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Producing Tradition and Beauty to Unify People

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Translated Title :: ファシズムの手段としての日本とドイツ,の美学。伝統と美の演出による国民統合

Abstract :: 1920年代初頭、日本ではファシズムの文化が蔓延し、美学や多くの哲学・文学作品にその姿を現した。それは、当時の空気を支配していた危機感の高まりと結びついてきた。これは、大正自由民主主義、資本主義国際主義の産業資本主義的生産様式への移行に伴う大規模な都市化に伴うものであった。経済が弱体化した時代には、右翼団体の執念と暴力が、自由主義社会の風潮を弱め、ついには覆すことができたのである。

ヨーロッパにならって、新しい文化秩序をつくるために、モダニズムの克服が必要だった。日本はドイツ、イタリア、スペインなどの国家的な考え方に加わり、モダニズムやファシズムの思想の世界的な交流に参加した。ドイツでの国際的な言説や研究の一環として、日本の知識人は、日本の国家システムの独自性を主張するための言語的な裏付けを提供したのである。

ファシズムにおいて、政治は、文化的で美的な経験を促進する「儀式的価値の生産に押し込まれていた」のである。美的な配慮は、ファシズムのアイデンティティ、自己定義、目的意識にとって、実に中心的なものであった。「仕事的美」プロジェクトなど、日頃からドイツに憧れていた民藝運動は、「産業美術研究所」の創設に大きく貢献した。その目的は、伝統工芸の保存と輸出、そして東北地方の貧しい地域の工業化でした。

しかし、民藝の美学は、生活用品だけでなく、人々の時間の使い方も含めて形成されるべきものであった。「生活文化」の改革が必要だったのだ。ドイツのKdF「Kraft durch Freude」（喜びによる力）やイタリアのOND「Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro」などヨーロッパのモデルに影響を受け、工場での余暇を欧米の既成のモデルに従って合理化する取り組みが論じられた。その最たるものは、西洋的でなく正真正銘の土着文化でありながら、現代の工業労働と同じように規則的で生産的な日常文化の美しさを強調したことである。

このテキストでは、日本における新しい日常生活文化の創造に関わった方法、制度、主人公たちについて説明しています。この文化は、管理された生産性の中で西洋的・近代的であることを望まなかったものの、西洋のモデルを用いて、日本における美の新しい有効価値を定義したのです。

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Japanese and German Aesthetics as Means of Fascism: Producing Tradition and Beauty to Unify People

07 2020

One could say that the reorganization of time was the most noble attribute of all rule. A new power that wants to assert itself must go to a new order of time. It is as if time begins with it.¹

Elias Canetti

Even the most practical revolutionaries, will be found to have manifested their ideas in the aesthetic sphere.²

Kenneth Burke

Since the late 1920s the Japanese press was filled with discussions of fascism, with some reformist right wing group *kakushin uyoku*, advocating a fascist regime mainly related to a fascination the personality of Mussolini and the successes of his Fascist Party, the *Fascio di Combattimento*.³

1 Elias Canetti: *Masse und Macht*, Frankfurt am Main, 1990, S. 445 translated by author

2 Kenneth Burke: *The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle*, in *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973 (1941), p.217

3 Notably political leader Nakano Seigo (1886-1943) sought to bring about a rebirth of Japan through a blend of the samurai ethic, Neo-Confucianism, and populist nationalism modelled on European fascism. In December 1937, Nakano had a personal audience with Benito Mussolini. In the next month, he met with Adolf Hitler and Joachim Ribbentrop. The idealist right wing, *kannen uyoku*, on the other hand, rejected fascism as they rejected all things of obvious western origin. The Great Japan Production Party, *Dai Nippon Seisan To*, Imperial Japan's preeminent self-declared fascist party, was founded with the help of Toyama Mitsuru (1855-1944).

Leslie Russel Oates: *Populist Nationalism in Pre-War Japan: A Biography of Nakano Seigo*, 1985

The first books which presented Italian Fascism to a Japanese readership had already appeared in the 1920s.

Inoue Seiichi: *Mussorini to sono fashizumu*, Tokyo Jitsugyō no nihonsha, 1928

Giulio Aquila and Hiroshima Sadayoshi: *Itaria ni okeru fashizumu undō*, Tokyo Hakuyōsha, 1927

Founded in 1923, the short-lived political organization *Keirin gakumei* was able to build an ideological bridge between nationalists and socialists, creating a political precedent for later ultra-right movements in Japan.⁴ Since Benito Mussolini coined the term in 1919, the Japanese right wing was aware of the existence of Fascism in Italy. Even before that, intellectuals such as Kita Ikki (1883-1937) emphasized a process of self-emergence through national awakening, drawing on the ideas of writers such as Rousseau, Kant, Darwin, Spencer, and Marx to reorganize Japan.⁵

4 In January 1923, Takabatake Motoyuki (1886-1928), one of the first theoreticians of national socialism in Japan, who completed the first Japanese translation of *Das Kapital* in 1924, and anarchist Uesugi Shinkichi (1878-1929), who founded with Kita Ikki (1883-1937) the *Roso-kai* 'Old and Young Society' in 1919, created the *Keirin gakumei*, or the 'Statecraft Study Association' as the first fascist organization in Japan in the manner of Mussolini's Fascist Party. Besides the *Genyōsha* 'Dark Ocean Society' and the *Kokuryūkai* 'Amur River Society', the *Keirin gakumei* is considered the main progenitor of all important ultranationalist organizations.

Miles Fletcher: *Intellectuals and Fascism in Early Showa Japan*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 1, November 1979, p.41
Tatiana Linkhoeva: *Debates on 'Japanese-style Fascism in the 1920s, Axis Empires: Toward a Global History of Fascist Imperialism*, Workshop LMU, Munich, 23-24 November, 2015

5 Kita Ikki outlined his philosophy of nationalistic socialism first in 1906 in his book 'The Theory of Japan's National Polity and Pure Socialism' *Kokutairon oyobi Junsei Shakaishugi* and emphasized a close relationship between Confucianism and platonic state authoritarianism.

As ideological father of Japanese fascism, in his 1919 book on the 'An Outline Plan for the Reorganization of Japan' published as *Nihon kaizō hōan taikō*, which has been called "Mein Kampf of the Shōwa ultranationalist movement", he articulated a theory very similar to fascism.

