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STAGING GOOD TASTE, STAGING 'JAPANESENESS' CONSUMER CULTURE, THE DEPARTMENT STORE *MITSUKOSHI* AND PERFORMANCE OF MODERN IDENTITIES IN JAPAN

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I

First, I should connect the topic of the symposium – ‘performance’ or ‘performing cultures’ – with ‘consumption’ and ‘consumer cultures’ as an important focus of my own research into the construction of modern identities in twentieth-century Japan. ‘Performance,’ initially describing performing arts, today generally means social and cultural practices, emphasizing the aspect of activity, of a communicative and sensual representation, of presenting “attitudes, of modes of being, materials, signs, lines and colours” (Fiebach 2002, p. 755). In general, as it is argued, daily life is characterized by cultural performances. As concrete acts of communication they “are not simple reflectors or expressions of culture or even of changing culture, but may themselves be active agencies of change, representing the eye by which culture sees itself and the drawing board on which creative actors sketch out what they believe to be more apt or interesting ‘designs for living’.” (Victor Turner, quote in Fiebach, p. 753).

In this sense the concept of performance comes close to that of ‘lifestyle.’ Lifestyle is understood here as the cultural forming of acting, as a spectre of specific forms of articulation and practices as well as objects by which social individuals are identifying themselves and distinguishing themselves from others. Here we have a link with the topic of ‘consumption,’ long understood mainly as an economic category and as such as a passive behaviour. Only in the last two to three decades has it become a regular topic of cultural studies treating it also as an act of communication between subjects, in which they are not simply using objects to satisfy their needs and their natural longing for happiness. Following Baudrillard, it is instead a social act to relate oneself to another in order to create hierarchical differences and identities (Baudrillard 1998).

Since then, theoretical and ideological controversies on consumption as a form of presentation and/or re-presentation, as an act of self-realization/self-stylization and/or subordination have been vacillated “between the dangers of an excessively romanticised ‘consumer freedom’ on the one hand and the paranoid fantasy of ‘global control’ on the other” (Morley 1999, p. 466). In this paper applying the concept of ‘performance’ to the problem of ‘consumer culture’ I am going to avoid this kind of ‘either-or’ logic, distinguishing between two aspects of ‘lifestyle’ (linked closely to processes and institutions of consumption) which nevertheless in reality are inseparable and intertwined: the *vertical* aspect of lifestyle referring to a certain origin, claiming authenticity and essentiality, and the *horizontal* aspect referring to diversity via combination, plurality, and interchangeability. Discussing both aspects of lifestyle, I do not intend to present them in a teleological manner, as a ‘history of progress’ from the first to the second, to more freedom and individuality. Rather we have to see them as interwoven, and we have to ask how the balance between them is changing within Japanese society, in which (as in other modern societies, too) the typical fields of everyday taste and lifestyle – clothing, food, housing (*i-shoku-jû*) – become more and more commercialised. One way to track down this changing balance is to scrutinize how the presentation of these fields, *i-shoku-jû*, has changed in the mass media, especially in an only recently ‘re-discovered’ corpus of texts: so-called company or house magazines (*kikan zasshi*) edited by commercial companies such as department stores, mainly in the first half of the twentieth century. In this paper I will set the focus on *Mitsukoshi*, a house magazine of the Mitsukoshi department store, published 1911–1933 (under a different title before 1911), in order to trace, how a certain kind of lifestyle – in those days called Mitsukoshi taste (*Mitsukoshi shumi*) – was presented and created through this medium.

To illustrate what the two aspects of lifestyle mentioned above mean, let me now introduce two statements, which came from different media and different periods of time.

(1) “*You are not what you wear.*” In autumn 2001, this advertisement rolled through London on its famous red double-deckers, trying to open the European market for the successful Japanese ‘fast retailer for casual clothing’ *Uniqlo* (Jpn. *Unikuro*, Fig. 1). With the slogan “Clothing forever and for everybody” (*eien no minna no fuku*) in the mid-1990s the company had already caused a sensation in Japan at a time, when well-established department stores like Mitsukoshi were being forced to close one branch after the other.

(2) "Clothing and body-accessories tell us of the people's inner selves. Women have to consider this, because through make-up they are expressing their characters in a particular manner," a dermatologist starts his article on "The taste of civilized (or cultivated) women" (*bunka fujin no tashinami*) in the 1927 June number of the department-store magazine *Mitsukoshi* (Fig. 2).

That clothes are not saying anything about who you are, is the message of the first statement; that you can deduce the heart of a person from her outward appearance is that of the second. The first one can be seen as a kind of self-portrait of all post-modern societies as consumer and affluent societies. Not regarding all problems, caused by the so-called 'affluence,' in this self-perception consumption contributes to a plurality of life styles and produces a kind of democratisation. Lifestyle in this horizontal understanding today no longer represents affiliation to a certain social group or even class. Lifestyles are to understand as active performances by individuals, who are putting on stage their competence to create their own style and to design their own cultural projects, their ability to question identities or to affirm them. Wearing cheap and simple clothes (that *Uniqlo* is advertising) is as little a sign of poverty (or of what Bourdieu has called "a taste of necessity") as carrying a Mitsukoshi-bag still symbolizes membership in the elite. To live in the right milieu, to have access to information and knowledge and to certain spaces for living or health – these, it is argued, today are the much more important elements of distinction and indicators of social inequality than "conspicuous consumption" (Veblen) or the demonstration of richness. "We won't tell you what to wear or how to wear it. [...] By offering a wide range of well-made, logo-free basics, we aim to give you the choice to create your style," the *Uniqlo* homepage is telling us concisely (cf. <http://www.uniqlo.co.uk>, April 2003).

