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References :: Miriam Silverberg, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, Edward Said, Nathan Shockey, Sharon Sievers, Kashiwagi Hiroshi, Kiyoshi Kikuchi, Rebecca Ann Nickerson, Andrew Gordon, Minori Nishiya, Rie Mori, Geoffrey Jones, Madoka Yamazaki, Usui Kazuo, Michiko Shimamori, Lynn Gumpert, John G. Richardson, Annika A. Culver, Sonia Ryang, Kitazawa Hideichi, Jan Bardsley, Ann Arbor, Angela Coutts, Beth Katzoff, Anne McClintock, Jennifer Robertson

Translated Title :: アウト・オブ・ザ・シャドウズ - 欧米は日本の女性の公共性をどう形成したか

Abstract :: この文章は、西洋の文化的影響が日常生活に及ぶ中で、日本の近代化の台頭をまとめたものである。工業化が進み、社会の契約が問われるようになった。農村から都市への大量移住と女性労働力の形成は、多くの人々に疎外された生活をもたらしたが、同時に芸術制作のための肥沃な土壌を生み出したのである。芸術家たちは、モダニズムを大衆に媒介し、大きく変化する時代に方向性を求めていた。しかし、社会の一部が啓蒙されたと感じるにつれ、この西洋への流れは、このプロセスに参加しない残りの人々をも切り離すことになったのです。デパートは、新しい文化的生活とシンボルを推進する役割を担うようになった。このような社会の変化の中で、労働人口が増え、家庭内での自律性が高まった女性たちが、新しい文化生活の原動力となった。街角で目立つようになり、店や広告やメディアによって主要な顧客として狙われるようになると、彼女たちは公共空間の役者にもなった。女性は現代生活のシンボルとして、また性の目覚めのモデルや映写機として認識された。以下のページでは、文化や社会がどのように女性化し、西洋的な女性の理想像が近代文化の生産と表象の一翼を担うようになったかを説明する。この役割の中で、女性たちは、このスピード重視の社会生活が生み出す不可解な変化のすべてに対して責任を負わされることにもなった。当時の日本の女性運動は、それまでの女性の役割を変えることに大きな挑戦をしていました。近代化の姿勢は認められたものの、主に西洋の女性は同等性の象徴として提示されました。文学や美術における美的・文化的自律性は認められたが、プロレタリアの世界でさえ、日本の女性は権力ではなく、美しさだけ表現していた。経済が発展し、消費力、生産力が求められるようになると、女性は再び良妻賢母になることを余儀なくされた。1931年、日中戦争が始まると、国家は自国の戦争に女性が協力することの重要性を認識する

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## **Out of the Shadow**

### How the West formed a Concept of Modern Woman in Japan

04 2020

Soon after WW I, the rise of modernisation and cultural influences of the West reached Japan's every day life. With the industrialisation of the country, the social contract of society was to be questioned. Mass migration and formation of woman's labor force from the countryside to the cities produced an estranged life for many people and also produced a fertile soil for artistic production. Artistic practices visualised and formed this process and mediated modernism to a public, seeking for orientation at a vast changing era.

At this time, Japanese artists not only witnessed but more and more were accomplice with trending European art forms and participated with international communities. They not simply copied Western forms but interacted and communicated on eye-level with the most proliferated artists and intellectuals. Some of them even visited Japan and with modern communication and mass media Japan circled from the outline of contemporary discourse to the center. Being part of this international circle and transferring related discussions to the local audience, Japanese artists and intellectuals, enlightened part of society and drifted more to the West, but also separated with the rest of the people, who would not take part in this process.

It became not only a issue of self-determination and autonomy from governmental tutelage, it was mainly a cultural segregation that emerged in the dread of mass culture and consumption in the 1920s. Modernisation's threat to unhinge fixed social

relationships and subjectivities led to the formation of a discourse on the essence of society.

Aesthetics of everyday life came in charge to negate the divisions and fragmentation of society, and formed a new political and cultural order. Department shops became a main promotor of the new cultural life with their permanent display of modern consumerism in shopping windows, and with the exhibitions of artists who showed their latest works in galleries at those stores. As the chapels of modern life in urban areas, they became symbols of the division between old and new economy, as the former related on production and the latter on consumerism.

In this changing society, women, a growing part of the working population and with greater autonomy within the household, have been the driving force in and identified with the new cultural life. As they became more visible in the streets, targeted as main customers by the stores, advertising and media, they also became actors in this promotion and symbols of modern life as models and projection screen of sexual awakening.

In this sense culture and society feminized and a Western idealisation of woman became part in producing and representing modern culture. Furthermore the female population also was seen as a main target of those who opposed the new way of life. As a role model of Americanism and advertiser of Western life style, women were blamed for all that puzzling changes, and in general for the modern speed driven public life.

## Research of Feminine Space

After having passed the inauguration as military power by winning the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, and proven its economical equality with supporting the colliding parties at WWI with industrial goods, Japan's cultural appreciation, engaged along international appearances for quite a time.

Before in Meiji, the concept of gaining equality in civilisation by a form of state sponsored capitalism was followed by challenging the global norm of culture as ideology of production in Teisho. Now, the discussions about modernity were outlined and the targets on economical, military and cultural strength were defined without governmental leadership.

In the aftermath of the Kanto earthquake, different opinions on the 'every day practise' *seikatsu* arose on several mass media channels between intellectuals.<sup>1</sup> By some, modernity was issued as Americanisation and they concluded that this modernisation rooted in a lack of national tradition and cultural history, therefore the consumerism of capitalism was imposed as an ephemeral and unreal culture.<sup>2</sup>

As most Japanese intellectuals were inhabitants of a Marxist conception of society, they echoed in their critique the Frankfurt school, accusing consumerism as cultural imperialism, epitomized by American modernisation.<sup>3</sup> Most socialists and also conservatives at the time perceived this consumerism as an artificial replacement culture, invading Japanese society and leading to bourgeoisie and decadence.

Opposing consume, the Japanese constructivistic approach to shape society, premised on the same principles as elsewhere. Eliminate barriers between art and daily life, lifting the public from the status of spectator to participant, and defining mass culture as avant-garde, helping to emancipate from governmental tutelage.<sup>4</sup> For this it was more than an art form of collaboration and networking with groups,

1 Following Miriam Silverberg the term underlays the notion of construction, more than the literal translation as life-style.

2 Ōya Soichi (1900-1970) *Modern Social Strata and Modern Mores Modan so to modan so*, published February 1929 in *Chūō kōrōn* Central Review magazine. In his critique he declared modernism as consumer-oriented hedonism, which is unproductive and based on spending.

3 Cultural schools that offered everything from classes in Esperanto and German to reading groups on Marxist works established around the country,

4 The change of social habit and perception through a well designed environment by the integration of fine art into everyday life was practiced by Russian Constructivists, Dutch De Stijl artists and the German Bauhaus since the second decade of the century.

and movements world-wide, it was a conception of its own in abandonment of copying cultural templates.

Therefore, Ethnographers, intellectuals, artists, inspired by Constructivism would not oppose technological advances, but rather raise awareness on consumerism and document the transformations on the street where culture was created collectively. The public space which emerged within this new culture, shared by all but differentiated by class and gender, expanded the metropolitan areas.

For most of the people, who did not benefit accordingly to the economical rise of the elite, it was more of a confrontation with new lifestyle and its commodities, as it was an experienced reality for them.<sup>5</sup>

The joyful entertainment on the streets, which had existed earlier in Edo and other cities, were people would gather to drink, eat and consume culture *daidōgei*, would be infiltrated by 'gated' commercial venues as department stores, cafes, restaurants, theatres and cinemas. Those which where in lack of money or social restricted due education or clothing, this places were often not accessible.<sup>6</sup>

The streets transformed into public spaces to stage acts of consumption and realize new identities, juxtaposed to the household, the former place of retreat and relaxation, and center of patriarchy. Opposed to this sense of privacy, the public workplace incorporated men into the machinery of modern capitalism and made them aware that only the streets offered the stage to become free, to realize their desire.