Mussolini convened the *Fascio di Combattimento* on March 23, 1919.

George M. Wilson: *Kita Ikki's Theory of Revolution*, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1, November 1966, pp.89-99

In 1923, socialist and historian Sakai Toshihiko (1871-1933), one of the founding members of the Japan Socialist Party in 1906 and the Japan Communist Party in 1922, and Arahata Kansō (1887-1981), left-wing labor leader, published 'Fascism in Japan' in the July 1923 journal of the Red International of Labor Unions RILU (Profintern), in English.

Anti-Western and anti-liberal trends in Japan had high-ranking supporters and strong organizational solidarity during the 1920s and thus were able to exert disproportionate influence as a result of their popularity among the bureaucratic and military elite.

In the beginning of the 1920s, there was a pervasive culture of fascism that emerged. Manifest through aesthetics and in a number of philosophical and literary works fascism was interlaced with the increasing sense of crisis that dominated the atmosphere of the period. It was accompanied by transformations of massive urbanization that followed the transition to an industrial capitalist mode of production, during the Taishō liberal democracy and the capitalist internationalism. The persistence and violence displayed by right-wing groups was able to weaken and eventually to overturn the prevailing atmosphere of liberal society.⁶

Thus, fears expressed in the state's increasing focus on the internal and external dangers posed by the spread of communism provided the motive and justification for political repression and the creation of fascist-style police power beginning in the late 1920s. Legal and institutional structures linked to the Peace Preservation Law of 1925 connected communism as an existential threat to the national body *kokutai*. The expansion of a police state became the centrepiece of new forms of censorship, as internal surveillance, mass arrests, purges, and the forced recantations of left-wing beliefs emerged as part of daily governmentality. Fascist thought raised concerns with Comintern activism in the empire, and the propagated military threat posed by the Red Army helped the ultranationalistic debates on aggressive expansionism to Asia. Their representatives, who could not implement their policy visions during the 1910s, because the liberal group prevailed in domestic politics, argued for Japanese imperialism and expansionism to secure the Asian continent under Japanese control. Anti-communism became central to fascist imperialism through the strategic thinking and geopolitical vision of Japan's wartime leaders

6 By the end of the Tokugawa period, Japan had a population of approximately 31.5 million people, with an urban population of about four million, and in 1920 the population of Japan had increased to just less than 56 million, and reached 73 million by 1940. The urban population of around four million had likewise increased to around 10 million in 1920, and that more than doubled to over 27 million in 1940. Over the same time period, the rural population actually decreased by about 300 000.

Thomas O. Wilkinson: *The Urbanization of Japanese Labour, 1868-1955*, University of Massachusetts Press, 1965, p.24

heightened during the Russo-Japanese War and its aftermath.⁷

In cultural affairs, by the 1930s Surrealism rather than Naturalism became associated in the military police's mind with Communism. In 1933 the Japanese Communist Party was dissolved when Sano Manabu (1892-1953), its Chairman, renounced Soviet Russia from his prison cell and espoused the national cause.⁸ Within three years 74% of all communist detainees had followed his path, and in 1934 the Proletarian Artists' League was dissolved.⁹

A German Taste of Kultur

With the rise of the Nazi regime in Germany, Berlin lost its status as referential melting pot of avant-garde and Paris gained popularity within the artist community.¹⁰ Bauhaus closed in 1933, under protest by director Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) and in the same year the *Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* 'Imperial chamber of fine arts' was used as centralized controlling centre on artistic practice.

Only members were allowed to continue as artists,

7 The longstanding Russophobia in military doctrine goes back to the rivalry for control over Manchuria and Korea that had been nurtured since the turn of the century. The Japanese Army warned vehemently of evil ideas of Bolshevism, which was broadcasted in propaganda pamphlets and public speeches, inciting that the 'red peril' fused internal and external threats across the Japanese empire to spread a Bolshevistic Asia.

Louise Young: *Japan's total empire, Manchuria and the Culture of War-time Imperialism*, University of California Press, 1998, pp.140ff

8 In 1932, Yoshino Sakuzo (1878 - 1933) considered to have been a foremost democratic theorist in the Taisho and early Showa Eras, wrote: "To define Fascism is an extremely difficult task. We can, however, say in general terms that it implies the rule of the disciplined and resolute few as against that of the undisciplined and irresolute many. It is anti-democratic, and particularly anti-parliamentarian; it is national rather than international; and it tends to dignify the State as against the individual, or any group of individuals, except of course the resolute group in whose hands power is concentrated. These are the ideas which animate the various groups in Japan [. . .] and therefore, in spite of their occasional repudiation of the title, they can reasonably be called Fascists."

Yoshino Sakuzo: *Fascism in Japan*, *Contemporary Japan*, vol. 1, no. 2, September 1932, p.185

9 This all took place even though in Japan there was no consolidated cultural ideology or official art like in Nazi Germany, as there was no single Party to demand it.

Tsurumi Shunsuke: *An Intellectual History of Wartime Japan 1931-1945*, London, KPI, 1986, p.63

10 Adolf Hitler, had been sworn in as Chancellor of Germany on 30 January 1933, and with the day after the Reichstag fire in Berlin on 27 February, he received from President Hindenburg the Reichstag Fire Decree. Using the emergency decree of the Weimar Constitution most civil liberties in Germany, including habeas corpus, freedom of expression, freedom of the press, the right of free association and public assembly, the secrecy of the post and telephone, were taken from the public and not reinstated during Nazi reign. In March Hindenburg signed the Enabling Act of 1933, which gave Hitler's regime arbitrary powers, and in August of the following year Hindenburg died, after which Hitler declared the office of President vacant and made himself head of state.

and all non-arian, Jewish, Communist and unwanted artists received a ban on work. A debate within the Party arose about whether Expressionism, with its German roots and favour of 'Blood and Soil', could express the authentic spirit of a new Germany.

It was held between such as Josef Goebbels, a collector of modern art, who supported these ideas, and party ideologue Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946), who propounded more conservative views.

