban. He traces the ban's lineage from the early 1930s, specifically after the Manchurian Incident (1931), where the state began to impose increasingly tougher measures against foreign films, mainly through the more stringent enforcement of censorship rules. In terms of ideology, he points to 'Occidentalism' as a factor in how Japan perceived Hollywood films and its relation to its own sense of nationhood. This marks a transition from seeing Hollywood as a source of inspiration to one of hostility.

Baskett (2009) offers an interesting viewpoint connected with cultural linkages among the Axis powers. Throughout the mid to late 1930s, Japan cultivated close diplomatic relations with Germany and Italy with a view to joining the Anti-Comintern Pact. Alongside the political overtures were also a number of efforts undertaken by Japan to strengthen cultural ties with the Axis powers. To this extent, Japan would accede to censorship requests from the other Axis powers and even engage in co-productions. Yet these efforts at improving ties among the Axis powers were limited and never really became the united front against Hollywood that some may have envisioned.

During the same period, Yecies (2005) looks at the impact of film censorship in Korea, then part of the Japanese Empire. In the build up to the 1937 film ban, he outlines how popular Hollywood films were in Korea and crucially how profitable they were for the occupation authorities. Interestingly, it was the censorship fees that Hollywood had to foot in order for their films to access the market that made them reliable money-earners for the authorities. This highlights the importance of the economic factor in the distribution of Hollywood films and the expected impact in terms of losses for key domestic actors, such as theatre owners. Limited to Korea, there is then a need to consider this from a broader perspective across Japan as a whole.

Along with his focus on political forces, Welky (2009) notes the trade deficit Japan had with the US at the time of the film ban. This may go some way to explaining the role of the Finance Ministry in implementing the ban and freezing US assets. It further shows that economic factors were relevant alongside the political ones, particularly in reaching an agreement. If Hollywood was considered part of the 'other' in Occidental terms then it would be almost impossible to reach a compromise. But if there were economic factors involved as well, an agreement would be more possible as there would be domestic actors in Japan with interests in having the ban lifted. This presents a base from which to explore the film ban more carefully, particularly in terms of the political context of the time.

To understand better how this agreement came about, this paper adopts Putnam's Two-Level Game Theory to chart the interaction between the domestic political forces and those at the national level. One of the leading models in international relations, Putnam's theory was developed to explain the outcome of the G-7 summits in the late 1970s where domestic politics helped shape the agreements reached (Putnam, 1988). In his model, when governments or the 'chief negotiator' engage in dialogue, they must take into account domestic political forces and their interests. These domestic factors (Level II) can either constrain or expand the chances of success ('win-sets') at the international level (Level I). Putnam further explains how the size of these 'win-sets' is influenced by three factors. The first is the power and preferences of domestic factors, the second is how ratification takes place in a country, and the third is the strategies used by the 'chief negotiators' to expand the 'win-sets'. This paper uses the first and third factors to trace negotiations between Hollywood and the Finance Ministry at Level I and their interaction with domestic forces at Level II. The second factor of ratification did not play much of a role here. Before this analysis, the next section will briefly outline the motivations behind the ban to provide some important context.

Motivations for the film ban

When the war in China broke out in July 1937, it signified many changes for Japanese society as stricter policies in line with the total war footing came into effect. Viewed in this way, it would seem that the Japanese authorities implemented the film ban as part of broader wartime measures, but it is worth examining the issue from various angles. There are a number of international political factors that were behind the decision to ban foreign film imports and it is worth exploring them in order to understand the issues that were at stake. These fall into two categories, the impact of the Sino-Japanese War and ideological ties with the Axis powers.