Scientists like GONDA Yasunosuke (1887-1951), KON Wajirō (1888-1973) and YOSHIDA Kenkichi (1897-1982) engaged in the socio-cultural research of the daily life in Japan.<sup>7</sup> They studied the modern

5 Based on Edward Said's concept of 'imaginative geography,' the urban districts can be regarded as a cultural practice, constructing identity of a certain social group.

6 Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) and Siegfried Kracauer (1889-1966) would research at the same time similar urban phenomenons in Germany. Walter Benjamin describes this separation of living and working space, of private and public interior and how the first is designed to entertains the wealthier class and the second is inhabited by the crowds of the lower class.

Walter Benjamin: *Gesammelte Schriften*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp., 1991, V p.52

Siegfried Kracauer: *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo*. Berlin: Arsenal.: Die Angestellten. Aus dem neusten Deutschland. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1971

7 Yoshida Kenkichi (1897-1982), was also stage designer and with Osanai Kaoru and Hijikata Yoshi, one of the founding members of the Tsukiji Little Theater Tsukiji Shogekijo.

Gonda Yasunosuke worked at the Ohara Institute for Social Research. It was founded on February 9, 1919 in Osaka by Magosaburo

customs determined by the factors of industrialisation, social conflict and the rise of mass culture.<sup>8</sup> Gonda was an ethnographer who researched the cultural experience of the working class and how they choose their everyday practice and cultural artefacts. He coined the term *minshū goraku*, depicting the urban masses who develop and enjoy their own forms of entertainment, besides the high cultural forms of *bunkashugi*. Advocating leisure and play as everyday practice in entertainment areas like Asakusa instead of consumption at commercial areas as Ginza, he became more political over time. Shifting away from distinguishing leisure venues according to social strata, Gonda spoke of general masses and asked the state to organize cultural facilities to engage nationalized practice.<sup>9</sup> As his writings and surveys were used by the state for propaganda and educational purposes, Gonda himself held that culture was a collective construct of traditional elements that also contained Western and modern aspects.

Kon and Yoshida, with a more artistic approach, defined the practice named *Kōgen-gaku* Modernology, the research of modern life, *modan seikatsu* in the urban space as a semantic field of information and reflexions of commerce.<sup>10</sup> Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Kon Wajiro, either alone or a group of associate and disciples, acted as ethnographers observing and recording the changing face of Japan in the process of rapid modernization.

Indeed, Kon and his team were more interested in social practices rather than the image of spaces alone, recognizing the value and effect of the former on the latter.

Kenchiki Yoshida, who filled the book with simple and engaging illustrations of everyday ordinary occurrences, such as sketches and diagrams of the wrinkles in the cotton stockings of Tokyo women riding the trains or walking on the street. These

wrinkles, an unassuming detail on an object used by a person everyday, distilled the essence of changes in life and its effect on urban behaviour. The transition from surveying domestic space to objects and then urban phenomena is a clear indication of Kon's understanding regarding the role of architecture and its relationship with people and material things.

The observation and documentation of such a relationship in constant flux is an accurate method of dissecting the very essence of architecture.

Contrary to the West, where architecture seems to be characterized by geometrical space, these studies in Japan organized space as movement. What enables re-appropriation through habitation. In the case of Tokyo, the intermediate space represents both urban and cultural relationships, intensified through the arrival of imported modernity.

As Gonda was interested in the popular forms of performative entertainment provided for the urban masses, Kon and Yoshida researched the movements of the crowds, their customs in response to attractions, advertisement and the purpose of their strolling on the streets *sanpo-teki kōdō* in generally as construction of their options. Consume as production, specific to gender, age, social strata, and occupation. But unlike Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) who depicted the *bohème* point of view, struggling with the masses, Kon described the mores of ordinary people, organizing their daily life in public, choosing their commodities, and inhabiting urban space.<sup>11</sup> Mapping the street life in a most detailed way, depicting clothing, and movement of the people, he did not investigate the individual or political reasons which would constitute the process itself. In conclusion of his research he stated that modern life produced different sort of people who were dedicated to the new style.

Those consumers of urban lifestyle were called Modern Boy *mobo* and Modern Girl *moga*. Distinctive to a second group of people who only temporarily consumed the new life and those who contributed as employees to the modern life. In this surrounding, the social and cultural definition of women gained a new status.

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Ohara(1878-1943). Ohara, a wealthy industrialist from Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture, (Kurashiki Cotton Spinning Company KURABO), also established the Ohara Art Museum and the Kurashiki Institute for Science of Labour.

<sup>8</sup> The term was first used by Kon 1927, distinguished from anthropology and folk studies.

<sup>9</sup> Learning German to read Marx at an early age some of his later books and articles in 1942 referred to Nazi cultural policies. Miriam Silverberg citing Tsuganesawa Toshihiro in: Constructing the Japanese Ethnography of Modernity, The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 51, No. 1, Association for Asian Studies 1992, p.45

<sup>10</sup> After the disaster they engaged in examining the temporary structures with Barakku sōshokusha Society for Barrack Decoration together with members of the art-group Action.

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<sup>11</sup> In different diagrams he organized the items needed by women, wanted by men as organized the interior of a modern household in a most efficient way. See diagrams in Miriam Silverberg: Constructing the Japanese Ethnography of Modernity, The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 51, No. 1, Association for Asian Studies 1992, pp. 30-54

The new woman, who left the traditional feminine sphere of the home, began joining new occupations and appeared as consumer and performer of urban public spaces. The demand for female workers of a new type, as teacher, telephone operators, typist, shop assistants or bus girl selling tickets emerged when business organisations prospered and society changed. *Shokugyo fujin*, as these women in professions were called, offered proof that many Japanese women were not only consumer of goods and fashion and neither aspiring to become merely idealised as *ryosai kembo* good wife-wise mother, whose duties were chained to the household.<sup>12</sup>

### Working Woman

Using modern technology to form 'cultural living', the position of all women changed in their responsibility to execute the process of rationalising the Japanese household after Western influenced patterns.<sup>13</sup> Either the working female model or the housewife *shufu*, they were passionate reader of the popular women's magazines, through which they learned the latest about family, children, housework and cooking.

Their tasks included the administration of the house and the family income as well as the education of the children, which made them to an important figure in the consumer goods industry. Women were addressed as a purchaser for the whole family and as an independent consumer. The progress of mechanization and the revolutionizing of technology was even by critics envisaged as the context for the formation of the modern woman.

Those who, former mainly were isolated from any outside activities of family life, as work, leisure and education, if not supervised by men, now transformed the role of society. Especially in the new environment of the cities by the reorganisation of everydayness.<sup>14</sup>

12 The 1920s and 1930s shaped the image of modern life by portraying three female figures: The 'modern girl' *modan gāru*, (abbreviated to *moga*), the 'working woman' *shokugyō fujin* and the 'housewife' *shufu*.

13 Established feminists such as Yosano Akiko (1878-1942) and Yamada Waka (1879-1959) advocated in the magazine *Kaizō* on behalf of feminism as one place to begin on the larger project of political and social reform, and 'Culturalism' *bunkashugi* as the ideal secondary base condition to reform human life.

Nathan Shockey: *Literary Writing, Print Media, and Urban Space in Modern Japan, 1895-1933*, Columbia University, 2012, p.63f

14 Within a short space of time, Tokyo's population tripled from 1.3 million in 1890 to 3.7 million in 1920. Continuing education in vocational schools, seminars, middle and high schools, women's schools and uni-

versities ensured the development of a qualified workforce. This led to the emergence of an educated generation for work in the service sector, known as the 'new middle class' *shin chūkansō*. One calls *modan* the new way of life within the material culture and *seikatsu* the 'everyday life', which was associated with consumption and pleasure. Recreational activities outside the city, such as sports activities and visits to beaches, amusement parks and thermal springs, have become popular leisure activities thanks to the expansion of the railway network.

