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Duke University Press * *Durham and London* * 2025



**Corporate
Advertising Design,
Nation + Empire
in Modern Japan**

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GENNIFER
WEISENFELD





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Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞

Project Editor: Lisa Lawley

Designed by Courtney Leigh Richardson

Typeset in Garamond Premier Pro and Helvetica Neue
by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Weisenfeld, Gennifer S. (Gennifer Stacy),
[date] author.

Title: The fine art of persuasion : corporate advertising design,
nation, and empire in modern Japan / Gennifer Weisenfeld.

Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2025. | Includes
bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2024024165 (print)

LCCN 2024024166 (ebook)

ISBN 9781478031314 (paperback)

ISBN 9781478028086 (hardcover)

ISBN 9781478060307 (ebook)

ISBN 9781478094197 (ebook other)

Subjects: LCSH: Commercial art—Japan—History—20th century. |

Graphic arts—Japan—History—20th century. | Design—Japan—

History—20th century. | Advertising—Japan—History—20th century. |

BISAC: ART / History / General | SOCIAL SCIENCE / Ethnic

Studies / Asian Studies

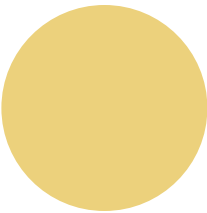
Classification: LCC NC998.6J3 W45 2025 (print) | LCC NC998.6J3
(ebook) | DDC 744.0952/0904—dc23/eng/20240927

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024024165>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2024024166>

Cover art: *Top right*, cover of *Mazda News* 23, no. 6 (June 1936);
bottom left, cover of *Advertising World* 10, no. 1 (January 1933);
background, pamphlet for Morinaga Celebrity Recital Contest,
mid-1930s, Morinaga and Co., Ltd. (*all details*).

Publication of this open monograph was the result of Duke University's participation in TOME (Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem), a collaboration of the Association of American Universities, the Association of University Presses, and the Association of Research Libraries. Funding from Duke University Libraries made it possible to open this publication to the world.



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上意の
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隣組に
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文化の
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農村の
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UX-12A KX-12F
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must start by thanking the many companies that opened their archives to me and trusted me with their stories: Kao, Shiseido, Lion, Morinaga, Calpis (Asahi Group Japan), Toshiba, Matsushita/Panasonic, and the Nippon Design Center. And none of this would have been possible without two people: Mizusawa Tsutomu, my longtime mentor and former director of the Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura and Hayama, who first introduced me to the people at Kao, and Ōmura Hidemasa, a former Kao archivist who made it his personal mission to introduce me to everyone else, including the incredible human network of professional archivists in the Japan Business Archives Association. This book is a testament to the generosity of spirit of so many people. I am truly grateful and happy to be able to share it with them.

A writing fellowship from the Design Incubation Workshop helped clarify my ideas at a key juncture in my research and introduced me to the amazing Aaris Sherin, who later generously commented on a very rough draft of a much too long manuscript. The book is immeasurably better thanks to her. Similarly, the manuscript benefited from incisive feedback from Jilly Traganou, Ken Oshima, Nicole Gaglia, and Mariko Azuma. Magdalena Kolodziej, Quinn Bulkeley, and Brandee Newkirk also provided invaluable research assistance. I must convey special appreciation to the extraordinary Ishii Kae, who has continued to assist me in every way imaginable. I also owe tremendous thanks to the two anonymous Duke University Press reviewers for their helpful comments. They

undoubtedly made this a better book. Any shortfalls, of course, are my responsibility alone.

A number of people have helped expand my knowledge of design and corporate history: Christine Guth, Elizabeth Otto, Toshio Watanabe, and Hiro Good. Matthew Hayes and Luo Zhou provided critical library support at Duke for my project. Additional thanks to Shima Enomoto for help with some difficult idiomatic translations.

In Japan, my teachers and colleagues greatly contributed to this research journey: Tan'ō Yasunori, Omuka Toshiharu, Takizawa Kyōji, the late Kaneko Ryūichi, the late Kashiwagi Hiroshi, and Okatsuka Akiko. I also express my deep appreciation to Ōtani Shōgo, Kida Takuya, Kawata Akihisa, Mashino Keiko, Kuwahara Noriko, Hayashi Michiko, Kito Sakiko, Mōri Yoshitaka, Kōgo Eriko, the late Shimura Shōko (who lives in my heart), and the Yoneyama family.

I have the great fortune of being surrounded by an incredible group of colleagues in art history and Asian studies in the North Carolina Triangle who have helped me in innumerable ways: Kristine Stiles, Paul Jaskot, Sheila Dillon, Sumathi Ramaswamy, Rick Powell, Annabel Wharton, Simon Partner, Tom Rankin, David Ambaras, Morgan Pitelka, Leo Ching, Hae-Young Kim, Richard Jaffe, Esther Kim Lee, Nayoung Aimee Kwon, Stanley Abe, and John Taormina. As always, Jack Edinger is the photographer extraordinaire who produced many of the book's gorgeous images.

Friends near and far have also provided great support: Ann-Louise Aguiar, Kimberly Slentz-Kesler, Ann Gleason, Holly Rogers, Tracey O'Connell, Ayelet Zohar, the fabulous women in the Trinity Park No-Guilt Book Club, and the DFC pickleball crew. I am particularly grateful to my dear friends and fellow scholars Amy Ogata, Sandy Isenstadt, Andy Watsky, Julie Nelson Davis, and Patti MacLachlan, who always inspire me.

Research for this book was supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Social Science Research Council. The Metropolitan Center for Far Eastern Art Studies has been a steadfast supporter of my work over the years. The Leonard A. Lauder Research Center at the Metropolitan Museum of Art Publication Grant provided invaluable support for the illustration program. I also acknowledge with deep appreciation the significant financial contribution that I received from Duke University, specifically Trinity College of Arts and Sciences, that has made the inclusion of the rich image program possible. I also thank everyone at Duke University Press who has helped shepherd this book to publication, Kenneth Wissoker, Ryan Kendall,

Lisa Lawley, and James Moore. Richard Slovak also lent his keen eye to the editing process.

My family already knows well that none of this would have been possible without their love and support, but I still want to say it again here because I do not take it for granted. Thank you so much, Mom and Dad. Thank you, Derek—love of my life. This book is dedicated to my daughter, Luci, who will always be my proudest contribution to the world and my greatest inspiration.

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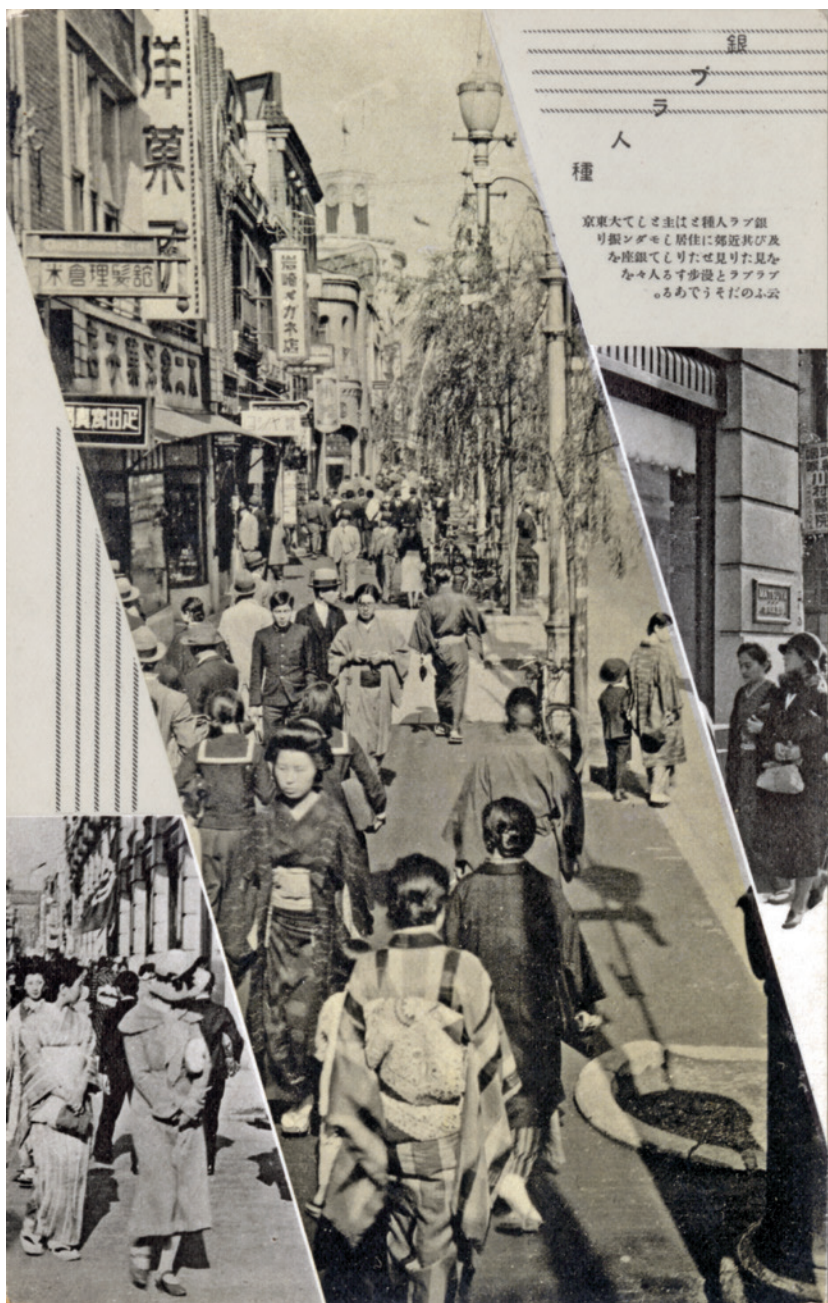
INTRODUCTION

A good design is fundamentally persuasive; it convinces by its presence.

—HOLBROOK JACKSON, *Commercial Art* (1928)

Imagine strolling down one of the main boulevards in Tokyo's fashionable Ginza district. It is the early Showa period, around 1930. You are engaged in *ginbura*—the popular activity of sauntering and window-shopping in this high-profile commercial area (figure I.1). On all sides stand department stores and shops with decorative show windows displaying textiles, clothing, books, and household goods. Advertising signs and banners adorn the streets like an exposition fairground. Then day turns to night, and a flood of electric light and neon signs transforms the street scene into an even more dramatic illuminated theatrical stage (figure I.2).¹ A vibrant modern Japanese design movement produced this transformation of the urban environment—what many critics at the time referred to as the “artification” of the streets.²

This book tells the story of the birth of commercial art—modern advertising design—in Japan from the turn of the twentieth century through its global efflorescence in the total design event of the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games. While the transformation of the city street into a publicity space certainly began much earlier, new technologies in communication, transportation, and mass production expanded and accelerated the production of advertising that bombarded the consumer on an everyday basis. Japanese advertising designers



1.1 *Ginza Strollers*, postcard,
ca. 1932. Collection of the
author



1.2 *Ginza Late at Night*,
postcard, ca. 1932. Collection
of the author

worked for modern companies to parlay these technological innovations into new forms of publicity for a mass consumer audience.³ Public commercial spaces like the Ginza district became modern advertising design's playground. At the same time, along with private ventures like the department store, commercial artists also worked in spectacular state-sponsored exhibitionary spaces around the globe, designing domestic and colonial industrial expositions as well as international world's fairs.⁴ They extended design from the indoor display environment to the outdoor theater of the street, tying together consumer culture and urban space.

By examining the critical cultural role of commercial art as it developed in tandem with mass media and advertising, I map the social relationship between art and commerce in modern Japan. I not only demonstrate how integral advertising was to the creation of a national society but also reveal the vast network of design professionals who promoted the brand-name goods that profoundly impacted common perceptions of a modern Japanese lifestyle. This network extended transnationally from Asia to Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union.⁵ These commercial art specialists were early developers of "corporate identity systems" in Japan. They systematically developed ways

to visualize brand and corporate identities that enabled differentiation of consumer products in the market.⁶

Brand image definition was increasingly important for the success of most major Japanese companies. According to business historian Louisa Rubinfién, Japan's "commercial world of ordinary household goods had evolved not only from a commodity- to a brand-oriented market, but also from a merchant- to a manufacturer-dominated market."⁷ This focus of corporate manufacturers on selling brands nationally rather than supplying goods locally led to a heavy reliance on aesthetics to inculcate aspirational desires among the consumer public, even when that public often did not have the financial wherewithal to purchase such goods. I argue that advertising design's aesthetic and affective surplus provided substantial added value necessary to compensate for the markedly higher prices of brand-name goods. Aesthetic surplus was the extra artistic investment in advertising design to convey more than practical information about the product and imbue it with appealing qualities. Affective surplus conjured emotive layers around commodities that mobilized the consumer's feelings in connection with the product or company—a precursor of present-day "mood advertising." These surpluses provided visual and sensory pleasure, entertainment, and emotional experiences that exceeded the use value of the products they promoted. The corporate sponsors that I consider here were all consumer-oriented companies that invested considerable capital into advertising and design to establish their brands in the market. It is noteworthy that after more than a century in business, they are all still major companies with well-known national and global brands.

Without creative design in advertising, brands could not subsist. And "if art is the most persuasive of all methods of expression," as Holbrook Jackson wrote in *Commercial Art* in 1928, "it may be assumed that the association of the artist with the display of merchandise would increase the persuasiveness of display, and therefore augment that turn-over which is the life-blood of commercial enterprise. Excellence of design and beauty of form are the most persuasive of all things."⁸ Prominent Japanese toothpaste manufacturer and active design sponsor Lion Dentifrice declared advertising a kind of "fertilizer" for the enhancement of commodities.⁹ If we follow this agronomic metaphor, then design is the carefully cultivated flower that attracts the bees and provides nectar to facilitate pollination. Bringing into focus a range of design forms, I demonstrate how commercial artists diversified the sensorial impact of advertising campaigns, amplifying their reach and social significance. These include the creative realms of letter design, packaging, postcards, show window displays, and kiosks and other modes of outdoor publicity, as well as the better-known

forms of posters and print advertising—all originally embraced under the category of commercial art.

This book seeks to advance the global turn in design history by centering Japan as an active node of production in an international design network and as a real-time participant in a transnational dialogue rather than a latent and passive cultural recipient on the periphery. The editors of the volume *Global Design History* note that such a global orientation is imperative to correct “the lopsided” and still overly dominant representation of the history of design as the main preserve of Euro-America. We must, as they recommend, expand our understanding of design as a field that is practiced and consumed around the world.¹⁰ Still, a national lens is equally important within the larger global context because the national and local also condition design, helping to create markers of national identity while simultaneously revealing the constructed nature of such stereotypes or myths.¹¹ We can diversify the notion of the national by highlighting the plurality of traditions and modern experiences that it encompasses.

Perhaps more than anywhere else in the world at the time, Japanese corporations and their upper management were taking a hands-on role in spearheading advertising design for everyday consumption. This was not only a deliberate choice but also a point of pride that is evidenced in the staggering amount of archival material that they collected and preserved for posterity. Unlike the distributed agency characteristic of design work abroad and in Japan’s postwar period, prewar Japanese commercial advertising was solidly rooted in companies. It was an exemplar of consolidated agency.¹² Design historians in Japan widely recognize the importance of corporate sponsors in the history of the country’s visual culture, regularly exhibiting their work in major exhibitions. They have been less concerned, however, with how these artistic contributions were enmeshed with business and political histories, particularly the history of empire.¹³ I analyze Japanese advertising and commercial art production within the broader context of world design history while also considering the wide-ranging cultural implications of Japan’s emerging consumer capitalism and the ideological formations of nation and empire building.¹⁴

Unlike a conventional singular object of study, advertising design can be truly understood only when one appreciates the immense scale of production and the often-totalizing nature of the campaigns. Advertising saturated the senses in every realm of daily life—visual, tactile, olfactory, auditory, and, if you count sponsored eating establishments like the Shiseido Parlour and Morinaga Candy Stores, gustatory as well. Advertising design was also decidedly intermedial, as product designs and logos were cross-referenced in print advertisements, and

print advertising was incorporated into point-of-purchase displays and show windows, while photographs of show windows were used to illustrate company public relations magazines. Yet advertising design is not merely a mode of material or visual production; it is a lens through which corporations and the state filtered and communicated their desires to a consuming national public. This cultural mediation had real-world effects in the construction of consumer identity and daily life. In exploring how corporate marketing and advertising transformed products into desirable commodities, we must also consider the active role of the consumer who experienced such commodities and media spaces in differentiated ways. Not enough attention has been paid to Japanese commercial design's nuanced gendering of consumption as a social act that demarcated identity and social class. Advertisers stood among a range of competing interests, both public and private, who were attempting to mold the spheres of women, men, and the family. Corporate advertising interpellated an array of gendered consumer types that often overlapped: good wives, wise mothers, efficient housewives, new students, cosmopolitan beauties, audacious modern girls, dandified modern boys, romantic couples, vigorous athletes, productive laborers, suited salarymen, brave soldiers, invincible supermen, patriotic imperial subjects, and—very important—healthy, clean, and playful children, just to name a few. While often advocating the ethics of virtuous consumption, corporate advertisers carefully straddled the line between extravagance and necessity—pleasurable wants and utilitarian needs. Consumer-subjects in turn bought into these identities but also commingled them. As sites of democratization or incorporation into the larger body politic, designed commodity spaces encouraged experimentation with these new consumer subjectivities. But in the larger framework of Japan's official lifestyle reformation movements, companies frequently joined the state in mobilizing women to construct new concepts and practices of domesticity that intertwined aesthetics, hygiene, and national identity.

Transwar Design

While scholars widely acknowledge that the corporate creation of new consumer markets was key to Japan's miraculous revival after its catastrophic defeat in World War II, this market-creating activity actually began early in the century.¹⁵ Market creation was abundantly evident in the spheres of health and beauty, food and beverage, and electrical goods for labor and leisure, and even for selling commodified forms of nation and empire. Designs for international publicity efforts like tourism campaigns, for example, were forerunners in the field of what scholars now refer to as *nation branding*.¹⁶ These campaigns pro-

duced consumable images of “Japan” at home and abroad while also helping manage the country’s reputation for diplomacy and international relations.

By the 1930s, just sixty years after its founding as a modern nation-state in 1868, Japan was already claiming an expansive empire that included Taiwan (1895), Korea (1910), and Manchuria (Manchukuo) in Northeast China (1932). In creating a unified imperial marketplace, commerce, and by extension commercial design, linked the Japanese metropole and its colonies through a web of consumption and products. The coupling of art and industry through design was also instrumental in the aestheticization and commodification of politics. Publicity and propaganda were points on the same continuum. Design for advertising purposes is inherently an art of persuasion, which, as Walter Benjamin has argued, under capitalism “seeks to veil the commodity character of things” through spectacular displays and symbolic arrangements.¹⁷ In this respect, it functions in a similar fashion to modern political propaganda, which often seeks to represent the fragmentary and alienating experiences of modernity in terms of a utopian and unified national body. Thus, it is not surprising that various state and quasi-governmental organizations enlisted many of the most talented Japanese commercial designers to work for the national project of social mobilization that preceded Japan’s entry into war with China in 1937 and continued through the war in the Pacific.

This book demonstrates how, under the militarist regime of imperial Japan, national politics were effectively commodified and marketed through the same modern mechanisms of mass culture that socially progressive artists developed under more democratic market systems.¹⁸ In many cases, the work of these designers effectively blurred the lines among avant-garde art, reportage, advertising, and national propaganda. Designers skillfully instrumentalized cutting-edge international modernist aesthetic strategies to serve both the commercial and political spheres. The melding of modernist commercial design and nationalist propaganda calls into question the often-facile association of progressive aesthetics with progressive politics, offering a much-needed opportunity to interrogate the relationship between style and ideology. Moreover, Japanese corporate interests allied themselves with state interests that ranged from daily-life rationalization efforts during the 1920s to full-scale social mobilization during wartime. They created new needs that benefited both. Still, while purportedly catering to these basic needs, they produced desires that went well beyond national concerns.

As the eminent historian John Dower has written, despite its horrors, World War II was paradoxically a “useful war” in terms of producing profits and setting the economic stage for the postwar period.¹⁹ Just as with economics, the

connections and advantages that spanned the war are abundantly evident in the history of design. Even with radical changes in the Japanese sociopolitical landscape, the continuous activities of several key designers (and corporate sponsors) served as a bridge across the war, forming the basis of contemporary design practice. Even more than seventy-five years after the end of the Asia-Pacific War, there is still a lingering taboo about discussing wartime activities in Japan that has done considerable collateral violence to design history. The pervasive tabula rasa narrative of postwar Japanese design ascension not only expunges the continuity of individual careers, the honing of professional skills, and the development of networks that were all crucial for the reemergence of the postwar Japanese design community with such exceptional expertise but also ignores the underlying persistence of nationalism in the visual sphere—a nationalism that subtly shifted from wartime mobilization to postwar democratic peace. In fact, the publicity mechanisms (and their related industries) that transitioned from the consumer advertising of the interwar years into the marketing of nation and empire through the 1930s and 1940s were essential building blocks of postwar reconstruction.

Designers transformed practices forged in the distinct sociopolitical climates of the prewar and wartime eras to suit postwar needs. This argument goes against the grain of most standard design histories, which usually maintain a decisive break between the pre- and postwar periods, often strategically erasing the genealogies and continuities of Japanese design through the century.²⁰ I resurrect these important historical transwar connections to resuture the fractured history of modern Japanese design.

Creating Modern Advertising Design

Modern Japanese advertising design had strong roots in the media forms and publicity practices of the Edo (1603–1868) and Meiji (1868–1912) periods, including decorative signboards (*kanban*); advertising handbills (*hikifuda* or *bira*); posters (*ebira* or *ekanban*); leaflets (*chirashi*); fans (*uchiwa*); hand towels (*tenugui*); exterior door curtains (*noren*) with shop names (*yagō*); banners (*nobori*); illuminated paper lanterns (*chōchin*); distinctive crests, emblems, or logotypes (*mon* or *monshō*); promotional games (*sugoroku*); free giveaways (*omake*); lettering design (*Edo moji*); and postcards (*ehagaki*) (after the establishment of the postal system in 1900), not to mention innovative use of mobile handcarts, baskets, and live musical promotion. Decorative wrapping paper and packaging (*tsutsumigami*) were also long-standing promotional media in Japan. Customers saved and reused them, producing an ongoing promotional effect simi-

lar to stylish shopping bags branded with identifiable logos that people now carry as accessories. Japanese advertisers dubbed packaging the “silent salesman.”²¹ Early modern advertising practices also utilized sophisticated product placements and plugs in popular culture entertainment as well as celebrity endorsements, even from the afterlife.²² Design critic and historian Nakai Kōichi has identified the 1860s as an important starting point for defining modern advertising in Japan because of the advent of mass circulation, independent daily newspapers that carried news and advertisements for consumer goods and services such as the *Yokohama mainichi shinbun* and *Bankoku shinbunshi*. The *Asahi shinbun*, one of Japan’s oldest and largest national dailies, began publishing in Osaka in 1879.²³

The implementation of a national education system in 1872 that expanded the literate consumer public beyond the elite social classes, combined with large-scale urbanization starting in the late 1890s, also greatly contributed to the so-called massification (*taishūka*) of Japanese culture. While there were still great disparities in wealth among the Japanese populace, the standard of living generally rose for most sectors during the interwar period. This was particularly true for the expanding middle class, as well as a segment of this population who became wealthy due to the boom economy during World War I. Increased prosperity provided many Japanese people with extra money and time to spend on recreation. Consumer demand for goods and entertainment rapidly expanded. This expansion in consumerism produced valuable work opportunities for artists in the commercial sector.

Early publicity firms, known as *hiromeya* or *tōzaiya*, pioneered outdoor advertising such as men wearing sandwich boards and costumed marching bands (*chindonya*) that would perform theatrical skits to promote products. In 1890 they sponsored a parade through Tokyo with marchers dressed as beer bottles for Meidiya’s campaign to promote Kirin beer. By 1910 these marching bands were so common in Japan’s cities that they had to be regulated and restricted to a maximum of ten people and three vehicles because they were causing traffic accidents and becoming a general nuisance.²⁴

At the same time, press entrepreneurs founded media brokering companies known as *kōkoku dairiten* (advertising agencies), forerunners of contemporary advertising agencies, to sell space in newspapers and magazines. Former newspaperman Takagi Sadae established the first major media brokering firm, Mannensha, in 1890 in Osaka, quickly opening branches throughout the country. By 1897, just two years after the end of the Sino-Japanese War, there were over 150 such advertising agencies in Japan, including one of the current advertising industry leaders, Hakuhōdō, founded by Seki Hironao in 1895. A few

years later, in 1901, Mitsunaga Hoshiro (also known as Mitsunaga Hoshio) founded Nihon Kōkoku Kabushiki Kaisha (forerunner of Dentsu, currently Japan's largest advertising firm) as the first advertising corporation with significant investment capital, and it included a telegraphic wire service called Denpō Tsūshinsha.²⁵ These agencies did not, however, produce advertising design until after the Asia-Pacific War. Rather, in this early period, they simply brokered space in mass media outlets for work produced either in-house by Japanese companies or by small independent design firms. Most commercial advertising and publicity design before 1945 was produced in-house by company management and employees.

Traditionally an artisanal field in Japan, advertising design became a major area of artistic endeavor in the first few decades of the twentieth century. This gradual recognition of design's aesthetic as well as functional value has shaped the field's evolution and defined its central importance in the visual arts ever since. The construction of a new social status for design was not a coincidental development. Designers who sought aesthetic and social legitimacy for the profession aggressively forged it through the discursive spaces of specialized publications circulated through mass media. They also professionalized the field by systematizing and standardizing theoretical and technical knowledge, while establishing institutional degree programs to credential this expertise.²⁶ Japan's newly emerging modern companies hired legions of these freshly credentialed young commercial artists to advertise brand-new lifestyle commodities and to define corporate identities in the public visual sphere, generating a wealth of creative advertising design that was buoyed by trailblazing marketing strategies. This dynamic sphere of publicity transformed Japanese artistic production by making it accessible to a mass audience while still staying closely linked to the culturally legitimizing aesthetic values of fine art.

Global Advertising Design

Japanese art and design were long engaged in an aesthetic dialogue with the world. For decades, scholars have ably explored the global craze for Japanese woodblock prints as well as the country's traditional and export-style decorative arts exhibited at world's fairs that ignited the widespread *Japonisme* boom across Euro-America. These scholars have also illuminated the mediation of important Japanese culture brokers in this exchange. Although its proponents viewed Japan through a distorted Orientalist lens that Anne Cheng has recently labeled "Ornamentalism," *Japonisme* was still a critical contributor to international aesthetic movements such as art nouveau, art deco, and even

the Bauhaus, which designers then selectively reinterpreted back into modern Japanese design.²⁷ With great interest, Japanese designers viewed high-profile international events such as the art nouveau extravaganza of the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle and the much-heralded 1925 Paris International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts (Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes) that launched the wildly popular international design trend of art deco. *Art deco*, a new catchall term derived later from the shortening of *Arts Décoratifs*, described the globally circulating *style moderne* that exhibited strong geometric and abstracted compositions combined with highly stylized, sleek machine-age aesthetics.

In addition, Japanese commercial artists recognized Germany as a hothouse of professional design activity throughout the decade as the country hosted a series of landmark public events, including the first Congress of International Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf in 1922. This event heralded the dynamic movement of international constructivism and was attended by some of the foremost avant-garde artists of the period, many of whom were interested in expanding their art practice beyond the circumscribed arena of fine art into the art of daily life. Murayama Tomoyoshi (1901–1977), one of several influential interlocutors of international constructivist graphic design techniques in Japan and later founder of the important Japanese artist collective Mavo, attended the congress.²⁸ Not only did Germany have the famous Reimann School of commercial art and display, which launched an international offshoot in Britain, and Kurt Schwitters's dynamic multinational Circle of New Advertising Designers (Ring neue Werbegestalter) innovating in commercial typography, but the country also held many major advertising fairs throughout the decade, such as the Berlin National Advertising Fair (Reichs-Reklame-Messe) in 1925, which was publicized throughout the city by a dramatic parade of masked figures.²⁹ And just a few years later, in 1928, Germany hosted the massive International Press Exhibition in Cologne, known as Pressa, which centered on the modern news media, publishing, and advertising industries and featured the now-legendary Russian artist El Lissitzky's avant-garde displays using the photomontages of Gustav Klutsis and Sergei Senkin for the pavilion promoting Soviet culture, which shook the design world to its core.³⁰ The pavilion vividly brought avant-garde design into the professional and commercial sphere.

Japanese artist and critic Nakada Sadanosuke (1888–1970) wrote a series of influential articles on his impressions of the celebrated German Bauhaus school of art and design (1919–33) after visiting in the early 1920s.³¹ He was followed by others, most notably the high-profile design couple Yamawaki Michiko (1910–2000) and Yamawaki Iwao (1889–1987), who studied there in

the early 1930s.³² Bauhaus design, even after the school's closure by the Nazis and the diaspora of many of its main participants to the United States, continued to be an enduring inspiration for the Japanese.³³ Their collective writings promoted the Bauhaus into one of the most influential international forces for modern Japanese design, just as countries and corporations around the world were also enthusiastically discovering the communicative potential of print and editorial design, particularly the creative combination of photography and text in photocollage and photomontage.