In contrast, the second statement gives very concrete instruction how young women in particular, as potential brides to valued sons (*taisetsu na musuko no yome*) should carefully take care of their face and skin. Because, even if they are not favoured by 'mother nature', a well-groomed skin might tell something about their education and family. As mentioned above, this article was published in the journal *Mitsukoshi*, published by the prestigious department store Mitsukoshi. This monthly was far more than a mere catalogue. Each issue offered, above all, old and new seasonal patterns for kimono and their accessories, along with other commodities, including products from Western countries. They invited entries for pattern and other competitions and published the names

of winners. Western fashion trends were introduced and fashion as a social phenomenon, both in the West and in Japan, became a theme for discussion, also through short stories focusing on the topic. For that purpose a network of artists, writers, journalists, and scholars was established who gathered in various research and discussion circles organized by the staff of Mitsukoshi department store. For many years, the journal *Mitsukoshi* reported on the monthly work of the 'Fashion circle' (*ryūkōkai*) and also published the lectures given there.

Later I will present a more detailed discussion of this journal, which is similar to those published by other Japanese department stores, and its inexhaustible advice and instructions, but first I would like to draw attention to similarities between the spatial order of the department store as a modern institution and the structure of journals like *Mitsukoshi*, both taking part in the production of modes of perception, of knowledge or of lifestyles. First, on the catalogue pages advertised commodities and goods often were presented by referring to the departments where they were sold, sometimes with the help of small maps, particularly when, as during the 1920s, new branches were being opened close to centrally located railway stations. (Fig. 3).

Second, we find so-called 'how-to-do-articles' as a kind of advisor. Their content too was structured largely by the logic of a kind of 'departmentization' of the body according to gender or age, or of everyday commodities and luxury goods according to the typical lifestyle fields of clothing, food and housing. The departments were separated also by the criteria of 'ethnicity and civilization.' For example, an article, published in October 1922, titled "On oriental taste" (*Tôyô shumi ni tsuite*, Fig. 4) introduced merchandise that could be bought in the 'Oriental department' (*Tôyô hinbu*). Discussing the term 'Orient,' being created by the 'Occident,' the article uses stereotyped language, as is typical for these journals and is linked to the corresponding goods, purchasable in the particular departments: there are goods in an 'Oriental' and a 'Western style' (*tôyôfû* and *yôfû*), but also in a 'Japanese style' (*wafû*). The article notes that, although Japan is part of the 'Orient,' the 'Oriental department' of the Mitsukoshi separated Japan proper (*Nihon hondo*) and collected merchandise from China, Korea, Taiwan, Java, and India in this separate 'Oriental department.' This material and verbal presentation of goods can be seen as an important factor in discourses of national and ethnic identity, which at that time were also influenced by Japan's ambiguous status as an 'anti-colonial colonizer,' among other things (cf. Robertson 1998).

Here we find a close linkage to the third homology. Namely, the journals include another category of texts that refer to a very specific characteristic of

Japanese department store culture. Since Mitsukoshi sponsored exhibitions of art and products in specific rooms within the store, the journal published lectures and articles by experts to introduce the reader to the material in them. Because of their historical seriousness and precision, as well as their intellectual quality, most of these articles can be characterized as a kind of enlightenment literature. As a modern company Mitsukoshi also played the role of a modern cultural patron. Under its roof and its sponsorship, various study groups of experts, for example, the 'Fashion circle' mentioned above, gathered to discuss topics relevant to the company and society. One of the topics was the question of 'taste' (*shumi*). Before asking why this topic was so important and how it permanently was 'performed on the stage' by Mitsukoshi as a kind of *taste-space*, I first would like to return to the two statements about the brand *Uniqlo* and the 'cultivated women' that exemplify the two different aspects of lifestyle.

"*Bunka fujin no tashinami*" – the term *tashinami*, above translated as 'taste', implies the meaning of etiquette, i.e. a system of commonly accepted conventions which (especially the female) readers of this article ought to become acquainted with. Thus, by using cosmetics – e.g. the French perfume or the body lotion which are promoted on the same page (Fig. 2) – the female reader has to fashion her look according to a certain ideal of beauty, or, more generally, she has to adapt to a certain lifestyle and to exhibit this lifestyle, the lifestyle of a *bunka fujin*, of a modern woman. Such a modern woman at that time usually came from the upper middle or upper classes. Essential for this vertical aspect of lifestyle, therefore, is the close interrelationship of a certain understanding of modernity, of *bunka seikatsu* or "cultured (cultivated) life" as an expression of a social status, and at the same time with Mitsukoshi as its purveyor. The products and services of Mitsukoshi thus shape and stage this status, and those who consider themselves as belonging to this status are staging a style, which for a certain time even was called the "*Mitsukoshi shumi*" or "*Mitsukoshi konomi*," both of which might be translated as "Mitsukoshi taste" (cf. Jinno 1994, p. 198 ff.).