Woman magazines ran articles on how to establish the status of the new cultural living and satisfy their new desire for consumption and aspirations as social class. Capable of making financial decisions on their own, they flocked in the urban public sphere, as autonomous actors and shifted their presence from the enclosed private to the open public worlds. Their new acquired self-confidence led them out of the household to become key players in the daily spectacle of modernity.<sup>15</sup>

Industrialization and centralization of society drew many young people from the countryside to urban centers in search of work. Obligated to obey their fathers, many young girls from rural areas, were often due financial difficulties separated from their families and on their own resources in the bustling cities. Working as café waitresses, in dance halls, or on stage at entertainment venues, they served as an eroticised spectacle to look at, and in the worst scenario often unable to escape the misery.

The step from sexual slavery to sexual liberation was individually determined, because their remuneration came only from tips. On the other hand it was a place where young people could meet social in public without restrictions. The job of the café waitresses *jokyū* offered a good income for those who challenged established social norms with a sort of open sexuality and secondly it was an opportunity for work to young women without particular education or training.

After the earthquake, with over 15,000 girls working in cafés and bars by the late 1920s, and over 66,000 waitresses in 1930 mostly around the entertainment districts known as *sakariba* (literally, bustling places) such as Ginza, Asakusa, Kanda, Shinjuku and Shibuya, these venues increased in number as they differed from their Meiji and even Taisho antecedents in style. Former rather elegant places, serving Western food by elegant waitresses dressed demurely in traditional kimonos and white aprons, now an increasingly erotic service became its chief

15 See Sharon Sievers: *Flowers in Salt. The Beginnings of Feminist Consciousness in Modern Japan*, Stanford University Press, 1983

attraction. As geishas were too expensive for white-collar workers, cafés offered a cheap opportunity for modern girls and boys to socially intermingle.

For girls it was a form of liberation to work without particular education and a form of emancipation to work not behind closed doors in factories, and instead to interact with the male dominated public. Despite prostitution was legal until 1956, café waitresses were not employed as such but also did not get paid by the owner as their remuneration came solely from tips. Therefore competition was rivalling and encouraged them to develop their skills at coquetry and seductive manipulation as the open sexuality challenged established social norms and gender roles.

### Fashion in Public

In the rise of the department stores, the marks of this new culture were Western clothing, cosmetics, and the beauty salon. Woman's fashion became a symbol of modernity, represented by girls working as shop window mannequins or being photographed in Western clothes for advertising and magazines. Constantly admonishing people to consumerism with advertising and promotional articles in news papers, magazines and film, the selection of modern items seemed endless from food, furniture, clothing, style and attitude.

The logic of capitalism necessarily focused on woman as targets of this new urban life of consumption. Defining their new role in public, the acceptance of the female body in public space took place on different levels, as the new woman and new girls were not only categorized, as consumers or workforce but also as sexual objects. In myriad forms they rejected the Meiji dictum that sexuality was unsuited for public display other than in dedicated areas, and reflected women's changing identities. The new mass media of the 1920s and 1930s shaped the image of woman as an enraptured female ideal, uprooted from the national context, suggesting with consumer goods a self-stylisation beyond national and cultural borders. The new methods of advertising showed women as protagonists of a flourishing urban culture in the advertisements, which, despite the distinctly western appearance of the women portrayed, made the reference to the 'tra-

ditional Japanese' woman symbolic. Middle class Tokyo women had adopted western style fashions as part of a dual lifestyle built around a combination of a traditional Japanese home and a western-influenced working or leisure life. Urbanized middle-class Japanese women, especially those in Tokyo, were engaged in an active desire to adopt a lifestyle in which western-style clothing, accessories, makeup and hairstyles are worn on frequent occasions. Where shopping and dining activities in western-style environments became a regular activity, but without any explicit rejection of kimono and core traditions.

Within just a few years, significant numbers of women had begun to reconfigure the traditional style, influenced by the almost universal style by American silent movie actresses. Shopping became a leisure activity in a more practical, body-centered and female-oriented version of the so-called *bunka seikatsu*. An upper-class intellectual movement beginning in the 1920s which preferred Western goods and materials to create a more educated and culturally rich lifestyle.<sup>16</sup> Western clothing, makeup and hairstyles were adopted in a cross-over of cultures, presented not only in magazines and movies but also live by elegant human mannequin girls in department stores to attract the new class of shoppers.

For those who could not afford imported ready-to-wear clothes, the modernisation of the *meisen* kimono, made from inexpensive pre-dyed silk, had by the late 1920s, become Japan's first clearly identifiable fashion clothing item. Adopted as a school uniform it underwent a transformation from an unglamorous home-clothing option to a fashionable 'walking dress,' in just a decade. Numerous companies, shops, hospitals and schools began to use uniforms for the growing number of working women.

Japanese women became enthusiastic adopters of a domestic sewing culture, with almost every urban housewife striving to own a Singer or a domestic sewing machine.<sup>17</sup> Since almost all uniforms would

16 Kashiwagi Hiroshi: On Rationalization and the National Lifestyle. Japanese design of the 1920s and 1930s' in Tipton E. K. & Clark, J. eds.: Being Modern in Japan. Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s, University of Hawaii Press, 2000, p.68

17 After Shiseido in 1934 held a beauty fashion show nationwide, the Bunka fashion school published Japan's first fashion book *Fukusō Bunka*, thus helping to educate contemporaries about fashion. Two years later the first issue of the fashion magazine *Sōen* followed, which cost 10 Zen with about thirty pages. Kiyoshi Kikuchi: *Nihon no fūzoku-shi*. Chūōbunka shuppan Tōkyō, 1984, p.229f

have to be sewn at home, the according skills were essential to women of almost all social classes. With the bulk of the readership as members of the new lower-middle class, magazines provided sewing patterns to at least sew a *meisen* kimono or uniform, for those who were not in a position to buy any middle-class goods.<sup>18</sup> Fitted with these hand-made non-traditional garments, also lower income woman would take on some of aspects of an identity-shaping fashion, thus giving them a modest but significant place in the public and female-driven consumer culture that emerged in the mid-1930s.

Aspiring those much more practical clothes by both gender, woman were driven to limit their cross-cultural double identity and put in charge to preserve the aesthetic beauty of the nation's cultural identity. Despite nearly all contributors of fashion magazines generally shared the opinion that Western clothing were superior to Japanese in terms of the economy, practicality, and health and hygiene, especially for the modern working place, at the same time, their collective concerns articulated the fundamental relationship between clothing and Japanese identity and how this change of fashion might change the cultural identity.

In the 1920s proponents urged woman to embrace Western clothes because they were better for their overall health and hygiene, and because they symbolized Japan's rise to the level of other 'civilized' nations. By the 1930s critics were struggling with the possibility that the adoption of 'Western-style clothes' might render Japan a mere copy of the West. The discourse did not circle around the men's fashion choices but instead was about to find suitable and imaginative ways to incorporate the kimono

into Japanese woman's wardrobes.<sup>19</sup>

It was up to female artists and experts on Western fashion, such as YAMAWAKI Toshiko (1887-1960), CHIGUSA Iwako (dates unknown), or Ōi Masa (dates unknown), instructor at Tokyo Art College, to put forth some effort to ensure that women's clothes, regardless of their heritage, can express the spirit of the people and negated the notion that the clothes themselves signify identity.