The “almost supernatural clearness” of photography, argued German designer Jan Tschichold, offered a major advantage for modern advertising by building up optical associations when used with typographic design in modernist “composite” (montage) images, “double-copy” compositions that overlapped printing of plates, or “photograms,” where objects were laid directly on light-sensitive material.³⁴ Montage’s creative fusing of disparate images and texts, observes curator Christopher Phillips, could “divert the photograph from what it ‘naturally’ seems to say” and “underscore the need for the viewer’s active ‘reading’ of the image.”³⁵ In other words, it required the viewer’s cognitive interaction to complete and interpret the image. In this sense, it addressed the spectator “conversationally.”³⁶ In the commercial arena, advertising artists employed composite images to start this conversation with consumers while creating nonlinear promotional narratives with parts synecdochically standing in for wholes that then metonymically linked the product and its concept. Such composites provided a multiple, but still controlled, perspective that sought to sway the consumer through the accumulation of layers of meaning. They were also able to establish new hierarchies within the image through manipulation of scale, particularly through dramatic foregrounding. These composite images soon became a dominant contemporary mode of representation in publicity.

Newspapers, private companies, design groups, and individuals brought a host of world artistic movements to Japan, sponsoring important public exhibitions throughout the period. After World War I, there was widespread international interest in posters, which were rapidly introduced to the Japanese public. This global movement generated influential publications about the poster’s ideological efficacy, such as Deutscher Werkbund member and leading proponent of expressionism Adolf Behne’s *Das politische Plakat* (The political poster), published by Verlag “Das Plakat” in 1919 and soon translated into Japanese. In 1921 the Osaka *Asahi* and *Yomiuri* newspapers, both deeply invested in print media and the art of persuasion, sponsored major shows of international posters, displaying hundreds of sample works.³⁷ Japanese design-

ers working abroad—like Paris-based Satomi Munetsugu (1904–1996), who was originally from Osaka but resided in France for most of his life, working alongside some of the foremost French designers of the period, such as A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Jean Marie Mouron) and Jean Carlu—were also important culture brokers, bringing work back and forth between the countries. In 1934 Satomi arranged the International Commercial Art Exchange exhibition (Kokusai Shōgyō Bijutsu Kōkanten), organized at Matsuya department store in Ginza, which was covered by editor Murota Kurazō in a special issue of the Japanese journal *Advertising World* (*Kōkokukai*), followed by the All American Advertising Art Exhibition (Zenbei Kōkoku Bijutsuten), featuring work by the American Academy of Arts in Chicago. In 1935 Satomi and Murota collaboratively organized an exhibition of Japanese poster art for display in Paris that was very positively received and led to Japanese work being included in the poster pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in 1937. In addition to these exhibitions and their designated impresarios, new professional trade journals were the most important intermediaries for introducing world design to the Japanese public, and Japanese design to the world.

By the 1930s, modern design was a dynamic sphere of knowledge production that spanned the globe. The design community used mass media to promote their profession. Design historian Grace Lees-Maffei has identified the importance of “mediating channels” like professional trade journals in circulating this knowledge.³⁸ Japanese magazines participated in a real-time global conversation with corresponding publications from across Europe and the United States. This constituted a transcultural and transnational traffic of ideas and images traveling on a media highway that flowed in all directions. The Japanese commercial art community was familiar with most of the major Western design trade publications, and the information that these journals presented played a central role in the instrumentalization and globalization of modern styles.³⁹ Translated excerpts from original publications and editorial commentaries by Japanese critics frequently accompanied copious journal illustrations. In an age of lax or nonexistent copyright laws, Japanese publishers were able to reissue foreign images with impunity, providing a rich encyclopedia of styles for local reference and adaptation.

Trade journals in Japan served as important supplements to school training, publishing practical how-to information on state-of-the-art techniques, as well as reports on current trends in media and advertising research. And importantly for the history of design, they brought visibility to artists working behind the scenes in the commercial sphere. When considered in combination with the

multitude of published design collections that collated information for producers and retailers, it is clear how these publications nurtured the nascent professional field of commercial art and sustained a lively discourse on design.

Though any national design history must be situated within a global comparative framework, even seemingly universal media could have distinctly divergent characteristics in local contexts. In Europe and the United States, posters, for example, were largely mass-produced outdoor ephemera placed on city streets to attract the masses. Their designers strove for immediate impact through bold graphic representation. In Japan, however, posters were primarily placed indoors and were more like mass-produced ornaments for extended aesthetic appreciation. Japanese posters were mounted in frames or on metal rods and hung inside retail and entertainment establishments as well as on trams and trains as a kind of promotional interior decoration. Some were used as backdrops in show window displays. The Japanese government first allowed advertisers to place posters in train station waiting rooms in 1889; Kirin beer, under the auspices of its wholesaler and business partner Meidiya, was among the first to mount posters at Shinbashi and Ueno stations in Tokyo, the next year commissioning posters for major railway stations nationwide. By 1910 posters hung in every major Japanese train station, and six years later, framed advertisements were introduced into train cars. Since many posters were intended to hang for long periods of time, sometimes upward of a year, they needed to have enduring appeal. So, in this sense, they functioned more like artworks than mass-culture ephemera.⁴⁰ Still, they had mass appeal. “Posters,” wrote well-known Kirin beer poster designer Tada Hokuu (1889–1947), were “a visual form that directly influenced society,” as well as “an exceptional art form of daily life, textbooks for aesthetically edifying the masses, and pioneering forms for expressing period taste.”⁴¹

Private associations, schools, and companies all over Japan founded groups to study emerging global trends in advertising and design. This phenomenon was so widespread in the 1930s that design historian Kawahata Naomichi has gone so far as to dub it the country’s “era of design study groups,” identifying over sixty associations formed during this time.⁴² While interest in design boomed in the prewar period, the study of design in historical context from a contemporary vantage point presents several challenges. Principal among them is advertising design’s general anonymity. Although it is an explicit form of visual communication produced to convey complex sets of ideas and messages about companies, products, consumers, and the larger social field, advertising design was usually created behind closed doors by unidentified individuals in private offices, thus obscuring the context and means of production. This study’s extensive excavation of corporate archives greatly illuminates these ac-

tivities and the groundbreaking work of a broad network of advertising design specialists, including those working in the important new professional role of art director (*āto direkutā*).⁴³

Defining Design

Prominent design theorist and advocate Hamada Masuji (1892–1938) argued early on for designers to be pulled out from behind the scenes and given due social recognition. He was, however, faced with deeply ingrained biases. Despite the lack of a clear distinction between arts and crafts in premodern Japanese artistic practice, a new term distinguishing the fine arts, *bijutsu*, had come into use soon after the founding of the Japanese nation-state around the time of the Vienna World's Fair in 1873. Having seen the social status enjoyed by artists in Western countries, many Japanese artists—along with concerned government bureaucrats and influential cultural ideologues—returning from abroad fought to establish fine art as an autonomous sphere of cultivated intellectual endeavor worthy of social recognition. In the process, however, they rigidified the previously fluid boundaries among fine arts, decorative arts, and crafts, thus creating a self-conscious artistic hierarchy on the model of the West. The Ministry of Education (Monbushō) reinforced this categorization by establishing an official salon in 1907 called the Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (Monbushō Bijutsu Tenrankai, abbreviated as Bunten), which was dedicated to exhibiting fine art.⁴⁴ By the 1920s, the art establishment and art education had well inculcated this hierarchical mentality, although in actual practice the areas still blended. Most artist-designers themselves did not consider design activity their principal artistic contribution and emphasized their “pure art” (*jun-sui geijutsu*) work as of greater aesthetic importance.⁴⁵ There were prominent artists, like the celebrated neo-traditional Japanese-style (*nihonga*) painter Yokoyama Taikan, who were adamantly opposed to the incorporation of design under the rubric of fine arts because of its aesthetic unworthiness. Art historian Michelle Bogart has noted a similar enduring prejudice against commercial art in the American context during the same period. She partially attributes this to power politics within the field, as claiming jurisdiction over fine art was a means of acquiring cultural authority.⁴⁶

The social recognition of modern Japanese commercial design and designers was a gradual process that culminated only in the postwar period. In the early years, after the Meiji Restoration, commercial art's fate was inextricably linked with all the applied arts—traditional and modern. Promoting what design historian Sarah Teasley has called “design-fronted diplomacy,” the new Japanese

government, following the lead of Britain, France, and later the United States, where industrial arts and crafts were receiving extensive governmental support to boost national commerce and trade, was an active participant in the major display venues of international world's fairs as well as domestic industrial expositions, inaugurated in Japan in 1877.⁴⁷ The establishment of a set of trademark regulations (*shōhyō jōrei*) in Japan in 1884, replaced by a full-fledged trademark registration law in 1899 (*Shōhyōhō*), marked an important milestone in the public recognition of brand identity. In 1888 the Japanese Patent Office (*Tokkyōchō*) introduced the first authoritative set of “design regulations” (*Ishō Jōrei*) as a first step toward legal registration and protection of products and aesthetic designs. These were revised into the official Design Law (*Ishōhō*) of 1909. The state also established the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (*Nōshōmushō*) in 1881 to help promote industrial development, which included supporting Japanese design work, mainly the decorative arts (*sōshoku geijutsu*). With the dual national slogans “rich country, strong army” (*fukukoku kyōhei*) and “increase production, encourage industry” (*shokusan kōgyō*) echoing through the halls of government, in 1913 the ministry began mounting yearly exhibitions of works for sale that explicitly valorized design (*zuan*) and applied works (*ōyō sakubin*) in the context of Japan's industrial expansion.⁴⁸ When the ministry was subsequently split in 1925 into the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry (*Nōrinshō*) and Commerce and Industry (*Shōkōshō*), the latter, directed by the powerful political figure Takahashi Korekiyo, took on the mantle of the yearly exhibition.⁴⁹ Along the way, by its sixth annual showing in 1919, the exhibition shifted to using the broader design term *kōgei* (meaning industrial arts, or the artistic and skillful production of practical objects for daily life) in its title, which was increasingly the most common term for design in the Taisho period (1912–26). In 1928 the ministry founded an influential design study center, the Industrial Arts Research Institute (*Kōgei Shidōjo*, or IARI) to investigate rationalized modes of design for mass production, issuing the widely disseminated journal *Industrial Art News* (*Kōgei nyūsu*).⁵⁰

The varied categories and nomenclature used in this exhibition clearly indicate that design terminology and taxonomy were in flux during this period. Japanese design historians have charted a gradual conceptual shift around the turn of the century from the long-standing artisanal notion of design (*ishō*) based on sets of forms and patterns (*hinagata* or *kata*) to one that implied more personal autonomy and professional standing on the part of the designer, expressed in the increasingly common terms *zuan* (design), *shōgyō bijutsu* (commercial art), and later *dezain* in the 1950s. The term *design* and its newly coined Japanese translation *zuan* were also introduced into the Japanese lexicon at the

time of the Vienna World's Fair by prominent artist-designer Nōtomi Kaijirō (1844–1918), who attended and went on to become an influential educator in the field.⁵¹ Originally, the first kanji character used for *zuan* included the hand radical as an intrinsic lexical building block, but as the term became standardized, this radical was dropped, indicating a shift in perception of the field from one of the hand to one of the mind. It became, according to Morinaga designer Shiihashi Isamu, “a job in the world of ideas.”⁵²

Still, the meanings of these terms were highly unstable and continued to evolve. The term *ishō* continued to be used interchangeably or in combination with *zuan* throughout the prewar period. Hamada Masuji coined the Japanese term for commercial art, *shōgyō bijutsu*, around 1926 as a direct translation from the English to serve as a “general term for all practical art” (*jissai geijutsu*). By 1932 it was listed in standard reference publications and was in common use. It was, in Hamada's words, a form of “artistic industry” (*bijutsuteki sangyō*).⁵³ And not, he further clarified, merely any art used in advertising, such as the ubiquitous pictures of beautiful women (*bijinga*) that frequently appeared in publicity. It was art that formally and intentionally embodied its commercial function. This marked a departure from previous practice where it was common in high-visibility projects to select or commission a work by an already well-established artist in the world of fine arts that would then be used for advertising purposes. This work was generally not intended to represent pictorially a particular product or industry. Rather, businesses sought to invest their trades with the refined image of fine art, thereby distancing themselves from direct association with commerce. This reflected a persistent social bias against those directly involved with commercial activity, partially rooted in Edo-period neo-Confucian morality. Thus, posters of beautiful women, which had been used for hundreds of years to represent style, sophistication, and elegance, were still the most appealing for promotional purposes. For example, the first senior managing director of Mitsukoshi department store, Hibi Ōsuke, selected renowned academic oil painter Okada Saburōsuke's (1869–1939) prizewinning painting *Portrait of a Woman*, exhibited at the Tokyo Industrial Exposition in 1907, to be adapted into the now-famous Mitsukoshi department store poster, requiring only the simple addition of the store's name (figure 1.3). Like many of his academic colleagues, including his illustrious teacher at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Kuroda Seiki, Okada produced paintings that were adapted for commercial use throughout his career.⁵⁴ Still, the professional identity of these artists was always solidly situated within the lofty precinct of fine arts.

For Hamada, authentic commercial art required the skillful manipulation of aesthetics to “attract the consumer's eye” and “make the product stand out,”

1.3 Okada Saburōsuke, poster for Mitsukoshi department store, 1909 (original work, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1907). Mitsukoshi Department Store



effects that furthered commercial interests.⁵⁵ According to art critic Harada Jirō, writing in 1930 for the international audience of *Commercial Art*, Hamada understood commercial art in ideological terms as a “productive art,” while so-called fine art was “non-productive and consumptive.” Commercial art was proletarian, while fine art was bourgeois. Ultimately it was commercial art’s “intensive and universal quality” and “inseparable affinity to the life of the people” that gave it cultural significance.⁵⁶

Such new perceptions of commercial design were emerging around the globe. The new anglophone term *graphic designer*, usually attributed to American designer William Addison Dwiggins, was coined around this time in 1922. This term was used to denote the professional sphere of utilitarian printing that included letter design, typography, book design, packaging, ephemera, posters, and press advertisements.⁵⁷ The Japanese term for commercial art, now principally synonymous with two-dimensional graphic design, was originally more capacious, comprising three-dimensional forms such as show window displays, freestanding signage, and packaging. Sometimes such design was termed *sōshoku bijutsu* (decorative art). It also overlapped with elements of industrial design, known as *sangyō bijutsu* (industrial art) or *sangyō kōgei* (industrial crafts), which included product design. As time went on, the Japanese

term for commercial art was often used interchangeably with the new terms for advertising art and publicity (*kōkoku bijutsu* or *senden bijutsu*), with *senden* later taking on a valence closer to political propaganda during the war years, particularly when used in the expressions *kokka senden* (national propaganda) and *kokusaku senden* (national policy propaganda). It is also worth noting here that in pre–World War II anglophone literature, the term *propaganda* did not have pejorative connotations and was often synonymous with *publicity*.

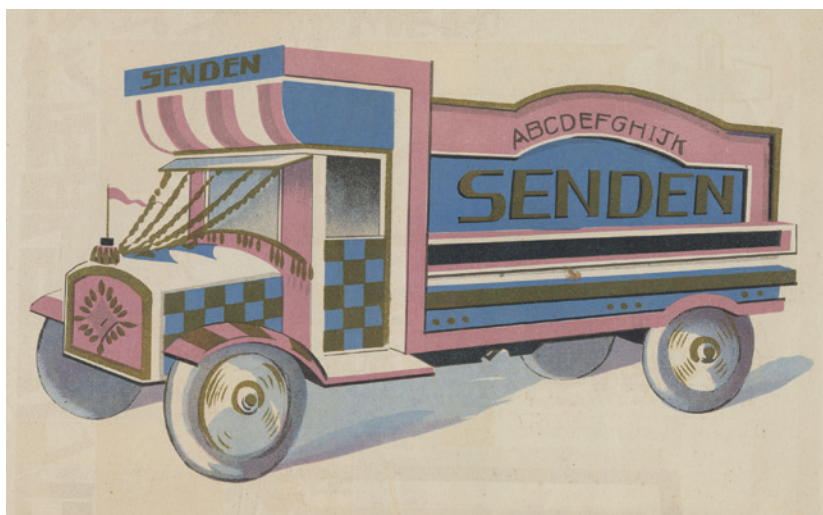
Prominent Shiseido cosmetics designer Yamana Ayao (1897–1980) later wrote that he ultimately preferred the term *advertising art* (*kōkoku bijutsu*) because “advertising work is a much wider area incorporating production that has social and political implications. In current terminology,” he noted, “this would probably put design under marketing and communication.”⁵⁸ In the end, “design” in the Japanese interwar period was a lexical and theoretical *mélange*, and it is only in a specific contextual deployment that its meaning is best understood.

Parading Publicity

The spaces of design were multiple and diverse—indoor and outdoor, corporate and national, static and mobile—expanding in all dimensions. The street was often the designer’s canvas and stage. In addition to large-scale painted, electric, or neon billboards, outdoor publicity included street kiosks, known as “advertising towers” (*kōkokutō* or *sendentō*), which were attention-grabbing columns or small buildings that functioned primarily as architectural signboards.⁵⁹ There were “sandwich boards,” which were wearable signboards paraded through the streets amid pedestrian traffic by “sandwich men.” Alongside them, stylishly costumed “mannequin girls” (literally, living mannequins) demonstrated products and performed for the public.

Modern technology also revolutionized outdoor promotion, spawning decorated automobiles, trucks (figure I.4), and even advertising balloons and aerial banners. Along with trains, ships, and airplanes, automobiles and trucks were the most representative new transportation technologies of the modern age. For advertising purposes, they were highly effective because they enabled long-range mobile promotion. Furthermore, it was argued that a moving device was infinitely more visually stimulating than a stationary one. This fact was not lost on avant-garde designers in Soviet Russia, for example, who actively decorated trains and ships for agitprop (agitation propaganda) to disseminate Bolshevik ideas across the country after the revolution.

The 1920s saw the birth of prominent publicity parades sponsored by commercial firms around the world, such as the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade,



I.4 Design mock-up for advertising truck. Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 10:4

inaugurated in 1924, with giant balloons debuting in 1927. They also caught on in Japan, an extension and consolidation of local promotional street events that emerged out of the long-standing practice of costumed marching bands that would wend their way through commercial districts starting around 1845. In 1930 the first Japanese national advertising festival parade took this to a new scale (figure I.5). Enthusiastically covered in the press, the event was declared in *Advertising World* as “the parade that drove three million Tokyo residents crazy.”⁶⁰ It was timed to coincide with the culmination of the capital restoration project that rebuilt Tokyo after the devastating 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake and its public celebrations. In many ways, the parade was as much a celebration of the rebirth of the capital city as it was a celebration of consumer advertising in Japan. As a representative for the Nippon Polydor Gramophone Company wrote, “This year’s advertising festival is not just for showcasing the signature products of each company, but it is also intended to display to the world Japan’s recovering economy, as part and parcel of the capital restoration project.”⁶¹

Organized by the advertising firm Shōjikisha and held on March 26, 1930, from 2 to 8 p.m., the festival included over two hundred participating companies marching more than half a mile through Ginza and downtown Tokyo. Radio broadcasts promoting the event drew city residents to the streets in droves. Participants wrote candidly in *Advertising World* about their com-



I.5 Photograph of advertising
festival parade (Ginza).
Advertising World 7, no. 5
(May 1930): 8. Shiseido
Corporate Museum

pany's plans, expectations, execution, and budgets—a form of behind-the-scenes debrief. Many also described their failures and “most embarrassing moments” due to inadequate planning time (the organizers gave them only three days' advance notice) and budget constraints or unforeseen circumstances of weather (wind particularly), visibility (from the street and the rooftops), and technical difficulties. One company even described building a gigantic head on its float that did not fit through one of the gates on the thoroughfare and eventually lost the back of its skull when employees had to force it through the opening. Writing for the Nippon Gramophone and Nippon Columbia Companies, Itō Toyota noted:

It is our nation's first advertising festival ever, and it was a huge success. However, our company failed. Due to the limited budget and time and other company responsibilities, we had no alternative but to leave the whole plan to a third agency. It goes without saying that from the general plan to the detailed parts, we ourselves are the most suitable because we are most familiar with our products. Indeed, it was a pity for us this time. . . . My feeling is that the decoration should be bigger and simpler. Slogans should be raised up higher for better visibility.⁶²

Lobbying hard for regularizing the event, the participants hoped to rectify these failures in future festivities.

Watanabe Sei, representing the Akabō Necktie Company, explained how his team wanted their parade float to provide a “holistic experience,” where the display would look as good to those walking on the streets as those standing on top of buildings with a more bird's-eye view.⁶³ Representing Shiseido, advertising section chief Takagi Chōyō praised the festival as a huge success in terms of scale and popularity, calling it “a milestone in the history of advertising in Japan.” He lamented, however, the lack of modernity communicated by many of the companies. “We are already in the 1930s, but they are still obsessed with a seemingly out-of-date ornamentalism and gaudy colors,” he complained. “As a new industry in Japan, advertising should be equally fresh and original. I prefer nuanced styles to garish colors, delicate creativity to coarse humor.” Heavily committed to investment in advertising, Shiseido was already advanced in differentiating itself as a modern Japanese company. Takagi mused about this, “In a word, our presentation tried to look like a delicate painting and modern architecture simultaneously. It would have been even better with an added touch of humor.” While he was not entirely satisfied with the result, he pondered aloud about how the company might re-

spond better to the needs of the public and serve an appropriate social role, asking rhetorically, “As an influential company, isn’t Shiseido responsible for enlightening the public?”⁶⁴

Equally important in the world of advertising design, Morinaga and Company was represented by Koyama Masanari, who praised the event as “an epoch-making moment in the advertising industry” that deserved all the attention and acclaim it was receiving. He described “waves and waves of crowds—approximately two million people in total” watching the event, exclaiming that there had never been a better chance for companies to promote their products. Concurring with Shiseido’s Takagi and many others, he acknowledged that humor was a very important aspect of advertising. Consequently, Morinaga injected a lighthearted jocularly into its parade floats, which promoted four separate products: milk, dry milk, milk caramels, and milk chocolate. For milk, two employees dressed in cow costumes, leaving their own legs visible so that they looked like cows walking on four legs. For dry milk powder, which was marketed as a nutritious product for children and a “must-have for every mother,” they designed a large stroller with babies seated in it. As the stroller moved, the babies’ heads bobbed humorously. For milk caramels, the team capitalized on the image of a smiling baby face, creating a large model of the company’s distinctive caramel box with its yellow packaging and six dolls with smiling faces going in and out of the box. This was an instant sensation. Last, they struggled with how to convey the image of Morinaga’s Napoleon brand milk chocolate, ultimately creating a horse made of chocolate with a Napoleon-like soldier in the saddle swinging his sword and giving orders. The billboard beside him read, “Chocolate is my favorite—Napoleon.” The crowds cheered for these fun displays.⁶⁵

Writing for the Calpis beverage company, advertising chief Mannen Amehashi noted that the company’s overarching goal was to display its motto in a humorous and distinctive way. Anticipating that many companies would use parade trucks, the team chose to use a small “cute” automobile, treating their display like a piece of fine art. Spending days and nights on their elaborate billboard, they spotlighted the company’s logo.⁶⁶ At the same time, representatives for Right Ink were particularly ingenious, recognizing that in an age of speed, they should use an airplane to stand out from the crowd and be visible to viewers beyond the parade. With the goal of impressing people with their originality, they inscribed their company name on the wings of the plane and had the pilot drop small colorful flyers over the city, which were also coupons for the product.⁶⁷

In his concluding “Editor’s Note” about the parade in *Advertising World*, Murota marveled at the event, writing, “It never occurred to us that the advertisement festival would attract over 200,000 participants. The festival has enlivened the atmosphere and spring is also in the air. Warmly surrounded by the enthusiasm and applause of our citizens, more than 130 parade cars and over 1,000 life-size models ambled through the city center. Standing atop the Matsuya department store, you could easily lose yourself in the delight.” He exclaimed, “Finally, we have ushered in a new era for advertising.”⁶⁸



1



Promoting the Profession



Things cannot be presented “naked.” They must be packaged.
—HAMADA MASUJI, in *The Complete Commercial Artist* (1930)

Many Japanese designers were simultaneously practitioners, cultural critics, pedagogues, and entrepreneurs mapping out a discursive terrain for commercial art that solidified its professional and social position. Design entrepreneurs and the publications they pioneered—including design compendiums—disseminated important information about innovative work to a burgeoning community of commercial artists and advertising professionals. Design discourse and criticism emerged in Japan in the mid-1920s with the appearance of influential trade journals and other specialized publications. They articulated a new public sphere where a cadre of aesthetic experts could mediate consumer taste and consumption through learned (and credentialed) expertise in the art of persuasion. These experts, and their authoritative media



arms, were critical intermediaries, analyzing and comparing aspects of the market while providing compelling microdata on individual producers.¹

As periodicals that focus on new developments and specialized information concerning a particular trade or profession, trade journals are recognized among field specialists as linchpins for the success of commercial enterprises. They are also internal marketing media that sell ideas, products, and services to self-identified members of a specific trade or business. Commercial design trade journals are, in effect, advertising for advertisers—publicity for publicists—thus different from media for more general audiences. They carry industry-specific job information and important lessons that facilitate professionalization. The journals also carry current news—industry gossip—but with a circumscribed focus.

While some specialty journals were industry wide and compared activities across a given field, others, particularly in-house public relations magazines—“house organs”—provided similar types of information but only for circulation within a given company or to company customers. Most new Japanese corporations launched such house organs to disseminate information to employees and to inculcate loyalty among retailers and consumers. These publications were distinct from the even narrower coterie magazines (*dōjin zasshi*) of like-minded, artistically inclined individuals writing about design, such as *Affiches* (*Afissu*, French: Posters) and *Desegno* (*Desenguno*, Esperanto: Design), although the distinction between coterie magazines and trade journals was sometimes ambiguous in commercial art, particularly in terms of influence. Several Japanese trade journals actively published between 1910 and 1945, and each demarcated a new constituency for design discourse. Some were highly specialized, devoted to a single mode, like *Show Window Pictorial News* (*Uindogabō*), launched in 1915, which focused on show windows and related forms of display.² Others, like *Printing and Advertising* (*Insatsu to kōkoku*), centered on specific media such as the rapidly evolving area of print technology, which was having a profound impact on design. Some were explicitly polemical, like Hamada Masuji's *Commercial Art* (*Shōgyō bijutsu*), which began publishing in 1930 and championed a distinctly activist vision for the field. And when photography came to the fore as a popular advertising medium in the 1920s, Japan also saw a proliferation of professional and amateur journals that circulated key information on commercial photography (*shōgyō shashin*) or applications of art photography in the commercial sphere, such as *Photo Times* (*Foto taimusu*) and *Kōga* (translated from the German term *Lichtbild*, meaning “bright picture” or “photograph”).³

Writers for *Show Window Pictorial News*, for example, included art and design professors, architects, and working professionals, paid for their expertise.

Each mode of production had its own specialized transnational knowledge and devoted constituencies. Devotees of the show window included Hamada Shirō, public relations pioneer and head of the advertising division at Mitsukoshi department store. Mitsukoshi introduced show windows around 1903. With the permission of senior managing director Hibi Ōsuke, Hamada sent a group of employees to New York City to study show windows in 1905. Considered “the most primitive and natural form of publicity” for selling goods, display, according to French critic Marcel Emile, consisted “primarily of placing the things before the public in such a way as to attract and retain attention until the desired end”—the sale—was reached.⁴ Show window displays became a popular mode of publicity around the world, typified by the glimmering commercial Arcades in Paris, whose phantasmagoria of commodities and devoted flaneurs were brilliantly described by Walter Benjamin and elegantly captured by photographer Eugène Atget.⁵ Jérôme Le Maréchal, manager of the famed Paris department store Galeries Lafayette, known for its creative show window designs, however, asserted that while “a show window is a catalogue of samples with the aim of catching the eye of the passer, tempting him and making him buy . . . the commercial power of displayed goods is only developed if the work is artistic.” Thus, creative windows had to be arranged like “a scene in a theatre,” exemplifying the global artistic investment in the “well-dressed window” for marketing and selling.⁶

Writing in the Japanese journal *Advertising World* (*Kōkokukai*) in 1928, critic Hirasawa Shun went so far as to identify show windows as a barometer of national modernity and asserted that German designs were unequivocally the most sophisticated and creative in the world. As “leaders in the global aesthetics of show windows,” wrote Hirasawa, German designers were creating abstract and minimalist window displays that functioned as “miniature modern museums” but connoted a new sense of modernity. These show window designs uniquely connected advertising and the decorative arts to the public on the street with the goal of enticing consumers into the store to buy products. In Japan, Hirasawa observed, it was Tokyo’s Matsuya department store that was most “tuned into the rhythm of the times.” Matsuya hired professional designers and invested heavily in their displays, smartly using lights to make their products look appealing. Their expert lighting designs made each product “glow with its own glamour.”⁷

In Japan’s lively advertising design trade publishing field, two journals and one landmark compendium of commercial art represent key intersections in the professional design world that exemplify the interconnections among practice, pedagogy, discourse, commerce, and politics: *Affiches*, the intersection of

design and modern art; *The Complete Commercial Artist* (*Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*), design and theory; and *Advertising World*, design, advertising, and political propaganda.⁸ They all overlapped. They all entered enduring worldwide debates about whether commercial art was a social science based on experimental research or an art of intuition, whether it could be creatively autonomous or remained encumbered by the needs of its clients, and whether it was an international field requiring universal standards or a national endeavor that ought to be deeply rooted in local traditions. Regardless of their various positions, the expanding national network of journals and individuals demonstrates the strong mutual connections across the field and the vital role of key interlocutors who facilitated these connections; most prominent among them were designer Sugiura Hisui; design theorist Hamada Masuji; designer and editor Murota Kurazō; photographer, critic, and educator Kanamaru Shigene; and educator Miyashita Takao.

