

The Acceptance of Two Visual Versions of Alice in Japan

Shinichi Kinoshita

cxj03744@nifty.com

<http://www.hp-alice.com/>

Introduction

The Paramount film *Alice in Wonderland* was released in Japan in 1934. Its influence made the Japanese title of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* established, but the film scarcely gave influence upon Japanese visual image of Alice. Today, the Paramount *Alice* is almost forgotten. Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* was not welcomed at its first appearance in Japan in 1953. Soon after Disney's *Alice* completed its showing season without any sensation, the film itself was forgotten, too. Now, however, the animation is widely accepted by Japanese people as a visual image of Alice. The poster shows the process in which the visual images of Alice in film have had influence in Japan, comparing the influences of two *Alice* movies Japanese way of accepting *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Chronological Table

- 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
- 1871 *Through the Looking-glass and What Alice Found There*
- 1898 Lewis Carroll passed away.
- 1899 *Kagami Sekai*, the first Japanese translation of *Through the Looking-glass* (~ 1900)
- 1908 *Arisu Monogatari*, the first Japanese translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (~ 1909)
- 1932 Exhibition at Columbia University to Commemorate the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of Lewis Carroll
- 1933 Paramount *Alice in Wonderland* was released in the U.S.
- 1934 Paramount *Alice in Wonderland* was released in Japan
- 1937 Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was released in the U.S.
- 1951 Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was released in Japan.
- 1951 Walt Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* was released in the U.S.
- 1953 Walt Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* was released in Japan.

The Case of Paramount film, *Alice in Wonderland*

Dec 1933: released in the U.S.

Directed by Norman McLeod

Screenplay by Joseph L. Mankiewicz and
William Cameron Menzies

Starring:

Charlotte Henry (Alice), Cary Grant (Mock
Turtle), W.C. Fields (Humpty-Dumpty), Gary
Cooper (White Knight), etc.

Mar 1934: released in Japan with
Japanese subtitles

Japanese title: *Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu*

Articles on Magazines (1)

Kinema-Junpo (*The Movie Times*; three times a month) Nov 1933 to Apr 1934

News of Alice in the U.S.: three columns

Pre-release photo shots of Charlotte Henry:

two

Movie review: two columns

Advertisements: five “full-page” advertisements

Suta (*Star*; twice a month) Feb to Mar 1934

Pre-release photograph: one

Story on the Photo:

one story on the “opposite-page” of the photo

Movie review: one full-page article

Articles on Magazines (2)

Eiga to Engei (The Screen and Stage; monthly)

Jan to Mar 1934

Pre-release photo shot of Charlotte Henry: one

Movie review: one column

Eiga Hyoron (The Filmcrit; monthly) Apr 1934

Movie review: one (three pages)

Shin Eiga (The New Film; monthly) Mar to Apr

1934

Introduction: one by the translator of the subtitles of *Alice* (six pages, with comments on the musical play *Alice in Wonderland* in 1932, Broadway)

Advertisement: one “full-page”

Kyoiku Eiga (The Educational Films; monthly)

Apr 1934

Movie review: one column

The first appearance of the Japanese title
Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu:

On newspapers:

May 1928, *Yomiuri Shinbun*

News on Sotheby's auction of *Alice's
Adventures under Ground* manuscript

On books:

1930, translation by Saisuke Nagasawa

Both of them, however, were not influential enough to fix the Japanese title for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* since then.

Translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1920s-40s

- 1920 Masao Kusuyama *Fushigi-no Kuni* (Part 1: *Alice-no Yume* Part 2: *Kagami-no Ura*) *Translation of both Alice books
1921 Yaso Saijo *Kagami Koku Meguri* *Translation of Through the Looking-glass
1921 Miekichi Suzuki *Chichu-no Sekai*
1923 Kozo Mochizuki *Arisu-no Fushigi Koku Meguri*
1925 Tomoharu Washio *Fushigi-na O-niwa, Mari-chan-no Yume-no Kuni Ryoko*
1925 Shigeo Masumoto *Otenba Arisu-no Yume*
1926 Yoko Tamamura *Arisu-no Fushigi Koku Tanken*
1926 Kiichiro Odo *Fushigi Koku Meguri*
1927 Kan Kikuchi and Ryunosuke Akutagawa *Arisu Monogatari*
1928 Saisuke Nagasawa *Fushigi Koku-no Arisu*
1929 Tamihei Iwasaki *Fushigi Koku-no Arisu*
1930 Saisuke Nagasawa *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu* (former *Fushigi Koku-no Arisu*)
1930 Masao Kusuyama *Arisu-no Yume* (former *Fushigi-no Kuni*; Part 1: *Fushigi-no Kuni* Part 2: *Kagami-no Ura*)
1932 Masao Kusuyama *Fushigi-no Kuni: Arisu Monogatari*
1933 Masao Kusuyama *Kagami-no Kuni: Arisu Monogatari* (former *Kgamai-no Ura*)

1934 Paramount *Alice* was released in Japan under the title of *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu*

- 1934 Saisuke Nagasawa *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu*
1934 Kiichiro Odo *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu* (former *Fushigi Koku Meguri*)
1946 Yaso Saijo *Fushigi-no Kuni* (former *Kagami Koku Meguri*)
1946 Jiro Osaragi *Fushigi Koku-no Arisu*
1948 Masao Kusuyama *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu* (Former *Arisu-no Yume*; Part 1: *Arisu-no Yume* Part 2: *Kagai-no Ura*)
1948 Sunao Kikuchi *Fushigi-na Kuni-no Arisu*

After that, most of the translations were published under the title of *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Alice* or *Fushigi-na Kuni-no Arisu*.

Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu, the Japanese subtitle version of Paramount *Alice in Wonderland*, had a decisive influence on the title for the translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The movie itself, however, is now almost forgotten in Japan

The Case of Disney's
Alice in Wonderland

1951: released in the U.S.

Directed by Clyde Geronimi et.al.

Screenplay by Winston Hibler et.al.

Aug 1953: first appearance in Japan with
Japanese Subtitle

Japanese title: *Fushigi-no Kuni-no Arisu*

Articles in Magazines

Kinema Junpo (*The Movie Times*; twice a month): two columns

Screen (monthly):

one article (three pages with movie still),
rewritten from the press-sheet

Eiga-no Tomo (*Friends of Films*;
monthly):

one photo story (“opposite-page”) and
one movie review (two pages)

Obviously, the number of the articles
in magazines was much less than that on
Paramount *Alice*

In 1953, Disney's *Alice* was not welcomed by many people because of the following three reasons:

- Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was not so popular in Japan (as *Snow White*, etc)
- The story was not easy to comprehend for Japanese children at the first sight (compared with *Bambi*, *Pinocchio*, etc)
- The film was released with Japanese subtitle, not Japanese dubbing. Children had to read subtitles to follow the story and word-plays.

But nowadays, the visual image of Disney's *Alice* is very popular, maybe more popular than that by Tenniel, in Japan.

Why and how has Disney's *Alice* become so influential?

The revival release of Disney's *Alice*

1973 *Fushingi-no Kuni-no Arisu*

1987 *Fushingi-no Kuni-no Arisu*

The picture was released with Japanese
Dubbing

What happened in prior to the revival
release of Disney's *Alice*?

Publications in 1972:

- *Arisu no Ehon* (*The picture book of Alice*)
- “*Ruisu Kyaroru*”: *Bessatsu Gendaishi Techo* (Special Issue of *Modern Poetry Pocketbook*, featuring “*Lewis Carroll*”)

Exhibition in 1972:

Exhibition of “*Arisu no Ehon*”

In 1972, a year before the first revival release of Disney’s *Alice*, Lewis Carroll was rediscovered in the Japanese literary scene.