More than that they began to discuss ways how innovations in women's clothes could become the basis for a new culture. Rather than turn to the kimono as this basis for a national uniform for women, Chigusa dissociated Western-style clothes from the West and attempted to redefine them as the basis for a new Japanese identity.<sup>20</sup>

Nevertheless, such efforts to redefine 'Western' styles as 'Japanese' were not limited to fashion, as similar debates were taking place in the realm of architecture and other fields of culture. When almost all department stores had adopted glass window displays outside the store and opened restaurants with western-style tables and menus in which customers could eat without taking off their shoes or coats, shopping and strolling in urban centers emerged as a liberating social experience for women, adding a new dimension to their feminine personality.

Against the backdrop of an evolving middle class, department stores in large cities expanded their sales strategy to a broader clientele and established departments for food and daily consumer goods.

But more than clothing, cosmetics and other beauty products, both imported and domestically made, would in fact come to define the shopping experience for women aspiring to a cross-cultural double life *nijū seikatsu*. The consumption of brand cosmetics played a significant role in the making of the modern Japanese woman, who were lured into the

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18 Andrew Gordon: "Like bamboo shoots after the rain: the growth of nation of dressmakers and consumers." in Franks, P. and Hunter, J. eds. *The Historical Consumer: Consumption and Everyday Life in Japan, 1850-2000*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012

2012b: *Meisen kimono* was widely popular from early to mid 1900s. With fresh designs, vivid colors and inexpensive price tags, it was a reference for those who dreamt of being an independent woman. *Meisen* gave them the means to exercise their sense of fashion out of the office. The *Meisen kimono* genuinely reflected the modernization of Japan.

The Army's Clothing Division began in July 1930 publication of its own journal, *Hifuku Clothing*, with the stated aim of addressing issues of clothing in the interest of 'national defense', 'national economy', and 'individual economy.' The editors explicitly distanced themselves from the *Modern Girl* and her counterpart, the *Modern Boy*, stating that these figures had been swallowed up by Americanism and were ruled by trends.

Minori Nishiya and Rie Mori: *On the Journals 'Hifuku' and 'Senji no honzome': Textile dyeing during the Fifteen-Years War, 1931-1945*, Kyoto Prefectural University Bulletin, 2005

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19 Another reason to think about wearing western clothing was the first fire in a high-rise building that broke out on December 16, 1932 in the *Shiroki-ya* department store in Nihonbashi, Tōkyō, and went through the press as *shirokiya zurōsu-densetsu*, (*Shiroki-ya* slip legend). 13 of the 14 fatalities were women who wore the traditional loincloth *koshimaki* instead of western underwear. While trying to climb down the rescue ropes and cover their nakedness with one hand at the same time, they fell to their deaths. This event gave the supporters of Western clothing another argument, and the department stores began to adapt the uniforms of their employees to Western design. *Mainichi shinbun*, *Shōwa-shi zenkiroku 1926-1989 - History of the Shōwa time, complete chronology*, p.99

20 Rebecca Ann Nickerson: *Imperial Designs: Fashion, Cosmetics, and Cultural Identity in Japan, 1931-1943*, University of Illinois, 2011, p.34f

department stores by human mannequins, some of whom were well known actresses.

### Woman in Advertising

This form of presentation was obviously an effective way of promoting new fashion products and would become a primary vehicle, in what can be described as an early fashion show. Innovations like that by pioneering beauty products maker Shiseido and its second president FUKUHARA Shinzo (1883-1948) were decisive to an increase of interest in department stores to define the upper middle-class woman's shopping and consumption-based lifestyle in the early 1930s.

After graduating as a pharmacist from Columbia University in 1912, Fukuhara immersed himself in the art world in Paris and later returned to Japan to transform his father's pharmaceutical company into a luxury cosmetics brand. Fukuhara had been associated with art since his youth, beginning with studies in neo-traditional Japanese painting *nihonga* with the well-known painter ISHII Teiko (1848-1897). Later he devoted himself to watercolour and oil painting with KOBAYASHI Mango (1870-1947), painter of the Hakubakai White Horse Society, and was friend of prominent Western-style painters such as ISHII Hakutei (1882-1958) as well. But more than painting he developed a life-long passion for the modern art form of photography. His aim was to use modern advertising to promote the production of Western cosmetics for traditional and modern Japanese women. With his knowledge of photography and design he found some of Japan's most talented young artists and employed them to develop art nouveau-influenced advertising and graphic design motifs to stand out from the competition and to rebrand itself as a cosmetics company for the younger westernised elite.

The staff included several graduates of the prestigious Tokyo School of Fine Arts and their work reflected their deep knowledge of international art history as well as contemporary fine arts practices.<sup>21</sup>

21 Fukuhara worked closely with such as Sue Yabe (1893-1978), Mitsugu Maeda, Noboru Matsumoto (?-1954), and Ayao Yamana (1897-1980), who were educated in places like the New York University, and are ranked among the best-known Japanese commercial designers of the 20th century. Yabe Sue was the first designer hired by Shinzo Fukuhara for the Design Department and worked there from 1917 to 1925. Noboru Matsumoto was the first president without the name Fukuhara. When Shinzo Fukuhara retired in 1940, Matsumoto took over the management of the company until his death. Ayao Yamana (1897-1980), was one of the top illustrators and designers for the cosmetics manufacturer. He was strongly influenced by French Art Deco,

Most prominently, KAWASHIMA Riichirō (1886-1971) worked as one of several of Fukuhara's artist friend as consultant to the company's design division. Trained at the prestigious Corcoran School of Art and the National Academy School of Fine Arts in the United States he was befriended with FOUJITA Tsuguharu (1886-1968), with whom he even stood model for Diego Rivera for a cubist portrait when living in Paris.<sup>22</sup>

Through Kawashima Riichirō, Fukuhara was able to receive regular instalments of the French haute-couture fashion journals as *Vogue*, *Gazette du Bon Ton* (published from 1912 to 1925), which focused on art nouveau, art deco aesthetics an lifestyle and during a period of revolutionary change in art and society.<sup>23</sup> By the 1930s, Shiseido editorial design increased the use of photography, influenced by new typographical and layout techniques as photomontage being developed in Europe design schools like the Bauhaus in Germany.<sup>24</sup>

Although Shiseido's consumer base included many working women, the design of the corporate magazines promoted visions of independent wealth or highly idealized images of modern middle-class domesticity.<sup>25</sup> With a strong cinematic aesthetic the magazines featured Hollywood starlets, images of synchronized chorus line dancers such as the famous Tiller Girls, whose almost mechanistic precision dancing was identified by German theorist Siegfried Kracauer as part of the mass spectacle or 'mass ornament' of modernity.

he played a decisive role on shaping the perception of Shiseido products. Yamana, who worked nearly fifty years for Shiseido, left the company due artistic disagreements the company in 1932 until 1936 to become art director for the new art and travel propaganda journal, 'Nippon', published by Nihon Kobo founded by Yonosuke Natori. Yamana was without doubt a pioneer of commercial design, instrumental in the establishment of the 'Tokyo Association of Advertising Art' Tōkyō Kōkoku Bijutsu Kyōkai in 1931. It was the earliest professional organizations for commercial designers in Japan.

22 Portrait de Messieurs Kawashima et Foujita, 1914, oil and collage on canvas, 78.5 x 74 cm

23 Distributed by Condé Nast, *Gazette du Bon Ton* featured designs by well-known illustrator Georges Barbier (1882-1932), Ernesto Michalhes (1893-1959) among others.

24 In the December 1934 edition, a Japanese family with four children and only their mother is shown in their living room at Christmas time with a decorated tree in the background, a rich meal on the table and a daughter playing the piano.

25 By 1929, the company's only leading Japanese competitor, the Kaō Corporation, which specialized in toiletries (including bath and body, and shaving cream), boasted over twice Shiseido's revenues with \$2 million in total.