International Trade Journals and the Question of National Style

The four largest national markets for design in the 1920s were Britain, France, Germany, and the United States, which all maintained active trade publication industries that frequently cross-referenced each other. Prominent internationally known journals included *Commercial Art* (UK) and its successor, *Commercial Art and Industry*; *The Studio* (UK); *Das Plakat* (The poster, Germany); *Gebrauchsgraphik* (Commercial graphics, Germany); *Art Director's Club Annual* (US); *Modern Publicity* (UK); and *Arts et Métiers Graphiques* (Graphic arts and crafts, France), among many others. The object of such a journal, according to the editor of *Commercial Art*, was

to be of service to the business man, the designer, and the general public. It will show the manufacturer, retailer and advertiser what is being accomplished at home and abroad, and make them familiar with the work of artists and designers who can help them. It will place the commercial point of view before the artist, and assist him to realise the needs of commerce and the conditions of mechanical reproduction. It will show the public that is invested in beautiful things, products of everyday utility which they can buy, produced at competitive prices and yet possessing the fine essential qualities of a work of art.⁹

Design could be highly regionalized even within a national setting, and in Germany, Leipzig and Berlin dominated, with, respectively, over sixteen and

twenty-two design journals each by the late 1920s. For Japan, Germany was a particularly influential model. Design professor Miyashita Takao (1890–1972), writing in *Advertising World* in 1929, noted German design's far-reaching impact on the global design world with Japan among the nations that had been most influenced. He described the semiannual Leipzig Trade Fair (Leipziger Messe) as “teeming with originality” and stimulating new ideas, especially for outdoor advertising. What most impressed Miyashita was how German advertising artists trained extensively in architecture and interior design, helping them cultivate their imaginations in three dimensions. He concluded, “In stark contrast to the previous generation of German artists whose works, like the label we put on the German people, are logic-oriented and lack sensitivity, today's German style is ‘softer,’ often commingled with the artist's personal stylistic preferences, embodying a sense of humor and delightfulness. Skillfully combining decorative arts and modern sentiment, the advertisements in Germany are both one-of-a-kind and state-of-the-art.”¹⁰

The Japanese commercial art community was widely familiar with the pre-eminent German graphic design publication *Gebrauchsgraphik: Monatsschrift zur Förderung künstlerischer Reklame* (Commercial graphics: Monthly magazine for promoting art in advertising), edited by H. K. (Hermann Karl) Frenzel (1882–1937). It was published bilingually in German and English in Berlin from 1924 to 1944.¹¹ One of the earliest professional graphic design journals in Europe, it developed on the heels of the popular pre–World War I German art nouveau arts and crafts movement known as Jugendstil, or modern style, becoming the model for design trade journals around the world. It also became the official organ of the Association of German Graphic Artists (Bundes Deutscher Gebrauchsgraphiker, or BDG), which guaranteed a sizable readership. In 1927, just a few years after the journal's establishment, the editorial board realized the international nature of the emerging field and augmented its name with the subtitle “International Advertising Art.”¹²

While the journal's understanding of *international* was largely limited to North America and western Europe, it did feature work from other countries, including Japan. Other prominent trade journals like Britain's *Commercial Art* similarly included sections such as “Advertising from All Quarters” to spotlight work around the world.¹³ Frenzel's extensive international connections and powerful position in this emerging global field were evident in his central role as art director for the widely heralded 1929 International Advertising Exhibition (Reklameschau) held in Berlin in conjunction with the twenty-fifth-anniversary celebration of the World Advertising Congress. There was a particularly great concern at this time about standardization of practices throughout the global

community, and *Gebrauchsgraphik* addressed this concern in 1926 with the publication of its official “principles for the standardization of formats for the graphic industry.”¹⁴

A window to commercial art around the world, *Gebrauchsgraphik* was one of the most avidly read and excerpted design trade journals in Japan. And as Japanese designers working for manufacturers, retailers, and government entities eagerly sought to understand world design practices in the 1920s and 1930s, their work was interpreted within such international trade journals, often in essentializing terms, defined within a narrow spectrum of identity politics. This reflected an underlying tension in design discourse between nationalism and internationalism, or the local and the universal. Some writers in *Gebrauchsgraphik* argued that the spread of international commerce was increasingly blurring “the contours of artistic form in the individual nations,” destroying what was formerly known as “‘Volkskunst’—the art of the people.”¹⁵ Many others were still invested in articulating national, ethnicized differences in design, specifically between the West and “non-West,” by identifying visual precedents in earlier pictorial traditions. Even Japanese commercial artists like the Paris-based Satomi Munetsugu, who had permanently resided abroad in Paris since the age of seventeen, were described in ethnicized terms: “His outlook is French; his love of accurate arrangement, Japanese; the two combined give his work the curious and attractive personality which has brought him success.”¹⁶ Still others were openly contemptuous of contemporary Japan’s design efforts, which they perceived as mistakenly straying from local traditions. Writing for *Gebrauchsgraphik* in 1927, Dr. Eduard Wildhagen proclaimed that despite a long and illustrious history of creative advertising, “it seems as if the Japanese, abandoned by all the good spirits of his immediate past, had delivered up the art of advertisement to crude daubers and dilettante students.” Instead, he praised traditional Japanese woodblock prints and family crest symbols as the perfect precursors of modern advertising, extolling, “Old Japan deserves on the score of its former achievements to be called the classic land of Advertisement and poster art. In the course of a long artistic development it has collected for future use all the elements of propagandistic art in its most perfect form as no other civilized country has done.”¹⁷

Japanese designers and trade journals were conversely mostly interested in design’s contemporary, transnational, and universal qualities in an increasingly global marketplace, even while acknowledging the distinct nature of national production. Commenting on this difference in viewpoint, cultural critic Harada Jirō (an advisory board member for *The Complete Commercial Artist*) noted in *Commercial Art* that to attract the attention of the contemporary

Japanese public, it was essential to use something “exotic” in the marketplace, “something different from traditional form.” The new devices of advertising in Japan were, according to Harada, intrinsically associated with a “foreign method,” and the Japanese public repeatedly “clamored” for them. However, because there were Japanese who reacted against this “intoxication” with things Western, some artists were endeavoring to develop new work with traditional methods “to infuse a new life into the old form.” And “the absence of a Japanese flavor” that was evident in contemporary advertising design was bound to reveal “ethnic characteristics” down the line. He emphasized that whatever their method, Japanese commercial artists shared the aim, “not only to attract the attention of the people to a poster or a show window, but to arrest it upon the ware it advertises and excite the mind of the observer, leading him to buy the goods.” This objective, Harada concluded, could be attained only by a careful study of the local “community psychology,” which inevitably changed over time.¹⁸ Thus, local context was critical even in an increasingly globalizing design world, as nations had a shared and evolving community psychology that overtly or covertly informed national style.

Sugiura Hisui and *Affiches*

Sugiura Hisui (1876–1965), a leading designer and founding member of the influential Japanese graphic design study association the Group of Seven (Shichininsha), was an avid reader of *Gebrauchsgraphik* and other international trade publications.¹⁹ As one of the very few early artist-designers who established a public reputation in the graphic arts, Hisui, popularly known by his artist name rather than his surname, paved the way for many others. His training in the fine arts as well as his strong personal ties to the art community gave his design endeavors social status to which others of equal ability could only have aspired. First studying in the Matsuyama atelier of the long-standing Maruyama-Shijō school of ink painting, and then formally enrolling at the prestigious Tokyo School of Fine Arts in neo-Japanese-style painting under master Kawabata Gyokushō, where he also came under the tutelage of premier Western-style painting master and design proponent Kuroda Seiki, Hisui used his position to promote the graphic arts in the public eye and within art education. From Kuroda, who had attended the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, he absorbed a deep appreciation for French art nouveau, a style that was itself greatly indebted to Japanese art and design.

Hisui’s career demonstrates the deep entanglements of cultural criticism, pedagogy, commercial entrepreneurship, and statecraft. After graduating from

art school, he worked in the design division of Tokyo's *Chūō shinbun* newspaper doing color lithography for the Sunday supplement as well as various journal cover designs and was then hired as chief designer for Mitsukoshi, where he worked from 1910 to 1934 designing graphics for the store's posters, catalogs, and public relations magazine, *Mitsukoshi Times* (*Mitsukoshi taimusu*, later *Mitsukoshi*).²⁰ At the same time, he did designs for several civic and state enterprises, creating landmark posters for the new Tokyo metropolitan subway lines and cigarette packaging for the government monopoly on tobacco, salt, and sugar.²¹ He worked for the national tourism agency, the Japan Tourist Bureau (JTB), designing its magazine *Tourist* (*Tsūrisuto*) and posters, as well as for the South Manchurian Railways (Mantetsu), whose expansion helped imperial Japan colonize northern China. He simultaneously served as a publicity advisor to the highly innovative Calpis beverage company from 1921. On top of this wide array of commercial work, he was an influential figure in design education. His legacy in design pedagogy is preserved at two prestigious art schools, Musashino Art University (Musashino Bijutsu Daigaku, formerly the Imperial Art School, Teikoku Bijutsu Gakkō), where he served as chief of the design department from 1929 to 1935, and Tama Art University (Tama Bijutsu Daigaku, formerly Tama Imperial Art School, Tama Teikoku Bijutsu Gakkō), which he helped found in 1935, serving as school president for many years.²² Considering his prominent status and long-standing interest in labor unions, it is no coincidence that Hisui served as founding committee chair of the All Japan Commercial Artists League (Zen Nippon Shōgyō Bijutsu Renmei), representing twenty-one participating groups, which was established in 1936 and renamed the All Japan Industrial Artists League (Zen Nippon Sangyō Bijutsu Renmei) two years later.

Hisui's popular designs inspired by art nouveau, and later art deco, circulated widely through several very successful commercially published multivolume design portfolios, which further catapulted him into national recognition in the Japanese art world.²³ After the 1915 publication of the first volume of his *Hisui Design Collection* (*Hisui zuanshū dai-ichi go*) by well-known arts publisher Kanaobunendō, his professional opinion and authority gained increased importance and breadth.²⁴ His designs were so well known that people referred to him as "Mitsukoshi's Hisui," or to the store as "Hisui's Mitsukoshi." This public renown was further fueled by a perceived rivalry between Mitsukoshi and Shirokiya department stores, whose main poster designer, Hashiguchi Gōyō, was equally popular and had previously defected from Mitsukoshi to its main competitor. Hashiguchi was one of a number of classically trained artists like Kitano Tsunetomo and Machida Ryūyō who specialized in images of beautiful women (*bijinga*) and came to prominence through the myriad com-



1.1 Sugiura Hisui, poster for Mitsukoshi department store, Tokyo. Commemoration of the restored west building of the main store and the new Shinjuku branch, 1925. National Crafts Museum/DNPartcom

mercial poster competitions Japanese companies sponsored during the early decades of the twentieth century.²⁵ These competitions were a major source of income for artists and also enabled them to gain significant notoriety, although, unlike Hisui, most artists distanced themselves from identifying as professional designers to avoid the stigma of commercialism.

Hisui's work marked an important shift to explicit product endorsement, which would become the dominant design trend from the 1920s onward. Many of his designs still relied on elements of the *bijinga* tradition, with the significant addition of the expressive nude, but they displayed a new concern for graphically accentuating the identity of the sponsor. This included, for instance, the direct incorporation of the modern architectural structures of the department store buildings and its fashionable consumers—adults and children (figure 1.1). Posters also represented the store synecdochically through the display of its promotional magazine, launched in 1911, well known for

1.2 Sugiura Hisui, poster for Mitsukoshi department store, 1914. Musashino Art University Museum and Library Collection



publicizing new consumer trends. In one widely circulated poster image from 1914 (figure 1.2), *Mitsukoshi* magazine was conspicuously presented on the lap of a seated female figure, quickly recognizable as an example of Japan's "new woman" (*atarashii onna*) by her hairstyle, apparel, and modern domestic surroundings. The poster implied a direct connection between the store and the woman's fashionable new lifestyle.

Strongly indebted to sketching from nature, Hisui's designs relied on the abstraction of natural forms. His upbeat stylized embellishment accorded with the bright, aspirational role that department stores were selling to consumers and that new corporate brands were hoping to harness to aestheticize their luxury products. Carrying over this bright and cheerful style from commerce to nation and empire normalized and equalized these entities, blurring the lines between private virtues and public vices. Professionally, he became a nexus for connecting design to all levels of corporate, political, and imperial power. Using winged female allegorical figures in traditional and Western-style garb, for example, Hisui's posters for Mitsukoshi, Hoshi pharmaceutical, and



1.3 Sugiura Hisui, poster for South Manchurian Railways, 1917. National Crafts Museum/DNPartcom. Photograph by S&T Photo © 2021

the South Manchurian Railways romanticized the present in classicizing terms, prettifying industrial and colonial enterprises indiscriminately (figure 1.3).²⁶ In this way, like many of his contemporaries advocating for design who interchangeably aestheticized business and politics, Hisui purveyed an idealized vision that facilitated commercial, national, and imperial expansion.

After returning in 1924 from a two-year study excursion to Europe, Hisui formed the Group of Seven with seven of his young design students from the Japan Art School (*Nihon Bijutsu Gakkō*), a private art academy. The group made a significant mark in the worlds of both design publishing and exhibitions. The initial members, all men, were Arai Sen, Kishi Hideo, Nomura Noboru, Miyoshi Tadaomi, Tanabe Shōichi, Kamiya Komao, and Ichiki Takeshi, but other design students from the Imperial Art School who worked with Hisui soon joined, most notably Kubo Yoshirō (*Mitsukoshi*), Suyama Hiroshi (*Mitsukoshi*),

Hara Mansuke (Mitsukoshi), and Koike Iwao. And Mitsukoshi's advertising bureau chief, Matsumiya Saburō, served as an advisor along with Watanabe Soshū (1890–1986), a well-known author on decorative arts and crafts and soon-to-be professor of design at the Imperial Art School.²⁷ The group went public in early May 1926 with their inaugural show, titled the First Creative Poster Exhibition (Daiichi Sōsaku Posutā-ten), held at Mitsukoshi in Nihonbashi, which included over seventy works by twenty-three participants (both members and guests), and then mounted annual shows of original poster designs (*genga*)—domestic and international—at the store until 1934.²⁸ Intriguingly, the show was first slated to be held at the Ginza Matsuzakaya department store gallery, reserved through the good auspices of the store's advertising bureau chief and *nihonga* artist Kubota Kinsen, but with Hisui and others working for Mitsukoshi, the group quickly saw that it was problematic to be exhibiting at a rival store and switched the venue.²⁹ Japanese modern advertising design was inextricably entangled with the corporate sector from its beginnings on all levels. Despite the myriad advantages of having powerful corporate patrons and employers, this could also make asserting artistic independence a challenge, an ideological conflict against which Hisui frequently bristled.³⁰

The group's ranks swelled quickly from 1926, forming a powerful network of budding professionals including Murota Kurazō (designer and editor of the newly launched *Advertising World*), Hamada Masuji (principal founder of the Commercial Artists Association [Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai] and later editorial board member of *The Complete Commercial Artist*), Enomoto Eiichi (Morinaga), Hida Tomikichi (Morinaga), Koike Tomihisa (Morinaga), Shiihashi Isamu (Morinaga), Hiranuma Fukusaburō (Morinaga), Fujimoto Michio (Morinaga), and Kanamaru Shigene (Kinreisha), among others. Exhibition participants and their allies buoyed the group's reputation with positive reviews in the press.³¹

Soon after, the Group of Seven began publishing its own journal, Japan's first graphic design magazine, *Affiches* (1927, 1929–30) (figure 1.4).³² Initially labeled a “magazine for the study of posters” (*posutā kenkyū zasshi*), the journal's subtitle changed in November 1929 to a “magazine for the study of design” (*zuan kenkyū zasshi*), adding the French subtitle *Revue Mensuelle aux Artistes Décorateurs* (Monthly review for decorative artists), indicating a broadening of the purview. While Hisui was editor in chief, Kishi, who was particularly interested in the study of poster design, effectively served as the journal's editor. Watanabe Soshū again served as an advisor and contributor. Featuring Hisui's vibrant cover designs, *Affiches* launched in July 1927, published by Bungadō, starting with a slim twenty-eight pages (printed on both sides) and eighteen

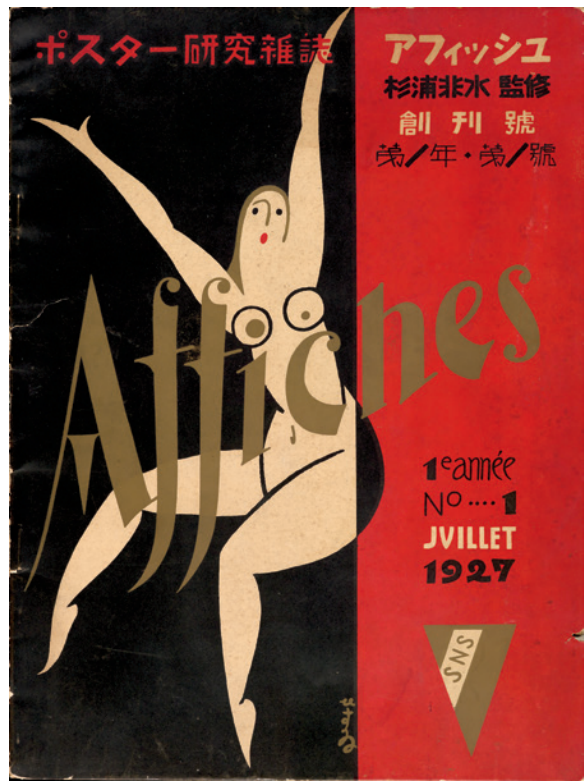


1.4 Sugiura Hisui, covers for *Affiches* magazine. National Crafts Museum/DNPartcom. Photograph by s&t Photo ©2021

opening illustrations printed by chromolithography in five colors. At the relatively high price point of ¥1 per issue, it was a luxury publication.³³

Affiches featured posters richly illustrated in color from around the globe by celebrated and lesser-known designers. Some issues of the magazine also included perforated postage-size stamps (known in German as *Reklamemarken*) of the group's various poster designs so that readers could collect sample works and the journal's covers. This was a popular trend in Europe from the 1890s with thousands of published examples. Hisui's vivid cover for the first issue, replicated in stamps, featured a freely rendered white female nude with arms triumphantly extended over her head boldly leaping on pointed toes across the page like a dancer in a Paris revue (figure 1.5). Set against a vertically divided black-and-red background, her ample buttocks change color as they extend

1.5 Sugiura Hisui, cover of *Affiches* 1, no. 1 (July 1927).
Duke University Library



across the divide, and her breasts are encircled in black rings, with one enlarged gold nipple dotting the *i* in *Affiches*. By exoticizing and eroticizing the fleshly image of the white woman, the design unequivocally expressed the group's imagined liberation of the poster artist in the cosmopolitan, sexually charged *élan vital* of the modern age. The group championed the liberatory aesthetic of international artistic modernism that imbued creative posters with a new energy—often sexual—matching the equally excited rhetoric of industrial progress. And in true commercial fashion, the cover design and stamps featured the Group of Seven trademark triangular flag on the lower right, boldly branding the group's work and the nude body.

Declaring “creative posters” (*sōsaku posutā*) as the new art of modernity, Hisui penned the rallying cry “Words for the First Issue,” unabashedly proclaiming their artistic validity:

It's been more than four years since I formed the Group of Seven with some young designers around me, and it's been more than a year since we announced our initial research and had our first exhibition. Some-

one had to get his hands dirty and be the first voice to put forth creative posters in Japan, and the Group of Seven was that group. But this is not something of which we are particularly proud, it is something that was demanded by modernity itself. This movement is something that needed to happen. Japan's business world [*jitsugyō shakai*], its workers, and artists alike have finally opened their eyes to posters . . . and commercial design [*shōgyō zuan*]. World War I was the catalyst for this. It can be said that this study and the demands for it finally caught on [in Japan] right after the Great Kantō Earthquake [of 1923]. However, the problem of how to develop advertising art [*kōkoku bijutsu*] is not just Japan's problem. In fact, since Japan has been influenced by several Euro-American countries, it is part of a world situation. For example, when the magazine *The Studio* calls for commercial art to secede from fine art, we see the same impulse expressed in Japanese magazines that say industrial arts [*kōgei*] should secede from pure art [*jun bijutsu*]. Most artists have not thought about merging art with actual society; they just think of advertising pictures as something risky for art. These are people who only look at this from on high (from an elite and elevated position)—basically they need to get down from their high horses. There are people willing to step down and see the world from an actual social position—I am one of these people.³⁴

Posters were public messages that had to be seen. They also had to be held in memory, according to French poster designer Jean Carlu. But due to the fast, and ever-accelerating, tempo of modern life, the poster was viewed rapidly and required quick comprehension. This is where artistic skill came in. In his published lecture in *Commercial Art* in 1931, Carlu asked rhetorically, "Should a Poster Be a Work of Art?" His answer, concurring with Hisui, was, "Every *good poster* is a work of art," even if it was made as "propaganda." Posters were a kind of "ideogram," or symbol expressing the idea of a thing without the aid of words, envisioned through the artist's imagination or "mind's eye." They should not be discounted as works of art precisely because making an effective poster required the aesthetic acumen of the artist—a facility with "the language of forms."

When we are thirsty any carafe filled with water will content us. But when we have a desire to buy some article, one poster among many must impose itself upon us to reply to this desire.

It is to achieve this end that aesthetics must come to the aid of psychology.

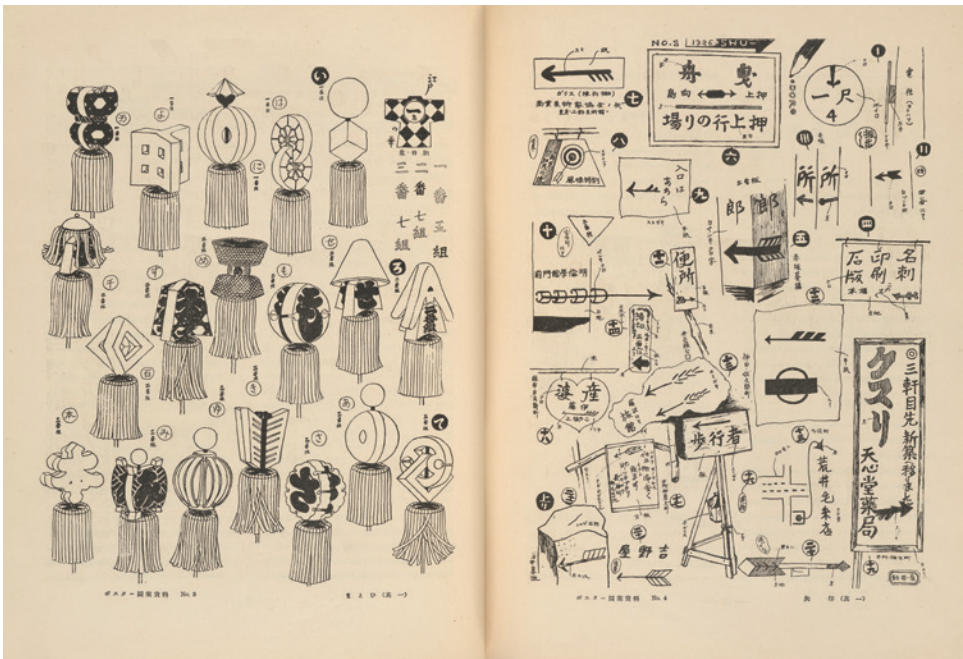
A work of art is an expression of the human spirit intended to provoke emotion in the mind of the spectator.

The artist is the operative in this creation, employing the elements of form and colour, as he would a mechanism devised at the turn of a lever, to produce a determinate result.³⁵

To the Group of Seven, posters were indisputably creative artworks, and their producers were bona fide artists. *Affiches* was dedicated to proving that point.

Convincing the Japanese public of this social value, however, was not achieved simply by artistic means. It was facilitated by harnessing powerful connections to corporate, institutional, and imperial Japan. Hisui's imprint on the magazine was immense. As mentioned earlier, he worked across the spectrum of commercial and state sponsors. As a valued employee of Mitsukoshi, he was able to mount the group's exhibitions in the company gallery, where fine art exhibitions were also being shown, thus equating their design work with more established forms of artistic production. As a consultant for Calpis, where Kishi Hideo also later worked, he was able to get the company to sponsor prominent advertisements in the magazine and financially support their endeavors, which reciprocally imbued the manufacturer's beverage business with a trendy cachet. A host of other sponsors followed suit: Morinaga, Matsuya, and Mitsukoshi department stores; the newspapers *Jiji shinpō* and *Asahi shinbun*; and the publisher Atelier-sha, just to name a few. At the same time, several group members went to work for the government and academia. Nomura, who founded his own small studio Adman Company, became a poster designer for the Ministry of Finance and, like Hisui, worked to promote the state tobacco concession.

Following his mentor, Arai took a position teaching design at Tama Imperial Art School and was central in establishing the school journal *Desegno*, dedicating the first issue in 1936 to the thirty-year anniversary of Hisui's career in design and the accompanying commemorative exhibition.³⁶ Often described as an "intellectual" designer, Arai worked with the prominent ethnographer of modernity or "modernologist" Kon Wajirō, who conducted important observational surveys of Japanese modern life in the Ginza district in the 1920s, particularly focusing on changing clothing styles. Kon drew into his circle young designers like Arai and Morinaga's Fujimoto Michio and wrote about the history of clothing for *Desegno*.³⁷ These young designers considered street observation important training for working in their field, and the knowledge they gleaned undergirded their social role in daily life. Describing his assignment on "hat detail" for Kon's Ginza surveys, Fujimoto later remarked that one could learn a lot about a person—occupation and class—from just a hat. And as Arai often told him, "The study of design requires the gathering of all kinds of materials. Even if you just sketch smokestacks, electrical poles, and signboards, this will all



1.6 Arai Sen, fire brigade banners (*mato*) and signboards with arrows, *Affiches* 1, no. 1 (July 1927).
Duke University Library

be useful. We must always be observing the things around us in our daily lives.”³⁸ In *Affiches*, Arai regularly contributed commentaries on sketches of vernacular forms of publicity (figure 1.6) such as firemen’s association flags (*mato*), way-finding directional arrows (*yajirusshi*), posters (*bira*), shop curtains (*noren*), and scarecrows (*kakashi*), rendered in Kon’s signature ethnographic style as reference material for poster design. Each member of the Group of Seven expanded this potent network of connections and expertise that reinforced design’s academic, economic, and political patronage while empowering commercial artists as vital influencers in the transformation of modern life in Japan.

Commercial art’s growing influence in the transformation of daily life was a global phenomenon. Advertising and marketing were two creative spheres that applied this influence. In the first issue of *Affiches*, Suzuki Toyoharu remarked on the cultural energy inherent in German posters. Discussing Berlin after World War I when *Der Sturm* posters were energizing public spaces along

with dynamic street advertising, he exclaimed, “Posters, dance in the streets! Dancers, make the streets your stage! Musicians, raise your voices and sing in the streets!” He accompanied this charge with illustrations of an outdoor advertising parade or *Reklamemesse* in Berlin in 1922 showing paraders dressed up as an elephant.³⁹ He also quoted contemporary reference works published abroad on art and advertising, such as A. F. Sheldon’s 1911 *The Art of Selling* and American art director W. Livingston Larned’s research on advertising published in his *Illustration in Advertising*, issued by McGraw Hill in 1925. A scholar of advertising who pioneered the market for correspondence education on sales, Sheldon took the hard-line position that advertising was for sales and sales only, diverging from the creative art focus of many designers.⁴⁰ Larned, on the other hand, was dedicated to exploring the “science of advertising illustration” but still insisted on the fundamentals of advertising art—“Every stroke of the pen, every mark of the brush, every artifice of the studio should be employed only as a commercial asset.” For him, advertising was “at its lowest ebb when it becomes a colorful luxury.”⁴¹

Affiches’ early issues were eclectic, and the editorial style informal. The magazine unapologetically promoted and reviewed the group’s own work and exhibitions, providing such extensive coverage of Hisui’s endeavors that it verged on vanity press. It had many self-referential product placements and advertisements, gesturing to the group and its sponsors. Each of the first five issues included a column of lyrical commentary by members titled “Septain” (French: a seven-line poem, which also numerically referred to the group’s name based on its seven founding members) and a schedule of upcoming events under “Chronique” (French: chronicle or gossip), and some had opinion sections with solicited reflections from different individuals based on various questionnaires. Significantly, *Affiches* illustrated and discussed global designs from England, Italy, France, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Ireland. From October 1929, after a hiatus of more than a year due to economic difficulties, the magazine restarted with a reduced paper size and lower price of ¥0.50 per issue. It also shifted to a new financial model offering prepaid subscriptions at ¥6 for half a year and ¥11 for a full year, which came with a host of new benefits entitling subscribers to affiliate and exhibit with the Group of Seven as well as opportunities to publish in the magazine. With this new, more fiscally sustainable model, the content shifted from lavish illustrations of international work to emphasis on the domestic work of members and affiliated designers. There was also a marked expansion of topics to incorporate show windows, dolls, café designs, commercial photography, movie posters, match labels, and collections of popular illustrations (*katto*).⁴²

Affiches' significance in the design world extended far beyond its modest publication runs. It inspired a host of other individuals and groups that would constitute Japan's next generation of design leaders. It is not an overstatement to describe it as the wellspring for a new professional consciousness that made public claims for the social validity of design in Japan. It directly spawned influential design groups that were based in corporate Japan and academia. Important examples include the Morinaga designers' group Kōzusha (Composition Company), the Shiseido Advertising Art Research Association (Shiseidō Kōkoku Bijutsu Kenkyūkai), the Tokyo Higher School of Industrial Arts' Association of New Designers (Shinzuanka Kyōkai), the Metropolitan Industrial Printers' Tokyo Print Artists Group (Insatsu Bijutsuka Shūdan), and the Imperial Art School's New Designer Group (Shinzuanka Shūdan). In addition, it motivated other groups formed during this time around the broader field of advertising, perhaps most important for this story, the Tokyo Advertising Art Association (Tōkyō Kōkoku Bijutsu Kyōkai), launched in 1931, which counted among its founding members the influential corporate designers Yamana Ayao (Shiseido cosmetics), Kōno Takashi (Shochiku films), and Okuyama Gihachirō (Nikke woolen clothing).⁴³ Hisui's legacy with *Affiches* persisted through this network of individuals, groups, corporations, and institutional entities that became the pillars of modern Japan's professional design field extending into the postwar period.