In contrast, brands such as *Uniqlo*, designed in Japan by the 'fast retailer' and produced in China, aim at the aspect of taste and lifestyle that assumes the ability of individuals to combine and select their own pattern from a huge variety of suppliers and objects, to fit themselves to a certain code instead of being fitted. Rolf Lindner characterizes this aspect as "horizontal differentiation in lifestyle groups instead of vertical representation of status differences" (unpublished manuscript). Euphemistically articulated as 'freedom', this aspect gains importance with an increasing de-traditionalization. Increasing spatial and

social mobility seems to go hand in hand with the vanishing of classes, and of regional and professional forms of networks and ties. This forces the 'released' individuals to "construct new forms of coherence" (cf. Jehle 2000, p. 107), created more and more by consumption as a social act of production of differences and – at the same time – of identity-creation. By purchasing and staging goods and commodities, individuals thus constitute groups with a common code, a kind of ambience, distinguishing themselves at the same time from other groups (cf. Baudrillard 1998, p. 92ff.). That means, lifestyles do not lose their character as 'signs', but they become more sketchy and floating.

Here we have to ask once again how the balance between the two aspects of lifestyle is changing within a more and more commercialised society. The more 'sketchy and floating sign character' of the horizontal aspect implies at the same time a tendency of fragmentation of the past thus becoming a potential reservoir of permanent and arbitrary re-combination. And this, again, involves a certain danger of wear and tear of tradition, in favour of a rootless *hic et nunc* (here and now) without any substance. This, however, is an ambivalent 'business.' Is this a condition hostile to nationalistic (and other) ideologies or, on the contrary, is it a breeding ground for them to prosper? Is such a 'here and now'-situation the other side of an omnipresent commercialism and consumerism, or is it a chance to develop responsibility in dealing with values and goods? These are 'big questions' my interest in the relationship of consumption and modern identities in Japan are based on. There cannot be an answer in general. Rather we have to reconstruct concrete socio-cultural contexts and texts, with the concrete protagonists acting with their specific cultural practices to perform their own interests. So let me now scrutinize how some typical topics of everyday taste and lifestyle in the fields of clothing, food, housing were presented in the *Mitsukoshi* journal in a certain period. This will be done in order to get an insight into how this medium, as an element of a much bigger context, including, for example, the reader of the journal, took part in the lifestyle construction.

II.

To most Japanese the above mentioned fields of clothing food and shelter, *i-shoku-jû*, are often understood as synonymous with 'everyday life' (*nichijô seikatsu*). This becomes clear by a diachronic analysis of texts classified under the topic of *i-shoku-jû* in the catalogue of the *Ôya Sôichi bunko*, the biggest

private library of popular magazines in Japan. Furthermore, reading these texts reveals the changing content of this concept, a process I would like to summarize as 'de-essentialization,' from a culturalistic understanding of *i-shoku-jû* as a symbol of profound (vertical) Japanese-ness to Japanese-ness as a pool of modular identities that can be easily obtained and, of course, can also be thrown away easily.

The just mentioned 'easiness,' I suppose, is largely shaped by a new media landscape of lifestyle, city, and fashion magazines, such as *Pia*, *Nonno*, *Popeye* etc., that have prospered since the 1980s and address their information and messages to a certain clientele, and thus take part in a seemingly new kind of segmentation of society – the so-called 'partial mass' *bunshû* (in contrast to *taishû*, the 'big mass') and social spaces. There is much interesting research by Japanese mass media and gender specialists, for example, Yoshimi Shun'ya and Ueno Chizuko, who have taken a look at media, commercial, and financial complexes like *Seibu* as the socio-economic background of those changes.

In the remainder of my essay, I would like to illustrate how the company magazine *Mitsukoshi* contributed to the discourses on Japanese-ness via everyday life-topics like *i-shoku-jû*, particularly in the 1920's and early 1930's, which are known as the 'age of a cultivated life' (i.e., a modern one, *bunka seikatsu no jidai*). Differing from the preceding Meiji era (1868–1912) with its omnipresent catchphrase of 'civilisation' (*bunmei*), 'culture' and 'cultivated modern life' (*bunka*, *bunka seikatsu*) became a very popular slogan in the wake of the 'daily life improvement campaign' (*seikatsu kaizen undo*), initiated and conducted by the state in 1918. Promoted by scholars, artists and reformers around the journal *Bunka seikatsu*, the meaning of this concept was widely discussed in other media too, among them *Mitsukoshi*. To give one example, the first number of 1923 included a New Year wish, which can be summarized as follows (Fig. 5): This year, finally, not only arms restrictions, but also *bunka seikatsu* and *seikatsu kaizen* will be realized – something we can be very happy about. Therefore, the department store too makes every endeavour to offer more low-priced top-quality products, to improve its facilities, to train the staff, to satisfy each customer and visitor, to serve the society as a whole (*shakai hôshi no jitsu o ageru*). and to contribute to the cultivated, modern life of our nation. In this short text the emphasis on the vertical aspect of lifestyle is evident.

A distinguishing feature of the medium *Mitsukoshi* is that general explanations of modern lifestyle always go along with the presentation of concrete objects of everyday life, as commodities and as exhibits. For example, the demand to implant 'Western rationality' into the 'Japanese context', i.e. to

harmonize it with ‘Japanese taste’, is often linked to historical flashbacks to the heydays of this taste in the past, mostly to the Edo period (1600–1867), as *Edo no shumi*. At the same time, the idea of modernity is materialized through catalogued objects and goods, pictures and photos that have to fulfil three functions: (a) to illustrate the instructions for their use (their utility value); (b) to inform about the price (the exchange value); (c) to be testimony of good taste (the symbolic value).