Goebbels, who wanted to control the whole realm of culture and propaganda, would win the power play and in 1933 the *Reichskulturkammer* that controlled all cultural production came under the direction of his Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda.¹¹

By the time, Goebbels position became more conservative, and academic kitsch, whether *völkisch* 'folk genre' painting or monumental neo-classical sculpture such as Arno Brecker's (1900-1991) or Josef Thorak's (1889-1952) heroes, now became the new official taste. Modern artists were regarded as degenerate and their works ridiculed as depicting distorted reality, were removed from museums and destroyed or sold abroad.¹²

11 For a full record of this conflict see D. Elliott: *A Life and Death Struggle*, in D. Ades, T. Benton, D. Elliott, I. Boyd Whyte ed.: *Art and Power: Europe under the Dictators 1930-45*, Stuttgart: Oktagon, 1995, pp.270-276

Rosenberg became editor of the cultural propaganda magazine *Kunst im Dritten Reich* 'Art in the Third Reich.' With his task force Reichsleiter Rosenberg he was responsible for the plundering of Jewish archives and libraries for the 'Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage' as early as 1939. By order of the Führer, Hitler had authorized Rosenberg to confiscate art treasures in the occupied territories. Large quantities of stolen goods were transported to Germany in railway wagons.

12 For more on the role of Switzerland's cultural policy to auction works of art defamed as degenerate, such as the famous 125 pieces at the Galerie Fischer in Lucerne on 30 June 1939 see: The Publications of the Independent Expert Commission: Esther Tisa Francini & Anja Heuss: *Fluchtgut - Raubgut: Der Transfer von Kulturgütern in und über die Schweiz 1933-1945 und die Frage der Restitution*, Zürich 2001

Three such international auctions took place in Lucerne on June 30 and August 26, 1939, and on June 28, 1941. On the brink of war, the auctions were not a commercial success, as they yielded a total of 681,000 Reichsmarks. Nevertheless, Goering appropriated 14 canvases – four Van Goghs, four Munchs, one Gauguin (*Riders on the Beach. Tahiti*), three F. Marcs (including *The Tower of Blue Horses*), one Cézanne and one Signac. Those not sold and involved in the degenerate art travelling exhibition were brought for storage to Köpenicker Strasse, Berlin, and totalled. According to the surviving archives, it was a matter of 12,890 paintings, sculptures, watercolors and prints. An unknown number was taken outside the city to be sold to foreigners at an average price of \$20 per masterpiece. In December 1938 Goebbels and Heinrich Hoffmann, the personal photographer and unofficial art adviser of Hitler, decided to burn the remaining artworks. On March 20, 1939, 1,004 paintings and 3,825 watercolors, drawings and other types of graphic works, primarily by E. Nolde, K. Schmidt-Rottluff, E. Heckel, O. Dix, G. Grosz and K. Kollwitz, were put on fire in the yard of the Chief Fire Defense Department on Köpenicker Strasse, Berlin. Over 600 works of 'degenerate' art by Picasso, Dali, Ernst, Klee, Léger and Miro were burnt in the early hours of July 27, 1942, in a bonfire on the terrace of the Tuileries Garden by the Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, where artworks confiscated from Jewish collectors were stored between 1940 and 1944.

Many artists left Germany in the aftermath of the Reichstag fire in February 1933 like George Grosz, John Heartfield, Max Beckmann, Heinrich Campendonk, Lyonel Feininger, Walter Gropius, Raul Hausmann, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoschka, Laslo Moholy-Nagy, Kurt Schwitters, and others.

Others resigned themselves to inner emigration as they were forbidden to exhibit and in some cases even to work.¹³ Not many artists continued to work even through the darkest years of the war, like Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945), who was to some extent protected by international respect in her studio at *Atelieregemeinschaft Klosterstraße* in Berlin.

Paris Enclave

At a time when the production of modern art in Germany was already heavily restricted under state control, local and international artists presented the latest trends in Paris. Only month before Japanese athletes took proudly part at the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Berlin, enforcing cultural exchange on an international level, the 'Exposition surréaliste d'objets', was held in the Parisian gallery Charles Ratton. The exhibition particularly valued object art and references to Primitivism, sexual fetish and mathematical models.

A few days before in Munich the 'Degenerate Art Exhibition' *Entartete Kunst Ausstellung* opened to the public on July 19, 1937, the Tokyo Prefectural Art Museum showed the 'Exhibition of Overseas Surrealist Works', organized by TAKIGUCHI Shūzō (1903-1979) and YAMANAKA Chiruu (1905-1977).¹⁴

Artists who were exposed as degenerated in Munich, would be praised by Japanese press in Tokyo.

Jan Philipp Reemtsma: *Das unaufhebbare Nichtbescheidwissen der Mehrheit: sechs Reden über Literatur und Kunst*, C.H.Beck, 2005

13 Max Ernst lived since 1922 in Paris and was member of the surrealist circle around Breton, Éluard and Man Ray. He emigrated to America with the help of Peggy Guggenheim. On January 31, 1933, on the day after the Nazis took over, SA men were entering the studio apartment of Georg Grosz, but he was already in New York. Only ten days after the Reichstag burn, Grosz was expelled, as the first and only one of 553 persons of public life who were immediately apprehended. Beckmann left after the radio broadcast of Hitler's speech at the opening of the Great German Art Exhibition in Munich. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner left for Switzerland, where he committed suicide in 1938. Paul Klee died in Switzerland in 1940 without getting Swiss citizenship because of his status of a 'degenerate' artist.

Otto Dix settled in the countryside and painted scrupulous landscapes in order not to provoke the government watchers. Edgar Ende and Emil Nolde were forbidden to buy brushes and paints. Elfriede Lohse Wächter was murdered in a former psychiatric institution at Sonnenstein castle in Pirna under Action T4, a forced euthanasia program of Nazi Germany.

14 Tokyo from June 9 to June 14, 1937

Obviously Paris was the artistic hub of the time and Surrealism its latest expression. The 'Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme' took place from January 17 to February 24, 1938, in the generously equipped Galerie Beaux-Arts, in Paris, and was organised by André Breton (1896-1966) and Paul Éluard (1895-1952), with Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) as generator, Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) and Max Ernst (1891-1976) as technical advisers, Man Ray (1890-1976) as head lighting technician and Wolfgang Paalen (1905-1959) responsible for the design.