The attack on China by Japanese forces was strongly opposed by the US who had long been suspicious of Japan's motives in the country. Yet, despite its vocal protestations, Washington maintained a low-key approach to the issue (Kelly, 2013). One incident though almost provoked a wider conflict in China involving the United States. On 12 December, 1937, Japanese aircrafts attacked the American gunboat USS *Panay* which was on patrol in Yangtze River, south of China's capital Nanjing. Despite Tokyo's assurances that it was accidental, few believed this claim and the US government demanded compensation. The standoff was resolved as Japan agreed to pay compensation and provided promises that such an incident would not happen again (Peifer, 2016). Despite the high stakes involved, the *Panay* Incident was resolved relatively quickly which provides some interesting context on the impact of the war on US-Japan relations. It also contrasts with the idea that maybe the outbreak of the war provoked more hostile policies toward the US.

Another way of looking at the effect of the Sino-Japanese War on the film ban is to consider this policy instrument within the broader context of propaganda and new controls on the media during the war. Japan had long recognized the importance of propaganda as seen during the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and how it was able to win over sceptical international opinion (Paine, 2003). However, the 1930s saw greater control of information in the domestic context. Whereas during the First Sino-Japanese War it was about how other countries perceived Japan, here it was about how its own people viewed the state. With the war, a Cabinet Information Division was established to coordinate the release of information from the various ministries. This was a clear sign that broader efforts by the Japanese government to gain control over the information that reached its public (Tosaka, 2003b). It would be natural therefore to see the film ban as an extension of these new propaganda efforts, particularly in the context of the political disputes between the United States and Japan over China and its future. But then why did it involve the Finance Ministry and why was it part of the broader restrictions on foreign luxury items? This would suggest that the film ban was more related to economic factors reflecting the pressing need for financial resources with the outbreak of the war, in particular foreign exchange reserves. It should be noted that after 1937, Japan's trade deficit with the United States worsened considerably (Iguchi, 2003). In this regard, it was not so much that the political or censorship aspect of the war had an impact but rather the economic pressures it brought about that did shape Japan's policies toward Hollywood, simply they became an economic target. This would become relevant during the negotiations as will be demonstrated in the next section.

The second factor to explore is the emerging ideological ties between Japan and the Axis powers during the late 1930s. Although political and military ties among them were rather fluid, the cultural sphere offered an opportunity to enhance ties and overcome some of the inherent difficulties among these fascist nations who exhibited racist policies to other cultures (Baskett, 2009). In 1937, the Japan-German Cultural Film Exchange Agreement was signed and signalled a new era of censorship in Japan which would be more sensitive to German requests. Furthermore, influenced by the implementation of the *Lichtspielgesetz* or German Film Law and the Italian film law in 1934, Japan created its own Cabinet Film Regulatory Council (Baskett, 2009). Can it be argued that the desire to improve ties with the Axis powers had an influence on the film ban in 1937? This is a debatable point. Much of the impact from the Axis powers would come later with the Film Law of 1939 which used very similar wording to its German counterpart. It is also worth considering the role of the Cabinet Film Regulatory Council. This organization under the Home Ministry actually had no budget and its powers were limited (Tosaka, 2003b). At the same time, it can be seen as representing a new ideological approach toward the film industry and a desire to create a 'nation spirit' in film making. This contextual analysis shows that both ideological and economic factors were at work and

how contrasting domestic actors had different interests. The following sections will examine the way in which this influenced the negotiations and agreement.

Negotiations and preferences of domestic actors

When the film ban entered into effect in September 1937, Hollywood's representative organization the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (MPPDA) began to make enquires with the Japanese government about resolving the situation and allowing their films to be imported again (Welky, 2009). In response the Japanese Finance Minister appointed the lawyer Kubo Hisaji to negotiate with Hollywood (Tosaka, 2003a). This shows that the Japanese government was willing to discuss the issue and that Kubo would be the 'chief negotiator' in the Putnam setting of international negotiations. The MPPDA would be his counterpart in representing all the Hollywood major studios as well as the backing of the US State Department. It should be noted that the State Department often let the MPPDA negotiate agreements with foreign governments around the world and simply provided support and assistance (Tosaka, 2003a).