Geoffrey Jones: *Beauty Imagined: A History of the Global Beauty Industry*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010, p.368



The slogan: “Women from respectable families wanted” in an recruitment article was posted in major newspapers in 1933 by Shiseido to scout young girls as fixed-term employees to be the company’s first campaign models. Chosen for their embodiment of health, beauty and the ability to wear western clothing confidently, they didn’t just learn makeup techniques, physiology, and dermatology which would be the foundation of makeup and skincare techniques, but also customer service manners, sales talks, personal appearance and etiquette.

Furthermore, they are even said to have been exposed to art through looking at exhibitions and seeing plays in order to further refine their sensitivities.<sup>26</sup> After intensive training, the Shiseido Girls held three 80-minute beauty demonstrations and dance performances each day with different outfits. Afterwards, the group members individually advised women on how to use the company’s new cold creams and powders. These events were so successful that, in 1935, Shiseido set up mobile beauty salons for their girls to visit the smaller towns and communities to give demonstrations to the rural public where they exposed hundreds of thousands of women to the full range of personal consumer items that until 1935, had been the preserve of a small number of upper-middle class Tokyo residents.<sup>27</sup>

Featured in the company’s elegant Shiseido Graph magazine, these early beauty consultants would become inextricably linked with the lifestyle fantasies of the Ginza shopping district, which beginning in mid 1930s, would become a world leader in almost every aspect of female driven consumer and leisure-based modernity.

The impact of department stores and the consumption of western-influenced clothing, makeup and accessories, marked a high point of modernity in Japanese urban culture, which was transferred to other Southeast Asian countries as far a Japanese

imperial presence had solidified into tutelary statehood. On the other hand in Japan, the fascination for all kinds of products associated especially with northeast China (and other colonies), triggered a media frenzy for the specific region.

Department stores in Tokyo spread the goods of the empire, and magazines would display Japan’s growing power after its conquest of Manchuria in terms of an expanding economic market. Therefore, Japan’s imperial modernity was not only expressed through cultural institutions. With a more repression-ary policy in Japan due a shortage of resources triggered by the expansion into Manchuria 1937, when luxury goods were condemned, companies like Shiseido, at the forefront of modern culture and style, ventured into other Asian countries. At this time, while domestic production control became severe, this companies, reacting to the intensification of the controlled economy at home, started reaching into the colonies for resources supplies, production plants and markets.

### Colonial Beautification

The Shiseido company opened its first outlet outside of Japan in August 1929, in Seoul and by 1931, they had opened outlets in Taiwan and Manchuria, creating a distribution system that reached for new markets and revealed acceptance of Japanese imperial modernity and scientific know-how.

When the economic pressure went on domestically and bans on luxury items went into effect, the state began restricting the import of many of the resources used in producing cosmetics. Relying on the colonies for its very survival, Shiseido turned to the Japanese empire for resources, production, sales, and research with factories in Manchuria, Shanghai and Taiwan.

By the begin of the Pacific War it had established outlets in Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines shaping colonial ideas about Japan, which overlapped with Japan’s assimilation policies and echoed the discourses on ethnicity. Parallel to the Japanese military’s incursions into China, the company called ‘beauty missionaries’, who taught cosmetic techniques and science, and dermatology who also educated in theatre, music, Western painting, and other cultural activities.<sup>28</sup>

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26 Using stage names like in Takarazuka (Japanese all-female musical theater troupe), they even enacted a theater play about ‘Miss Shiseido’ featuring a couple of sisters who lived in a Westernized house in a suburb, teaching about new cosmetics and makeup techniques through cosmetics-related Q’s and A’s. Women who came to see the play learned about makeup techniques suitable for each situation in daily lives through this play. The girls changed into uniforms after the play and offered consultations to female customers, giving them prescriptions.

Madoka Yamazaki: Miss Shiseidos – Stars Who Lead Women’s Beauty, Promotion folder, p.16 [https://www.shiseidogroup.com/bc/history/pdf/h-shiseido01\\_e.pdf](https://www.shiseidogroup.com/bc/history/pdf/h-shiseido01_e.pdf)

27 Usui Kazuo: Marketing and Consumption in Modern Japan, Routledge, 2014, p.59

28 Michiko Shimamori, quoted in Lynn Gumpert ed.: Face to Face: Shiseido and the Manufacture of Beauty, 1900-2000, New York:

To develop these markets, the company recuperated its strategy to direct the corporate image to a foreign and cosmopolitan appeal, depicting women of no discernible race, which in the 1920s enhanced Shiseido's advantage to move into the European and American markets. Now consumer advertising shifted from an idealisation of Japanised Caucasian woman to Japanised Asian woman, to prioritise an image of Japanese modernity and superiority.

The imperial beauty for the continent market was, despite the deepening of Sino-Japanese tensions, aimed to teach colonial audiences how to become modern with a mixture of Japanese science and Chinese tradition.<sup>29</sup> Despite its cosmopolitan approach, Shiseidō's attempt was subject to national, racial, cultural, and even historical limitations, as the company promoted a scientific, Western fashion-oriented modernity in Japan, while in the colonial market from the early thirties onwards, it tried to highlight its Asian, and specifically Japanese, modernity.

One example was the use of Japanese writing on its product packaging, that was chosen to enhance Shiseido's image for consumers in much the same way that the use of English description was used to impress consumers in Japan. Shiseido became not only an innovator in the business of both pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, as its marketing of conveying a modern, high-class image to consumers, helped to shape colonial ideas about Japan and Japanese culture.

With an increasing demand for a modern lifestyle, the company's activities, especially in Taiwan and Manchuria, introduced millions of colonial consumers to the idea that Japan, and not the West,

was the pinnacle of modern culture. Mobile Beauty Salons extended throughout the Japanese empire to make appearances at department and chain stores in colonized areas parallel to the Japanese military's incursions into China after 1937. For Japanese domestic and colonial subjects, these mobile beauty salons represented a form of cultural capital, that embodied the Japanese imperial modernity of a company whose incursions into domestic and imperial markets followed Japanese political power. The representative women who were chosen to promote that embodied capital in a kind of Japanese civilizing mission emanating from the imperial center, had naturally pale skin and a certain physique which lent itself well to western dress qualities.<sup>30</sup>

Like in other colonial endeavours, Shiseido as other Japanese companies and their representatives took the lead in developing a specific image of imperial womanhood for areas under Japan's influence. The company was one of many corporations that supported in their cosmopolitanism Japan's imperial modernity in an emphatically hybrid form of aesthetics in which they emphasized propaganda slogans of imperial harmony and a collaborative rhetoric of multiethnic and multicultural goals of the Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Despite some periodic protests and consumer boycotts, as often expressed in distaste for imperial Japan's political policies, activists in those colonized countries nevertheless valued white skin and according cosmetically products. Therefore they still consumed Japanese cosmetics, because of the presumed effectiveness of the products due to their modernity and scientific nature. They welcomed the luminous pallor the products promised and their acquaintance to upper-class status and high educational achievements. Along with the Western inspired imperial modernity, which was often equated with stylish Japanese women.

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Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 1999, p.84

29 Beginning in 1941, Shiseido featured actress Li Xianglan also known as Ri Kōran, (or Yamaguchi Yoshiko 1920-2014), Chinese born Japanese actress became poster girl for the company in China, portraying the company with a modern outfit that was unmistakably Chinese. Her allegiances were ambiguous, as she made propaganda films that introduced Japan to Manchurian audiences, as well as films that celebrated Japan's conquest of Asia. Although it is unclear whether Shiseidō was aware of Li/Yamaguchi's dual identities, her media presence allowed her to become an important symbol of the hybrid nature of Manchukuo, with its alleged *minzoku kyōwa*, or 'harmony of the five races,' touted in propaganda by the state. As a Chinese woman, she helped to sell an exotic vision of continental beauty to Japanese customers, and presumably, to Chinese as an actress representing Japan and a Japanese company.