The holistic presentation was staged in three sections, showing surrealist art work as well as unusually decorated rooms and mannequins which had been redesigned in various ways.¹⁵ With 229 works by 60 exhibitors from 14 countries including Salvador Dalí, Wolfgang Paalen, Kurt Seligmann, Alberto Giacometti, Meret Oppenheim, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, René Magritte, Giorgio de Chirico, André Masson, Roberto Matta, Joan Miró, and Yves Tanguy among others, the exhibition turned out to be the last highlight and final manifestation of the surrealist movement in Europe.

An extraordinary concentration of significance and potential for provocation was followed by the break of the surrealist community due politically motivated differences.

Japanism Nihon-shugi

Based on earlier romantic philosophies, in the name of a natural myth out of time, with no history, fascism promised an end to class division by unifying the people through their blood and spirit. In a language of faith that appealed, through images and myths, it evoked beauty and nature rather than rational thoughts. The tools of fascism ideology to unify people and controlling the masses were not restricted to economical and political measurements but expanded into efforts to beauty of the workplace and everyday life as to employ aesthetics as a means of increasing industrial production for a war.

In the gradually shift of Japanese society into a totalitarian system, it lacked especially in the beginning some grand gestures, iconic figures, and ideo-

logical guidance to transform the physical space or the arts as it happened in Italy and Germany.¹⁶ But nevertheless citizens were sufficiently mobilized without the need from propaganda gestures on a grand scale.

For the prevailing fascist mood in Japan in the 1930s, it was crucial to engage with modernity in a Japanese way. The overcoming of modernity was necessary on the European model in order to make room for a new cultural order. Japan joined German, Italian, French and other fascisms in the worldwide exchange of modernist and fascist ideas. Although they each employed their own ideological mechanisms, they also relied on common, as well as their own, rhetorical styles and images.

TOSAKA Jun (1900-1945) argued that the Japanese form of fascism was the result of "literary thinking. The core of the ideology of Japanese fascism was embodied in "Japanism" (Nihon-shugi).

In his view, "Japanism" consisted of a series of arguments for the uniqueness of the Japanese state system, and it was best exemplified in the 1937 governmental pamphlet "The Nature of our National Polity" *Kokutaijūno jōngi*.¹⁷ The ideological work in politics and society could be done only when the political leadership had secured the linguistic help of writers. A language that denied any logical criticism and which elevated tradition and beauty to objects of passive veneration.

Nevertheless, Japan's fascism was a local variant of a global phenomenon articulated in response to a modernity born in the West. Being part of the international discourse, Japanese intellectuals, like student of Martin Heidegger, KUKI Shūzō, (1881-1944) would secure the linguistic aid to stack the array of arguments for the uniqueness of Japan's national polity. Due his foreign studies he could see Japan, as it were, through German eyes to recognize that he and his kind lived in a fractured world

15 With this presentation the movement wrote exhibition history.

Uwe M. Schneede: Exposition internationale du Surréalisme, Paris 1938. In: Bernd Klüser, Katharina Hegewisch eds.: Die Kunst der Ausstellung. Eine Dokumentation dreißig exemplarischer Kunstaustellungen dieses Jahrhunderts, Insel Verlag, 1991, p. 94

16 No Japanese leader has ever been the focus of propaganda efforts as much as Europe. Just as Hitler immersed himself in music and architecture, as Mussolini was influenced by literati, or Franco wrote a screenplay and had it made into a movie.

17 The 156-page pamphlet, *Kokutai no jōngi*, was published in March 1937 in an initial print run of 300,000 copies, of which more than two million were eventually distributed in Japan and the Empire. It was the most important of a series of documents issued by the Japanese government to formulate an official ideology for a nation on the brink of total war.

Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur L. Tiedemann eds: Sources of Japanese Tradition, New York Columbia University Press, vol. 2, 2005

where neither language nor the senses could penetrate to the essence of "being" to the everyday reality of things. Therefore, Kuki's concept of aesthetics for healing the fracture of a world emptied out of meaning by modernity, leaned on descriptions by Western philosophy.¹⁸

Mainly the writings of Heidegger, Nietzsche pointed him the way to *Iki*, an aesthetic concept linked to the idea of non-essence and located in the eighteenth century of Edo Japan.¹⁹ *Iki* became determined as a truly unteachable Japanese sensibility kind of utmost aesthetic style, in which every decision, arrangement, activity has an aesthetic impact on objects, spaces, values, and produces aesthetic experience.

Produced through a resignation of fate, out of a 'World of Suffering', as Kuki describes it, *iki* represents the constant longing for ideals, incorporated in the idealised cultural framework of *Bushidō*.²⁰

Mourning melancholy for lost myths, including that of cultural priority, the fascist 'form' was taking charge of the imaginary, filled with native, pathetic traditional content, creating new and false myths. The producers of this images, the narrators and creators, neglected as individual by fascism, betrayed their convictions, including liberalism, modernism, Marxism, that had dominated their work for decades.

In the quest for an idealized culture, the concept of *iki* internalizes fascist art by projecting a positive utopian aesthetics of staged physical perfection and offering the way back to a whole and healthy experience.²¹

Therefore, the works that evoke the aesthetic properties of fascism become essential to understanding the fascist romantic worldview. Not claiming that *iki* was a fascist concept per se, it paralleled with the definition that fascism can be characterized formally as an use of aesthetic criteria within the political and

economic realms. Recreating ideological unity by offering its own new fictional myth of wholeness and authenticity potent enough to forge an individual's imaginary relations to society.²²

Beauty of Labour

At the end of his 1936 essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) considered fascism's aestheticization of politics tied to modern artworks in the means of technological reproduction.²³ Benjamin believed, the work of art had lost its distancing aura and its status of cultic object, but enhanced an active attitude in the public and became a potential tool in social struggle.

With fascism, politics was 'pressed into the production of ritual values' and became a cultic experience meshed with aesthetics.²⁴ The aim of fascism to respiritualise politics unfolded from a privileged position of absolute self-referentiality that valued aesthetic worth over claims of any other nature.

Aesthetic considerations were indeed central to fascism's identity, its self-definition, its envisioning of goals. Following Benjamin, art has become the fascist creed and was closely linked to the *l'art pour l'art* movement as it also cherished the prevalence of form over ethical norms. The emphasis on form is what characterizes fascism's aestheticized politics and also helps to explain fascism's cultural-political development, as it underscores the fate of fascism's claims to ethics within fascist culture. In the same way that the *l'art pour l'art* movement was driven by spiritual aims against the commercialization of art, fascism presented itself as auratic in opposition to disenchanting democratic systems.²⁵

18 Alan Tansman: *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism*, University of California Press, 2009, p.13ff

19 Prior to the Japanese discovery of German philosophers in the Meiji period (1868–1911), nothing comparable to this strict usage of the philosophical term 'aesthetic' was known in Japan.