Commercial Art, Modernism, and Photography: Kanamaru Shigene

As the editor of the influential British design journal *Commercial Art* pithily noted in 1926, "Commerce is the driving force of the modern State. It stimulates an intense activity. It is competitive, and therefore must develop on original and progressive lines. Its influence has reached the arts."⁴⁴ And while artists and critics still often claimed modernism as a realm of autonomous artistic production, liberated from representation and utility, its broad applications in commercial publicity and political propaganda spheres expose this rhetoric as another modernist myth. In his famous (or perhaps infamous, depending on your theoretical stance) 1939 purist manifesto, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," critic Clement Greenberg articulated the profound anxiety and abhorrence modernists felt concerning the possible "contamination" of pure form with matters of function and commerce, labeling all applications of modernism as "kitsch," in which everything is rendered into mere style, and surfaces triumph over depths.⁴⁵ Unlike the authentic individual expression and personal values of

modernist experimentation, kitsch, for Greenberg, was a world of mechanical repetition, faked sensations, spurious intentions, and hackneyed sentimentality. But countless scholars writing on modernism since Greenberg's time have revealed modernism's utter failure at aesthetic autonomy and have examined the deep anxiety embodied in these formalist critiques that "othered" mass culture, often gendering it female (because of the popular association between women and consumption), as a means of masculinizing and heroicizing elitist forms of artistic practice.⁴⁶

In 1934 the Japanese journal *Advertising World* published an excerpt in English from American Frank H. Young's book *Modern Advertising Art*. The author wrote:

Modernism in advertising art, employing new forms, new materials, new color effects and combinations of these, enables the artist to express an advertising message more adequately in the spirit of today. . . . Modernism, with its simplicity and freedom from tradition, is serving the advertiser well and is giving the advertising artist great opportunity to make use of his creative faculties. . . . Advertising can and will employ the most advanced technique in art for arresting attention and conveying impressions to modern minds which think and feel in a tempo expressed by the airplane, radio and television, talking pictures and jazz orchestras.⁴⁷

Many commercial designers in Japan employed modernist images to promote company products and gain "attention-value" in emerging national markets precisely because of the close associations with the modern, the new, the rational, the scientific, and the machine aesthetic. Their advertising designs were largely—although not exclusively—for companies marketing new types of modern consumer products like Western-style foodstuffs, innovative technologies such as light bulbs, or modern hygienic personal care items, all goods that intrinsically reflected the rapidly changing nature of daily life in twentieth-century Japan. They fully embraced what some scholars have disparagingly called *lifestyle modernism*, which design historian John Potvin has actively re-appropriated, expanding and imbuing with the more positive valences of social emancipation and aesthetic agency, particularly for men.⁴⁸

Kanamaru Shigene (1900–1977), a leading figure in the modern photography field, was instrumental in bringing together the spheres of commercial art, modernism, and photography (and later propaganda) for Japanese audiences.⁴⁹ His regular essays in all three major trade publications discussed in this chapter introduced new international applications of modernist photography to commercial work, supported by up-to-date technical information useful for profes-

sional designers like various dry plate technologies (ortho-, iso-, and panchromatic) and the color effects of corrective and selective filters.⁵⁰ Japanese readers were actively seeking out these techniques for cultivating aesthetic expression in the service of commercial and national goals.

A practitioner, critic, and educator, Kanamaru taught photography at Nihon University for almost his entire professional career and was one of the most prominent names in photography criticism during this time.⁵¹ He wrote several popular books: *Techniques of Commercial Photography* (*Shōgyō shashin jutsu*) with close friend Suzuki Hachirō in 1931, and *How to Make New Photography* (*Shinkō shashin no tsukurikata*), on avant-garde and modernist photography, in 1932. Together with Suzuki, he also established his own commercial photography studio, called Kinreisha, in 1926.⁵² In 1931 Kinreisha commissioned an ultramodern photo studio building in Tokyo as a public marquee for the firm's contemporary aesthetics.

Kanamaru simultaneously worked for a range of commercial manufacturers of popular brands, from Kao soap to Santendo's Daigaku (University) medicinal eye drops. Santendo promoted Daigaku eye drops, the company's first ophthalmic product, launched in 1899, as "a great eye drop for a rapidly modernizing society"; its trademarked image of a distinguished college professor sporting a full beard and glasses gestured to both Japan's modernity and the physical ailments that attended it.⁵³ For Daigaku, Kanamaru created a photo-montage advertisement featuring a surrealist pair of disembodied eyes, one translucently masked, hovering in the middle of a tree-lined university road, imparting added metaphorical promotional layers to Bauhausler László Moholy-Nagy's photographic "new vision" of daily life (figure 1.7). Increasingly abstracting and fragmenting the body into its constituent parts, such publicity images projected modernism's new vision onto the national body.⁵⁴

Hamada Masuji and *The Complete Commercial Artist*

One of the most vocal design theorists of the period, and a close associate of Hisui, Hamada Masuji was a powerful force in helping launch design as a new professional field of artistic practice. By publicly endorsing art as a means of persuasion and systematizing the specialized requisite knowledge, he explicitly and unapologetically put aesthetics in the service of commerce. For Hamada, products could not merely be placed in the market to speak for themselves—"naked." They required skillful packaging, and who better to design this packaging than artists who understood the affectivity of visual stimuli?

1.7 Kanamaru Shigene (photographer), magazine advertisement for Daigaku eye drops, ca. 1931. Kanamaru Shigene Archive, Nihon University Collection



Born in Hyōgo and raised in Osaka, Hamada, like Hisui, trained in fine art, first in Western-style painting at the White Horse Society (Hakubakai) painting studio run by Kuroda Seiki and his students, and then at the academic Pacific Painting Society studio (Taiheiyō Gakai). After this he entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts sculpture division. And like so many of his contemporaries, he began freelancing as a commercial designer while still in school. On April 24, 1926, he and a group of eleven young colleagues, including *Advertising World* editor Murota Kurazō, Sun Studio (San Sutajio) director Tada Hokuu, and several members of the Group of Seven, formed the Commercial Artists Association.⁵⁵ The design historian Tajima Natsuko has surmised that the association was actually formed in consultation with *Advertising World* publisher Seibundō as a think tank for starting the magazine because so many of the members had already published with the journal's precursors and would become future contributors.⁵⁶ The association mounted yearly exhibitions

starting in September 1926, mostly in fine art venues, with many sponsored by prominent newspapers, and were reviewed with great interest in both the art and popular press.⁵⁷ Critics referred to the group as “artists of the streets” because of their impact on the look of the urban environment. Association chapters soon formed throughout the country. First, the graphic designer Yajima Shūichi (1895–1982) established a sister group in Osaka in January 1928, inspired by both the association’s work and the Group of Seven’s second exhibition of posters, which traveled to Osaka in August 1927. This was followed by chapters forming in Nagasaki, Sendai, Iwate, and Hiroshima.⁵⁸ The association then opened a study center in 1929. That same year, however, Hamada and Tada Hokuu parted ways, with the latter forming the Association of Practical Print Arts (Jitsuyō Hanga Kyōkai) with Okuyama Gihachirō and the young prodigy Fujisawa Tatsuo, a Morinaga freelancer.⁵⁹ Murota and Tomita Morizō had already distanced themselves, ostensibly to concentrate on *Advertising World*. The defections were indicative of a simmering tension among these strong-willed and opinionated creative individuals, all of whom were jockeying for leadership. The hostility toward Hamada was revealed in a short anonymous exposé that appeared in *Advertising World* in October 1929 describing the Commercial Artists Association as in a “state of chaos” and questioning its future direction without its most famous founding members, not very subtly implying that Hamada was not well known for his own designs. Positing rancorous internal dissension and accusing Hamada of taking undue credit for the entire venture by claiming that he had unilaterally sacrificed himself for the organization, the article concluded that the group was now Hamada’s—for good or bad.⁶⁰ Hamada unabashedly assumed this mantle, and the following year (1930), he launched the Japanese periodical *Commercial Art* with himself as editor. In June of that same year, he was prominently featured with several illustrations of his design works in the British trade journal *Commercial Art*, where he was described by the Japanese critic Harada Jirō as the leader of the Tokyo Commercial Artists Association with a large number of followers, playing a role comparable to Hisui and the Group of Seven in popularizing commercial art in Japan.⁶¹ Three years later, Hamada established his own design academy, the Commercial Art Composition School (Shōgyō Bijutsu Kōsei Juku). This was a three-year program for certification as a commercial artist. All the while he continued to participate in many published roundtable discussions and to publish widely in other journals. The group sponsored regular exhibitions of members’ work into the late 1930s, collaborating with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to mount national commercial art exhibitions such as the All Japan Commercial Art Exhibition

(Zen Nippon Shōgyō Bijutsuten) in March 1937, held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum (Tōkyōfu Bijutsukan).⁶²

By 1936 Hamada's relationship with *Advertising World* seems to have normalized—perhaps due to Murota's departure—and he contributed a statement of purpose to the journal. An accompanying profile described him as a prolific scholar, a sought-after lecturer whom the Ministry of Education often sponsored, and a pillar of the design education field serving on numerous influential committees. Here he wrote representing the newly created National Commercial Art Education Association (Zenkoku Shōgyō Bijutsu Kyōiku Kyōkai) to announce the third exhibition of student works from across the nation and the first under the auspices of the association. He thanked the journal for providing an important platform for all students interested in pursuing commercial art. Cultivating future artists was still his primary goal, but he criticized those who continued to focus on aesthetics in design without recognizing its functional applications in business and all related fields, such as advertising, sales, and psychology. While many a person still held ingrained beliefs that it was impossible to harmonize art and functionality, for him, this was only a matter of needing more education, which he aimed to provide.⁶³

Hamada was indeed best known as a theorist and educator of design rather than as a practitioner. Nevertheless, his advocacy work was vital to the establishment of the field and widely respected, as indicated by both the scope of his activities and his major projects, principally *The Complete Commercial Artist*, the twenty-four-volume illustrated compendium of commercial design with annotation and theoretical analysis, published by Ars from 1928 to 1930.⁶⁴ With over two-thirds of each volume comprising illustrations, this landmark compendium served as a rich pattern book of design ideas—all at one's fingertips—for easy reference or adaptation. Essay contributors included seventy-one well-known professional practitioners, educators, and journalists active in the Japanese design field.⁶⁵ The series was published in both hardcover (price ¥1.5) and softcover (¥1) editions, distributed through direct subscription sales, with each volume totaling about 150 pages. Each volume also included a thin supplementary gazette titled *Commercial Art Monthly* (*Shōgyō bijutsu geppō*) with additional information and published letters from subscribers.⁶⁶ Subscription copies were sold primarily to Japanese commercial retailers and manufacturers, as well as printing companies and design schools, throughout the country and Japan's expanding empire, many of which did not have access to such current visual information. As the publication dates indicate, the volumes were not issued in order.⁶⁷

For the first fifteen volumes, six editorial committee members guided the project, Sugiura Hisui, Watanabe Soshū, Hamada Masuji, and Nakada Sada-

nosuke (the director and a managing committee member of the Commercial Artists Association respectively), Tatsuke Yoichirō (an author and the director of the Japanese Advertising Study Association [Nihon Kōkoku Gakkai]), and Miyashita Takao (a professor of industrial arts at the Tokyo Higher School of Industrial Arts).⁶⁸ It is clear, however, that Hamada was the driving force behind the series from its inception, and for the final nine volumes, he was elevated to chief editor. All the editors contributed at least one essay to the total 158 in the compendium, but Hamada dominated the list, authoring thirty-two, with the next highest being Miyashita at ten. Hamada's authorial voice emerges most strongly throughout the series.⁶⁹

This bountiful sourcebook—a veritable encyclopedia—of commercial art forms and techniques was both an important record of original design work by named commercial artists from the period and an invaluable trade publication for disseminating the most up-to-date design practices to small retail shops that could not afford to employ full-time designers but still sought to invest their advertising and displays with creative aesthetics. Not only did the series proffer new styles from around the globe to imbue commodities with a fashionable aura, but it also introduced new technologies and materials associated with modern industry to create an exciting spectacle for the consumer. The *Ars* series was one of the most important Japanese design compendiums and educational guidebooks published at this time, and its appearance indicates the growing contemporary market for explanatory design texts in Japan as the commercial art field rapidly expanded domestically and around the world.⁷⁰

Defining Commercial Art

The thematic titles of the twenty-four volumes indicate the breadth and depth of the series, ranging from world posters, show windows, signboards, and street decorations to electric advertising, product displays, cartoons, photography, lettering and layout design, packaging, and illustration. The series covered all the latest trends in advertising as well as the plurality of traditions associated with “Japanese taste” (*Nihon shumi*). The series was capped by a final volume featuring Hamada's one-hundred-page manifesto-style essay explicating his theory of commercial art and the social implications of the field for Japan.⁷¹ His design theory combined modernist fine art aesthetics with the “progressive” values of industrialism: rationalism, efficiency, effectiveness, applicability, and pragmatism. To this was added a touch of popular psychology and visual perception theory, and a strong dose of Marxian social utopianism, to produce Hamada's own distinct brand of commercial art, or *shōgyō bijutsu*. With this

attitude, he paved the way for both a commercialization of aesthetics and an aestheticization of commerce.⁷²

Modernism was his tool of choice for undertaking this process of aestheticization. He redirected the visually evocative aesthetic strategies of autonomous abstract art that undergirded modernism to serve a more clearly functional purpose, beginning with the general assertion that “form itself resonated with people in distinct ways.”⁷³ It was the designer’s job to maximize and direct this resonance in the consumer’s mind to accentuate the product.⁷⁴ Adapting Le Corbusier’s famous dictum that a house was “a machine for living in,” Hamada produced his own mechanical metaphor, declaring “art as a machine with a purpose.”⁷⁵ The implication was that art could function pragmatically through applied design, which was manipulable in a manner akin to the precise calibrations of a machine. Industrial development became the inspiration for Hamada’s commercial art, as its vigor supplied the designer’s “energy.”⁷⁶

Hamada was blunt in assigning blame for design’s low status in the artistic hierarchy. “Pure art,” he claimed, was “controlled by bourgeois ideology,” serving only the needs of the ruling class. His foremost goal was to redress this artistic grading and elevate commercial art. Due to its intrinsically compelling nature, commercial art, Hamada felt, would eventually eclipse all forms of art for art’s sake.⁷⁷ In the meantime, just naming the field was a significant act in the present climate of the Japanese art world, as it identified a vast realm of artistic production that went unacknowledged. Hamada lamented, “In some respects, it can be said that *shōgyō bijutsu* has not yet been born in Japan.”⁷⁸

Hamada called commercial art “art with a purpose” (*mokuteki no bijutsu*), distinct from pure art or art for art’s sake, which was produced entirely for aesthetic appreciation and individual expression.⁷⁹ His theory centered around the notion of purpose. Thus, how well a work served its purpose was the main criterion for evaluating its worth, while pure art was measured by the gauges of beauty and aesthetic pleasure. In *shōgyō bijutsu*, the new scientific credo of the age that went hand in hand with industrialism was expressed in buzzwords such as rationalism (*gōri*), exactitude (*seikaku*), clarity (*meiryō*), and suitability to purpose (*gōmokuteki*). Hamada argued that this form of art addressed the real-life conditions of a modern industrial society under capitalism. It was less elitist, appealing to the mass consumer. He believed that in the end the practical or applied arts would enable the artist to break through the limiting bonds of subjectivity in pure art.⁸⁰

Heralding a new consciousness for design, he advocated the independence of the designer vis-à-vis the client. And design should have a conceptual—and even social—underpinning that would function beyond purely monetary

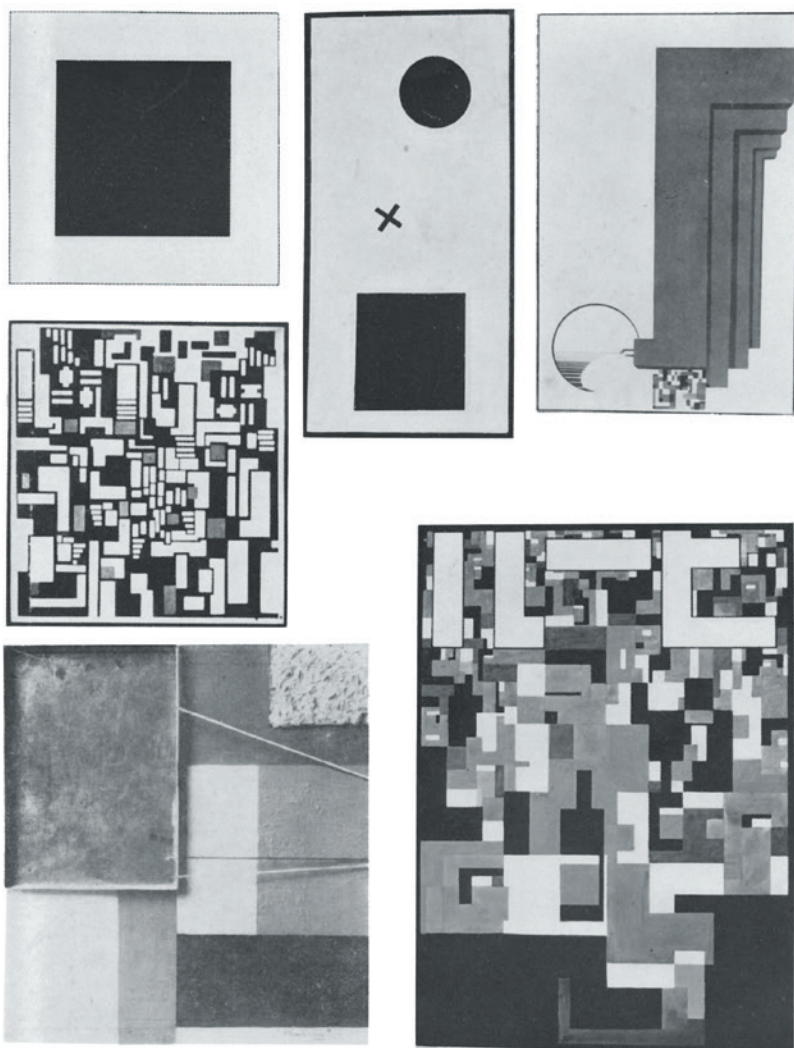
objectives. This signaled a new combination of the spiritual and the materialist. Design would transform a product into a commodity by mediating between the producer and the market, generating image and desire. Commercial art was “that which went beyond pure purpose; it [was] what inspired love and attachment [*aichaku*],” enabling the “spiritual elevation of commerce.”⁸¹

Hamada’s commercial art tended to emphasize production, downplaying consumption as the “bourgeois” component of modern commerce. He claimed that the “main purpose of commerce was to enhance the prosperity and livelihood of the masses.” And “mass production would solve problems by producing only practical, necessary items rather than consumer demand items.”⁸² Yet despite his claims to the contrary, consumption was still the essential flip side of Hamada’s commercial art strategies. It was the implied, and hoped-for, consequence of these techniques. Moreover, it was developments in the consumer market that fueled the expansion of the commercial design field as much as, if not more than, increases in production. This fundamental contradiction remained unreconciled in his writings.

Hamada also gave little serious attention to the issue of a product’s merit or the designer’s possible complicity in creating false need. Instead, he somewhat naively asserted the importance of “sincerity” when promoting a store and its products, warning simply that “deception will be discovered.” Additional slogans such as “move away from profiteering and toward social meaning” are repeated throughout Hamada’s text, showing a heavy reliance on the integrity of the producer and the designer to safeguard the interests of the consumer.⁸³ Yet it is undeniable that the strategies Hamada was championing were often effective precisely because they persuaded consumers to purchase superfluous items.

His final essay clearly illustrates the relationship between commercial art and international art developments. It begins with a series of illustrations showing various modernist and avant-garde works of art. Among each grouping is at least one piece labeled *shōgyō bijutsu*, demonstrating the easy conversion of modernist isms into styles for the commercial realm. The works employ lively abstract compositions, dynamic asymmetry, bold projecting diagonals, strong contrast and effective manipulation of materials, and, despite the mostly black-and-white reproductions in the series, presumably bold color contrasts in the originals, particularly red, black, and white.

In one illustration (figure 1.8), Hamada presents an array of abstract paintings. Two are suprematist works by the Russian artist Kazimir Malevich. Another is by the Dutch De Stijl principal Theo van Doesburg. It includes Murayama Tomoyoshi’s collage construction created as an homage to Van Doesburg. And two designs are by Hamada himself. One is identified as an experimental



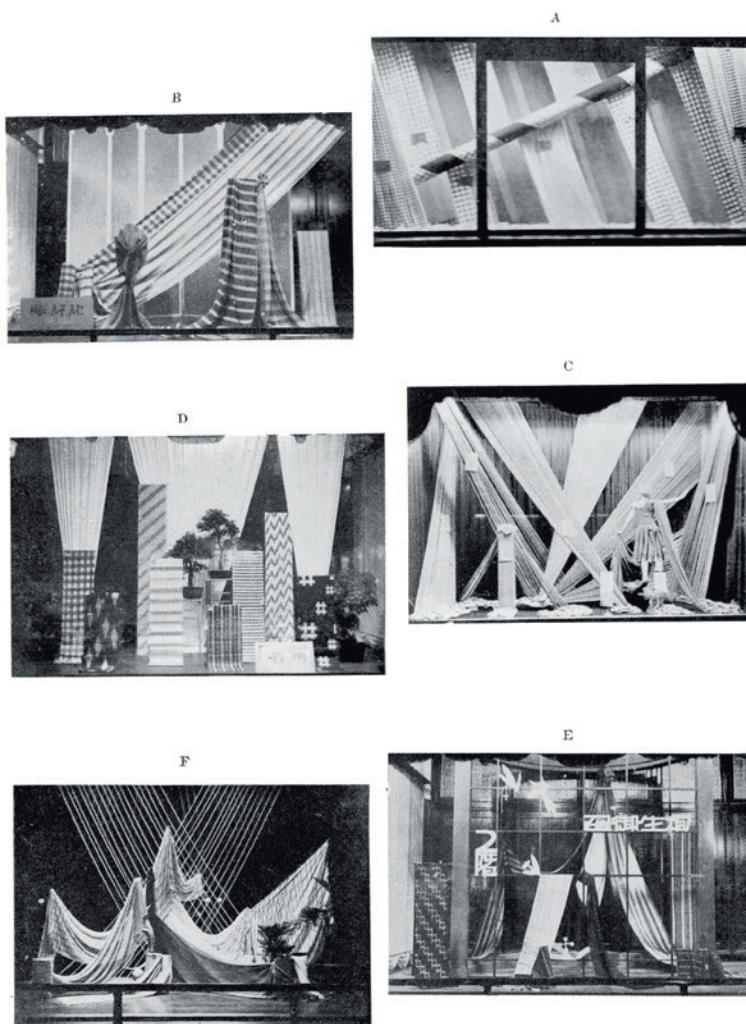
1.8 Abstract paintings and
Hamada Masuji design for a
beer poster (*lower right*).
Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō
bijutsu zenshū*, 24:6

“rational composition” for use in a poster, with no product explicitly mentioned. The other, in the lower right corner, is identified as a design for a beer poster. Mirroring Van Doesburg’s work to the left, Hamada produces a lively decorative backdrop that simultaneously camouflages and reveals the katakana letters for “beer” looming above.⁸⁴ Immediately below one can make out the shape of a bottle and its label and even roughly discern figures seated at tables in a café. The abstract composition subtly discloses its figurative content to the viewer. A leap of imagination is invited. In the numerous other similar comparisons, all styles are shown to have practical design applications.

Some of the most intriguing examples of show windows in the Ars series were those for the display of fabrics, one of the most common commodities advertised at the time (figure 1.9). The material malleability of the fabric enabled a range of visually striking display compositions. Overlapping and juxtaposition created visual texture. Bold diagonal sweeps of material caught the viewer’s eye, carrying it from one side to the other. In certain cases, the fabric almost appeared like shafts of light illuminating a stage or projecting into the sky. Others showed mannequins (referred to as display dolls, *chinretsu ningyō*, or sculpture dolls, *chōkoku ningyō*) draped in cloth that elicited a bodily response by inviting the consumer to imagine herself enveloped by the sensual material. Again, the black-and-white photographs do not do justice to the actual kaleidoscopic color of the displays.

Hamada drew inspiration from modernist art for even the most basic elements of display platforms and props. Designers were concerned with the massing of volumetric forms on the show window stage and the effective use of props for structuring window space. In fact, they likened their window displays to theatrical stage design. This experimentation is documented in many systematic studies and charts of various stepped stage platforms and backdrop organization systems. The systematization of this information in diagrams was invaluable for pedagogical purposes. Moreover, it lent the subjective artistic endeavor of design an air of scientific credibility, as if to imply that through methodical study absolute results could be guaranteed.