These three values could qualify very different things or phenomena for being a manifestation of ‘culture’ (*bunka*), as the following two topics may illustrate:

a) Above I have quoted the cosmetic instructions given by a dermatologist to young women to help them to become ‘cultivated,’ i.e. to become good and beautiful brides. Following the rhythm of the seasons, on the first pages of *Mitsukoshi*, annual event and art exhibitions are announced, followed by descriptions of items from the departments of *i-shoku-jû* (referring to the rhythm of the seasons, as well). At the end of each number are published summaries of discussions in the regularly held study groups or complete papers from lectures on topics such as how the relationship of the Japanese people to nature and to the seasons had changed during the process of modernization.

b) In the early 1920’s, Japanese intellectuals gave particular attention to the problem of housing when dealing with the ‘mission’ to define and to implant cultural, modern life into the citizens’ daily lives. According to George Sand, at that time mainly three groups competed for the ‘right understanding’ of what it means to live in a ‘tasteful, modern, cultivated’ house (*shumi no yoi jûtaku, bunka jûtaku*): “the older group of Meiji bourgeois proselytizers, rich in both social capital [...] and cultural capital (primarily Western knowledge),” [...] “a vanguard of Taishô intellectuals, rich in cultural capital but lacking the kind of access to political power possessed by their Meiji predecessors,” and the more marginal intellectuals, purveying “new, largely Western tastes” to the “new middle class,” the *shin chûkansô*, then often called “the educated unpropertied class” – *yûshiki musan kaikyû*, or “paupers in Western clothes” – *yôfuku saimin*; (Sand 2000, pp.101–102). The *bunka jûtaku* models, presented on the pages of *Mitsukoshi*, represented the mentioned Mitsukoshi-style (*Mitsukoshi shumi*), referring to the social status of the upper and the upper middle class, who fit into the first two groups mentioned by Sand.

To support this statement, I would like to give some more examples of lifestyle presentations in the journal *Mitsukoshi*. The first is an essay written by Ôkuma Yoshikuni in July 1925 to introduce his own house, designed by himself: *Watashi no setteishita jûtaku*, (pp. 2–5, Fig. 6 & 7). Ôkuma, an architect and professor of engineering at Tôkyô University, was official head of the “Culture village” (*bunka mura*) at the Peace Exposition (*heiwa kinen Tôkyô hakurankai*) held in 1922 in Tôkyô’s Ueno park. In this ‘village’ the best models of a *bunka jûtaku* contest were exhibited, chosen before by a jury, mostly consisting of members of the Society of Japanese Architects, among them Ôkuma (cf. Sand: 100). The second is an article by Nishimura Isaku (1884–1963), entitled “The new house. What meets with our taste” (*Atarashii ie. Ware ware no shumi ni kanau*; Fig. 8) and published in January of the same year (1925/1, pp. 6–9). In 1921 Nishimura together with other liberal intellectuals, among them Yosano Akiko, Yosano Tekkan, Ishii Hakutei and Kawasaki Natsu, founded the “Academy of Culture” (*Bunkagaku-in*), which aimed at independent and individual education of children. Because of this, it was shut down by government order in 1943, but it was revived after the war and continues to flourish. Compared with Ôkuma, Nishimura certainly did not belong to the bureaucratic elite, but there are some interesting features common to both texts. The most important, probably, is the way they present their ideal *bunka jûtaku*, describing it against the background of two kinds of unsatisfactory alternatives (*ayamarareta bunka jûtaku* or *akushumi no bunka jûtaku*): those with insufficient space and design, i.e. ones too shabby, and those that are too luxurious or too fashionable. An article in the February number of 1925 illustrates the latter problem. It introduced the best models from a modern kitchen contest organized by the magazine. Members of the jury, again including Ôkuma (Fig. 9), in discussing the results of this contest had to justify why they did not award a first prize. The jury conclude, as Ôkuma explained, that among the nearly 600 proposals, there were too many ‘bourgeois kitchens’ (*burujua kaikyû daidokoro*) with a size of six to eight *jô* (about 10 up to 13.5 m²), but too few ‘proletarian kitchens’ (*puroretaria kaikyû daidokoro*), the ideal size of which was assumed to be about three to four *jô* (5–7 m²). Here *Mitsukoshi* and its player describe and prescribe in a very concrete way, what is considered to be ‘normal’ or ‘luxurious.’

Their own ideal regarding interior decoration, number and arrangement of rooms, can be summarized in Nishimura’s words: *sukoshi no nijû seikatsu* – “a moderately dual life.” That means, on the one hand, a “truly modern, cultural house” (*hontô no bunka jûtaku*) has to combine economic efficiency with a certain level of material and mental comfort, including a room for the maid and a

study which, if necessary, can be used as a guestroom, as well as of a blend of taste with scientific principles and hygiene. On the other hand, a moderately dual life means a skilful mixture of 'Western' and 'Japanese' elements (*yôfû* and *nihonfû*). For himself, Nishimura tells us, he prefers houses of common Japanese people – so-called *minka*, but because it is difficult to modernize them with the desired light, heating system, kitchen location, etc.), he decided in favour of a Western-styled rustic house which comes closest to the *minka*. The Japanese, he claims, are people with an elevated and noble taste (*naka naka jôhin na shumi*). Therefore they have to select the most elegantly styled from among the Western houses.

This aspect of *Mitsukoshi* as being both a space/location and a publisher of a medium as well, can be generalised. Staging good taste means not only to produce social distinctions, but also to represent national identity, Japaneseness. Whether they were conscious of it or not, Nishimura and Ôkuma took part in this process, even if the ideological character of such a Japaneseness, formed commercially and aesthetically, changed over time and within different contexts. *Mitsukoshi* numbers published in the early 1930's, i.e., after the worldwide economic crisis, support Kashiwagi Hiroshi's assessment of Japanese designers: "Rationalization and reform, once cultural movements, thus became political ones, just as industrial rationalization aimed at rescuing the nation from economic crisis was transformed into a rationalization campaign aimed at building and controlling the nation for the war regime." (Kashiwagi 2000, pp. 70–71).