Michael F. Marra: *A History of Modern Japanese Aesthetics*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2001

20 Diogo César Porto Da Silva: *Kuki Shūzō's Temporal Aesthetics: Finding Japanese Identity in Art and Literature*, The IAFOR Academic Review Volume 1 Issue 2, The International Academic Forum, Japan, 2015, pp.3-7

21 Susan Sontag makes a distinction between art and ideology when she contrasts fascist art with communist art: communist art is based on a Utopian morality, while fascist art displays a utopian aesthetics of physical perfection.

Susan Sontag: *Fascinating Fascism*, in Bill Nichols ed.: *Movies and Methods*, vol. 1, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. p.40

22 Alice Kaplan: *Reproductions of Banality: Fascism, Literature, and French Intellectual Life*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, p.26

23 See Walter Benjamin: *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit*, in *Gesammelte Schriften I, 2*, Werkausgabe Band 2, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt, 1991 (1936), pp. 431–469

24 Benjamin writes that in the age of mechanical reproduction, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on politics.

25 The writer SHIMAMURA Hōgetsu (1871–1918) was one of the first Japanese who participated in the modern global conversation about aesthetic matters. Beside his activity as literary critic of Naturalism and his contribution to the modernization of Japanese theater, he wrote in 1902 *Shin bijigaku*, a treatise of rhetoric. This early work in the field of aesthetics and rhetoric terminated the tradition of *bijigaku* studies at Waseda University, and also created the premise for the study of rhetoric in Japan. He described the illuminating moment that results from the intertwining of the self with the object of contemplation. Only when the self leaves its function as productive will, this aesthetic perception can arrive and merge together with the object in consciousness. For

With many artists being engaged to sketch the Sino-Japanese confrontation, the *mingei* movement attracted attention by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry of Education. Asked to help on the home front *jūgo*, their social and cultural visions, based on folk-craft aesthetics, had finally a chance to be realized. In the fascist goal, similar to Germany or Italy, the creation of a new classless society was framed in aesthetic terms, advocating a traditional regional culture, not influenced by foreign movements, and sacrificing national unity.²⁶

Mingei was legitimized by the Japanese state much in the way as the axis partners Germany and Italy appropriated folk art to justify their national and imperial identity based on blood and soil. In the same linear mode of an emergent national subject linked to a highly self-conscious ideology, asserting independence from the West, Japan was using what was affirmed in the West before it was confirmed in the East. In this sense, Japanese nationalism remained a postcolonial concept.²⁷

Comparable to the method of the German propaganda organisation 'Beauty of Labour' *Schönheit der Arbeit*, *mingei* offered for the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry a uniquely Japanese contribution to modern design in a similar traditional and patriotic framework.²⁸ Discussions sponsored by

this, according to Edmund Burke, the ability of mourning ab is necessary, which Japanese authors of aesthetics called *mono no aware* (compassionate mourning).

See Massimiliano Tomasi: Studies of Western Rhetoric in Modern Japan: The Years between Shimamura Hōgetsu's "Shin bijigaku" (1902) and the End of the Taishō Era, in Japan Review, International Research Centre for Japanese Studies, National Institute for the Humanities, Kyoto No. 16 (2004), pp. 161-190

Alan Tansman: The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism, University of California Press, 2009

26 Due a national mobilisation, the inequality of wealth between rural and urban population was necessary to overcome. The promotion of an idealised vision of a rural, traditional household was a main step to attain fascist harmony.

27 Prasenjit Duara: The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism, in Nations Under Siege: Globalization and Nationalism in Asia, ed. Roy Starrs. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p.69

28 The organisation 'Beauty of Labour' *Schönheit der Arbeit* was founded on November 27, 1933 to optimize the working conditions in factories and gain better control over efficiency and spending. The organisation 'Beauty of Labour' was complementary to direct oppression. When state violence suppressed resistance, 'Beauty of Work' or organized in specific ways approval.

See Chup Friemert: Das Amt Schönheit der Arbeit in Das Argument Heft 3/4, 1972, pp. 258-275.

By the summer of 1933 the Werkbund was placed under the jurisdiction of Goebbels's *Reichskammer der bildenden Künste* 'Reich Chamber of the Visual Arts' and later under the new *Reichskulturkammer* Reich Chamber of Culture. However, until 1938 the organization was continued with the well-known name under the leadership of the National Socialist Hermann Gretsch.

The Militant League for German Culture *Kampfbund für deutsche Kul-*

ture the Mingei Association regularly included admiring references to the German example and, in particular, to the "Beauty of Labor" projects. The affinities between *mingei* and modernity, as developed during the 1920s and 1930s by YANAGI Muneyoshi (1889-1961) and his associates, were lent special credence to promote Japanese industrial productivity to succeed export markets in the West and to advocate social harmony of premodern communal ideals.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry established the 'Research Institute of Industrial Art' *Kogei Shidosho* in 1928 to promote export of traditional local handicrafts and to industrialize the impoverished areas in northeastern of Japan. The pursued design reflected a new version of Japonism, carrying the image of a modern and at the same time traditional aesthetics. Goal was to combine simplicity and functionality with a native, pre-industrial, agricultural past, but products often imitated European and American taste for export. To advise on artisanal production, foreign modernist experts such as architect Bruno Taut (1880-1938) and later designer Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) were recruited by the *Kogei Shidosho*.²⁹

Being Jewish and a noted socialist Bruno Taut was compelled to emigrate from Germany when the Nazis gained power. By an invitation from Japanese architect UENO Isaburo (1892-1972), he arrived in Japan on May 3, 1933. At his home in Takasaki, Gunma, he produced three influential appreciations of Japanese minimalist aesthetic of culture and architecture, comparing it with modernist discipline.³⁰

tur KfdK, founded by Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) in 1928, surveilled cultural life in Germany, campaigned against artists and held lectures and conferences. With about 38,000 members in 450 chapters by October 1933, the organisation merged with *Reichsverband Deutsche Bühne to Nationalsozialistische Kulturgemeinde* NSKG in 1934. However, Rosenberg, the Führer's representative for monitoring the entire intellectual and ideological training and education of the NSDAP, had less success with his organization than he had hoped. After his renaming as a National Socialist cultural community in 1934, his *Kampfbund* gradually merged into Robert Leys organization *Kraft durch Freude* (KdF). But even Ley did not manage to assert himself in art politics. It was only through his understanding with Rosenberg's opponent Joseph Goebbels that he succeeded in preserving more leeway for his organization, which was gradually drifting into the leisure sector.