Display functioned both inside and outside the store. Designers used street and entrance sales decorations as a temporary prosthetic for the front of a building (figure 1.10). According to Hamada, these structures were designed to pique the curiosity of pedestrians and draw a crowd.⁸⁵ As a gateway to the commodity exposition within, the decorative entrance, whether an arch or a pillar, produced an atmosphere of excitement. But more than any other medium, Hamada noted, consumers trusted photographs. Photographs were reliable and clear, two key components for promoting confidence. A photograph was the next best thing to being able to present the commodity itself. In fact, it



種六美現表るよに領要列陳と情感つ持の品商
 (置装窓列陳の類物種)

1.9 Show window designs
 incorporating fabrics. Kitahara,
Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū, 4:3



1.10 Sales entrance design
mock-up. Kitahara, *Gendai
shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 10:5

was better, because photographs could be manipulated to produce certain visual and emotional responses while maintaining the semblance of unmediated representation.⁸⁶ In the *Ars* series Nakada further explicated the development of avant-garde photography techniques in German advertising design, including photomontage, photograms, and X-ray photographs.⁸⁷ And Kanamaru authored several how-to sections in the same volume that explained the range of photographic technologies and devices currently available. His essays explained the relationship between photography and various printing technologies, the use of airbrushing, the effectiveness of different models and locations, and the use of films in advertising.⁸⁸

The *Ars* series creatively threaded a wide array of new technologies and design styles through a diverse set of commercial advertising modalities. It interspersed these with discussions about the theoretical and cultural implications of advertising design as a new art of daily life that was actively shaping modern society and producing new consumer-subjects. This merging of design and professional advertising would become the mainstay of *Advertising World*.⁸⁹

Advertising World (Kōkokukai)

Right at the time the Commercial Artists Association was forming, the major trade journal *Advertising World* began publication in March 1926.⁹⁰ Published by Seibundō until it ceased in December 1941, it was one of the first professional trade journals devoted to commercial art in the context of the advertising world, providing extensive information on corporate sponsorship and advertising campaigns month by month.⁹¹ Offset printed in color and sold at the comparatively high price point of ¥0.85 per copy, it covered new advertising trends, techniques, and technology (figures 1.11 and 1.12). *Advertising World* provided extensive illustrated examples of current design work discussed by well-known scholars and prominent professional practitioners. From its inaugural issue through April 1935, the journal's chief editor was Murota Kurazō. After he left to become manager of the advertising department at Nakayama Taiyōdō (manufacturer of Club Cosmetics) in Osaka, the editorship shifted to Miyayama Shun (aka Miyayama Takashi; b. 1905).⁹² Murota was not only a prominent editor, a prolific author, and the editor of several advertising dictionaries that codified professional terminology but also an active designer, particularly known for his poster designs for Morinaga and the Osaka Sogo (Sogō) department store café.⁹³

The journal was one of the most important agents mediating international advertising design information for a Japanese readership, frequently excerpting material from fellow trade journals abroad. It also had deep connections to



1.11 Cover of *Advertising World* 9, no. 11 (November 1932). Collection of the author

corporate Japan. In the first issue, Murota credited Calpis president Mishima Kaiun with leading the Japanese design world from advertising design to the age of commercial art. For Japanese professionals in the commercial design field, *Advertising World* was “a bible,” notes media sociologist Namba Kōji.⁹⁴ In contrast to *Affiches* and *The Complete Commercial Artist*, whose readers were fundamentally inclined toward art, *Advertising World* was more targeted at those in the business of advertising, along with researchers and critics. It addressed practical concerns related to the advertising industry. For example, in the July 1929 issue, an article titled “The Undercurrents in News Publishing: Changing from 12 to 13 Columns per Page” discussed the implications of Japanese news agencies converting to a thirteen-column-per-page standard. It argued that the decrease in word size to accommodate more words per page was problematic not only because of legibility but also financially, if papers insisted on charging advertisers the same fees per word for less visibility. The pseudonymous author noted the almost monopolistic dominance of the four

1.12 Cover of *Advertising World* 10, no. 1 (January 1933).
Collection of the author



major news agencies: *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*, *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun*, and Tokyo and Osaka *Asahi shinbun*, whose change in protocol would surely impact smaller news outlets and cause their advertising revenue to decline. The article stressed that the already widespread antipathy toward these major news companies would surely be exacerbated by this change. As Namba observes, this article aptly illustrates the mentality of competitive brinkmanship that existed between advertisers and publishers during this period. *Advertising World* reflected this specialized world of cooperation and competition among advertising practitioners, offering a purported de facto insider's view of the industry for the professional benefit of its readers.⁹⁵

The journal's viewpoint was often critical, reviewing missteps in the field, as seen in pieces like the unsparing "Forty Commandments of Failed Advertisements," which listed a series of unfortunate blunders and their implications. It included advertising plans without an objective, efforts that did not support sales, ads not suitable for the product, ads that were outdated, ads that expected

too much, undertakings that went against the current of the times, things that were overdone or insufficient, ads that indulged in jealous competition, ads for one product within an ad for another, unhealthy ads, overconfidence in the power of advertising, copy open to misunderstandings, selection of the wrong media, forced individuality, impersonal approaches, and so on.⁹⁶ Professionals were rapidly codifying the dos and don'ts of the field with *Advertising World* as their mouthpiece.

It also acted as a watchdog for consumer protection, warning readers about professional scams, particularly during the desperate times of the global Great Depression.

Those posting recruitment information usually exaggerate, “Do an effortless job at home and easily earn 50–100 yen a month! Just pay a little application fee and you will be considered!” Even some big stores post such fake news and profit from convincing the unemployed that a side job is a windfall. These stores will sell the materials and machines to those applying for a side job and ask them to do some manual work at home. However, as expected, the products they make do not sell well due to their low quality. What they earn in return cannot make up for the money they have already paid! . . . To make matters worse, those controlling the fraudulent businesses can further profit by gathering and selling people's information. It is a shame to capitalize on those terribly in need.⁹⁷

“One Hundred Small Advertisements”

Still, despite these dire warnings, the magazine's view of the field was expansive and creative, as well as deeply conscious of fiscal realities. In his essay “One Hundred Small Advertisements,” Murota wrote at length about the new forms of print culture and objects of daily life through which advertising could cost-effectively infiltrate the private or public spheres of consumers.⁹⁸ The emphasis on affordability, and acknowledgment of the limited advertising budgets of many companies, focused the article on smart and effective expenditures. He gave an encyclopedic list of items that could be exploited for publicity, inexpensive things that were still good quality. He urged readers to think beyond the magazine as a media platform, broadening their horizons to the myriad choices available, which he then categorized into six types: stationery, daily necessities, cosmetics, measuring tools, toys, and indoor and outdoor supplies. When categorized by material, such goods could be organized into ten types of products, made of paper, ceramics, celluloid, metal, rubber, textiles, glass, wood,

leather, and miscellaneous. He then highlighted important “don’t miss” opportunities. In effect, every product surface, whether in the consumer’s sight or hands, could potentially be mobilized for promotion.

Among paper products, he started with the unassuming writing blotter, designed to absorb excess ink on both sides, whose usage was expanding in Japan, particularly among students. Blotter producers were increasingly printing advertisements on one side, putting corporate messaging directly in front of the consumer at work, as well as providing visual pleasure. Blotters were sized to accord with the average student notebook. Targeting blotter advertisements to student products was most effective. Similarly, bookmarks were resurging as a popular publicity space featuring images of film stars. Thanks to innovations in gravure printing, bookmarks with pictures were commonly appearing in books and magazines. They were even becoming objects of aesthetic appreciation and fan collectibles among students. Alternatively, stores selling musical instruments were printing popular song lyrics on their sponsored bookmarks. Bookmarks themselves were multifunctional, not limited to marking pages, but also serving as rulers. Calendars, some comprising pages for every day of the year, like blotters sat on desks and tables, offering a daily opportunity to put publicity in front of consumers as they tore off pages. Advertisers were already eagerly aiming their sights on calendars. On the other hand, postcards, he noted, used specifically as direct mail advertising, were not especially popular, as recipients simply threw them away without reading them. Even when advertisers directly delivered their publicity postcards to people’s mailboxes, saving on postage, this was not necessarily an optimal medium. What was more compelling was the current trend of distributing bromide-printed postcards at trendy cafés in popular districts like Ginza. Attractive waitresses directly handed out these postcards, which often featured beautiful film stars, and this increased their allure. As Murota somewhat cheekily notes, “Unlike those you will probably throw away instantly, the postcards you receive while drunk you will keep.”⁹⁹

The exhaustive listing of objects and surfaces is astonishing in its detail and instructive in its vision. Magazine and book packaging with thick and sturdy paper could promote bookstores. Summer fans imprinted with advertising were a seasonal favorite. Book-size paper notebooks that were portable and could be for everyday use or gift giving were practical. Labels with printed names were being distributed by hotels to travelers as souvenirs to stick on their suitcases. Companies, particularly department stores, were using decorative sealing and poster stamps to brand their plain wrapping paper. Small and inconspicuous, stamps were a subtle and persuasive form. And those that sealed were functional as well. Also small-scale and cheap, matchboxes with decorative labels, known as

advertising matches, abounded. Some cafés and restaurants even issued new versions monthly to entice consumers on a regular basis, akin to the serial novels popular in the publishing world. Erotic café images were particularly popular.

Murota then veered into even more esoteric realms: oil-absorbing sheets (a new cosmetic product that was all the rage with women, including traditional apprentice geisha [*maiko*], who wanted to dab the sweat off their faces during the summer) and fragrant papers (pioneered by Lily Cosmetics) were becoming must-have products for summer. Explaining the ease with which one could make a “fragrant” advertisement, he noted that the preparation required only a one- or two-inch bookmark, which could be scented with either heliotrope or cyclamen, and then advertisements could be imprinted on it and wrapped in thin wax paper. It did not require expensive fragrance. At their counters, stores could distribute elegant and fashionable fragrant paper as promotional flyers. Engaging the olfactory senses, this aromatic publicity produced “fragrant” promotional sites of endless possibility. It was a precursor to the latter-day scratch-and-sniff promotional gimmicks that culminated in Odorama motion pictures.

Publicity opportunities came in different shapes and sizes. Department stores distributed bundled sheets of paper soaps wrapped in wax paper as free gifts. Rolled or “tobacco-type” flyers were popular. Companies sponsored auditory promotions that replaced lyrics in well-known songs with slogans. Playing cards keyed printed publicity to the more agreeable red suits of hearts and diamonds and the attractive face cards of kings and queens. Advertisers considered spades and clubs inauspicious. The heart represented love, the diamond fortune, and the king and queen power. Advertisements or fortune-telling images could be printed on the backs of these cards. Such “trump-type” cards worked best in cafés or establishments in the pleasure quarters because waitresses played cards with their customers while helping to advertise the products.

Other miscellaneous printed matter included metric conversion charts that were portable and educational, menus, telephone directories, address books, transportation timetables, school schedules, globe-shaped or cutout cards that could be pasted together to make something three-dimensional, product-shaped flyers, slogan cards, and scorecards for sports, such as those printed on the inside of Morinaga’s “School Lunch” brand biscuits box. After eating the biscuits, the consumer would open and unfold the box to use the scorecard. This paralleled the adaptable Sanseido bookstore flyers, whose front advertised dictionaries and whose back served as a sports scorecard.

Children were a main target for advertising. Morinaga was the leading confectionery company commissioning promotional picture books for children. The company hired White Horse Society painter Okamoto Kiichi, a famous

children's illustrator, to draw silhouette-style images to promote its products in newspaper advertisements. Masks were similarly popular in several market sectors as promotional giveaways, especially when imprinted with the faces of popular film stars. Children were most drawn to masks with cartoon characters. Beverage manufacturer Calpis also invested heavily in masks. And as Murota adds suggestively, it was likely that consumers would encounter advertising masks representing Black boys, or *kuronbō* (a derogatory term akin to *darkie* or Little Black Sambo), at expositions, a nod to Calpis's celebrated blackface poster by German designer Otto Dünkelsbühler (commonly referred to as Otto Dunkel in Japan), discussed in a later chapter.

Fun paper hats with advertising were objects with enduring appeal as toys that parents would not so easily throw away. Steeple-crowned hats were inexpensive and practical on cool days. Morinaga and Meiji, both specializing in snacks, championed small flags with the company logo. Utilizing a wide variety of colors, such small, cute flags became important symbols for companies and worked better for visual promotion than conventional flyers. In addition, the *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* newspaper distributed small flags on special occasions printed with the company's name. Miscellaneous cards could also communicate government public service announcements, such as "watch out for fire" cards (*hi no yōjin kādo*), important reminders for consumers in the flammable cities of Japan.

Murota pointed out the new advertising trend of issuing a corporate house organ enabling companies to reach out directly to their customers. Monthly periodicals kept customers abreast of the newest products. Other paper publicity formats included pamphlets and brochures, product catalogs, advance admission tickets to events and films (discount coupons), mailing envelopes, receipts issued by the newly appearing cash registers (which could be saved as discount coupons), bus maps and guidebooks, and promotions using *aburadashi* magic ink that appeared when heated, a gimmick that never failed to arouse curiosity and wonder about the hidden information. Paper balloons, napkins, and place mats were also effective ways to connect products with social dining.

As for ceramic products, there were ashtrays of all kinds. Ashtrays with tobacco advertisements were common abroad where the concession was not a government monopoly. In Japan, when the landmark commercial Marunouchi Building (popularly known as the Maru Biru) opened, the owners issued a miniature building-shaped promotional ashtray. When Tokyo Electric launched its Mazda brand light bulbs, it also introduced a light-bulb-shaped ashtray. As a creative, functional, sculptural mode of publicity, ashtrays, mainly manufactured by Oriental Ceramics (Tōyō Tōgei, today's Toto), were sold at between ¥0.20 and ¥0.50 along with kitchen utensils to cafés and restaurants, showing up at

popular establishments in the Ginza district. When majolica pottery came to prominence in Japan, majolica pen trays were everywhere. News agencies, banks, and insurance companies, among others, would use their monogrammed pen trays as calling cards. Soon after, cheaper substitutes—made of glass and enamel—became more prevalent. Teacups, sake bottles, cups, and chopstick stands with company names imprinted on their surfaces were some of the most commonly seen ceramic products. These were followed by extensive lists of products in all the other materials, culminating in miscellaneous objects.

Murota ends his colossal list with the modest and somewhat incongruous bathroom deodorizer, because, as he states, “the bathroom is not only an essential place, but also an inspirational one.” And as legend had it, he reminds readers, Shimazu Nariakira, the highly regarded feudal lord of Satsuma domain who proposed the original idea for the design of Japan’s national flag, got his inspiration in the bathroom. The deodorizer was the perfect means by which to inspire the consumer because no one could tolerate a malodorous bathroom. It was particularly appropriate for advertising pharmacies and related products. Like many of the objects he discussed, deodorizers, Murota argued, could actively connect consumers and advertisers in intimate and private spaces, infiltrating daily life in its most mundane dominions. He then signed off from this list with a solicitation: “If there is any other object that can potentially serve as an advertisement, please kindly let us know and we will introduce it.”¹⁰⁰

Reference, Networks, and Gossip

Advertising World readers particularly valued the magazine’s abundant reference pages with extensive illustrations of original advertising design and copy. Commercial artists adopted these models with impunity, a practice that was considered a legitimate mode of apprenticeship for assimilating professional knowledge and current design standards. This practice built on centuries of copying from pattern books and proprietary design books as the bedrock of artistic training in Japan.¹⁰¹ The journal’s role as sourcebook was especially valuable for seasonal promotions, as each new season required refreshing, and the issues were keyed to this constant cycle, including holiday sales. The two Japanese traditional gift-giving occasions to express thanks at midyear in the summer (Ochūgen) and at the end of the year in December (Oseibo) were reflected in the July and December issues respectively. Traditional holidays like New Year were interspersed with newly imported ones like Christmas. Each special issue offered a rich assortment of appropriately festive decorations for publicizing seasonal sales and tied into the social practices of gift giving, which benefited

commercial interests. Major national events, such as the inauguration of the new Showa emperor, or “Go-Taiten,” in 1928, similarly generated special issues. The accession ceremony was a major stimulus for publicity, inspiring commemorative show windows at a range of businesses and a parade of floats that traveled through the capital.¹⁰² Trade publications helped manufacturers and retailers keep their publicity current and stylish in a competitive modern marketplace increasingly saturated with commodities.

As a professional networking tool, *Advertising World* periodically listed national directories of advertising designers and specialists (*meikan*) with their portraits, addresses, areas of expertise, the school where they received their design training, teachers, degrees, and publications.¹⁰³ This included an expanded professional field of specialists working for printing companies, magazines, and retailers, particularly department stores. It also published the informational series “Alphabetical Advertising People Patrol” providing longer profiles of practitioners in alphabetical order. The magazine announced new hires and profiled newcomers, while still dedicating substantial space to veterans.¹⁰⁴ The journal also played a key role in unifying the field across the country, forging national connections by reporting on the important commercial cities in the western Kansai region.¹⁰⁵

Reader-response columns and detailed coverage of industry gossip addressed emerging trends, factions within the design community, and even notable deaths. Such gossip extended to information about major design competitions at home and abroad along with prizewinners. A typical column from May 1929 expounded on international partnerships such as recent advertisements by General Motors and Paramount in Japan, while noting that the American advertising giant Douglas Leigh had just arrived in Tokyo and boldly claimed, to everyone’s irritation, that Japanese advertising was inferior. Many in Japan, they reported, construed Leigh’s behavior as condescending and indicative of the power imbalance between the two nations. The column criticized the excessive Japanese concern with novelty and uncritical acceptance of American design models, culminating in a bigoted diatribe: “We are in the times when greasy Chinese food has also been Americanized into Chop Suey. Really, do you like Chinese food?”

The column announced two new important technological developments that were impacting the design sphere: aviation and robots. The age of aviation was transforming advertising communications through airmail and aerial publicity. Soon there would be smoke writing in the sky, they predicted. At the same time, scientist Nishimura Makoto (1883–1956), an outspoken advocate for Japanese robotics, had recently displayed his invented robots at the Kyoto

and Hiroshima Great Showa Expositions. Even though the robots were artificial, observers swore that they seemed like they were actually breathing. Regarding these as a clear sign of modernity's turn toward the futuristic world of the film *Metropolis*, the commentators noted that it was only a matter of time before advertising robots appeared.

Gossip commentary included reports on cinema studios Shochiku's and Nikkatsu's lively advertising for the Japanese film industry. The authors lauded the appearance of mannequins in Japanese displays, particularly department stores. But they also cautioned companies to avoid imitating Western mannequins. Last, they announced the appearance of the Ars compendium, *The Complete Commercial Artist*, sardonically criticizing its indiscriminate coverage and Euro-American focus, writing that it "literally covers everything, even piss, and it is slightly white, Western-stinking piss ["stinking of butter" or *bata kusai*, a derogatory Japanese term for something overly Westernized]." "It is absolutely piss," the column exclaimed. "For that reason, because it is piss that comes from across the ocean, it should be called *Manneken Pis* [referring to the Dutch bronze fountain in Brussels with a statue of a boy peeing water]." ¹⁰⁶ From catty personal attacks to belligerent national commentary, the gossip sections made no bones about being partisan. They intimately reveal the underside of the developing profession and its contentious stakes. A window into the collective psyche of the field, *Advertising World's* editorial inner monologue was laid bare for all to read.

Global Advertising and Local Education

Despite criticizing others' efforts as overly reliant on international design and underrepresenting local work, *Advertising World* served as the most important mediating bridge connecting Japan to the broader world of global advertising. The editors were dedicated to keeping Japanese readers abreast of what was happening overseas via sections such as "Snap of the World," "Advertising World Overseas," and "Overseas Advertising News." Writing in January 1930, Murota penned the essay "How Does the 1930s Advertising World Work?" assessing global stylistic trends in poster design ranging from expressionism to constructivism and surrealism. ¹⁰⁷ A few years later, in May 1933, a translated article reported on a recent exhibition of British advertising and sales, featuring an editorial that introduced that country's creative campaigns and new production techniques. ¹⁰⁸ Of course, it was de rigueur to cover the Bauhaus and its diasporic offshoots, particularly how such artists were reenvisioning advertising design as a form of public education. Translating a quote from Herbert

Bayer, one article stated, “It is worth penetrating the essence of design and understanding what we want to create. In this way, design is not just for the purpose of design; design itself becomes part and parcel of the product. By looking at design, we may comprehend the product as well.”¹⁰⁹ Bayer’s process of reverse extrapolation using design as a critical lens through which to imagine and instantiate the product rather than conceiving of the product as a distinct thing with inherent qualities that simply focused the designer’s work powerfully foregrounded commercial art in a new way. Design now became part of the product as the two merged to create a new entity that superseded both.

Advertising was also an art of the future. Keeping up with new technologies in the field was a critical role for the journal. For example, it published a special issue on neon signs, an advertising medium developed in France and popularized in the United States in the 1920s, printing a transcript of Japan’s first professional roundtable on this subject.¹¹⁰ Glass signboards were also featured. Other articles spotlighted the advertising tie-ins related to the intercontinental passenger travel of the famous Berlin *Graf Zeppelin*, which visited Japan in 1929.¹¹¹ Show window mannequin designs were perennial favorites. Their equally popular living counterparts, “mannequin girls,” were even reported to be forming their own professional organization, the Japan Mannequin Club (Nihon Manekin Kurabu).¹¹²

In January 1931, Nagaoka Itsurō’s “The World of Advertising in 100 Years” rhapsodized about a futuristic scenario based on the author’s experience at the 1927 London Advertising Exhibition:

Just like the science fiction of H. G. Wells, the world of advertising in 2030 will be as dazzling as you could possibly imagine. . . . By 2030, television will be popular all over the world and people will all be dressed in uniforms. Attached to the ear and the shoulder will be a television set made of light metal through which you can view all the channels. The audio device in the set will allow you to hear sound as well. You turn on the television, and a New York prima donna is giving a wonderful performance, wearing a hairstyle millions of girls will desire. . . . Cities become sleepless because of the light that is never turned off and taxis race on the elevated roads.¹¹³

Less than a year later, in September, the magazine announced the inauguration of television broadcasting by the De Forest Radio Company in the United States, heralding a new era of broadcast advertising. Excited by new publicity techniques in the United States, they boasted, “Advertising in the United States has made its way all the way up to the air, and now you can find advertisements

even on airplanes. . . . With electric power equal to four billion candles, advertisements are projected onto skyscrapers and clouds in New York City.”¹¹⁴

Advertising World contributed greatly to the profitability and expansion of the advertising field in Japan. Namba notes that in 1925 advertising firm Dentsu's total monthly revenue for May from sales of publicity space was ¥830,000, but ten years later, in 1935, the total revenue for the same month was ¥1,180,000. Even during this age of turmoil, the advertising industry was still growing steadily, and *Advertising World* was playing a pivotal role. From 1935 to 1937, the magazine published its biggest issues. However, authors also expressed concerns about the monopolistic tendencies of the larger Japanese agencies, which were stifling competition.¹¹⁵

Education was at the core of the magazine's mission. Regular series offering practical courses on advertising defined the parameters of the field, starting with its very definition and function. Under the English header “Truth in Advertising,” the magazine launched a series in 1931 to lay out the basics. It began, “What we now call ‘advertising’ [*kōkoku*] is an English word with roots in the Latin term ‘*advert [ere]*’ meaning to attract attention [*chūi o hiku*].”¹¹⁶ Thus, attracting the consumer's attention was one of advertising's main goals. Promotion and good design should always attract attention in some way. This was not, however, what advertising was all about. It should also be designed to increase sales. And while it certainly served the purpose of informing the consumer public, its ultimate objective was to sell goods.

The article detailed the multifaceted nature of advertising and its proliferation in different forms over history. As a cultural medium, it was as old as human civilization, noted the author, and its historical evolution started with stone inscriptions that evolved into pictorial signboards in earlier periods of limited literacy. But the larger question remained, Why make advertising? While local stores with reputations might be able to rely on a regular client base, the national expansion of business necessitated advertising to introduce products where they were not known. The article described the present moment as characterized by a “bombardment of commodities,” each tailored to a specific group. With more choices than ever, customers were becoming shrewder and accustomed to comparison shopping. Therefore, without advertising, it was increasingly difficult for brands to stand out.

Structured as a lesson, the article further explained the four-part composition of the modern economic machine: production, marketing, distribution, and consumption. A simple graph visualized this organizational structure, under the supervision of a general manager, with an emphasis on marketing, subdivided into advertising and “word of mouth.” According to the *Advertising*

World author, “A good business cycle depends on rational production and consumption, both of which determine sales. Today, in particular, marketing plays an expanding role. Given so many choices, customers are always looking for something new. Gone are the days when quality was the one and only determining factor. Never before have we lived in such an age when producers vie for the newest technologies, designers crave the most attractive advertisements, and businessmen introduce the most advanced business practices. It is under such circumstances that we are able to see economic prosperity.”¹¹⁷

Effective distribution, the article asserted, required field research to determine target consumers and markets. Advertising could help producers reach across geographic boundaries. As long as there was market competition with new goods and inventive copy, advertising would play a pivotal role in ensuring brand success. According to the author, the essence of advertising was encapsulated by the saying “You won’t want what you don’t know.” In sum, the relationship among producers, retailers, and customers was not mechanical or fixed but fluid and dynamic, requiring flexible, creative individuals to man the helm.¹¹⁸

Japanese Roots: Prints and Trademarks

Many creative individuals contributed to *Advertising World*. One of them was Professor Miyashita Takao, another influential interlocutor who served as a nexus of the design community. For Miyashita and many others, education included preserving those traditional modes of artistic production that were distinctly Japanese and still valuable for advertising media, specifically printmaking. He wrote a series on the relationship between print media and modern advertising, praising the merits of this long-standing visual tradition in Japan. “Living in an age of mechanical reproduction when exquisite photography abounds,” he mused, “I find myself even more attracted to the mastery of hand-created printmaking.” Resuscitating printmaking (woodcut and linocut), according to Miyashita, could help contemporary commercial designers produce in an “artful manner.”¹¹⁹

Linocuts, for example, conveyed a kind of “childish” affect that countered the mass-produced quality of photography. “Be it woodcut or lithograph, relief print or intaglio,” he wrote, “the gem of printmaking lies in the artist’s craftsmanship. You can appreciate how much effort the artist has made even from a single stroke. Today, the technology that makes reproduction possible is also being applied to printmaking. Machines quickly replicate the original version as the template, and mass-produce it in the form of photography.”¹²⁰ Printmaking could reach larger audiences through mechanical reproduction but should

not succumb to the modern technology of the “capitalist machine,” losing its artistic value. Whether it was the printmaking culture in Normandy, the peasant prints of Strasbourg, the traditional illustrated calendar in southern France, or even pictorial talismans in Japan, printmaking was a form of art production rooted in vernacular culture that instantiated a societal bond that could not easily be converted into mass-produced commercial art. However, he noted, the profit-craving economy now coveted printmaking’s splendid qualities. And recent advertisements in the United States had started to show a preference for advertising as artistic expression rather than simply a mode of commercialism. Noting a rapid transformation of commercial art into a profit-driven game, Miyashita lauded those artists who were still unswervingly loyal to their art careers. For him, they treated art with conscience and fought for its value. Their work was a new kind of public art, characterized by functionality and amenability to the rhythm of the times.¹²¹

One of the designers who most exemplified the mission to keep printmaking relevant, advocating for its artistic expressive possibilities in commercial art, was Okuyama Gihachirō (1907–1981), who also wrote regularly for *Advertising World*, whimsically signing his name “ㄗ8.” He championed professional “advertising prints” together with Tada Hokuu and worked in the advertising division of Nippon Keori, commonly known as Nikke, a manufacturer of woolen clothing located in the prominent Maru Biru. He was widely celebrated among his contemporaries for his distinctive woodcut style of graphic design, which he also translated into animated show windows and other modes of publicity. He was also one of the Japanese designers whose work was featured abroad in the British journal *Commercial Art*.¹²² Many design historians consider him one of the great individualist artist-designers of the early twentieth century in Japan.¹²³

Nagaoka Itsurō profiled Okuyama in *Advertising World* under the title “Originality Born of the Chisel,” crediting the artist’s Nikke showroom designs with making the Maru Biru famous. Okuyama was only twenty-three at the time. Nagaoka described the designer’s style as easy to apprehend, visceral, and immediate and declared that the Nikke showroom looked like “a Yap Island Museum,” referring to one of the South Pacific islands, a Japanese colonial protectorate in Micronesia, implying that Okuyama was wild like the island natives. He was, in other words, a modern-day primitive. His “peculiar style,” Nagaoka explained, was like a “flood” (*hanran*) from the corner of the building out to the citizens on the street, infusing them with energy.¹²⁴

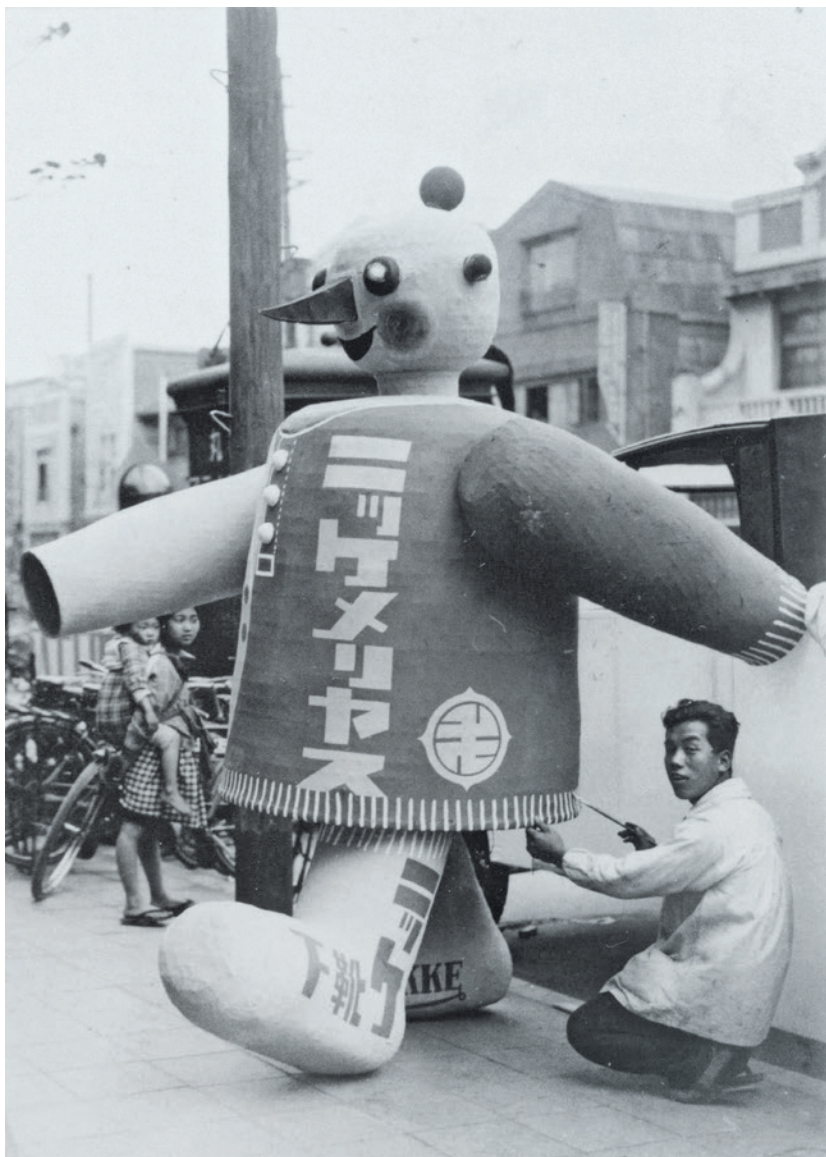
For Nikke, Okuyama created the company’s iconic mascot “dekobō” (best translated as “beetle-browed boy,” which also connoted mischief), a cute and whimsical promotional character pictured as a young boy with a large round

1.13 Okuyama Gihachirō,
poster for Nikke suits and
overcoats, 1935. Matsudo City
Board of Education



head, a carrot-like nose akin to a snowman's, a wool cap, a wool sweater, and oversize wool socks on enlarged feet (figure 1.13). The character came to life on paper and in three-dimensional displays—an animated salesman on whose body the commodity also came to life (figure 1.14).¹²⁵ His distinctive woolen clothes tied him to the Nikke brand and its products. For over a decade from 1928, Okuyama did graphic designs and show window displays for the company with a distinctive printmaking aesthetic. Also, he was an active crossover member of the Creative Prints movement and imbued his work with a strong modernist twist. Like many other private corporations during this time, Nikke supported both art and design, maintaining a gallery within its Marunouchi showroom where Okuyama and others exhibited their work.