For instance, the two top kimono patterns of the 1931 spring collection are introduced by the February number of *Mitsukoshi* as follows: The first one is called *Shinkonjaku monyô* ("new pattern of old and new times") because its primary colours go back to the end of the 7th century under the reign of Empress Jitô (r. 686–97) as one source of ancient Japanese beauty thinking. At the same time, the anonymous author continues, it takes up new impulses from Western fashion, and the harmony of both sources should be trendsetting for the world of fashion. The name of the second one is "Silhouette" – a term directly adopted from the Western fashion world and referring to the subtle change of light and shadow. Further, the colouring of the first pattern is described as graceful and representing the aesthetic consciousness of ancient Japan, whereas the second is said to symbolize the lively freshness of artistic activity of the new Japan. Both together are at the top of the 1931 spring fashion. Colouring in fashion (*shikichô*), the article states, is quite similar to the spirit of the age (*kichô*). Autumn fashion of the same year is introduced nearly by the same kind of argument. Offering the two cloth patterns, *kosode* and *hikari*, *Mitsukoshi* – as Japan in

general – joins the worldwide economic and mental trend by remembering cultural highlights of the past Edo period, on the one hand, and by processing new trends of art into new products on the other. Therefore *Mitsukoshi* is described as a 'pacemaker' for the anticipated economic boom.

To sum up, this manner of presenting old and new cloth patterns and their colouring can be seen, to be sure, as a specific manifestation of increasing nationalism in the context of *Mitsukoshi*. Good taste should not only be more deeply anchored in Japan's history, it becomes also increasingly fixed to the Japanese national character (*kokuminsei*). But such an interpretation does not mean that Japanese society in general fell into a 'vertical' traditionalism or Japaneseness fundamentally opposed to modernity/horizontal diversity. Rather, the last examples demonstrate the above mentioned entanglement of both aspects, especially in the context of commerce and consumption. Fashion, lifestyle phenomena in general, function not only as means to increase profit or to create distinction, but also as an instrument to reconstruct and to fragment the past, thus becoming a potential reservoir of permanent and arbitrary re-combination. Whether such a fragmented, re-combined past can be abused in the framework of nationalistic ideologies or deployed against them (or even undermine them) depends on the concrete political and social situation in a certain society. It is this ambivalent connection between ideology, history and consumption in the process of formation of modern identities in Japan (and elsewhere), that leads me to take in interest in research on consumption cultures and department stores. Once again, to find out the mechanisms for mobilising the past for certain present purposes, we each time have to reconstruct the concrete socio-cultural contexts and the concrete protagonists with their specific cultural practices (and texts) to perform their own interests.

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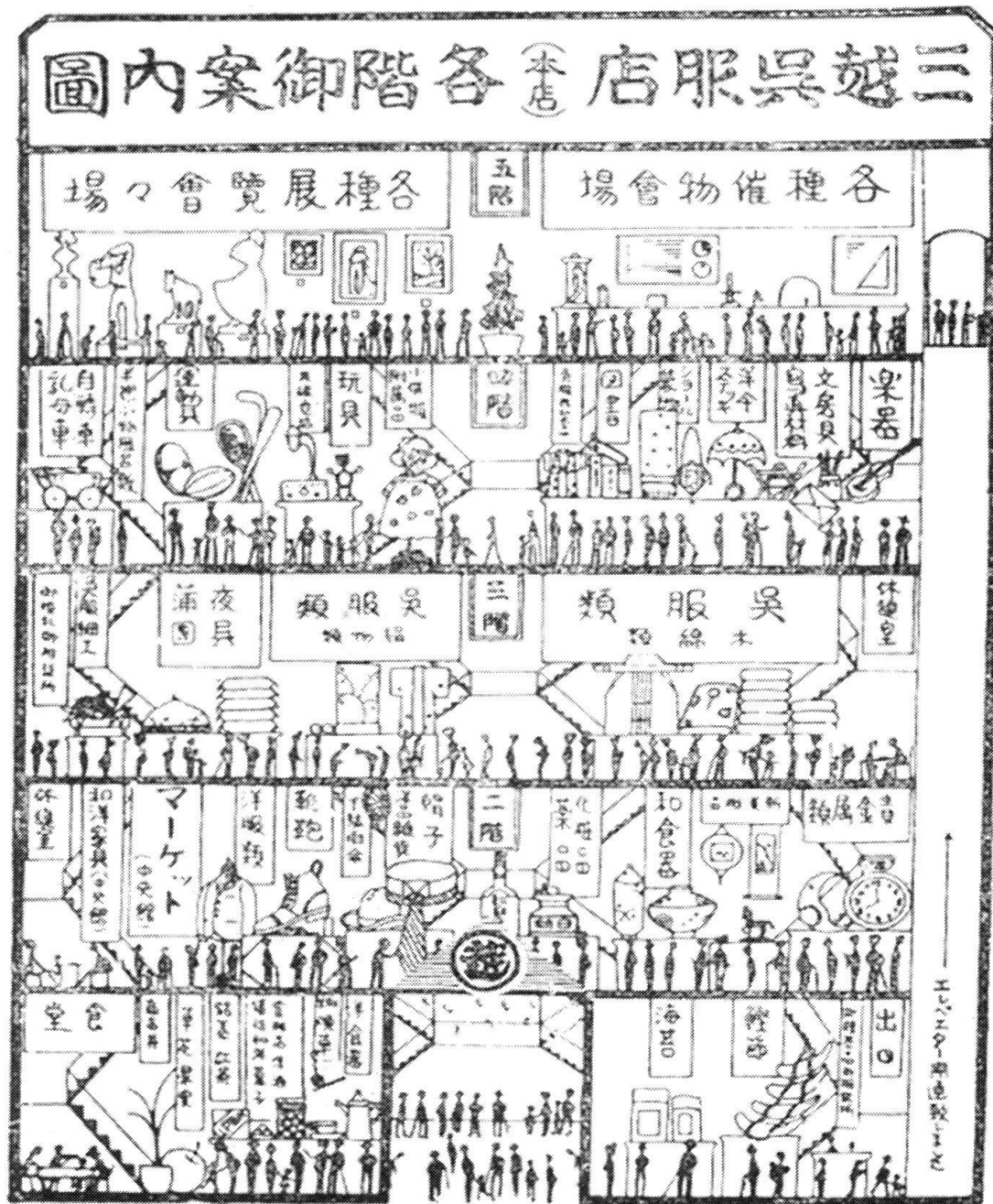
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Illustrations