29 Bruno Taut, whose admiration for Japanese masterpieces was published in books and magazines, stated a critique after seeing an Institute's exhibition at the Mitsukoshi department store in 1933. Two month after this he was hired by Kunii Kitano and advised them to collect and re-sample old Japanese masterpieces.

In 1940 Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) traveled to Japan as an official advisor to the Ministry for Trade and Industry, with the task on raising design standards to develop products for the West.

30 Both shall not be coined as supporter of a fascist Japanese aesthetics, but the lack of a national aesthetic identity was seen by bureau-

As *Mingei* defined various objects made by hand for everyday life, the institute's first president KUNII Kitaro (1883-1867) included in his definition of industrial art *Sangyo Kogei* also machine-made objects. They were intended for everyday use and were meant to industrialize and mechanize local crafts for export.

As both faced the same direction toward new popular art based on utility, *Mingei* wanted to protect local handicrafts from excessive industrialization and mechanization contaminated by capitalistic commercialism. Yanagi Muneyoshi separated the design of skilled handicrafts from industrial machine-made products, and pointed out that the latter should not imitate the other, but rather be designed in a simple and straightforward form, from battleships to commodities.³¹

Not a member of *Mingei* but with good relations to Yanagi, HAMADA Masuji (1882-1938) and others like Bruno Taut, penetrated the inherent modernity in traditional Japanese design by working on many prototypes for the institute. The emphasis was a proof for the movement in favouring a new Japonism for export and as a national identity. Understanding the simplicity of Japanese traditional design, as decoration was connotated as Oriental, backwards and urban fashionable, Kunii advocated the anti-ornamentalistic style of the Bauhaus. He endorsed *Mingei* in a pragmatic effort as design resource to campaign a distinctive Japanese aesthetics for consumption abroad.³² Aesthetic but functional objects showed the strong connection between crafts and the life of the people, implying a high level of refinement in the everyday life of regular Japanese folk. As an example, the decorative alcove *tokonoma* in the Japanese house was therefor lauded as a kind of altar to aestheticism.

Cultural Order

With the announcement of the New Order *Shintaisei* policy by Prime Minister KONOE Fumimaro (1891-1945) in August 1940, the *Mingei* Association used the opportunity to promote their ideology to Japanese society and culture by publishing the October issue of their magazine with the title 'The New Order and *Mingei*'.³³ To encourage regional handicrafts they envisioned the participation of various government ministries and discussed 'The New Order and the Question of Craft Beauty' with German Graf von Dürckheim (1896-1988), who was sent to Japan in 1938 by Joachim von Ribbentrop (1883-1946) to coordinate the dissemination of Nazi propaganda in Japan.³⁴

Another article featured the project for a girls' dormitory for a spinning factory owned by OHARA Soichiro (1909-1968), second director of the Ohara Museum of Art in Kurashiki. The concept of 'daily life culture' was envisioned as a site of no privacy to increase the labor productivity and to keep the girls, who came from farming households in rural villages, under total control.³⁵ The concept of *Mingei* aesthetics shaped the girls work and leisure life with designed housing and furniture by integrating farm and factory culture as well as various items from other Japanese regions and colonies, which were integrated according to their benefits.

But the *Mingei* aesthetic was intended to shape not only products of everyday life, but also the way people spent their time. The planners of the reformed "culture of daily life," wanted not only to integrate the material culture of Japan's periphery into the metropolitan center, but also to adapt the rhythms of rural productivity into the industrial leisure created by the factory era.³⁶

33 Also in other magazines like NIPPON, crafts were heralded for displaying the Japanese people's adroitness at adapting the cultural achievements of other nations; in this case, China, Korea, and Western countries.

34 Dürckheim was an early supporter of National-socialism, but discovered that he was of Jewish descent and Ribbentrop decided to create a special mission for him to become an envoy for the foreign ministry. On 15 July 1939 Dürckheim published an article in the third issue of the journal Berlin - Rome - Tokio in which he refers to the glorified Japanese 'Samurai spirit' and its relationship with Nazi ideology.

35 Kim Brandt: Kingdom Of Beauty: *Mingei* And The Politics Of Folk Art In Imperial Japan, Duke University Press, 2007, p.157

36 Shikiba Ryūzaburō (1898-1965) wrote a detailed questionnaire about daily life that was distributed to 362 female workers at the Kurashiki plant in January 1941. The questionnaire also included a section dealing with "Romantic Love," "Marriage," and "Menstruation." The questions and especially discussion grouped under these categories suggest that at least some of the planners also wanted to address one of the most difficult conflicts of the fascist model of society.

crats as a handicap in international markets.

Taut left for Turkey in 1936. Ueno spent four years studying in Berlin and Vienna, during which time he also worked in the office of Viennese architect Josef Hoffmann. In 1925 he met and married Austrian designer Felice Rix (1893-1967), and they moved to Japan the following year.

31 Amagai Yoshinori: Japanese concept of Kogei in the period between the first world war and the second world war, p. 105-109 In: Wong, Kikuchi, Lin eds.: Making Trans/National Contemporary Design History, 2016 – 10th Conference of the International Committee for Design History & Design Studies, São Paulo: Blucher, 2016

32 See Kim Brandt: Kingdom of Beauty: *Mingei* and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan, Duke University Press, 2007

The relevance of the aesthetic but functional *Mingei* objects and its ideology on the so-called home front was promoted as a fascist vision of a 'culture of daily life' *seikatsu bunka* and emphasized the strong connection between crafts and the life of the people.