The chief of Nikke's showroom, Mizuta Toshio, urged the design community in *Advertising World* to invest in “active advertising” (*sekkyokuteki senden*) to reverse the course of the Great Depression rather than spouting doom and



1.14 Okuyama Gihachirō,
Nikke *dekokobō* character,
1930. Matsudo City Board
of Education

gloom. Bright colors and humorous motifs would lift the gray pall that had descended over people's minds. This would make any company stand out. Presenting photographic illustrations of Nikke's vibrant storefront advertising kiosks, live mannequin revues captured on film, bus station billboards and hanging leaflets, outsize beach tents at the Kamakura seaside, and company-brand swimsuits, he demonstrated new approaches that took advantage of current Japanese fads like beach swimming for fueling consumption. Such leisure activities were also tied into popular commercial film releases. In each mode illustrated, Okuyama's signature chunky logotypes in katakana and romanized letters and his boldly drawn female swimmers vividly leaped off the surface.¹²⁶ Spotlights in *Advertising World* in August 1938, his iconic poster for Nikke bathing suits (figure 1.15), featuring a vigorous leaping female swimmer with long, flowing hair set against a blue ocean with an enigmatically floating classical column, elegantly combined modernist printmaking with surrealist aesthetics to emphasize the new healthy body of modernity wearing Nikke apparel.¹²⁷

A frequent contributor to various design trade journals, Okuyama wrote regular essays for *Advertising World* on printmaking, such as "Theories of Advertising Woodblock Prints" in 1939.¹²⁸ Opening with the header "Japan the Country of Woodblock Printing," he pointed to the global recognition of prints as works of art and Japan's top position as a cultural contributor in terms of both technique and long-standing admiration for the medium. Foreigners had been the first to recognize Japanese prints as fine art, and Okuyama rebuked the Japanese for not properly valuing the artistic achievements of their own domestic traditions. Rather, the high level of these practical works was because the Japanese aestheticized all aspects of their daily lives, including ceramics, lacquerware, textiles, furniture, and so on. Even when they did not have a single "artist," the Japanese, he argued, had creative producers whose skill exceeded that of current professional art masters. Detailing all the ways in which woodblock prints had already been intrinsically embedded into the popular publicity of their times, such as the *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world) representations of famous actors from Kabuki, he then chronicled their descent into neglect and oblivion with Westernization. By no means suggesting a return to the Edo period, however, he instead advocated for the creation of a fresh status for printmaking as a special kind of "new art" that was imbued with Japanese color, taste, and new life but inherently practical and connected to industrial print enterprises without losing any of its artistic value. Understanding Japan's print culture of the past when working in the present was, in his words, "a national obligation" (*kokuminteki gimu*) and "an ethnic obligation" (*minzoku no gimu*). It was the embodiment of Yamato—Japanese native—spirit.¹²⁹

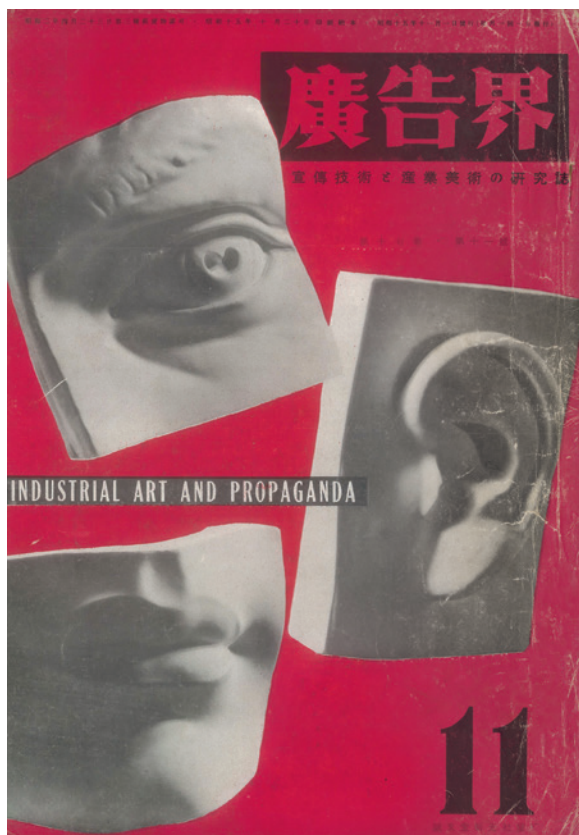


1.15 Okuyama Gihachirō,
poster for Nikke bathing suits,
1938. Kyoto Institute of
Technology Museum and
Archives

Similarly endorsing the relevance of printmaking aesthetics for modern design, Miyashita had concluded that the current generation was on the verge of ushering in a brand-new world where modern technology and traditional art could coexist. Only when both worked together could contemporary dilemmas be solved.¹³⁰ This applied to other forms of design as well. One area where the traditional and the modern coexisted or flowed into each other was trademarks. Many Japanese trademarks dated back centuries. But a group of artists in *Gebrauchsgraphik*, led by Professor Ernst Böhm and Karl Schulpig, among others, was examining the significance of trademarks within the context of modern design. This prompted a domestic reexamination of Japanese trademarks. Well-designed trademarks could offer helpful information to consumers about the company's main products or values while also providing visual pleasure. One *Advertising World* article provided an annotated and illustrated list of well-known examples. It explained that the encircled character 大 (*dai*) for Daimaru department store, for instance, dated back to the dry goods store Daimonjiya, established in Kyoto in 1717. The *maru*, or circle, was an enigma. "A circle has the capacity to incorporate anything, even the whole universe. Like Pi or an eon, it has no limits. 'Dai' means big and/or great in Japanese. Therefore, 'Daimaru' indicates the founder's desire to establish a great [and unlimited] business as well as become a great businessman."¹³¹

Newer companies, like the publishing firm Shufu no Tomosha (publisher of the popular journal *Housewife's Companion* (*Shufu no tomo*)), sought public input on creating a new trademark, holding a prize contest in 1919. The chosen design, according to the article, won because it was simple and clear, illustrated the company spirit, and used the motif of the torch as a metaphor for the company's mission to enlighten women, with the torch taking the shape of the character *shu* (主) from *shufu* (housewife). Similarly, the trademark for the popular brand Club Cosmetics clearly illustrated its mission and ideals. The use of the cherry blossom (*sakura*) motif, the Japanese national flower, indicated the company's dedication to domestically produced cosmetics in contrast to the many imported goods in the market. The two women depicted in the trademark represented modern girls who possessed both beauty and intelligence. The viola flowers suggested the delicacy of Japanese women more generally. In short, Club Cosmetics offered domestic cosmetics of excellent quality, and its trademark communicated the company's unwavering commitment to illuminating the unique physical and intellectual beauty of Japanese women.¹³²

This emphasis on identifying, reviving, celebrating, and sometimes even inventing Japanese traditional modes of cultural production became stronger as Japan entered the war years after 1937. Nationalistic and militaristic themes



1.16 Cover of *Advertising World* 17, no. 11 (November 1940). Sankō Library

began to take precedence. With the times, *Advertising World* markedly shifted its focus from publicity to propaganda (figure 1.16), reflecting the new demands for promoting nation and empire in a war theater where countries were vying for global dominance. This prompted commercial interests to align even more with governmental concerns and put decades of carefully honed professional design expertise in the service of the state.

As Hamada wrote, “The real beauty of art is found in our surroundings, in our daily life—in produced objects and practical goods.”¹³³ This adulation of the utilitarian nature of industrialism was mixed with a utopian vision that aimed to reach a mass audience. It questioned the recondite premises of art for art’s sake, searching for a new form of applicability, because in his words, if “beauty in art is to be esteemed, it must speak to everyone. It is assumed that to appreciate art one must be educated and cultivate knowledge. But does beauty need to be difficult to understand?”¹³⁴

In arguing for the systematic application of visual art techniques in commercial art, Japanese design critics like Hamada helped forge the new category of artistic production labeled commercial art and design, which imbued art with a purpose and aestheticized commerce. Seeking to influence consumers by visually manipulating their perception of goods, daily life, and even the urban environment, they attributed to commercial art the potential for promoting social change through innovative forms and new functions. Trade journals and design compendiums together with the burgeoning commercial publications on design served as invaluable tools for disseminating these new conceptions of design. They also publicized the names of individual designers still generally behind the scenes.

Design entrepreneurs spearheaded a movement to construct a new social status for the field, legitimating commercial art as a significant area of artistic practice. This in fact marked a convergence of concerns between modern designers and fine artists around the world. Artists active in the “new art movement” in Japan and various avant-garde groups abroad were increasingly seeking to incorporate a more productivist perspective into the realm of fine arts to make their work more applicable to the conditions of daily life, while those in the commercial art sphere sought to aestheticize their production—raising its quality—by applying modernist visual techniques to everyday design. The abundance of publications on various areas of design practice, the explosion of design study groups, and the establishment of educational programs in design as independent institutions or within fine art academies by the early 1930s greatly reinforced the importance of this area of artistic production in the Japanese art world. Moreover, the Ministry of Education’s incorporation of a crafts (or industrial arts) section into its official annual salon in 1927 was an important step in elevating this growing field in the academy and the public eye. Finally, the active participation of designers in state initiatives from clothing reform to propaganda production promoted them to an advisory level equivalent to other members of the cultural intelligentsia. This process of legitimation spanned the war, ultimately coming to fruition in the postwar period and reaching its summit in 1964 at the design megaevent of the Tokyo Olympics.

2



Visible Language + the Art of Letterforms

Beautiful typography is the most effective way of promoting the worth of a commodity.

—TAKEDA GOICHI, *General Survey of Design Letters* (1926)

Typographic design, the art of arranging and styling the appearance and printing of type, is a visual mode of communication that functions on an aesthetic metalevel. Distinct from text and content but intrinsically allied with them, the visible language of letterforms can also mark different subjectivities and ideological beliefs. Building on expressive native calligraphic traditions and a rich commercial print culture, modern Japanese advertising designers rapidly expanded their lettering lexicon from the late nineteenth century as they encountered Western typefaces and international professional editorial design techniques. In this chapter I explore the emergence of modern Japanese lettering and typographic design as they were developed in tandem with the professional sphere



of advertising. Through close analysis of selected examples of Japanese scripts and types in specific promotional contexts, I illuminate the multilayered and effective mode of visual communication constructed through printed text.¹ The examples range from logotype designs to mass media print publicity. Some are attributed, and others are anonymous. They are sober and whimsical. Employing the distinctive historical, grammatical, morphological, and aesthetic aspects of the Japanese language, designers have been able to create a powerful visible language that has been instrumental in defining product and corporate, as well as cultural and national, identities in modern Japanese visual culture.

Debates on Language

The Japanese written language is a distinct amalgam of Chinese-derived logo/ideographic characters (kanji), native syllabaries (kana; hiragana and katakana), and romanized letters (*rōmaji*) and numbers, offering designers an unparalleled range of expressive possibilities. The semantic evolution of Japanese is the result of centuries of highly mediated, transcultural interaction with other Asian and Western languages. The original derivation of the Japanese written script from ancient Chinese, the development of two complementary phonetic syllabaries to accommodate the distinct polysyllabic and inflected nature of spoken Japanese, and the introduction of Western words and alphanumeric writing systems to Japan are well-known facts. Less well known, however, are the Japanese debates on language reform in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which are equally critical to understanding the development of written language in the modern period. Standardization, legibility, and access were pressing concerns for both politicians and commercial entrepreneurs in Japan's rapidly emerging national public culture. As renowned designer and type aficionado Hara Hiromu (1903–1986) is quoted as saying, “Before the problem of scripts, the problem of national letters [*kokuji*] is an enormous wall that stands in our way.”² Contentious debates over what should constitute a national written language, which bear witness to the immense social and political significance of visible language, formed the ideological backdrop to the development of modern letterforms. These debates, while unresolved, merit discussion as a preface to an analysis of specific design programs.

Written language, according to the design critics Matsuoka Seigō and Koga Hiroyuki, inherently constitutes the *écriture*, or writing, of culture, as an evolving written language instantiates living culture.³ Thus, the hybridization of the Japanese language signifies the process of Japan's transculturation. The dialectical relationship between Japan and China and, later, the relation-

ships constructed between Japan and its Others (“Asia” and “the West”) are thus encoded in the linguistic character of the language. Japan’s experience of modernization and modernity had a profound impact on the heavily kanji-based writing system as the country reckoned with new social and cultural forces as well as the incipient nationalism of its newly created nation-state. Kanji became the focus of intense debate among so-called cultural reformers, whose proposals ranged widely, from character simplification to complete abolition. Believing themselves devoted nationalists, all sides defended their objectives for the good of the nation. Concerned primarily with issues of access and the democratization of the media, prominent newspaper editors like Hara Takashi (1856–1921) at the *Ōsaka asahi shinbun*, later prime minister, were staunch public advocates of the reduction of the basic kanji character set, the adoption of less complicated orthography, and the use of a more colloquial written style employing fewer Sino-Japanese words.⁴ They were joined by a broad array of public figures, from linguists to politicians, who felt strongly about the need to standardize and simplify written characters (as well as the phonetic syllabaries) for easier recognition and legibility, which, it was hoped, would also greatly ease the burden on commercial typesetters. Unlike their Western counterparts, who had only the alphabet and numbers with which to contend, Japanese typesetters routinely had to deal with thousands of characters for a single publication.

More extreme views also came to the fore during this period: Maejima Hisoka (1835–1919), the father of the modern Japanese postal service, argued that the national letters should be the phonetic kana, which would serve as Japan’s alphabet, and that kanji should be entirely abolished. The actor and politician Sue-matsu Kenchō (1855–1920) went even further, suggesting that katakana alone should be Japan’s primary script, printed horizontally in the manner of Western texts. Prominent business leaders, including Morishita Hiroshi (1869–1943), president of the well-known company that manufactured the Jintan medicinal candy and breath freshener, a leader in the field of Japanese advertising with the number-one brand in the country, formed the Phonetic Syllabary Script Association (Kana Moji Kai) to pursue this mode of language reform, believing it to be a critical means of internationalization. Members of the group viewed kanji as a direct obstacle to Japan’s full entry into an international world order of modern nations. As radical as this proposition may sound, it bears keeping in mind that Korean nationalists at about the same time accomplished a similar eradication of kanji, adopting the hangul alphabet as the official national writing system.⁵

Other prominent Japanese intellectuals countered the kana advocates with the proposal that romanized letters should be Japan’s national written language

and established such groups as the Roman Letters Association (Rōmaji Kyōkai) to study the matter. Developing many *rōmaji* types and scripts, this group included famous novelists and poets like Natsume Sōseki (1867–1916) and Kitahara Hakushū (1885–1942), who lent considerable cultural legitimacy to its activities. Many years later it was discovered that the poet Ishikawa Takuboku (1886–1912) even kept his personal diary in *rōmaji*.⁶ Their increasingly strong aversion to the gap between spoken and written Japanese fueled these activities, precipitating the “unity of spoken and written language movement” (*genbun itchi undō*), which eventually led to the widespread adoption of vernacular Japanese in modern literature and many other print media.

Japan’s first minister of education, Mori Arinori (1847–1889), submitted an even more extreme proposal than the abandonment of kanji. He suggested that English be adopted as the primary language of Japan, going so far as to consult with American linguists to develop a simplified form of English to serve as Japan’s national language. There was strong resistance to all these drastic reform proposals. Kanji preservationists prevailed, hampering what even the most moderate thinkers felt was an imperative for some degree of character reform.⁷ What remained was a highly charged, decidedly unstandardized, multivalent linguistic field.

Type Design and Lettering

Japan did not widely adopt movable type until the late nineteenth century despite its repeated introduction from China, Korea, and Europe over many centuries. This was due to the high cost and relative inconvenience of casting individual types for thousands of characters. Most of the printing in Japan was hand carved on woodblocks. *Minchō* (literally, Ming dynasty) was, and remains, one of the classic typefaces in Asia. As the name indicates, it was widely used in China during the Ming dynasty, an age of widespread printing with movable type. Motoki Shōzō (1824–1875), pioneer of movable type in Japan, developed Chinese *minchō* into a Japanese typeface, a highly regular and balanced type that is characterized by thick vertical and thin horizontal lines. One of its distinctive features is the inclusion of small triangular decorative flourishes at the ends of horizontal lines, called *uroko* (literally, fish scales), which simulate the ends of brushstrokes in regular script calligraphy (*kaisho*). These parallel the use of serifs, small decorative embellishments on letters in Western typography. *Minchō* has been in continuous use since its creation, and multiple variants, such as narrow and bold versions, have appeared over the years.⁸ Staunch supporters of *minchō* have even made efforts to install it as a national script to

the exclusion of all others. Design historian Kawahata Naomichi has likened this move to racialized cultural campaigns under the German National Socialists, who initially adopted the Fraktur typeface for official publications, imbuing it with the Germanic national qualities that supposedly characterized the Third Reich, while at the same time prohibiting the use of other, ostensibly less “German” types.⁹ Even in this age of seemingly limitless digital fonts, *minchō* is often still the standard default font setting in most Japanese word processing software and defines the visual character of much of Japanese printed text.

Because of the difficulty and expense of developing type, as well as the inability of type to simulate adequately the dynamism of calligraphy, the majority of innovative and expressive letterform designs in Japan, until the inauguration of digital fonts in the computer age, have been hand-designed printed lettering rather than actual cast typefaces, what Kawahata has termed *kakimoji*.¹⁰ During the 1920s, the heyday of commercial design studies in prewar Japan, lettering designer Fujiwara Taichi (active 1920s–1930s), who worked for a brief period designing advertising for Morishita Hiroshi’s breath freshener Jintan in Osaka, coined the new term *design letters* or *design characters* (*zuan moji*) to denote expressive hand-drawn letterforms.¹¹ Sugiura Hisui wrote about the “designification of the letter” (*jitai no zuanka*).¹² In the introduction to the 1926 compendium *General Survey of Design Letters* (*Zuan moji taikan*), edited by graphic designer Yajima Shūichi, Tokyo Imperial University (Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku) professor Takeda Goichi (1872–1938) called for “new letterforms to fit modern commodities,” stating that “beautiful typography is the most effective way of promoting the worth of a commodity.”¹³ Eye-catching letterforms were already crucial to visual communication in the Tokugawa period, and modern design proponents sought to expand and diversify these expressive possibilities to encourage increased consumption of new products.¹⁴ In the process they reinforced the important role of the designer as a creative mediator in communicating product identity to an expanding consumer public.

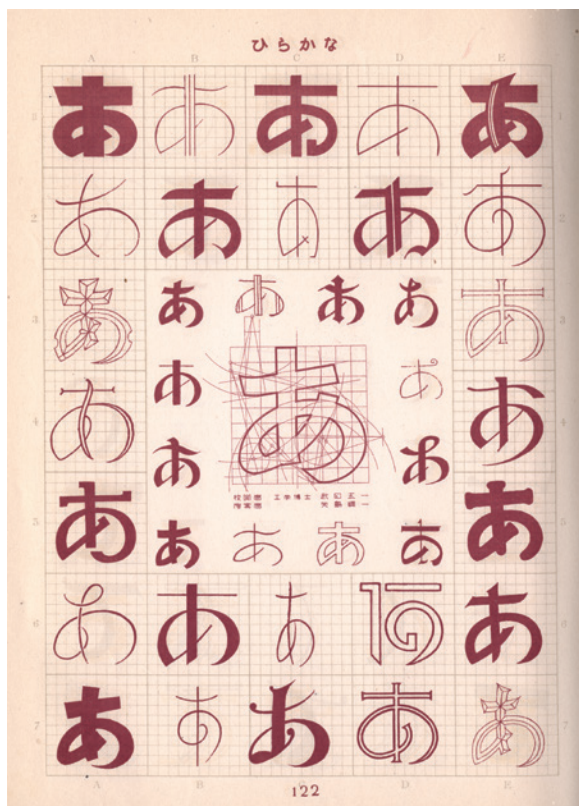
The boom in design-related trade publishing that took place in the 1920s and 1930s included a plethora of lettering compendiums or graphic sample books, many published in Osaka, the second-largest city in Japan and a center of commercial activity.¹⁵ These were ostensibly publications for commercial retailers and designers to use as sourcebooks. The number of volumes published, many with multiple reprints, that specialized in practical design training and applications attests to their popularity and perceived efficacy.

In Yajima’s best-selling 1926 volume, two thousand standard kanji were presented in ten varieties of lettering (figure 2.1) with an additional eighty forms of katakana and twenty forms of hiragana.¹⁶ Laying out the collection of scripts



2.1 Ten examples of design lettering for the same character (arranged vertically). Yajima, *Zuan moji taikan*, 282–83

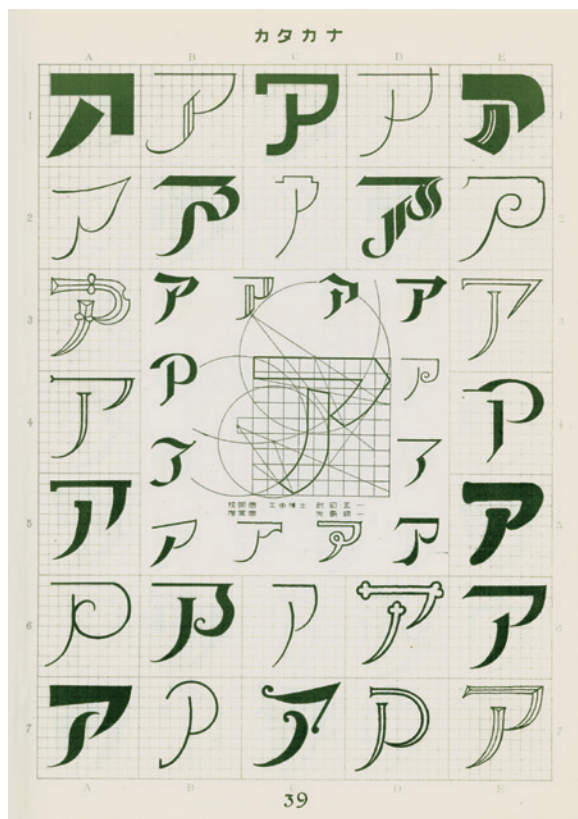
on an ordered orthogonal grid, Yajima compared their various aesthetic properties and systematically analyzed their relative proportions. Ultimately interested in breaking down letterforms into their constituent elements in the hope of producing a series of combinable and recombable forms, Yajima went even further in his 1928 publication *Anatomy of Design Letters* (*Zuan moji no kaibō*), where he abstracted and geometricized kanji and kana, which he then analyzed in a comparative framework. Example pages laying out various permutations of the hiragana and katakana renditions of the phoneme *a* display the broad variations and widely divergent aesthetic properties with which the same letter could be imbued (figures 2.2 and 2.3). Thick and thin, angular and curvaceous, legible and scribbled, plain and decorative—the comparisons are myriad, as is the cornucopia of choices. The use of the term *anatomy* in the title directly referred to scientific fields of study. By schematically mapping these phonemes on a grid and annotating them in an empirical, architectural, draftsman-like style, these diagrams attempted to predetermine visual responses by methodizing aesthetic strategies into a set of principles and rules.



2.2 Lettering examples for the hiragana phoneme *a*. Yajima and Takeda, *Zuan moji no kaibō*, 122.

Fujiwara Taichi's 1925 compendium *Designed Practical Characters* (*Zuanka seru jitsuyō moji*) included page on page of sample letters in a variety of free-form styles spelling out model promotional phrases, such as “giant end-of-the-year bargain” and “ornamental electric fixture designs” (figure 2.4). On a double-page spread, vertically aligned character combinations for “Sunday” on the left are paired on the opposite page with the full roster of the days of the week rendered horizontally in characters and in seven different *rōmaji* scripts (figure 2.5).¹⁷ The script types are all highly mannered, some more angular and others more rounded. Each script has a distinctive decorative flourish; one even has small hearts scattered throughout the lines. Eschewing the quest for legibility and standardization, these designs emphasize subjective lyricism, a sensibility that reflects the aesthetic spirit of what has commonly come to be known as *Taisho romanticism*. This spirit drew inspiration from the decorative and poetic imagery of the international art nouveau movement and flourished in the heady age of individualism emerging in Taisho-period Japan. Japanese designers were drawn to an already familiar decorative sensibility. Their work

2.3 Lettering examples for the katakana phoneme *a*. Yajima and Takeda, *Zuan moji no kaibō*, 39



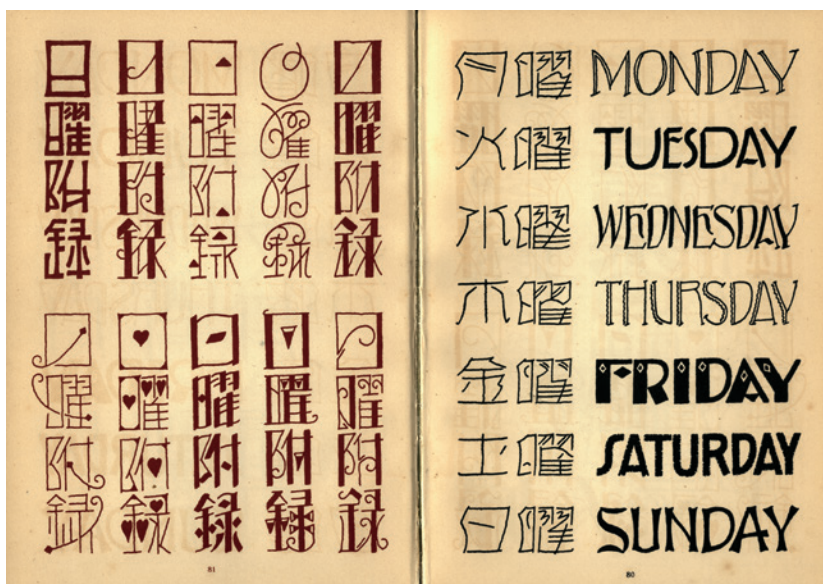
emphasized ornate floral patterning and extensive use of decorative flourishes, conveying an overriding image of elegance and luxury.

The now world-renowned cosmetics company Shiseido is one of the commercial enterprises most associated with Taisho romanticism, epitomized by the elegant and curvy typography developed by Yama Rokurō and Yamana Ayao. Both Yama and Yamana initially worked for the publisher Platonsha, owned by Nakayama Taiyōdō, the manufacturer of Club Cosmetics, where Yama first developed a highly mannered kanji script lettering for the titles of the company's journals, *Pain and Pleasure* (*Kuraku*), *Woman* (*Josei*), and *Theater Film* (*Engeki eiga*). They paired the letters with sensual line drawings of women in fashionable, mostly Paris-inspired, attire. Strongly cultivating a modern decorative sensibility, the characters pushed the limits of legibility, emphasizing expressive ornamental flourishes and distorted stroke proportions. This signature style had tremendous influence on the subsequent advertising designs for the Japanese movie industry, underpinning a distinctive subgenre of lettering that



2.4 (left) Lettering examples for sample promotional texts such as “giant end-of-the-year bargain” (*seibo daiyasuuri*; far left column) and “ornamental electric fixture designs” (*dentōgu sōshoku zuan*; far right column). Fujiwara, *Zuanka seru jitsuyō moji*, 7

2.5 (below) Left page, far left column: Various vertical design lettering combinations for “Sunday” (*nichiyōbi*). Right page: Days of the week rendered horizontally in characters and in seven different *rōmaji* scripts. Fujiwara, *Zuanka seru jitsuyō moji*, 80–81





2.6 Sawa Reika, Shiseido
wrapping paper, 1927. Shiseido
Corporate Museum

came to be known as *kinema moji* (cinema letters).¹⁸ Yama and Yamana soon brought this aesthetic to Shiseido to promote the company's luxury cosmetic creams and powders. The designs, exuding delicate femininity, targeted female consumers.

Shiseido's iconic wrapping paper, produced in many iterations over the years, featured the romanized brand name with its characteristically elongated S's to evoke images of the languorously reclining, elegant female figures featured prominently in the company's pictorial advertisements (figure 2.6). The graphically stylized Shiseido camellia logo sits to the upper left, and the Japanese kanji logotype, rendered in a thin, delicate script, is on the lower right. The three separate logos float in a sea of swirling florals and red arabesques. They all combine to express refinement and grace.