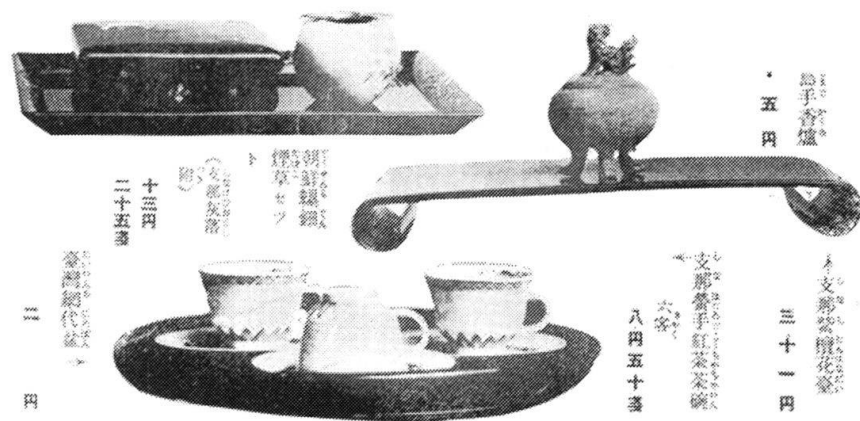


Figure 1: "You are not what you wear."



31

Figure 3: Catalogue page with advertised commodities and goods presented by maps. (Kabushiki kaisha Mitsukoshi [ed.], 1991, p. 92.)



東洋趣味について

東洋品部の商品一般

□「一口に『東洋』と申しても、其の意味は色色御座います。元來『東洋』と申しますのは歐洲人が、歐洲を標準として名づけたので、小亞細亞地方から印度、支那全部を指し、日本も其の内に含めてゐるので御座います。日本から見ますと、西方に當る小亞細亞地方の如きは、『東洋』と申すのは、變です。嚴密に申しますと、印度でも支那でも變な譯ですが、歐洲人から先手を打つて『東洋』と云はれて了へば致方御座いません。

□そこで今日『東洋』と云へば、我が日本を始め、支那、印度等を主として含む事になつて居ります。併し我が三越の東洋品部は、日本本土を除いて、支那、朝鮮、臺灣、爪哇、印度地方等の産物と製品とを蒐める事になつて居ります。

□即ち三越の各デパートの分け方は、概して其の品物の種類及び用途によつて居りますが東洋品部のもは、其の産地によつて分つてある譯で御座います。従つて家具もあれば、

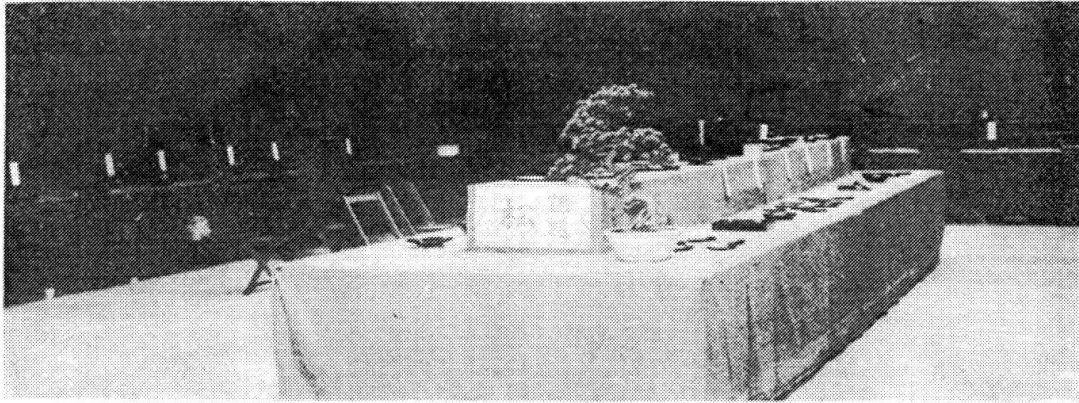
□併し産地が一定して居ります爲めに、其の産地の特色、所謂ローカルカラーが著しく現はれ、これによつて各種のものが統一されてゐる譯で御座います。即ち支那のものには支那の特色があり、印度のものには印度の特色が各種のものを通じて存在して居ります。