Distinguished from the populist German *völkisch* movement, which banned needless, tasteless and nonsensical items as formation of a new cultural identity, in comparison *Mingei* and the Japanese Ministry of Commerce and Industry campaigned to preserve traditional technology. They were concerned about the possible loss of handcraft techniques due to the wartime restrictions imposed on civilian manufacturing.³⁷ In this understanding a Japanese defensive state should not only be militarily 'strong' *tsuyoku* but also culturally 'beautiful' *ut-sukushii*, as to beautify Japan meant to increase its power.³⁸ In this sense, the language of fascist aesthetics offered a cure for the ills of modernity. But its solutions, which began in creativity and imagination, ended in politics.

The social reform of daily life under the 'New Order' rule, was formalised by the IRAA Imperial Rule Assistance Association, Japan's fascist organization to promote the goals of the movement.³⁹ Aiming to pen-

etrate and coordinate Japanese society, from village to metropolis, this became the Japanese answer to the mass political parties of the fascist states.⁴⁰

For the cultural section of the IRAA Imperial Rule Assistance Association, culture was a central concern as a necessary and integral aspect of daily life, undertaken in a factory culture movement, a national health care movement or a regional culture movement.

The promotion of the state's cultural policy involved also prominent figures of art and entertainment, as one of Japan's most influential playwrights, KISHIDA Kunio (1890-1954). He headed the cultural section of the association on October 19, 1940 as director.⁴¹ Considered because of his non-inflammatory political beliefs, he proved his positive guidance of the oppressive Japanese government since 1938, when he was sent to the southern front of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in China in order to chronicle the conflict.⁴² In his belief that Japanese culture 'is the mother of world culture,' Kishida was a main advocate of the new cultural order, with an eye on German cultural politics and its central role of theatre to define a national culture concisely.⁴³

Like in Germany, the establishment of a new theatre system, controlled by the state, could serve

37 In the development of a true *völkisch* living culture of the German people, Nazi cultural policy struggled against kitsch and unwanted clutter of degenerate pasts. Splendid and bourgeois interior was gathered by local city governments and burned in celebration. Another campaign which had little to do with modern culture, or the virtues of *völkisch* arts and crafts was the resumption of a Werkbund anti-kitsch agitation regarding commemorative Nazi merchandise. When merchants tried to cash in on Nazi symbols and insignia, a 1933 Cologne exhibition entitled 'Away with National Kitsch' *Fort mit dem nationalen Kitsch*, illustrated the negative example of a model room crammed with Nazi artefacts. The display insisted on the sensitive dignity of political iconography and to keep it unsullied by commercialism.

On Nazi modernism see Paul Betts: *The Authority of Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design*, University of California Press, 2004

Designated individual artisans, as most leading *Mingei* artist-craftsmen, received in 1942 special permission to continue work.

38 In wartime Japan, even the most basic actions became an expression of the greatness of the Yamato race and by extension, national destiny. The Education Ministry made aims showing the proper etiquette for eating Japanese food, the correct angle at which inferiors and superiors bow to each other, and even the right way to mount a staircase. Manners were more than just a sign of civilization, they were the mark of racial superiority.

39 Recommended by the informal think tank Shōwa Research Association *Shōwa Kenkyūkai*, political parties voluntarily dissolved themselves, and the totalitarian Imperial Rule Assistance Association *Taisei yokusan kai* was formed by Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro on October 12, 1940, to overcome the deep-rooted political differences between bureaucrats, politicians and the military. The Association chose the name of an association (*kai*) to differentiate itself from political parties but never took their place. It never attained the status enjoyed by the Nazi Party in Germany or the Fascist Party in Italy, and its chief contribution to Japan's war effort was to propagate the ideals of Japan's new order to her people. The Association controlled all chan-

nels of communication and households due its subdivision into neighbourhood groups, who were required to circulate papers sent from the *Taisei yokusan kai* headquarters.

Nevertheless, it was the only political party in existence, and in combination that the Meiji Constitution accorded the Emperor broad discretionary powers and granted him *de facto* commander-in-chief status over both the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy, and to initiate and institute legislation, then the basic framework for fascism appears to have been firmly in place.

Marcus Willensky: *Japanese Fascism Revisited*, in *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, Volume 5 Number 1 Winter 2005

It has been argued that the Imperial Rule Assistance Association failed to become a fascist party because it never eradicated pluralistic thought and competing state ideological programs. But especially the IRAA's very looseness allowed such effective fascist inculcation.

Historian Peter Duus describes it as an "unwieldy sprawling national organization that meshed with the existing bureaucratic structure."

Peter Duus: *Modern Japan*, 2.ed Boston Houghton Mifflin, 1998, p.229

40 In the cities, "neighborhood associations" were organized on a block-by-block basis. They coordinated everything from issuing ration cards to fighting fires, and in the hands of key leaders, they severely limited the freedom that Japanese civil society had developed.

See Marius B. Jansen: *The Making of Modern Japan*, Harvard University Press, 2000

41 Commissioned as an officer in the Japanese army in 1912 he left two years later, disillusioned by military life. In 1924 he established the magazine *Engeki Shincho* 'New Currents of Drama' along with the founder of the Tsukiji Little Theater Kaoru Osanai, with whom he split soon afterwards. With actor Tomoda Kyōsuke and actress Tamura Akiko he founded the Tsukijiza Tsukiji Troupe in 1932, and in 1937 the Bungakuza Literature Theatre Company.

42 Kishida detailed his travels in China in his book *Jugun gojunichi* 'Following the Troops for Fifty Days.'

43 Cited in James R. Brandon: *Kabuki's Forgotten War: 1931-1945*, University of Hawaii Press, 2009, p.137

as educational tool for the people. To follow the rules of the community in daily behaviours as well as to discipline them in rituals of collectivity was connected to the making of the state's image.⁴⁴

Cut off from other work opportunities, former leftist artists helped to cultivate traditional norms and values of cooperation and sacrifice in the state-initiated movement. By working with autonomous theater groups and mobilizing people in rural areas to participate, the performing arts were used to educate the population. The plays addressed issues such as renewing culture, using time and resources efficiently, overcoming fatigue, enduring the hardships of the war, regulating consumption, and promoted savings.