The crucial roles of lettering and the editorial layout of advertising copy in the emergent field of commercial art were in evidence across advertising de-



2.7 Takashima Ichirō, various examples of modern expressive design lettering. Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 15:62

sign. Important trade publications such as the *Ars* multivolume compendium devoted two full volumes to the topics (figure 2.7).¹⁹

But not everyone was a fan of Japan's modernist experiments. Western critics were particularly concerned that "the Orient" not diverge from its perceived traditions. Writing for *Gebrauchsgraphik* in 1927, Dr. Eduard Wildhagen wrote dismissively about modern Japanese lettering, "Even that essential treasure of Eastern culture, the Chinese lettering, is often dreadfully distorted in modern posters and used in a crude manner quite alien to the inner laws of its being. These letters, so charming in their freedom of line, are often squeezed into geometrical forms or carried out in a misunderstood enlargement of the brush technique or, worst of all, are distorted and rendered tedious by combining elements of geometrical form with accidental effects achieved by the manipulations of the writing-brush."²⁰

Tradition, Japanese Taste, and Corporate Logos

Yet even amid a heavy emphasis on modern expressive letterforms, Japanese publications still recognized the ongoing relevance of earlier scripts for the burgeoning national consumer market. The past continued to have meaning in the present, and there was no better example of this than the sustained use of Edo scripts through the twentieth century. Some have since been standardized into typefaces. The Ars series, for instance, showcased numerous examples of preexisting Japanese scripts (figure 2.8). Some of the most well-known Edo scripts it featured were *kakumoji* (or *kakuji*), *botan moji*, and *Kanteiryū*. *Kakumoji* (square characters), a form of squared-off, highly stylized characters, was often used in household seals and for insignias on clothing. *Botan moji* (peony characters) often appeared on the backs of *happi* coats, jackets emblazoned with commercial crests, traditionally worn by Japanese shopkeepers and now seen predominantly at street festivals. These peony characters have puffy strokes with wavy contours and are molded into a circular surround that makes them appear like flower buds from above. One of the most popular Edo-period scripts that was later codified into a typeface with multiple variants was *Kanteiryū* (literally, Kantei style), which is associated with the signage and publications for the Kabuki theater and is now the official Kabuki script. Developed around 1779 by the ninth heir of the Edo-based Nakamura-za Kabuki theater and widely used for all Nakamura-za signage by painter Okazakiya Kanroku (artist name Kantei; 1746–1805), whose name it bears, *Kanteiryū* is sinuous and displays a strong compression as if each character were being sat on, leaving very little space between strokes. One variation termed “fat Kanteiryū” (*futo Kanteiryū*) has strokes that are corpulent and fleshy. Another, *Sumō moji* (sumo script), as the name describes, was an Edo script variant specifically associated with sumo wrestling, a sport that has continued to be popular throughout the modern period. Sumo script also has thick, rounded inky horizontal and vertical strokes.

A sampler of Edo characters in volume 15 of the Ars compendium featured two illustrations of *hige moji* (whisker characters).²¹ As the name describes, the characters have whisker-like stylized brush trails at the ends of the strokes and simulate the “flying white” (*bihaku*) calligraphy technique that accentuates the white streaks and gaps within black *sumi* ink brushstrokes. Whisker characters are still widely used in the commercial sphere for everything from the shaved ice dessert (*kakigōri*) signs that dot city streets in the summer to the backs of *happi* coats. Because of *hige moji*’s association with the Edo period, Japanese consumers viewed this script style as traditional.

Hige moji are also conspicuous on the product label designs of Japanese sake brand names, such as Hakutsuru and Ozeki. Even as Japanese national and over-



2.8 *Left page:* Sampler of traditional Japanese commercial lettering including two small black whisker characters (*hige moji*), two round (white and orange) peony characters (*botan moji*), and a fat Kanteiryū (*futo Kanteiryū*) at bottom right. *Right page:* Model German text in sans serif Futura typography (designer: Paul Renner for the Bauersche Giesserei, Frankfurt am Main) that reads, “The lettering is the soul of every advertisement.” Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 15:6–7

seas markets developed and regional manufacturers transformed themselves into national brands with cultivated corporate images, sake brand identity remained largely unchanged. Unlike beverages newer to Japan, for instance, beer or wine, sake’s image was enhanced by association with centuries-old traditions of fermentation and brewing, even as much sake production was in fact being transformed in response to increased consumer demand, including the controversial practice of adding straight alcohol to the fermented rice wine, to which purists adamantly objected. Advertising’s coding of a product as traditional through letterforms reinforced consumer confidence in the quality standards of the company.

Sake was by no means the only Japanese business that had its roots in Edo, and sake producers were not the only modern companies to use *hige moji* in their company logos. Industry innovator Mitsukoshi department store got its start back in the seventeenth century as Mitsui Echigoya dry goods.²² The company's modern trademark displays the character 越 (*echi*, from Echigoya; also read *koshi*, from Mitsukoshi) written in encircled *hige moji*. Already in the Edo period, Echigoya was a sophisticated advertiser, supplying logo-printed giveaways and hiring famous actors to endorse company products. Promotions also included product placement. For instance, well-known woodblock designers such as Utagawa Kunisada (1786–1865) portrayed Edo beauties in front of the store with the company name and logo featured conspicuously on the hanging shop curtains in the background.

The company continued to be a trendsetter in promotional strategies, yet it consciously maintained its Edo heritage in the script logo, thus complicating what was otherwise a strict delimiting of Edo scripts to “traditional” business enterprises. Parallel identities could thus be indicated by pairing the *hige moji* logo with the company name in a range of different scripts, from capitalized roman letters to highly expressive hand-drawn kanji design characters, many of which Sugiura Hisui created as design director. Promotional material amplified the store's modern identity with representations of its stylish new architectural edifices and nattily dressed customers. Mitsukoshi's interest in maintaining a connection to Edo was not merely a nostalgic nod to the past. To augment its signature business of selling kimono fabrics, the department store aggressively promoted the revival of various period styles. In her compelling study of Mitsukoshi and the prewar Japanese consumer market, Jinno Yuki has described the store's central role in the construction of taste through its sponsored culture study groups, most prominently the Trend Association (Ryūkōkai), founded in 1905, and the group's public relations journal, *Fashion (Jikō)*. Mitsukoshi launched an enormously profitable Edo-period “Genroku” (1688–1703) style fashion campaign that developed into a widespread “Genroku boom” during the period immediately after Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5).²³ Alongside the burgeoning demand for Western-style (*yōfū*) goods, the continued appeal of Japanese-style (*wafū*) goods, such as kimonos and traditional drinks and food, especially sweets, inaugurated a distinct strand in marketing catering to what became known as *Nihon shumi*, or “Japanese taste.” The Ars series dedicated an entire volume to advertising invoking “Japanese taste,” deploying aesthetic references to earlier domestic aesthetic forms.²⁴

Corporate logotypes and identities were as diverse as the companies for which they were created. In a competitive consumer market, manufacturers needed to differentiate themselves through their public images, and the visible



2.9 Kao soap promotional calendar, 1932 (open and closed). Kao Corporation

language of letterforms greatly helped articulate their identities. The Nagase Company, manufacturer of the popular Kao soap product, is a prime example of the sophisticated promotional techniques that innovative companies deployed in print publicity, even in those most seemingly mundane examples.²⁵ In a small 1932 Kao soap promotional calendar, the text, in kanji, *rōmaji*, and katakana, travels in three different directions and is written in four different scripts (figure 2.9). Distributed to loyal retailers at New Year's, the calendar served a double promotional function by both promoting the company and directly showcasing its main product, the Kao soap bar, which is displayed prominently in the middle of the composition. On the calendar, the image of the soap bar itself opens to reveal the months of the year.

The brand name *Kaō sekken* (Kao soap), in semicursive logo script, appears at the top and in the center of the bar. A newly created kanji compound, the character combination would not have been widely comprehensible to Japanese consumers and therefore, alongside the kanji, written horizontally from right to left, is the phonetic reading, rendered vertically on the right side of each character in katakana. *Rubi* (alternately, *ruby*, named in the nineteenth century after the British 5.5-point type size called *ruby*) or *furigana*, as such parallel annotative phonetic reading marks are known, are written above or beside kanji to gloss their transliteration, as many characters have several readings. Printed in a smaller point size than regular type, *rubi* are generally written in *hiragana*, but they can also appear in *rōmaji* or katakana, as is the case here.²⁶

Historians date the application of *rubi* back to the earliest Japanese texts, for instance, the eighth-century *Chronicles of Japan* (*Nihon shoki*) and *Records of Ancient Matters* (*Kojiki*), but those *rubi* simply provided alternative kanji readings. It is believed that *rubi* as we know them today came into common use after the creation of phonetic syllabaries in the ninth century to indicate the reading of words that originated from native spoken Japanese in Japanese texts written in Chinese (*kanbun*), what was called *kunyomi*. While *rubi* were most widely used in the Edo period, when literacy increased dramatically, they were also prominent in modern mass newspapers and magazines. There were even newspapers written entirely in phonetic syllabaries known as *furigana shinbun*.

The use of *rubi/furigana* was another point of contention for language reformers. The debate came to a head in the mid-1930s, right when the Kao soap advertisement was produced. Opponents argued that this kind of annotative gloss was exceptional and did not exist in any other world languages. They felt that it perpetuated the use of difficult kanji and hindered language reform that would bring written and spoken Japanese closer together. Moreover, as a symbol designed to assist in reading, it was seen as a cultural crutch that was “uncivilized,” signified weakness, and cluttered the page. Supporters, on the other hand, advocated *rubi* as critical in the spread of literacy and as an important supplementary tool, imparting meaning that could be used dialectically with written text to enhance understanding, thus serving as a kind of contextual annotation. This function has been borne out in contemporary usage, in which *rubi* often serve as an abbreviated form of metatextual commentary. While abolitionists succeeded in persuading the Japanese Home Ministry in 1938 to issue an official advisory to avoid the use of *rubi* in mass media journals and newspapers as well as in textbooks, *rubi* still visibly persisted in the public sphere on a reduced scale and as a strategic weapon in the arsenal of graphic designers.²⁷

Through a skillful deployment of visible language, the Kao calendar was able to occupy every front. The katakana *rubi* gloss on the name associated the product with something foreign, as foreign loanwords (*gairaigo*) were often transliterated in katakana rather than hiragana. It thereby reinforced the connotations of the newness of the product and an inherent association with Western cosmetics and modern hygiene practices. The roman lettering “Kao soap” on the package and above and below on the square mounting is round and loopy, almost as if written with paste squeezed out of a tube, while the upbeat and rhythmic tilting of the letters imbues the product with a modern stylish air. The calligraphic brand name and its references link the soap with a long-standing Japanese Sinophilic poetic imagination. The stylized *rōmaji* adds a whiff of cosmopolitanism. The katakana reinforces the Western and modern roots of this

hygiene product, the promotion of which benefited from government campaigns for national health and welfare.

To take this analysis a step further, the small kanji catchphrase *hinshitsu honi* (quality standard), printed in black from right to left directly above and to the right of the brand name in a highly simplified sans serif Gothic-style typeface, evokes a machine aesthetic that mirrors the high-quality mechanized production that the Nagase Company proclaimed in its broader advertising campaigns to ensure consumer confidence in the quality of its products. Such regularized, rationalized type (without the decorative serif embellishments) imputed similar qualities to the production of the commodity. Gothic type was simple and clean, underlining that Kao soap was, without a doubt, clean.²⁸ It is impossible to determine whether consumers, or even designers themselves, were overtly cognizant of these multivalent connotations or whether their enculturation in letterforms was so complete that this visual language functioned at an unconscious level.

The Kao calendar also shows that Japanese letterforms were able to exhibit a free-form directionality—something that entered Western typographic design only with the experimentation of modernism. Multidirectionality is inherent in the polyglot nature of the Japanese language and enhances the possibilities of communication through editorial design. When first approaching a page for editorial layout, Japanese designers are confronted with the question of whether the text should read vertically or horizontally, and whether it should be read left to right, or right to left. This tremendous personal liberty in making aesthetic choices also causes designers no end of difficulty, as each design decision was, and still is, freighted with ideological as well as aesthetic import.

Despite repeated attempts at standardization throughout the twentieth century, directionality is still an open issue, with most textbooks written horizontally and most popular magazines and newspapers written vertically. Like the linguistic reformers discussed above, some early twentieth-century modernization advocates even recommended abolishing vertical typesetting (*tategumi*).²⁹ In Japan horizontal writing was associated with the West and was therefore a symbol of modernity. In the postwar period, advocates of horizontal writing made a spurious biological argument based on the side-by-side position of the human eyes. The Meiji government well understood the association of horizontal text with modernity and from 1872 to 1883 made the bold and symbolic move of switching the orientation of Japan's national currency from vertical to horizontal type.³⁰

The ongoing cultural consequences of these design choices are exemplified by a more recent crisis over promotional materials for the 1998 Olympics in Nagano, Japan, when the Japanese committee could not decide whether to print the multilingual promotional material, which included kanji and *rōmaji*, vertically



2.10 Hara Kenya, pages from the program for the opening ceremony of the Nagano Winter Olympics, 1998. Nippon Design Center, Inc./Hara Design Institute. Courtesy of the International Olympic Committee

or horizontally. There was an imperative to express the theme of the Nagano Olympics—"internationalism"—typographically, with vertical type encoded as Asian. The director of editorial design, Hara Kenya, suggested to the promotion committee that everything be in horizontal type to underscore the international sentiment.³¹ In the end, while the typeface on the official Nagano poster by Aoba Masuteru was in roman letters read from left to right, Hara designed his trilingual (Japanese, English, and French) official program for the opening ceremony in a combination of kanji and roman letters in vertical and horizontal type, respectively (figure 2.10). Hara's layout balanced the vertical and horizontal texts through a skillful use of the pictorial elements. For instance, the large headline character 御柱 (read *ombashira*), the visual focus on the top of the page, refers to the name of a pillar-raising ceremony that has been celebrated in Nagano for centuries. In this ceremony, incorporated in the Olympic opening ceremony, performers raised eight wooden pillars in the four cardinal directions of the main

stadium. Four pairs of vertical red pillars pictured in the program layout anchor the Japanese text and are aligned with the columns of the roman text as a mechanism for visually unifying the page.³² Four red circles, reminiscent of the *hinomaru* (ball of the sun) Japanese national flag (formally known as the Nisshōki), form a diamond within the pillars, creating another order of visual coordination that structures viewing. Highly inflected with nationalistic elements based on Buddhist and Shinto religious rites, the opening ceremony was itself an aestheticized spectacle of Japaneseness. Because of the international audience's need for accessibility, however, the editorial designers opted for a simple, clear typeface and a separate but equal layout that clearly differentiated and defined the Japanese elements while maintaining comprehensibility. The work represents a highly refined typographic essentialism in an internationalist context.

New Typography and Montage

Internationalism and the perceived need for a universal canon of typographic standards inspired modernist designers in Europe in the 1920s to propose simplified, so-called elemental, typographies that would be clear and without embellishment (sans serif), known in Japanese as “standard letters” (*hyōjun moji*). They based their argument on the need to represent the rationalized machine-production ethos of the modern age. Their objectives were functionalism and transparency. Reducing letters to their basic, hence elemental, forms was a means to this end. Bauhaus typography in Germany was the most representative of this trend.³³ Among Japanese critics, two figures set the foundation for the domestic reception of new typography. In 1925 Murayama Tomoyoshi translated El Lissitzky's essay on modernist design into Japanese in *Mavo* magazine and went on to write the highly influential 1926 monograph *A Study of Constructivism* (*Kōseiha kenkyū*).³⁴ *A Study of Constructivism* was the first publication to introduce and translate into Japanese the term *neue Typographie* as *shinkappanajutsu*, triumphantly presenting a host of writings on the subject, including work by László Moholy-Nagy and Karel Tiege.³⁵ At the same time, as discussed in the introduction, Nakada Sadanosuke, recently returned from studying abroad in Germany, wrote several articles for the art magazine *Mizue* (Watercolor painting) in 1925 introducing Bauhaus design and constructivism to many Japanese readers for the first time. Murayama quoted Moholy-Nagy on the importance of typography in the visual arts:

Typography is a tool of communication. It must be communication in its most intense form. The emphasis must be on absolute clarity since

that distinguishes the character of our own writing from that of ancient pictographic forms. . . . Therefore priority: unequivocal clarity in all typographical compositions. Legibility—communication must never be impaired by an *a priori* aesthetics. Letters may never be forced into a pre-conceived framework, for instance a square.

The printed image corresponds to the contents through its specific optical and psychological laws, demanding their typical form. The essence and the purpose of printing demand an uninhibited use of all linear directions (therefore not only horizontal articulation). We use all typefaces, type sizes, geometric forms, colors, etc. We want to create a new language of typography whose elasticity, variability and freshness of typographical composition is exclusively dictated by the inner law of expression and the optical effect.³⁶

In *Mavo* magazine, the group further explored the expressive potential of text-image compositions and dynamic asymmetrical layouts, including diagonal and even upside-down printing, further breaking down the orthogonal orientation of the page. The magazine reflected the dynamic tension between the standardizing impulses of mechanically produced forms of new typography and the continuing appeal of expressive hand-drawn letterforms. Both Murayama and Nakada, however, had strong avant-garde sensibilities and were allied with a broader movement of professional artist-designers advocating for the aesthetic recognition of experimental letterform design as formal innovations in opposition to the prevailing pictorial trends in advertising.

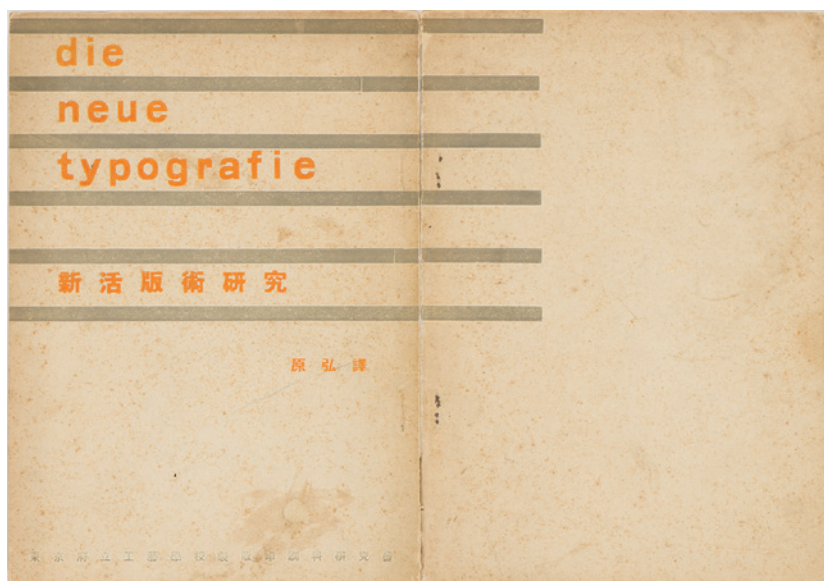
Other Japanese designers were more concerned with the commercial applications of new typography. Prominent among them was Hara Hiromu. A graduate of the printing division of the Tokyo Metropolitan School of Industrial Arts (Tōkyō Furitsu Kōgei Gakkō) and later a teacher there, Hara was a leader in the study of typography in Japan, forming the research group Tokyo Printing Artists Circle, abbreviated as PAC (Tokyo Insatsu Bijutsuka Shūdan), in 1932.³⁷ Hara waded into the discourse on type design with a translated collection of seminal theoretical texts on modern typography. His *Die neue typografie / Shinkappanjutsu kenkyū* (The new typography: A study of new typography; 1931–32) was a thin, pamphlet-style in-house publication (not for commercial sale) that was issued by the printing division of the Tokyo Metropolitan School of Industrial Arts.³⁸ The contents comprised an introduction and five chapters: (1) “New Typography” (“Atarashiki Kappanjutsu,” by Moholy-Nagy, 1923); (2) “Elemental Typography” (“Kihonteki Kappanjutsu,” by an anonymous author, 1925); (3) “Contemporary Typography” (“Gendai no Kappanjutsu,” by Moholy-Nagy,

1926); (4) “Layout for Reading” (“Yomu tame no Reiouto,” by Willi Burmeister, 1926); and (5) “Introduction to New Typography” (“Shinkappanjutsu Gairon,” by Jan Tschichold, 1930). Despite using the same title for the book as Jan Tschichold’s 1928 opus, Hara’s selected essay was in fact a different summary text that Tschichold published as an introduction to his monograph *A Lesson in Printing Design* (*Eine Stunde Druckgestaltung*, Stuttgart; 1930), which was less theoretical than *Die neue Typographie* and more geared toward working practitioners in the field.³⁹

As this highly selective compilation indicates, Hara’s interpretation of new typography as a practical tool for visual communication (*shikakuteki dentatsu*) did not neatly map onto any single theoretical position but rather constituted a critical synthesis of multiple sources over time. While steeping himself in the writings of the modern masters of typography from abroad, he also copiously read the Japanese critics who were analyzing them. Furthermore, as Kawahata has convincingly shown, Hara often encountered European texts refracted through the sometimes-sardonic prism of American trade journals such as the *Inland Printer*, which had a professional exchange with the Japanese trade journal *Printing Journal* (*Insatsu zasshi*).⁴⁰ These publications mediated and remediated texts as they circulated.

Like Hara’s contemporaries Nagaoka Itsurō and Murota Kurazō, who wrote for *Advertising World* about the efficacy of letterform design and innovative typography in the service of advertising and publicity, he ultimately viewed typography more as an applied art for practical purposes.⁴¹ In sympathy with Tschichold’s bold proclamation that “painting with letters is not typography,” he repeatedly asserted that design was not a fine art and should not be concerned with individual expression.⁴² He observed that “the constructivists,” with their zealous demands for elemental typography, “like the earlier Futurist Marinetti’s manifesto, started by waging a rude war against all established art.” However, to his mind, “these strong-willed guys grossly misdiagnosed the importance of ‘art’ as an adversary. Rather than art, [elemental typography] was, in fact, a form of industry [*kōgyō*].” “As an art movement,” he declared, “it was nonsense.”⁴³

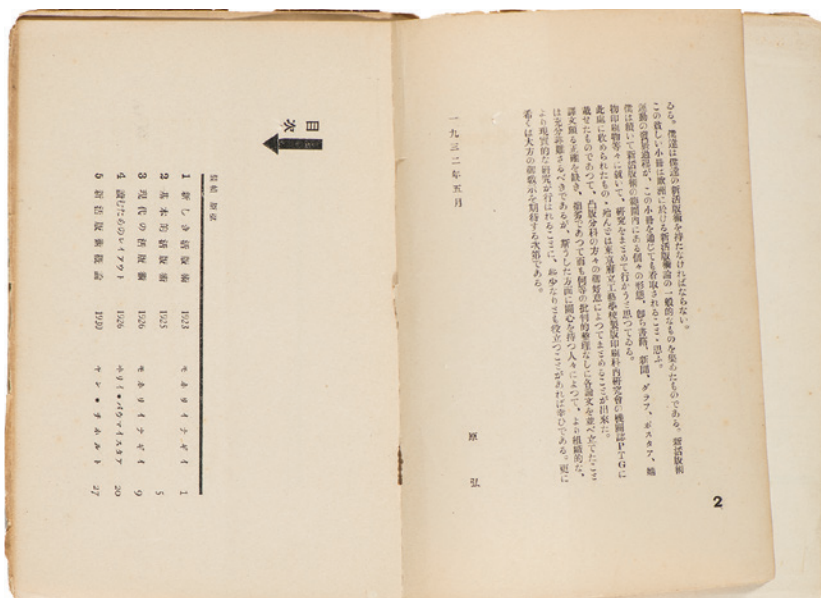
Hara also believed that typography was conditioned by the message it visualized. He demonstrated his book’s modernist principles in its design, producing a style Kawahata has deemed “simple and stoic” and quintessentially Hara.⁴⁴ On the cover (figure 2.11), he utilized lowercase sans serif type in reddish orange for the romanized title and a matching sans serif–style Japanese Gothic typeface with unmodulated strokes for the title characters below. Clean and spare without any ornamental vestiges of hand-rendered calligraphy, Gothic imputed a depersonalized, machine-made regularity to the content. The balanced



2.11 Hara Hiromu (author and designer), cover of *Die neue typografie/Shinkappanjutsu kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Furitsu Kōgei Gakkō, ca. 1931–32). Tokushu Paper Mfg.

layout grid of the cover design revealed a subtle, animating asymmetry, structured by horizontal gray stripes that framed the text within visual bands. The capacious white space on the cover's lower register was echoed in the ample right margins of the vertically oriented interior pages, which similarly displayed headers in bold Gothic typeface aligned against bolded vertical rules of equal weight (figure 2.12). A marked drop accentuated the transition from header to text. To order the page and further direct the eye, the typesetting incorporated core geometric graphic elements of new typography: squares, circles, and triangles. Curiously, however, the main text was rendered in the more classical *minchō* type, a seeming contradiction to the book's modernist credo. Despite the purported modern simplicity of the Gothic, Hara acknowledged that *minchō* was undeniably more legible and thus ultimately more effective as a primary visual mode for the body type of a book.⁴⁵

One of the main reforms that new typography proposed was the exclusive adoption of lowercase letters. Reformers argued that demands for economy threw into question the need for two sets of type, upper- and lowercase, when

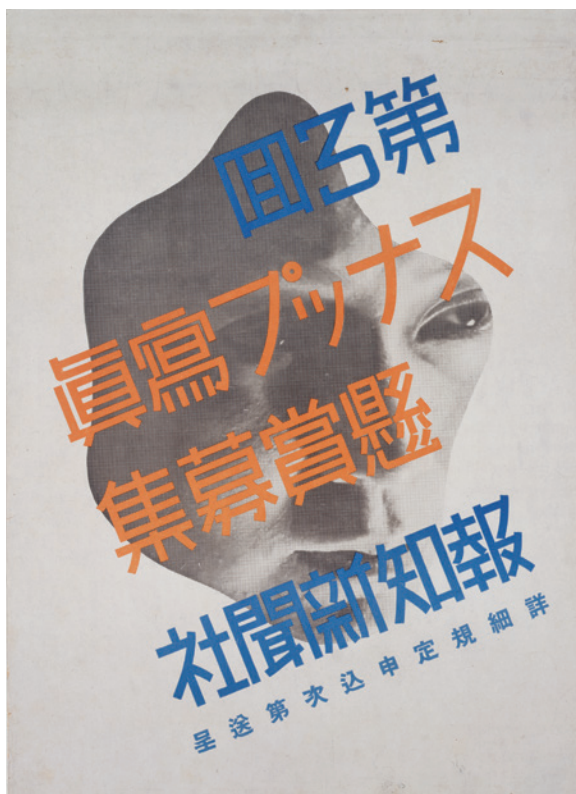


2.12 Hara Hiromu (author and designer), interior page and table of contents, *Die neue typografie/Shin kappanjutsu kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Furitsu Kōgei Gakkō, ca. 1931–32). Tokushu Paper Mfg.

one should suffice. Moreover, typographers traditionally considered lowercase types (minuscule) with their pronounced ascenders and descenders to be most legible, enabling easier differentiation between discrete words. Although Asian characters do not have the equivalent of upper- or lowercase, Japanese linguistic expression in printed text is polyglot, employing extensive use of romanized scripts, particularly for cosmopolitan cachet and visual emphasis in advertising. Hara responded to this proposition with deep misgivings about the purported benefits of using all lowercase for greater legibility, ultimately dismissing it as a passing fad. Instead, for visual emphasis he would later increasingly employ all-capital roman letters in his title and header designs, both with and without serifs.

Elemental typography was not simply concerned with letterforms but also encompassed the critical relationship between text and image in editorial layout. Hara's montage poster design for the Hōchi Shinbunsha-sponsored Third Snap Photography Competition of 1935 exemplifies his stark geometric simplification

2.13 Hara Hiromu, poster for Third Snap Photography Competition, Hôchi Shinbunsha, 1935. Tokushu Paper Mfg.



of letterforms for maximum clarity, used in combination with photographs (figure 2.13). The individual character strokes are unmodulated, their ends squared off without any additional decorative accent. The blue and orange characters and the kana letters, though evenly spaced and of similar overall proportions, are set slightly on the diagonal to animate the layout. The colored letterforms are also superimposed on an organically shaped fragment of a dramatically illuminated black-and-white photograph of a person's face, thereby contrasting the softly curving contours of the image with the strict angularity of the script.