□又趣味の方から見ても、所謂東洋趣味を有し、それによつて統一されて居ります。尤も東洋趣味と云ふ内にも、支那のものには支那趣味があり、朝鮮のものには朝鮮趣味があり、印度のものには印度趣味があり、臺灣のものには臺灣趣味があります。就中支那趣味は東洋趣味の中心とも申すべきもので、我が國でも近來一部に盛に流行して居ります。支那は、流石に古く文化の發達した國だけありまして、其の趣味には他の及ばない所があ

三 昭和二年十月一日

(24)

Figure 4: "On Oriental taste." (Mitsukoshi, 1922/10)



(続三の月二十) 會 覽 展 品 作 會 藝 津

大正十二年を迎ふ

正月の三越

今や軍備の縮小が議論ばかりでなしに、既に實行の第一歩を踏み出して居りますと共に、文化生活、生活改善云ふことも漸く實現されるやうに成りましたのは、茲に大正十二年を迎へますと共に、大に御同慶に堪へない所で御座います。而して我が三越は、此の時に當つて金々良品を廉價に提供致し、設備を完全にし、店員を訓練して、華客各位の御満足を得るに努め、デパートメントストアとして社會奉仕の責を擧げ、我が國民の文化生活に貢したい存念で御座います。

昨夏南新館の工成り、秋季東館六階七階の増築竣工し、賣場、事務室、仕入部等を合せて總坪數實に九千坪に達して居ります。そこで今年は量の方面より、主として質の方面で進歩改善を試みたく心掛けて居りますが、キャッシュユレデスターの増置などもその一つで御座います。幸ひに此の時勢に際して、御來客数は増加の一路を辿り、昨年中の御來客数は、實に一千萬を超えて居ります。茲に第一層の御厚情を祈り、併せて大方各位の御健康を祝します。次に例によつて正月の催物を左に列記致します。先づ第一に新年開店の劈頭四日から九日まで、西館四階に於きまして、吉例の

新年初賣出し

を開催致します。これには格安吳服類各種寄裂を豊富に取揃へますから、新年勿々御便利の事と存じます。次に九日から十四日まで、七階ギャラリで二つの展覧會を開きます。其の一は

眞野紀太郎氏滯歐水彩畫展覽會

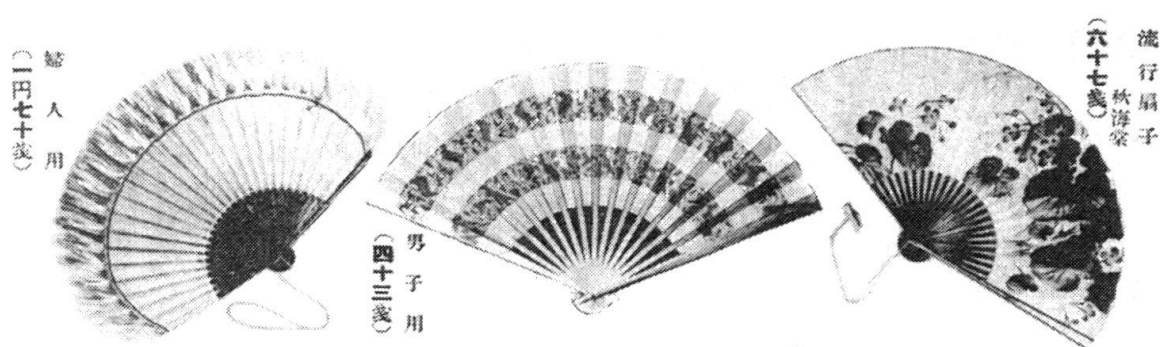
で御座います。昨年来洋畫家の滯歐作品展覧會は度々催して居りますが、水彩畫は三宅氏以後始めて御座います。他の一は

第四回朱葉會洋畫展覽會

で、これは第一回から當店で催して居りますが、今年は従来の會員たる埴原久和代、嶋高文子、高安やす子、津輕照子、小笠原貞子、岡百子

(5)

Figure 5: "Welcome of the year Taishō 12." (Mitsukoshi, 1923/1)



私の設計した自宅

工學博士 大熊喜邦

△誤られたる文化住宅

先年の平和博覽會に文化村と稱する住宅の出品があつて世間の興味を引いて以來、文化住宅の名稱が一般的に用ひられる様になり各所に所謂文化住宅が建てられるやうになりましたが、その中には随分如何はしいものがあります。

簡易生活一點張りの亞米利加の小住宅を眞似たものや、又能率一點張りで、住宅といふものは能率が上らねばならぬからと、少しのゆとりも落着きもないものを建てゝゐる向きもあります。尙一つは小さな建坪の内へ一通りの部屋を無理に押し込み、食堂、客間、書齋、居間、臺所などをすつかり備へるといふ風に、住宅の縮圖を作つてゐる向きもあります。中には、又來客本位の住宅は誤りであるとして、家族本位に囚はれ、人が來なくても良い様な家を作つたり、外觀が如何にもせゝこましく、きらびやかに出来て、おつとりとした、ぼんやりとした所の無い家を作り、向側の二階に下宿してゐて見れば良い様な物を建てたり、或は又耐火建築で無味乾燥な物を作つて文化住宅と稱して得意がつたり、何れも本當の文化住宅の意義に添はぬ、誤つた考へであると思ひます。