The month and the year of publication of the picture-books of Disney's *Alice* between 1952 and 1987 (the second revival release of the film)

Nov 1952	Aug 1953
Apr 1957	Jan 1961
Nov 1961	May 1963
Unknown (1965-1974)	May 1969
Jan 1970	Feb 1972
Jul 1974	Aug 1977
May 1979	May 1981
Apr 1982	1983
Nov 1984	May 1985
May 1987	Oct 1987

Various editions of picture-books of Disney's *Alice* have been continuously published and read by Japanese children.

Records of Disney's Alice

Year	Record company	Type	Note
1963	Japan Columbia*	EP	
1968	Japan Columbia*	EP	Picture Record
1970	Japan Columbia**	EP	
1972	King Records	LP	
1972	King Records	EP	Extracts from the LP
1972	King Records	EP (45rpm)	Two songs
1975	King Records	LP	
1980	Japan Columbia*	EP	
1980	Japan Columbia*	Audio cassette	
UNK	Kodansha	EP	

*Same audio source. **Same audio source, but Disney's pictures are not used.

The records of Disney's *Alice* have also been continuously released, and they have been enjoyed by Japanese children.

These two media, picture books and records, saved Disney's *Alice* from being completely forgotten.

Question: Why have they continuously published (or released), through these two media, Disney's *Alice*, which had not attracted Japanese children on its first release?

Disney pictures after 1950s

1950	<i>Cinderella</i>	1970	<i>The Aristocats</i>
1951	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>	1973	<i>Robin Hood</i>
1953	<i>Peter Pan</i>	1977	<i>The Rescuers</i>
1955	<i>Lady and the Tramp</i>	1981	<i>The Fox and the</i>
1959	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>		<i>Hound</i>
1961	<i>One Hundred and</i>	1985	<i>The Black Cauldron</i>
	<i>One Dalmatians</i>	1986	<i>The Great Mouse</i>
1963	<i>The Sword in the</i>		<i>Detective</i>
	<i>Stone</i>	1988	<i>Oliver & Company</i>
1966	<i>Winnie the Pooh</i>	1989	<i>The Little Mermaid</i>
1967	<i>The Jungle Book</i>		

After the release of *Alice in Wonderland*, very few pictures of well-known stories (to Japanese children) had been released until 1989, when *Little Mermaid* was released.

Alice had always been on the list of Disney's picture books.

*Paramount *Alice* was forgotten because no picture-books or records have been published (or released) since the first release of the film.

The influence of the movies from 1930s-70s could continue only with the aid of the recorded media, if there were no revival releases.

The Factors That Had Influence on the Visual Images of Disney's *Alice* after 1970s

Disney's *Alice* on Television (Bilingual Broadcast)

4 Apr 1979 TBS*

4 Jan 1981 TBS*

27 Dec 1992 NHK**

*Same content as that of the revival film released in 1973 and 1987

**Same content as that of a videotape

The Release of the Videotape of Disney's *Alice* (VHS)

5 Oct 1984 - Dec 1986: Pony

28 Sep 1987- Unknown Date: Bandai

The Development of Personal Video Recording System in Japan

- 1975: The first model of Betamax (SONY) was released.
- 1976: VHS format (Victor) was developed. The first model of VHS recorder (Victor) was released.
- 1977: The moderate-price VHS recorder, MACLORD (Panasonic) was released.
- 1983: VHS Hi-Fi standard was developed.
- 1987: The first model of S-VHS recorder (Victor) was released.

The broadcasted Disney's *Alice* could be recorded and played on personal video recording systems in Japan.

Conclusion

The Paramount *Alice* fixed the Japanese title of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but the film did not plant any visual image of *Alice* into Japanese people's mind. The visual image of Disney's *Alice* was spread wide through literary media. After the revival, its influence overwhelmed traditional media. The help of TV broadcast (with video air check) and video software in the early 1980s can be pointed out. Apparently, the two *Alice* films have had different influence on the sensitivity of Japanese people, but both were equally under strong influence of the verbal media until the early 1970s.

Visual media had influential power in the later 1970s, and its influence became definitive through the development of personal video recording system in Japan.