In the 1950s, she established her acting career as Shirley Yamaguchi in Hollywood and on Broadway in the US. She married Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi in 1951, but they divorced in 1956. See Annika A. Culver: Shiseidō's 'Empire of Beauty': Marketing Japanese Modernity in Northeast Asia, 1932-1945, *Shashi: The Journal of Japanese Business and Company History*, Vol. 2, No. 1 2013

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30 Embodied cultural capital comprises the knowledge that is consciously acquired and the passively inherited, by socialization to culture and tradition. Objectified cultural capital comprises the person's property (e.g. a work of art, scientific instruments, etc.) that can be transmitted for economic profit and for symbolically conveying the possession of cultural capital facilitated by owning such things. Institutionalized cultural capital comprises an institution's formal recognition of a person's cultural capital, usually academic credentials or professional qualifications. Pierre Bourdieu: *The Forms of Capital*, in:

John G. Richardson: *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Westport, CT, Greenwood, 1985, p.241-258

## Moga - Modern Girl

Another main influence of modern life was the popularity of American films, which also led to the new figure of the 'modern girl' *modan gāru*, (abbreviated to *moga*), the protagonist of consumer culture, representing the independent woman, representative of the changes women had already experienced and the desires they sought to realize. The image of the modern girl was projected by a short skirt worn above the knees, bob haircut, and makeup, to dramatize the extremities of new behaviour and the excitement and danger it elicited.<sup>31</sup> A 1925 study by Kon Wajirō, however, showed that the modern girl was hardly part of social reality. Rather, it was apparently a creation of the contemporary mass media that associated this controversial figure in the public imagination with resistance to the established gender roles, breach of conventions, emancipation, promiscuity, and romantic love.<sup>32</sup>

Male artists responded to the female challenge to question traditional roles, and therefore explored new sexual identities for woman with the genre of 'erotic grotesque nonsense' *Ero guro nansensu* which focuses on eroticism, sexual corruption and decadence. Novelists like TANAZAKI Junichiro (1886-1965), KAWABATA Yasunari (1899-1972), and especially EDOGAWA Rampo (1894-1965) were captivated by the modern girl, and dramatized female sexual and financial independence by vastly exaggerating an image of the consequences for male-dominated social relationships.<sup>33</sup> The femme-

31 The boyish hair-style was during these early Showa years largely the preserve of those in the entertainment industry and a small number of *moga*.

Barbara Hamill Sato: *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*, Duke University Press, 2003, p.55

32 Miriam Silverberg: *Constructing The Japanese Ethnography of Modernity*, in *The Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 51, no. 1, Feb. 1992, p.37f

33 Artists responded with the genre of 'erotic grotesque nonsense' *Ero guro nansensu* which focuses on eroticism, sexual corruption and decadence. A specific movement that originated around 1930, with many components which can be found throughout Japanese history and culture. See Miriam Silverberg: *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*, University of California Press, 2009

The buzzword '*nansensu*' was used to describe aspects of Tokyo that epitomized the historical moment based on incongruous images that represented the times. Those Japanese authors wanted to position themselves against proletarian literature, which they attacked for not presenting the realities of modern life. Although glamorizing poverty, *nansensu* literature made ordinary occurrences alluring and critiqued social conditions. Ryūtanji Yū (1901–1992), then widely read but now rarely studied, exemplified the aspirations of *nansensu* literature. He was also the spokesperson for the New Art School *Shinkō geijutsu-ha*, the coalition to which most authors engaged in this literary trend belonged. A former medical student Ryūtanji had an eye for urban details. Ryūtanji's 'street nonsense', to borrow the title of his 1930 anthology, magnified common Tokyo spectacles to expose how the city shaped

fatal, a common figure in the European Middle Ages, flourished in the Romantic period and reinvented in fin-de-siècle decadence, was merely brought to a wider Japanese audience by American movies as representatives of a new sexual awakening and declared beginning of modernity. Liberated from traditional morality, they were characterized as, empowered without intellectual but instead consumerist enlightenment to transcend established patriarchy.<sup>34</sup> This role model clearly revealed the fear of a threat to the established notions of bourgeois order, which included the beginnings of a gender war in itself.<sup>35</sup>

Whether the media created the image of the modern girl or merely reported her existence, they were soon labeled as objects of depravity associated with amusement and loose morals. Many Marxist intellectuals, socialist, and conservative Christian reformers, and government authorities, joined united the wider public in denouncing the expression of modernity as hedonistic. They unanimously criticised the exploitation of the modern girls and boys and their frivolous Western influence, by opposing the preservation of traditional society and culture, or decadent by blaming the media for the spread of capitalism.

The non-spiritual life style of the cities was seen as a cause of the impoverishment and isolation of society, which ended the mutual agreement of living together with neighbours within communities. Despite its drawback in the booming economy, the rural countryside was sacrificed as refuge from the superficial excess and spectacle of the urban everyday life.

In Japan in the 1920s and early 1930s, the true novelty of modern society was not so much the worker as the woman, as it was a conflict of the oral and mystic male culture versus the visual and vivid female approach to everyday life.

human subjectivity and cultural production. Ryūtanji used *nansensu* lightheartedly to critique places and practices that were becoming part of daily life.

34 Kitazawa Hideichi: *Josei August 1925*, in Harootyan: *Overcome by Modernity*, Princeton University Press, 2000, p.24

35 The phrase 'poison woman' *dokufu* was used to label violent women from the late nineteenth century to the early post-Second World War period. Perhaps the most well-known example of such a 'poison woman' is Abe Sada (1905–?), who mutilated and murdered her lover in 1936. On her release from prison she saw out her days as a bar hostess, although little is known about her final years. Abe and her lover were portrayed in Oshima Nagisa's (1932–2013) film *Ai no Korida* (*The Realm of the Senses*) in 1976. Although the actual number of such dangerous women was small, their transgressions had huge symbolic weight and revealed the tensions and anxieties of the society.

Sonia Ryang: *Love in Modern Japan: Its Estrangement from Self, Sex and Society*, Routledge, 2006, p.35ff

## Feminist Magazines

The women's movement was challenged to alter the hitherto role of woman, by blurring the socially constructed boundaries to become more politically empowered, and fighting on the other hand the exploitation as sexually liberated modern girl. It was extremely difficult for Japanese women to escape the ethnic and sexual double bind.

Despite they were allowed the attitude of modernity, but mainly Western women were presented as symbols of equivalence. Aesthetic and cultural autonomy in literature and fine arts was accepted, but even in proletarian circles Japanese women did not represent power but only beauty. These images of gender equality were adopted one-to-one, mainly by the Russian aesthetics, without being adapted.

Named after an 18th-century English all-women salon 'Blue Stocking', a new publication, *Seito* appeared from 1911 to 1916.<sup>36</sup> The magazine promoted feminist ideas with over 3,000 copies a month at its peak, and was sold all over Japan. Articles proclaimed the independence of woman, discussed female sexuality, chastity and abortion.

Regarding themselves as intellectuals, the woman associated with the magazine were described as 'new woman' *atarashii onna*, 'modern girl' *modan garu* or later 'poison woman' *dokufu* in other media. They received diverse attention for their unconventional behaviour of drinking, strolling alone in the amusement district, or being in cohabiting relationships.<sup>37</sup>

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36 An Ibsen Society founded by Osanai Kaoru in 1907, and a production of Ibsen's 'A Doll's House' directed by Shimamura Hōgetsu (1871-1918) in 1911 galvanized the formation of the Blue Stocking Society *Seitō* the same year. The play and the performance of Matsui Sumako (1886-1919), about a woman who leaves her husband and children because she wants to discover herself.

Bringing a woman actress in a realistic performance to the stage after a three-hundred-year banishment, when in Kabuki, female roles had traditionally been played by male actors, created an immediate sensation to the feminist discourse in Japan.