Japanese Recreation Association

Following the second World Recreation Congress in Hamburg in July 1936 and the third in Rome in 1938, the establishment of a Japanese recreation movement was discussed. Based on the Japanese spirit and the importance of the traditional family system underlying regional activities, the Japanese Recreation Association *Nihon Kōsei Kyōkai* was founded in early 1938.⁴⁵

Influenced by the European models as the German KdF *Kraft durch Freude* and the Italian OND *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro*, the effort to rationalize factory leisure according to established, Western models was discussed. Corresponding to the Japanese

44 The Third Reich integrated theatre under the state's control and promulgated a national theatre law *Reichstheatergesetz* in 1934, under which it designated a large budget for activities and facilities.

A committee to develop a cultural strategy for the Japanese theatre, cinema, and entertainment, initiated by the Ministry of Education in December 1939, included Yasunosuke Konda and Kunio Kishida. The Imperial Diet cut their budget proposal and the IRAA had to find an alternative way of controlling theatre.

45 The association held the first Japan Recreation Congress in Tokyo in November 1938 and the second in Nagoya in November 1939. The third congress was held in Osaka in October 1940 as the Recreation Congress for Asian Development *Koa kosei taikai*, with approximately 2000 delegates from 11 countries, giving it an international character.

The KdF was modelled on the Italian OND (1925-1945) by Dr. Robert Ley and initiated on November 27, 1933. The organisation presented diverse programs through its divisions of the Bureau of Sports (Sportamt), the Bureau of Travel, Walking, and Vacation (Amt für Reisen, Wandern und Urlaub), the Bureau of Afterwork (Amt Feierabend), the Bureau of Social Education (Amt Deutsches Volksbildungswerk), and the Bureau of the Beauty of Labor (Amt für Schönheit und Würde der Arbeit).

The *Nihon Kōsei Kyōkai* Japan Recreation Association had been created by the newly established *Kōseishō* Welfare Ministry. The original impetus for the formation of the Japan Recreation Association was concern within the military about the poor physical condition of the country's conscript youth.

See Kim Brandt: *The Beauty of Labor: Imagining Factory Girls in Japan's New Order*, in Alan Tansman ed.: *The Culture of Japanese Fascism*, Duke University Press, 2009, p115-137

nature, necessary recuperation and entertainment for workers was acknowledged as significant as developing human resources with healthy bodies to increase the productivity of labor.

GONDA Yasunosuke (1887-1951), who was by now part of the Social Education Department of the Ministry of Education, demanded in the framework of rationalizing everyday leisure to increase national productivity, the improvement of workers lives and the promotion of their culture, just like the KdF in Germany.

ŌKŌCHI Kazuo (1905-19884), professor in the Department of Economics at the Imperial University of Tokyo, was another critic who stressed the role of leisure at workplaces. As most light industries in Japan did not provide welfare, those poor workplace environments affected workers' health conditions and brought about a decrease in both efficiency and quality.

In this concern, leisure was regarded as a safe device for the state to prevent worker's outrage and to facilitate production by giving them energy to labor day after day. In May 1940, the state organized a factory culture movement by setting up the 'Society for the Study of Theatre for Workers' *Kinrōsha Engeki Kenkyūkai*. With representative scholars, artists, and critics in the field and state officials and prominent industrialists on the board of directors, workers were motivated to organize their off-work time at the workplace, also with the intention to preclude radical labor movements that increased after World War I.

Productions in the countryside were encouraged and supported while commercial theatre which served the consuming class in cities were blamed for attracting urban bourgeois audiences through their profit motive.⁴⁶ The state proclaimed that its control of entertainment was for the producing classes, providing welfare and improving the working environment. On 1 August 1940, the monthly 'day of Service for developing Asia' was promulgated. All citizens were to show their support for the war effort by forgoing 'luxury' items, such as alcohol,

46 In Germany a new type of choral theatre for the masses, called Thingtheater was presented for the first time in Halle 1934 by Otto Laubinger and Hanns Niedecken-Gebhard, as a visualization of the national socialist community. With the focus not on the individual but the people, the race and the cult, no known dramas but special written plays would be performed at dedicated open air stages.

tobacco, and meat, by volunteering for war work, and by participating in scrap drives.

This highly successful public relations campaign 'Luxury Is the Enemy!' *Zeitaku wa teki da!* unleashed housewives into the public arena, who only a years ago were target of consumerism and modern advertising and now being controlled of their public behaviour and censured by their outfit.⁴⁷

In pursuit of further civilian mobilization for the war, the New Political Order extended its control over the female body with the convention of the 'First Workshop for the Founding of New Female Beauty' *Shin joseibi seitei dai ikkai kenkyūkai* in January 1941. Directed by KITA Sōichirō (1894-1968) of the 'Imperial Rule Assistance Association' *Taisei Yokusanka*, the convention aimed to eradicate earlier concepts of female ideals that found weakness beautiful, and instead sought a new form of female beauty appropriate to the new political order. As a result of the meeting the 'Ten Commandments for New Female Fitness Beauty' *Shinjosei kenkōbi jussoku* were issued by the counsel, formulating the new embodiment *shintaisei bijinen*, which enforced woman to eat and grow plump, be well built with full breasts, and have a strong waist bone to support her sturdy body.⁴⁸

Initially, beginning in the late 1930s, agencies sought to organize and direct workers' leisure time, tending to define appropriate work culture in terms of ordinary forms of rest and recreation.

In the early 1940s, however, renovation-oriented officials promoted a new, 'healthy' culture that became integrated into workers' daily lives. The rationalization of leisure was not neglected in New Order Japan, but was pursued in a different way. Foremost was the emphasis on the beauty of an everyday culture that, while authentically indigenous and not Western, was as regulated and productive as modern industrial work.

In Germany, the 'beauty of work' project became a cult of productivity and efficiency in the late 1930s. In the process, it supplanted the earlier emphasis on pre-industrial, *völkisch* forms and modes to lend an unmistakably modernist flavor to the mature National Socialist ideology and culture.

Not so in Japan, where pre-industrial folk forms and ways of life were not so much displaced. A transfiguration took place with the aim of creating a culture of daily life that is both non-Western and modern in its controlled productivity.

Confronted with an only partially industrialized economy, Japanese fascists chose beauty over modernity in the face of adversity. «

47 The campaign was the brainchild of advertiser and student of the psychology, Miyayama Takashi.

48 Asato Ikeda: *Modern Girls and Militarism: Japanese-Style Machinist Paintings, 1935-1940*, in Ikeda, McDonalad, Tiampo: *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire, 1931-1960*, Brill 2012, p.105