住宅は一時的流行を追ふべきものでも無く、好奇心に驅られて建つべきものでも無い。たとへばアメリカに小住宅が流行するからといふ理由で、その直譯のやうな簡易住宅を建てたりするのは間違ひです。

Figure 6: "A house designed by myself." (Mitsukoshi, 1925/7)



幸福な生活の爲に

幸福な生活のために、先づ住家を善くせねばならぬ。金だ、事業だ、名譽だといつても、若し我々が楽しい家を持たなかつたら、實に不愉快な生活だと云ふことは、現代のたれもが切に感じて居ることです。

大抵の人は自分の住む家を一軒は建築して住み得ると信じます。其人の収入、資産等に相應なものであり、見榮のため、虚勢を張るためでないなら、少し心を用ひたら自分の家を得ることは難くないでせう。

一丈四方の家でも、樵夫の山小屋でも、自分の所有する家であり、自分で自由にそれを手入れし、増築することが出来、いつ迄も追ひ出されずに住み得るならば、立派な借家よ

我々の趣味に適ふ

新しい家

文化學院長 西村伊作

りも安心した楽しみを持つてせう。しかし、現代人は現代文明が與へるものうちの正しいものを享け用ひ、且つ我々の受けた教養に適つた善い趣味の生活をするために、我々の住家を善く工夫して作らねばなりません。

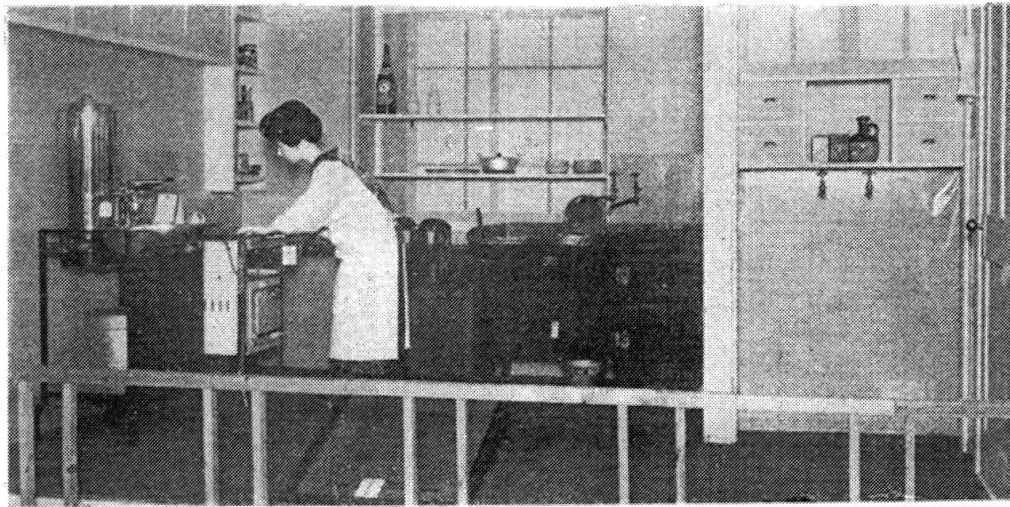
日當りのよい郊外

家を建てるには先づ善い敷地を擇ばねばなりません。風景の善いことよりも生活の便利を考へる可きです。山の頂上など風が強くて不便です。淋みしきに過ぎるのも不可。水の質については誰も考へるところ。職業のために交通の便如何。子供の



Figure 8: "The new house. What meets with our taste." (Mitsukoshi, 1925/1)

(のもして立組に地實を席二等二)……品出會覽展所臺



贅澤過ぎる設備

工學博士 大熊喜邦

應募圖案六百餘種を通過して、最初に感じたのは、其の廣さにしても、内部の設備にしても非常に大がかりで、且つ贅澤であることでした。これは募集條件が餘りに漠然としていて、何等一定の標準を示さなかつたからでもありませんが、たとへば其の廣さにしても八疊から十疊敷位にしたのがあり、内部の設備にしても、之れを實現するには、餘程の金を要するのが澤山ありました。

然し一般中流社會の生活状態から考へて、臺所の廣さは、三疊か四疊、せいぜい四疊半ぐらゐるで用は足りると思ひます。處が、今度應募したもの、その當選圖内のもので六疊から八疊ぐらゐるものが多かつたやうです。其設備にしても、なるべく金をかけないで出来る便利な器具や設計が、もつと工夫されてはしがつた。之れまで臺所は兎角輕便されて、家を建てるにしてもお座敷の方にはかり金をかけて、臺所はなるべく簡略にして置くといつた風でありましたが、近頃臺所の重要なことが大分注意され、以前とはちがつて、出来るだけ金もかけ、設備を便利にするやうになつて來たのは、大變喜ぶべきことであります。

さういふ時代の企てとして、今回の懸賞募集は中々有意味な催しで、世間一般に對し、臺所問題に對して注意を與へるに十分効果のあつたことと思ひます。

ただ其の募集の標準があまり漠然としてゐた結果として、一般中流家庭に應用するには、少し大がかり過ぎ、又贅澤過ぎるやうなものが多く集まつた嫌ひがありました。一口に云へば、ブルジョア階級の臺所が多く、プロレタリア階級の臺所が少かつたのを、遺憾に思ひます。

そこで、此の不満を補ふために、更に第二回の募集を企て、今度は標準條件をもつと狭く定めて、直ちに中流家庭に應用出来るやうなものを發表せられんこと

Figure 9: "[Kitchen] Equipments which are too luxurious." (Mitsukoshi, 1925/2)