Throughout their negotiations, the impact of domestic forces would come to shape the eventual agreement. In Japan, one of the main bodies was the Home Ministry who had been leading the effort to impose stricter forms of censorship on foreign films and viewed them very much as a threat to Japanese society. Any agreement that the Finance Ministry forged would have to be accepted by the Home Ministry who exercised considerable power following the outbreak of the war with China. Given their preferences, it would be difficult for the Finance Ministry to agree to any deal that would provide too many concessions to Hollywood, particularly in the political context. As such the focus would be framed from an economic perspective by Kubo. Such an outcome would be more acceptable for the Home Ministry who in any case was more focused on strengthening its own censorship powers. After intense lobbying with the Education Ministry throughout 1938, the Japanese Diet would finally pass the Film Law in 1939 (Uchiyama, 2020).

At the more extreme end of the domestic forces that would oppose any lenient agreement, and arguably the most unpredictable, were the ultra-nationalist secret societies, many of whom were from the military. While not directly involved, their violent participation in politics more broadly meant that they could not be ignored. Given the number of assassinations and coup attempts they had engineered in the early 1930s along with the lenient judicial sentences handed out to the perpetrators meant that by the mid-1930s they had succeeded partly in shaping the political ground, moderate politicians and their policies were being side lined (Orbach, 2018). When Japan signed the London Naval Treaty, the politicians who advocated this policy found themselves in the crosshairs of the nationalist societies. In fact, during the March 1932 Incident orchestrated by the Blood-pledge Corps, an ex-finance minister

and a leading industrialist were both assassinated. Two months later members of this society would even gun down the prime minister. In both cases, they received light sentences from the courts (Orbach, 2018). This kind of political violence created a difficult arena for any politician seeking to advocate more compromising policies with foreign powers. In fact, these groups played a role during the 1924 Hollywood boycott where nationalists forced a few cinemas to close their doors (Itatsu, 2008).

In some ways, the film ban could be a rehash of the 1924 Hollywood boycott where exhibitors closed their screens to all but domestic films and therefore the local industry might be expected to support the motion. However, as that experience had shown, a ban on Hollywood films was a double-edged sword. While there was the advantage of eliminating the competition, there was of course the disadvantage of losing audiences. Despite the growing Japanese share of the film market, exhibitors still relied on Hollywood films to draw in audiences and many made profits from the distribution of these films (Raine, 2014). It is also important to note that local film industry was very vertically integrated and dominated all aspects from screening to production, there they were vested in showing Hollywood films.

Interestingly, opposition to any favourable agreement toward Hollywood came from the independent film distributors who acquired films from other foreign sources and therefore viewed a singular deal with Hollywood as not only biased but threatening to their own business (Tosaka, 2003a). Instead they favoured more balanced policies to all foreign films, though their power was limited in terms of influence.

While there was great opposition to any agreement that weighed too favourably toward Hollywood, the opposite end of maintaining the ban without any agreement soon became a prospect that would be disadvantageous. Putnam (1988) describes such an outcome in negotiations as a critical aspect toward their chance for success. To this extent, Hollywood was able to establish early on that a no-deal outcome was unacceptable for the Finance Ministry and Japan more broadly. As negotiations stalled, the MPDDA made it clear that their members would then have no qualms about portraying Japan negatively in its films (Tosaka, 2003a). This worried the Japanese government significantly as they were still concerned about their image abroad, which it was very carefully trying to craft following the negative publicity over the war with China. This factor meant that the costs for 'no-agreement' were significant and thus the win-set was wider.

On the other side, the domestic film industry was a notable force in favour of resuming imports from Hollywood. Not only did they benefit from the revenues in screening the films, they also adopted many of the styles and techniques from these films. This helped the Japanese film industry to become competitive during the 1920s to the extent that it was able to gain a majority share of the domestic film market. The fear was that not only would they lose these foreign influences, but that they would also be forced to make much less popular propaganda-oriented films that the Home Ministry was advocating. While their

political power was relatively limited, their preferences had to be taken into consideration (Tosaka, 2003a).