Another crucial play was in 1910 the staging of Sudermann's *Heimat*, known as *Magda*, where the author emphasizes the right of the artist to a freer moral life rather than that of the petty bourgeoisie.

37 Raicho's condemnation in the *Asahi Shimbun*, after a visit to a geisha house, as lesbian, loving Russian literature, smoking cigarettes and being the 'masculine' kind of woman who merely toys with men, led the Japan Women's College to strike her name from their alumni list — and they did not reinstate it until 1992. See *The Bluestockings Of Japan: New Woman Essays and Fiction From Seito, 1911-16*, edited by Jan Bardsley. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2007

Ito Noe (1895–1923) was the second editor of the *Bluestocking* journal, bringing anarchist thought into its pages. She was murdered by the police in the disorder following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 with her partner Osugi Sakae (1885–1923) and his nephew.

The representation of these transgressive woman in conservative, male dominated, magazines, was used as pedagogical function, teaching other women about models of femininity to emulate and of which they should distance themselves from. The mass media symbolized the modern girl as vital symbol of change and non Japanese influence, targeting their self confident behaviour as frivolous, political activism, symbolizing a threat to social stability.<sup>38</sup>

In 1920, after dissolving the magazine, founder HIRATSUKA Raichō (1886-1971), together with fellow women's rights activist ICHIKAWA Fusae (1893-1981), following an investigation into female workers conditions in textile factories in Nagoya, found the 'New Women's Association' *Shin-fujin kyokai*.

On their parol was the demand to allow woman to join any political party, attend or participate in political events and to protect woman from husbands and fiancés with venereal diseases.<sup>39</sup>

The popularity of journals created especially for women, as the 'Women's Review' *Fujin kōron*, or 'The Housewife's Companion' *Shufu no tomo* became a mass medium. With increased education of Japanese woman, they helped to shape the discourse about the antiquated female image and the position of woman in the Taishō society, as they also supported a forum of response via reader's letters that would be printed in the magazines.<sup>40</sup>

Although the male dominated proletarian groups shared the belief in a necessary change of the woman's status in society, it is interesting that virtually none of the volumes of *Bungei sensen* 'Literary Front' (1924-1934), *Senki* 'Battle Flag' (1928-1931), as well as their precursor *Tane Maku Hito* 'The

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38 In real life the modern woman movement was far less prevalent than the mass media would propagate. Barbara Sato: *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003, p.49

39 Article 5 of the 1900 Public Peace Police Law *Chian keisatsu hō* prohibited women from joining political parties and denied them the right to listen to political speeches, until it was overturned in 1922 due to campaigning by the New Women's Association. Nevertheless women could not join political parties or vote until after World War II.

Another group was the Red Wave Society, *Sekirankai*, organized in April 1921, focusing on suffrage and women's rights, who argued that capitalism forced parents to sell their daughters as factory slaves or prostitutes due to financial difficulties.

40 In response to the modern times and reaction to new magazines, *Fujin sekai* 'The World of Woman', created by Murai Gensai (1863-1927) in 1906 and published until 1933, with up to 300,000 copies a month to advice woman in housekeeping, food and kids, changed its focus in the 1920s towards new needs and wishes of their female readers.

sower' (1921-1923), ever used a Japanese woman to depict feminism nor even showing one participating in potentially revolutionary activity such as demonstrations or strikes.<sup>41</sup>

Despite the active role of woman in political movements and the large number of female industrial workers, especially in major export industries as textile, and artistic expressions as Murayama's cross dressing performances and Shibuya's art works, which epitomized the ambiguity of gender roles, the leftist magazines showed only images of Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919), Nadezhda Krupskaya (1869-1939), and Soviet women workers.<sup>42</sup>

Mavo artist YANASE Masamu (1900-1945), who illustrated 1924 the first issue of *Bungei Sensen* in regard to Georg Grosz (1893-1959), depicted capitalism with a smoking factory, a shouting face and a naked female body representing greed and corruption against a fist holding a torch. The graphic work uses the same dangerous, sexualised codification of the feminine as the mass media was propagating to the public, not unfamiliar to drawings by Grosz.

With the magazine *Senki* 'Battle Flag', the image of revolution became even more masculine, with idealized, oversized male bodies, rarely featuring any woman, except for Soviet female workers.<sup>43</sup>

Yanase also worked as illustrator for the *Fujin undō* 'The Women's Movement' magazine, edited and run by OKU Mumeo (1895-1997), one of the founders of the New Women's Association.

Published once a year, from 1923 on, Oku had in fear of state censorship less intention to represent revolution within the magazine, instead promoting a useful participatory role of woman in a changing society. Rather than displaying female bodies in a sexualised or eroticised manner, the illustrations in

41 Angela Coultts: *Imagining Radical Women in Interwar Japan: Leftist and Feminist Perspectives*, *Signs*, Vol. 37, No. 2, *Unfinished Revolutions*, A special issue edited by Phillip Rothwell, January 2012, p. 331

*Bungei Sensen* and *Senki* amassed a combined circulation of over 50,000 by 1930.

42 MURAYAMA Tomoyoshi (1901-1977), SHIBUYA Osamu (1900-1963)

*Bungei sensen* featured a illustrated women's column, showing only Western women in a domestic interior performing the gender-stereotypical activities. vol. 4, no. 9, 1927

see Angela Coultts: *Imagining Radical Women in Interwar Japan: Leftist and Feminist Perspectives*, *Signs*, Vol. 37, No. 2, *Unfinished Revolutions*, A special issue edited by Phillip Rothwell, January 2012

43 Sata Ineko (1904-1998) and Miyamoto Yuriko (1899-1951) co-edited three issues of *Fujin senki* 'Women's battle flag', mostly written by man, with a Soviet woman on the cover.

the magazine represented them as strong, active working forces in factories, farms and offices, as an autonomous socio-political entity.

With no obvious political aim *Nyonin geijutsu* 'Women's Arts' (1928-1932), founded by HASEGAWA Shigure (1879-1967), one of the most popular playwrights of the 1920s and 1930s, was intended as a showcase for women's creativity not to represent ideology but to use the medium as an art form of its own. Focusing on woman as a category, the magazine reproduced in the begin works of radical female European artists as German Expressionist Maria Uhden (1892-1918), photographs of female authors as MIYAMOTO Yuriko (1899-1951) and YUASA Yoshiko (1896-1990) staying in Moscow, or the first female member of the *Nikakai* 'Association of the Second Section', HANIHARA Kuwayo (1879-1936).

In the begin the journal was, by circumventing censorship, producing an image of shared interests of international feminism, to unite woman in their creative aim of liberating them from the confines of patriarchy. By time *Nyonin geijutsu* lost its ability to seduce the audience with female art away from mass culture, when the reproduction of woman artworks disappeared from the cover and were replaced by a utilitarian design with standardised photographs from Russian workers, serving the leftist ideology. With the involvement of male left-wing activists such as KOBAYASHI Takiji (1903-1933) and NAKANO Shigeharu (1902-1979) the journal moved from feminist cultural issues to banned leftist organizations, and was getting to be a subject to censorship.<sup>44</sup>

## Mobilizing and Reproducing

By the time of the Sino-Japanese War, the state had realized the importance of women's cooperation in the war effort at home and some female artists managed to participate in military campaigns along-

44 The September and October issues of 1930 (vol. 3, nos. 9 and 10) and the October 1931 issue (vol. 4, no. 10) were all banned due to the political content.