The American side was slightly less complex in terms of preferences, but divisions did exist. One of the main actors that the MPPDA had to contend with was the State Department who actually opposed any agreement that accepted restrictions on Hollywood film imports (Tosaka, 2003a). This was a matter of principle out of concern that if restrictions in Japan were accepted then governments in other countries would follow suit. Such an approach was shared by the MPPDA, but the interests of its members forced it to consider Japanese options where imports would resume under certain restrictions. Another actor for the MPPDA to consider was the American Motion Picture Association in Japan (AMPA) which represented the local companies in the market who imported these films. This organization was set up by the MPPDA as it became clear that the Japanese government was adopting tougher policies to Hollywood (Kitamura, 2010). Interestingly, this move was also partially in response to the establishment of the Greater Japan Motion Picture Association.

Given that the AMPA would be involved in negotiations and that they were associated with the MPPDA or the Hay's Office, it is a more accurate to consider them as part of the level 'Chief Negotiator'. Originally, the AMPA had been set up to confront efforts by the Japanese government to establish its own state film industry (Kitamura, 2010). In its negotiations with the Finance Ministry, it used both direct and indirect measures to further Hollywood's interests. As much as the AMPA sought to take a strong stance and counter the increasingly bullish action by the Japanese government, they continued to be eager for Hollywood films to be imported again. Thus, they were prepared to accept any restrictions that may come in place least they lose out altogether (Tosaka, 2003a). In fact, Paramount Pictures would in 1941 invest their unremitted funds into Japanese bonds much to the disapproval of the US government (Kitamura, 2010). This helps understand the conditions as to why an agreement would be possible despite the high stakes involved.

Negotiating strategies and reaching agreement

When Hollywood and Japan's Finance Ministry engaged in dialogue, both sides had to adopt strategies that would strengthen their international position *vis-à-vis* the other side while also ensuring the domestic win-sets remained favourable. For Kubo and the Finance Ministry it was important that the Home Ministry did not jeopardize the possibility for an agreement to be reached. For the MPPDA, it was the State Department who had the potential to effect the outcome of a deal.

During the early stages of negotiations between Kubo and the MPPDA in New York, the plan he presented would allow for Hollywood films to be imported but that the frozen funds and future profits made would have to pass through a Japanese foreign exchange bank (Welky, 2009). In a sense, as much as the issue was about allowing Hollywood

films back into Japan, it was also very much about foreign-exchange regulations which the Finance Ministry had control over. This mandate gave Kubo considerable authority and strength in his negotiations and he used this to his advantage in both the Level I and Level II dealings. Crucially this gave him some strength over the Home Ministry as he avoided issues related to censorship. Given that the Home Ministry already held considerable power in respect of censorship of both domestic and foreign films, it can be judged that the need for a film ban was not a great requirement for them. Ever since the 1920s, the censorship system became increasingly centralized under the Home Ministry authority. Furthermore, the Army and Navy began to also put in their own requests for censorship, particularly as the war in China became more entrenched (Kasza, 1993).

Such a situation gave Kubo additional strength over Hollywood. Whenever the MPPDA representatives wanted to cut-off Kubo or seek out another person to negotiate with, they soon found out that he was the only one they could deal with (Tosaka, 2003b). With narrow options or 'win-sets' in Japan, they had to accept the conditions that were on offer least they be closed off from the market altogether.

From the American perspective, the MPPDA faced little opposition among domestic actors, but it did face objections from the State Department as highlighted before. In this respect, the strategy adopted by the MPPDA was to operate in a degree of secrecy and they kept the State Department in the dark (Tosaka, 2003a). Such an approach has been recognized by Putnam (1988) as a way to avoid political opposition, although he notes it has to potential to backfire if discovered. When the Kubo Agreement was secured in 1938, the US government was unaware that the two sides had reached agreement and only found out about this development through the media (Tosaka, 2003a). While this was a relatively risky strategy to use, it did have the effect of presenting the US government with a *fait accompli* that it generally had to accept despite its previous reservations.

Discussion

This paper has shown the impact of domestic forces upon negotiations over protectionism in the cultural industries. It further highlights the strategies adopted to increase the 'win-sets' and achieve an agreement that worked at both the international and domestic level. Although the film ban was lifted, Hollywood would face new strict measures as the Film Law came into effect in 1939. Unlike the Finance Ministry's film ban, the new Film Law was passed by the Diet and had broad political support. Despite this measure, Hollywood films remained popular in Japan and would continue to earn exhibitors handsome profits compared to domestic films (Tosaka, 2003a). In fact, if the authorities had hoped that they could impact upon the popularity with the film ban then they were mistaken. Such was the attractiveness of these films, that when the ban came in, the prints of old films that remained in the market commanded higher fees that before (Tosaka, 2003a).

In this case presented, Hollywood responded to the ban by seeking out a possible negotiated settlement and was willing to compromise. It seems that the Japanese Finance Ministry sent out signals that it was willing to negotiate and that a solution was possible (Tosaka, 2003a). Although Japan was a small market at the time, it was an attractive destination for Hollywood and offered great potential for the future. This was particularly the case given that the markets of Europe were becoming closed off due to the emergence of authoritarianism and war. The question is whether Hollywood's efforts to open Japan were due to this or as a matter of principle to not let protectionism win.

Although this is an historical example and there may well be questions about its relevance for today, the issues related to how to respond to Hollywood's dominance are still very pertinent in today's world. The lessons shown here are that protectionist measures do not always have the desired effect and are not able to 'create' the industry that the state may envision. It had long been a goal for Japanese officials, particularly from the Home Ministry, to craft a national film industry that the masses would participate in. They encouraged films to be made that covered certain ideals and principles related to nationalistic messages. However, this goal never really materialized.

Globalization is often considered as a contemporary topic, particularly of relevance in the post-Cold War era, yet this case example of how Japan responded to Hollywood is very much in the frame of this theme. We can see that the protectionist measures failed to have a boost for the domestic industry while it did not change the tastes among the local population. At the same time, Hollywood was able to successfully negotiate around the film ban. It is important to consider this point that protectionism does not block out foreign goods completely, as long as there is a domestic demand, then companies will find a way around these barriers. In the end, the biggest victim is often the domestic industry. Again consider how well the Japanese film industry was doing in 1920s under few protectionist measures compared to the situation in the 1930s where it began to struggle.

Conclusion

The implementation of the film ban in Japan was the culmination of increasingly tougher restrictions throughout the 1930s. While it may seem as if it was a reflection of the prevailing political ideology at the time, the lifting of the ban reveals more complex factors at work that helps us to understand how protectionism becomes policy, even when implemented by relatively authoritarian regimes.

The motivations behind the ban would appear to be mostly economic factors that were brought on by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War. To a lesser extent, the emerging ideological contacts with the Axis powers had an effect and certainly Japanese authorities were becoming more welcoming. But it is important to understand that this was mostly through the Home Ministry and its censorship powers, the film ban was brought in by the Finance Ministry. This made negotiations possible and Kubo as the chief negotiator was able to overcome domestic objections by focusing on the economic aspects, namely how funds would be repatriated back to the United States.

Using Putnam's (1988) approach, we can understand better the interaction between the state and domestic actors during a period of negotiations. The 'win-sets' show how the agreement was possible despite the opposition and prevailing ideology that would suggest it would not have been possible, even Hollywood executives at the time had little confidence in securing an agreement (Tosaka, 2003a). In the case of Japan, the domestic film companies and the general public were strongly in favour of Hollywood films and therefore made an agreement necessary. Similarly, in the US, the desire for film companies to earn decent profits, even for the short-term, contributed to larger 'win-sets'.

This tells us much about the limitations states face when implanting protectionist measures. In most cases it is difficult to maintain such a policy instrument without provoking strong domestic and foreign opposition, consider how the Trump administration has been seeking a 'deal' with Beijing after it imposed tariffs on Chinese imports. The lesson of Japan and Hollywood is that protectionism in the cultural industries can provoke strong reactions as this sector is often closely associated with forging the country's national identity. Yet, the economic function of this industry should not be forgotten and as shown with Kubo and his negotiations, such an approach can help to resolve a deadlock in what may seem like a seemingly unresolvable situation.

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