Nakano Shigeharu was one of the leading writer-poets of the proletarian cultural movement. His works dealt with militarism, the emperor system, and minorities in Japan, among other things. As one of the leaders of the Japan Federation of Proletarian Artists NAPF, he insisted that art should never be subordinated and instrumentalized into politics. After he was arrested in the early 1930s, he renounced ties with the Japan Communist Party in 1934, but continued to write about struggles during the war.

side their male colleagues. The efforts to integrate female leaders into the mobilization structure resulted in the foundation of the Greater Japan Women's Association *Dai Nihon Fujinkai* in 1942, which encompassed all major women's social and cultural groups.<sup>45</sup>

HASEGAWA Haruko (1895-1967), younger sister of Hasegawa Shigure, became one of the most outstanding female oil painters. Due an introduction by her sister, she received training in *nihonga* and *yōga* from two distinguished masters, KABURAKI Kiyokata (1878-1972) and UMEHARA Ryuzaburo (1888-1986), and even had an opportunity to study painting in Paris in 1931. She also gained several opportunities to travel around Asia and visited immediately after the outbreak Manchuria in 1931, China in 1937 and 1940, and Southeast Asia in 1939.

The latter two trips were sponsored by the army and the navy, respectively. Due her presence both in the art scene and on the battlefield she could establish connections within officials, and therefore organized under the auspice of the Army Information Bureau and the Army Art Association, the Women Artists Service Corps *Joryū Bijutsuka Hōkōtai* in February 1943, which operated on commission of the army. In their first major task members of the group visited military schools, made sketches, and other works on the theme of child soldiers to promote the government's campaign for their recruitment. In the follow up the works were shown at the 'Fighting Child Soldiers Exhibition,' touring the country and one year later in August 1944 similar works were produced to be hosted at the 'Child Soldiers for Victory' exhibition.

Goal of the effort was to encourage mothers to send their sons into battle. A most ambitious work was commissioned by the army in December 1943

to record women's patriotic activities at home as well as their efforts in working places.

The two large-scale paintings titled 'Imperial Women's Efforts for the Greater East Asian War' were collaborative produced respectively by twenty-four and twenty-five female artists of the Women Artists Service Corps. Although female artists successfully organized as a large group and took part in various activities during the war, at a scale they had never achieved in previous decades. All of their contributions happened only within the strict gender framework imposed by the wartime. Limited in terms of subject matter, for the most part, they illustrated women supporting men at home, and produced paintings of child soldiers, both of which were primary intended for mothers. Although the women corps well represented the respected role of 'good wife and wise mother' within the realm of art, only little attention was paid to them in popular art magazines and newspapers during the war.

*Nihonga* painter UEMURA Shoen (1875-1949), who not participated in the corps, was probably the most celebrated female artist who experienced remarkable success during the war. Already well known for her sophisticated beauties depicted in historical settings *bijinga*, she continued her routine activities during the wartime period and by doing so her fame reached a peak in 1941.

Featured in a number of major art magazines, she was named a member of the Imperial Academy of Arts and perceived as the ideal for women artists in wartime society, representing the maternal woman herself as she also depicted in traditional style paintings. For example, she executed a portrait of the wife of Kusunoki Masashige, a thirteenth century warrior known to be an imperial loyalist. The painting, Lady Kusunoki *Nankō fujin*, 1944, was offered as a support of war efforts to Minatogawa Shrine in Kobe, dedicated to spirits of soldiers who devoted their lives to the nation.

Despite their symbolic investment and active participation in propagating the nation, Japanese females were not recognized by state ideologues as direct political agents or equal citizens. When women did exercise political agency, the states response was invariably punitive, as the official effort

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45 With the foundation of the Great Japanese Women's Association *Dai Nippon Fujinkai*, short: *Nippu* on February 2, 1942, state, nation and feminism came together in institutional form. The new foundation was a measure of the *Taisei Vokusankai* Imperial Rule Assistance Association, which was based on the German model of Gleichschaltung. The male-led unified organization had more than 27 million members, including seven million in the Japan-occupied or colonized territories of Korea, Taiwan, Sachahn, and the South Seas Territories, according to its own figures. The association's organ, the magazine *Nippon Fujin* (The Japanese Woman), was the main source of information for women after the government forced most other women's magazines to be discontinued in 1941. Numerous activists of the pre-war women's movement got involved in the organisation and had their say in *Nippon Fujin*.

See Beth Katzoff: For the Sake of the Nation, for the Sake of Women: The Pragmatism of Japanese Feminisms in the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945), Columbia University, 2000

was to construct every ordinary woman in Japan according to the new standard of healthy-body beauty.

Because females served literally as the biological reproducers of the national people, in many respects they were even more rigorously implicated than males, both sexually and culturally.<sup>46</sup> Quite like in Nazi Germany, within the discourses and institutions of race hygiene the state encouraged the improvement of the conditions surrounding female productivity in the militarily strategic need to raise the population.<sup>47</sup>

Already in 1905 European ideas about eugenics and race hygiene were introduced by FUJIKAWA Yu (1865-1940) to the Japanese public as a general project of improving the domestic race. Until 1918, the pioneer of Japanese medical history published the journal *Jinsei* 'Human Life,' with the German subtitle *Der Mensch*, which was modelled after *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* 'Journal for Racial and Social Biology' founded by German eugenicist Alfred Ploetz (1860-1940) a year earlier.<sup>48</sup>

SHIGENORI Ikeda (1892-1966), a journalist who lived in Germany for five years between 1919 and 1924, founded the 'Legs Society' *ashi no kai* in 1925 to promote his ideas on eugenic and started the magazine Eugenics movement *Yūsei-undō* one year later.<sup>49</sup> The Legs Society became the Japanese version of *Wandervogel*, the popular German youth movement that later was absorbed into the Hitlerjugend and focused on physical and mental training to revive a society perceived as corrupted by urban modernity. The society capitalized on the growing interest in Japan on the potential of social engineering

of the masses to program individual bodies to function with machine-like precision as a corporate unit.

Sex became a purely reproductive act for the vast majority of married women, as the government banned all forms of birth control, including induced abortions.

Ceremonies were held in department stores by the Ministry of Welfare, to award the especially fertile mothers and attesting their reproductive success. Mass media praised those married woman as fertile womb battalion in the service of the state., while beautiful and healthy unmarried women were being tracked down to promote them as eugenically superior females and future 'Good Wives, Wise Mothers.' In a nationwide beauty contest photographs of the contestants were collected and judged, as thereafter juried collections were published in albums and distributed as wartime propaganda.<sup>50</sup>

However, these competitions and exhibitions, which were devoted to the popularization of a modern, scientific approach to health and hygiene, together formed a critique of the traditional notions of body aesthetics, nutrition, and gender roles and their substitution with new, eugenically informed technologies of the body.

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46 Anne McClintock: *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, Routledge, 1994

47 The Welfare Ministry inaugurated a 'propagate and multiply movement' *umeyo fuyaseyo undō*, which included the staging of healthy-baby contests throughout the country. At the same time, the official age of marriage was lowered by three years (to the high teens), and soldiers were granted furloughs for the purposes of marrying or having procreative sex with their wives.

Jennifer Robertson: *Japan's First Cyborg? Miss Nippon, Eugenics and Wartime Technologies of Beauty, Body and Blood, Body & Society* Vol 7 No1, Sage Publications London, 2001, p.10

48 Journal for the research of the essence of race and society and their mutual relationship, for the biological conditions of their preservation and development, as well as for the fundamental problems of developmental science.

*Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie einschließlich Rassen- und Gesellschaftshygiene*, Lehmanns, München 1904-1944

49 He wrote several books praising the efforts of the Nazis in rebuilding the postwar society and in reinvigorating the German national spirit.

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50 These included the book *Photographing Female Beauty Voseibi no Utsushikata*, 1938, *Female Expressions Onna no hyōjo*, 1938 and the *Anglophone Girls of Japan 1939* which was sent into the battle for Western affections.

Japan Photographers Association ed: *A Century of Japanese Photography*, New York Pantheon Books, 1980, p.20