Writing a series of articles for the photography journal *Kôga* in 1933, Hara emphasized the unprecedented influence of modern print media for propaganda, indoctrination, and agitation as it incorporated new technologies and the creative integration of typography and photography.⁴⁶ He and other Japanese graphic designers directly engaged debates among contending photographic movements in Germany in the interwar years that were responding to Soviet innovations in visual storytelling through the multiperspectival medium of photomontage commonly dubbed *factography*. These debates were

primarily between New Objectivity (*Neue Sachlichkeit*) and Bauhaus photography, represented most iconically by photographers Albert Renger-Patzsch and László Moholy-Nagy, respectively. Their opinions hinged on differing definitions of realism, with Renger-Patzsch arguing for photography as fact and Moholy-Nagy championing a modernist “new vision” of realism to transform visual perception and cognition. Creating a new combinatory visual method he called the *typophoto*, Moholy-Nagy claimed, “The objectivity of photography liberates the receptive reader from the crutches of the author’s personal idiosyncrasies and forces him into the formation of his own opinion.”⁴⁷ Hara, however, was ultimately more interested in the practical uses of graphic magazines and newspapers to sensationalize and spin current political affairs in the guise of news reportage—a form of what photography historian Margarita Tupitsyn has redubbed *mythography*.⁴⁸

Photomontage soon became the dominant visual idiom of the global 1930s–1940s. Collaborating with some of the premier modern photographers and photojournalists in the country, Hara worked both for major companies and on a range of quasi-governmental projects. With the design studios Nippon Kōbō (Japan Studio), Chūō Kōbō (Central Studio), and Tōhōsha (Eastern Way Company), he helped produce a range of stunning photomontages for state-sponsored projects directed toward foreign audiences (*taigai senden*) that were both touristic and propagandistic in nature. Unlike those of his modernist colleagues abroad who were ideologically moving toward lowercase, Hara boldly headed toward capitals. Such work came to typify his wartime production in cultural propaganda (*bunka senden*) and visually mirrored the increasingly stoic martial spirit of the Japanese empire being inculcated throughout the military and on the mobilized home front.

This masculine modern national style is perhaps best exemplified by the commanding large-format (A3) multilingual montage propaganda journal *Front*, which Hara designed for Tōhōsha in the early 1940s (ten issues, 1941–45), modeling it after the groundbreaking Soviet propaganda journal *USSR in Construction* (*СССР на стройке* or *SSSR na stroike*), designed by montage artists Lissitzky and Aleksandr Rodchenko. Quoting their compatriot Gustav Klutssis, Hara noted two divergent tendencies in montage, one represented by the experimental formalism of the avant-garde and employed in commercial advertising in the United States and Europe, and the other dedicated to social and political agitation to communicate the foundations of proletarian revolution represented by the artists in the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ *Front* clearly demonstrated his allegiance to the Soviet camp. More than a decade after Hara translated the theories of new typography into Japanese, *Front*’s solid, square, evenly spaced

2.14 Hara Hiromu, cover
of *Front*, nos. 10–11 (1943).
Tokushu Paper Mfg.



masthead boldly asserted the authority of Japan's imperial vision, as the simple serif capital letters confidently occupy the open frontier of Manchukuo (nos. 5–6, 1943) or burn like molten steel forged by the dynamic power of the nation's industrial engine (nos. 10–11, 1943) (figure 2.14).

Ethnicized Language

The promotion of legibility and script simplification in the interest of transparency and functionalism veils the racist ideological values undergirding this process of standardization. What might be lost or excluded in the attempt to gain clarity? And what values does the notion of clarity itself signify? As Katie Salen has noted in her analysis of a seminal 1932 essay by American scholar Beatrice Warde describing typography as a “crystal goblet,” the assertion of functional transparency belies the fact that letterforms are never neutral or transparent, thus never free of ideological values. Warde's and other new typography proponents'

advocacy of the moral virtue of functionality, machine aesthetics, and rationalism excluded other visible linguistic dialects. Standardization and normalization created so-called default settings and in the process marginalized and pathologized alternative modes, whether these be subjective handwritten decorative letterforms or consciously historicizing script forms.⁵⁰

Akin to language itself, printed text is unequivocally a marker of ethnic, national, and racial identity—characteristics that internationalists sought to expunge with impunity. Eminent modern architect Adolf Loos famously rebuked ornament as a sign of primitivism around 1910: “The more primitive a people, the more extravagantly they use ornament and decoration. . . . To insist on decoration is to put yourself on the same level as an Indian. The Indian in us all must be overcome. . . . To seek beauty in form itself rather than make it dependent on ornament should be the aim of all mankind.”⁵¹ Amplifying Loos’s disdain, typographer Tschichold added that “desire for ornament” is “an ignorant tendency which our century must repress.”⁵² As Japan modernized and entered the world theater of nations, it sought to distance itself from any semblance of ethnographic primitivism to maintain sovereignty in the face of European imperialism. By this logic, ornament, mired in the past and reeking of primitivism, could only reinscribe colonial subjectivity. Such was the deeply ideological nature of the cultural debates that surrounded the development of modern letterforms in Japan.

This cultural standardization was never totalizing, however, and it was countered on many fronts. In general trade publications like Ars’s multivolume design compendium, for instance, new typography was interspersed with examples of historical Euro-American and Asian scripts, a melding that would have been an anathema to purists like Tschichold. Hamada Masuji even sometimes paired new typography with Japanese scripts. In the two-page spread featuring the Edo sampler with *hige moji* already discussed (see figure 2.8), the facing page displayed printed German text in a stylized sans serif Futura type that read, “The lettering is the soul of every advertisement.” It was surrounded by a stark geometric layout with abstract editorial elements ordering the page. This seemingly incongruous juxtaposition is a perfect representation of the lively coexistence of divergent lettering tendencies in modern Japan.⁵³

Despite the widespread appeal of new typography in Japan (much of which was in fact hand-rendered), expressive lettering design continued to flourish throughout the prewar and wartime periods. Designers even developed a distinct form of “crisis lettering” (*hijōji moji*) in wartime publications like *Photographic Weekly Report* (*Shashin shūhō*) that exuded the agitation of the nationwide emergency mentality with its sharp angling, rapidly executed brushstrokes, and flying



2.15 Kōno Takashi, magazine advertisement for the film *Diagram of Our Youth* (*Seishun zue*) (dir. Shimizu Hiroshi; Shochiku Film Company, 1931), in *Kinema junpō*, no. 411 (September 1931): 138–39. Waseda University, Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum. Courtesy of the Kōno Takashi Archive

white-style streaky transparency, akin to airborne missiles. This crisis lettering appeared widely in pictorial magazines to convey current news from the war front, including information about potential air raids, the prospect of which was becoming ever more real in the 1940s. Sailing through the air and seemingly on fire, these characters were the visible language of the wartime news flash.

The embellished *kinema moji* of film publicity also persisted.⁵⁴ Many Japanese critics at the time felt, however, that this design had lapsed into a kind of repetitive decorative mannerism that merely added ornamental flourishes to regular characters without fundamentally rethinking the form of the characters themselves. In response to this popular mode of advertising, one designer, Kōno Takashi (1906–1999), a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, who joined the Shochiku Film Company (Shōchiku Kinema Kabushiki Kaisha) in 1929, developed a distinctive fanciful style that was soon widely imitated throughout the



2.16 Pamphlet for Morinaga Celebrity Recital Contest (Morinaga Meiryū Kyōenkai), mid-1930s. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

design field.⁵⁵ Kōno produced numerous posters and print advertisements for films in which he played with the thickness, balance, and proportion of characters, all of which are demonstrated in his charmingly awkward, abstract design for a magazine advertisement promoting Shochiku's 1931 film *Diagram of Our Youth* (*Seishun zue*) (figure 2.15). Kōno's personal lettering style had enduring appeal among designers well into the postwar period. Because this style emphasized the asymmetry and irregularity ascribed to traditional Japanese aesthetics rather than the rationalizing and standardizing impetus of Euro-American modernism in typography, design historians have deemed Kōno's work a distinctly "Japan-made modernism" (*wasei modanizumu*).⁵⁶

Other companies disseminated Kōno's quirky lettering style into the broader advertising field to great commercial effect. One example is Morinaga's printed program for the company's sponsored competition of celebrity performances in the mid- to late 1930s (figure 2.16). This small bit of ephemera vividly reveals the complex choreography of typographic design and its ability to speak simultaneously on multiple linguistic, visual, and ethnic registers. The front shows

a typographic layout with simple, deliberately awkward characters announcing the title of the competition, “Morinaga Celebrity Recital Contest” (Morinaga Meiryū Kyōenkai). The character strokes are short and intentionally clumsy, almost childlike in their awkwardness. The characters are also internally unbalanced with exaggerated and stunted proportions. The result is playful.

Below, in a red box, are the words “Morinaga’s show,” written in a simple lowercase roman cursive script, paired with the figure of a bird. The letters and characters on the back of the pamphlet, an advertisement for Morinaga milk chocolate, display several different logotypes and are in vivid contrast to those on the front. The Morinaga milk chocolate candy bar floats in the upper right with the company’s name in its signature gold serif roman lettering. Immediately below it is the company trademark, an upside-down angel grasping the letters *TM* (in Westernized order for Morinaga Taichirō, the company’s founding president). In the middle, the brand-name logotype for Morinaga milk chocolate is rendered in chunky bevel-edged kanji and katakana scripts that exude a sense of heartiness, which is in turn mirrored by the smiling faces of the two young women pictured at the bottom. The young women’s hair is tousled as if they were running. They radiate health and vigor. Marketed as a nutritional food supplement providing healthy calories to the still undernourished Japanese population, Morinaga’s milk chocolate was, as proclaimed in the white *minchō* text in the red box at the top, “A youthful food that produces the beauty of good health!” Appealing to families and Japanese youth, Morinaga was able to promote its basic sales points of vigor, health, and fun through the orchestration of diverse letterforms.

Wordplay

While letterforms were serious business, wordplay was also an important typographic strategy. Playing with the pictographic, homological, and phonological aspects of kanji characters was a long-standing tradition in the Japanese visual arts with numerous premodern examples in calligraphy and painting. The use of pictorial rebuses as coded messages was also common. Wordplay in modern Japanese advertising design used various literary and artistic devices to create whimsical text-image interplay and humorous substitutions to draw attention to commercial products and promotional messages. The ideo- and logographic nature of the Japanese written language makes it ripe for playful pictorializing, while the two Japanese syllabaries are similarly fertile areas for creative intervention for visually striking layouts, rhythmic repetition, and even anthropomorphization. In anglophone advertising, wordplay deploys linguistic devices based on phonetics and semantics such as assonance, consonance, spelling,



2.17 Nishioka Mihaku, whimsical anthropomorphized brand characters for Akadama (Red Ball) Port Wine with the character *red* (*aka*) holding or using the character for *ball* (*dama*). Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 15:73

alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhyme, acronyms, puns, and slang.⁵⁷ Many of these strategies are similarly in evidence in Japanese design. Wordplay in Japanese advertising could also be built on double entendre (with the secondary meaning usually being funny or risqué). Rich with onomatopoeia (words that phonetically imitate sounds), the sonic aspects of the Japanese language were also a bountiful site for design creativity. Copywriters linked the visual and lexical while choreographing the rhyming and repeating of sounds. At the same time, pictorializing letterforms injected playfulness and visual interest that shifted the design lens from lexical legibility to visual aesthetics.

The scattering method, for want of a better term, was also repeatedly in evidence, as when Calpis playfully sprinkles its katakana brand name (*Karupisu*) across the page as the letters rain down from above. The letter edges are jagged as if ripped apart, overlapping, with different-sized fonts in white on a black background. The playfulness connotes an enjoyable product that is presumably

fun to consume. Whimsical repetition was one of the most common visual strategies. Meiji chocolate used tightly printed, repeated characters for *hana* (flower) to create the patterns of blooming cherry blossom trees, or small stick-figure children raising their arms to form the character for *haru* (spring) to celebrate the season and its connection with delicious chocolate.⁵⁸ Playful letters connected the joy of spring, the beauty of flowers, and the gastronomic delight of chocolate.

Gigantism was a similarly effective wordplay strategy. Japanese trademarks often featured enlarged characters, frequently the first character of a company's name, such as the large character *taka*[*i*] used for Takashimaya department store or *dai* for Daimaru. This gigantism carried over into advertising design where one single character was used to dominate the page. These characters could be imbued with corporeal qualities as well, embodied letters and words that had bodily, fleshy, or sensorial attributes. For Kotobukiya's Akadama (Red Ball) Port Wine (figure 2.17), a popular fortified sweet beverage launched in 1907 and priced at a hefty ¥0.40 per bottle, designers in the *Ars* compendium enlarged the first character, red (*aka*), into a human figure who whimsically carries the character for ball (*dama*) along with a bottle of wine or uses it as a piece of furniture for sitting and serving. The red kanji-man exudes cosmopolitanism with his stylish hats and expressive poses. The anthropomorphized letters playfully allow the product to personify the modern consumer.

One brand that often played with words was Jintan, marketed throughout East and Southeast Asia as a medicinal aid for stomachaches but also as a breath freshener that was refreshing and aromatic. Under the pioneering leadership of Morishita Hiroshi, president of Morishita Nanyōdō, Jintan introduced the enormously popular brand character of the Jintan General, a modern Meiji-style general in Napoleonic uniform, who embodied and lent personality to the product. Generals were broadly popular figures during this time due to the wartime fervor of the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars. They were often modeled after German chancellor Otto von Bismarck.⁵⁹ The Jintan General's body became the company trademark, with his broad shoulders and decorative epaulettes used as a framing device to encompass the two brand-name characters written vertically and then often glossed in katakana with the romanized words "Jintan" or "The Jintan" above. Jintan became the number-one brand in Japan and the company's chief of advertising, Tanimoto Hiroshi, coined the catchphrase slogan "kingen," or "wise sayings," which the General presumably issued himself.⁶⁰ Company advertisements often incorporated such promotional text into the general's body alongside the brand name (figure 2.18). Both Jintan and Kao were known for their extensive outdoor advertising on poles along railway



2.18 Jintan newspaper advertisement showing advertising signboard of the Jintan General, *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun*, July 3, 1908, a.m. ed., 7

2.19 Kataoka Toshirō,
newspaper advertisement for
Oraga beer, *Tōkyō asahi*
shinbun, June 6, 1930,
a.m. ed., 8



lines, where their brand names decorated the modern byways. The Jintan General's body served as the signboard and the posts as his supporting legs.⁶¹

One of the great experimenters with visual wordplay in advertising design was the copywriter Kataoka Toshirō (1882–1945), born in Shizuoka, who was a pupil of the renowned naturalist novelist Izumi Kyōka. Kataoka worked for Morinaga as the first section chief of their advertising division and did a series of creative ads using onomatopoeic copy with double entendres, such as one that merged natural and military imagery using vertical characters and letters in a grid reading “wind blowing [*kaze sa sa sa*], waves lapping [*nami do do do*], in the nostalgia of the mountain wind [*yamakaze*] and at the edge of the sea breeze [*shiokaze*], you cannot forget, Morinaga milk caramel.”⁶² The double meaning pivoted on the two words *Yamakaze* and *Shiokaze*, which also referred to two famous Japanese naval destroyers of the period.

Kataoka moved to the Kotobukiya Company (now Suntory) in 1919 to work with the president Torii Shinjiro to promote Akadama Port Wine.⁶³ Kataoka was a transgressor of conventional advertising boundaries and made a series of

radical gestures for Torii that have immortalized Akadama in advertising history. He soon became known in the industry for designing the first advertising poster showing a seminude woman. His design featured the sepia-tinted photograph of opera actress Matsushima Emiko topless, revealing her bared shoulders, as she coquettishly holds a ruby-red glass of wine to promote Akadama in 1922. But even before that, in 1920, Kataoka had hand-penned the product name in red ink on top of its newspaper advertisement, sending the printed edition out as if it had been covertly covered with graffiti. This act of typographic disobedience became legendary, a radical intervention into the conventional space of the newspaper that humorously juxtaposed the hand-brushed red letterforms with the rigidly printed newspaper text. A large red circle—the eponymous red ball—also blotched out a whole section of text. Featured on the wine bottle's label, the red circle brought to mind the iconic motif of the sun (also on Japan's national flag), which Torii believed to be a life-giving force. The motif thus effectively bolstered the product's identity as a medically certified, nourishing libation.⁶⁴

Kataoka's work for Cascade (later renamed Oraga) beer, a brand Kotobukiya acquired, had similar pictorial and lexical whimsy. One Cascade advertisement showed a photograph of a man collapsed on a bed with an upright bottle of beer between his legs as a humorous phallic substitution.⁶⁵ Another for Oraga that became a series set up a bold grid of katakana and kanji that rhythmically read “O-ra-ga de-ta! O-ra-ga no-me!” —“Oraga has come! Drink Oraga!” (figure 2.19). Critics in *Advertising World* recognized Kataoka's humor and tendency toward the “raunchy” (*kitanai*) that pushed the boundaries of newspaper publishing standards of acceptability, declaring that consumer enthusiasm for the company's beer was more a response to the advertising than the quality of the beverage.⁶⁶

Kataoka's fertile mind was constantly innovating. Undoubtedly, some of his greatest contributions to advertising were for Kotobukiya's Smoca brand tooth powder (Sumoka hamigaki), specifically targeted at smokers and released in 1925. Sold for ¥0.15 per can, the product claimed to help remove stains and black spots and to keep teeth white and healthy while freshening breath. Smoca was marketed across genders and classes: it could whiten the teeth of modern girls and the pipe-smoking prostitutes of the pleasure quarters, blue-collar workers in *happi* coats, and businessmen in suits and fedoras. The Smoca brand left Kotobukiya to become an independent company in 1932, and Kataoka went with it.

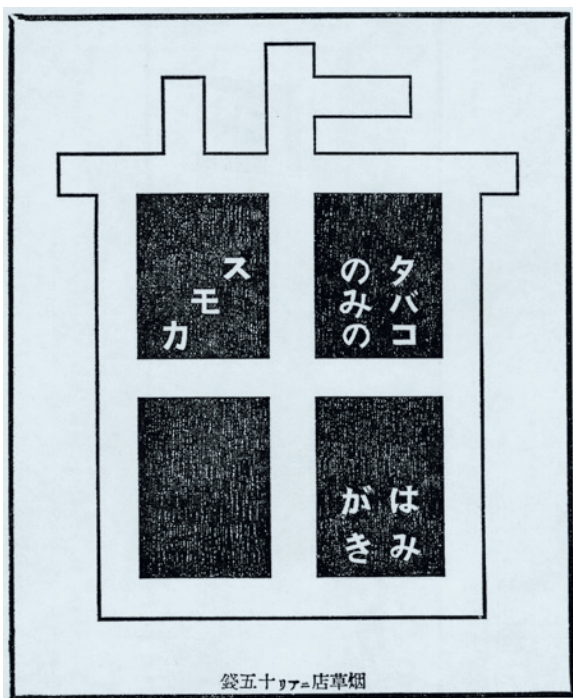
For Smoca, artist Suiryū Gan first created the brand logo out of smoke wafting from a pipe crisscrossed with a toothbrush. The smoke morphs into the romanized letters “Smoca” with the product's distinctive metal can centered in the middle of the *o*. The toothbrush points toward the front of the name, gesturing



2.20 Kataoka Toshirō,
newspaper advertisement for
Smoca tooth powder, *Tōkyō*
asahi shinbun, June 6, 1930,
a.m. ed., 5

to the erasure of the darkening effects of the smoke.⁶⁷ Commercial advertisers widely used images of their products or something associated with the product to form the letters of their brand name. For example, Lion Dentrifrice caught people's attention by rendering its name in the form of toothpaste squeezed out of a tube in cursive. Kataoka played with wafts of smoke trailing from pipes and cigarettes, curling them expressively into the air to make legible smoke signals.

For Smoca, Kataoka also played with grids of repeated characters.⁶⁸ One four-by-five example showed each column representing a day; the first (before using Smoca) repeats the characters “black, black, black, black”; then the next column, the first day using the product, is “black black black white”; the second



2.21 Kataoka Toshirō, newspaper advertisement for Smoca tooth powder, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, August 19, 1932, a.m. ed., 5



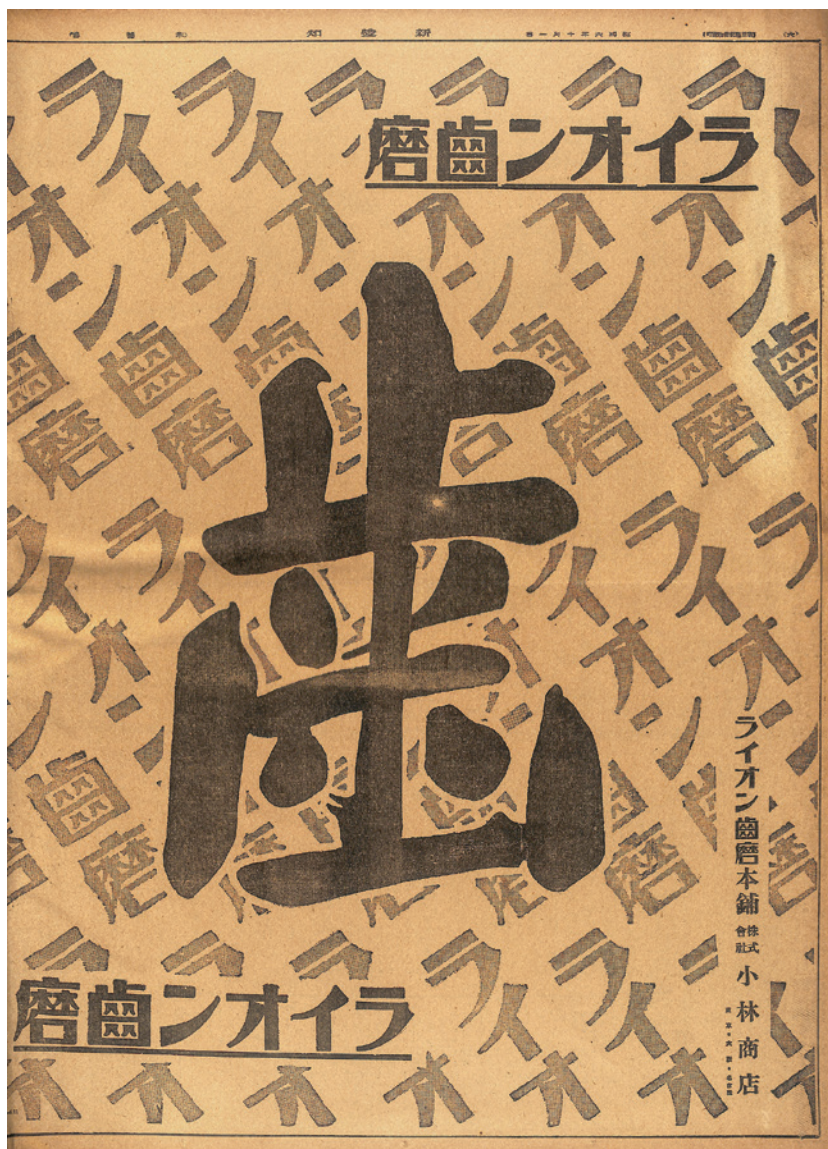
2.22 Kataoka Toshirō, newspaper advertisement for Smoca tooth powder, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, May 16, 1931, a.m. ed., 10

day is “black black white white”; until by the fourth day the entire column is white and the tooth powder has presumably brushed away all the black stains (figure 2.20). The rows of repeated characters for black and white are themselves like rows of teeth. In another ad with the repeated tagline *ha ga ha ni naru Smoca* (literally, the tooth becomes the tooth, or more idiomatically, the tooth gets broken), the double entendre is not comprehensible without reading the visual gloss, as the first *ha* (tooth) is black and the second is white, so with the use of Smoca, the “black tooth becomes the white tooth.”⁶⁹

The kanji character for “tooth,” or *ha*, is a pictogram for teeth in a mouth and has a distinctive box structure that could be aesthetically geometricized to serve as a container for ad copy.⁷⁰ In Japan use of this character dates back as far as the eighth-century historical annals of the *Records of Ancient Matters* (*Kojiki*) and had positive connotations of longevity. Kataoka repeatedly exploited its pictographic qualities with a series of ads that focused on the single giant character *ha*. In the rectilinear form of the black-outlined white character in one advertisement, he created four black quadrants as a visual metonym for smoke-stained teeth, placing parts of the tagline within them, reading vertically from right to left: “for smokers [*tabako nomi no*], tooth powder [*hamigaki*], Smoca” (figure 2.21).⁷¹ In one example, a gigantic outline of the *ha* character for tooth housed ad copy that completely replaced its internal brushstrokes.⁷² And in another, he transformed the inner brushstrokes of an anthropomorphized *ha* character into triangular black teeth clamping down on a cigarette dangling from its mouth, a single zigzagging line of smoke trailing upward (figure 2.22). The top horizontal stroke of the character tipped diagonally like a stylish beret on its head. The image made the linguistic character into a mascot.⁷³

Like rhymical repetition, lexical gigantism was an enduring visual strategy. The use of the giant *ha* continued to live on even a decade later when Lion revisited this pictographic approach with its own gigantic tooth in a newspaper advertisement that ran in the *Shin Aichi shinbun* on October 1, 1931 (figure 2.23). The single hand-brushed character for tooth—*ha*—dominating the center, now sat atop a diagonally printed repeating pattern reading “Lion Toothpaste.” Awarded first prize in the annual Advertising Association competition, Lion’s ad transformed Smoca’s playfulness into an earnest advocacy for the primacy of the tooth.

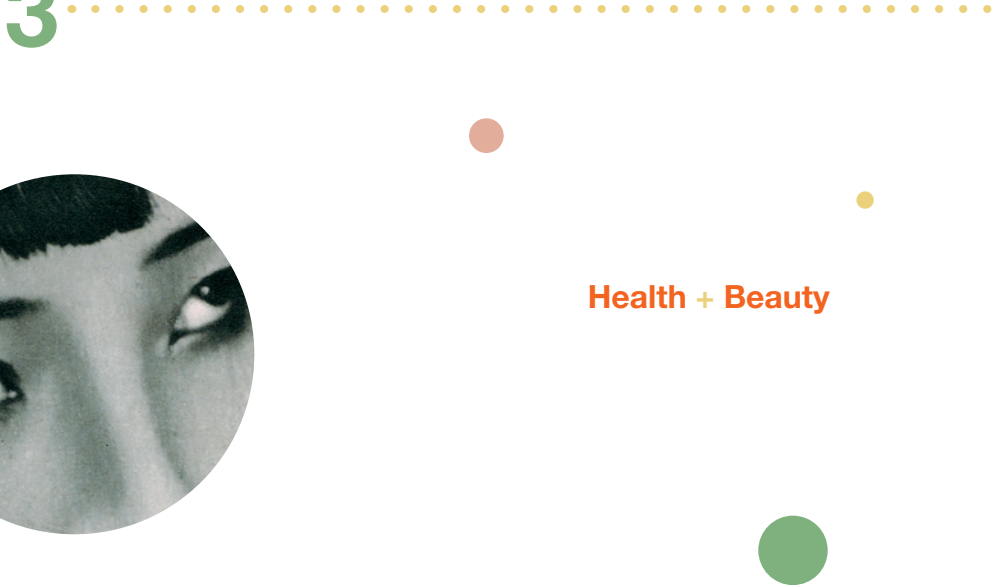
LETTERFORMS HAVE BEEN a vital topic in design discourse and commercial practice across all market sectors from the late nineteenth century up to the present. Designers in Japan transmitted artistic, subjective, ethnic, and ideological meaning through the skillful orchestration of the linguistic multivalence of the Japanese language. The renowned graphic and typography designer



2.23 Lion Dentifrice, newspaper advertisement using the large character *ha* (tooth), originally run in *Shin Aichi shinbun*, October 1, 1931, 6. Reproduced in *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, April 21, 1932, a.m. ed., 6. Lion Corporation

Tanaka Ikkō (1930–2002) addressed such multivalence in another connection: “Japanese can skillfully differentiate the use of chopsticks and forks. They don’t feel that it is difficult to distinguish which one to choose. These are two tools that have coexisted for them since they were born. They eat Japanese food [*washoku*] for breakfast, Chinese [*chūka*] for lunch, and for dinner they eat authentic Western food [*seiyōshoku*] that is exactly the same as Westerners eat. They get in a Western-style bathtub and sleep in a tatami room. None of these are unusual customs.”⁷⁴ Just as the Japanese today live a daily life inflected by transcultural culinary practices, they also live in and continue to produce a dynamic visual culture animated by a polyglot language made visible through typography and letterform design.

3

A horizontal dotted line in a light yellow color extends from the number 3 across the top of the page. Below this line, there are several colored circles: a small red circle, a small yellow circle, and a medium green circle.

Health + Beauty

Make your face three dimensional.

—KOMAI REIKO for Shiseido in *Approaches to
Three-Dimensional Beauty Cosmetics Methods* (ca. 1934)

While the health and beauty industry may not have garnered the level of scholarly attention paid to other economic sectors, it was without question a critical part of Japan's burgeoning consumer market in the early twentieth century. It provides an unparalleled window into the changing contemporary ideals of beauty and taste, not to mention being a valuable indicator of cultural trends in health and hygiene. Health and beauty products and their publicity tell a distinctive story about Japan's experience of modernity, particularly the impact of changing gender roles on national culture. As historian Kathy Peiss has convincingly argued, "beauty culture" should be understood not only as a type of commerce but also "as a system of

A large, stylized circular graphic in the bottom right corner, composed of several overlapping segments in shades of orange, yellow, and green, resembling a fan or a stylized flower.

meaning that helped women navigate the changing conditions of modern social experience” as they increasingly entered public life.¹ While women were the primary consumers in this market, they were not the only ones. Men were also actively engaged, as were modern families, particularly children.

Manufacturers in the health and beauty sector established new rituals of cleanliness, breaking down the totality of the body into its constituent elements: skin, hands, teeth, eyes, and hair.² Each segment of the body became another opportunity to market products by producing needs and deficits. Not surprisingly, manufacturers in the health and beauty industry became pioneers in advertising, as their products often required an aesthetic and affective surplus to compensate for the higher price points of brand-name products. These manufacturers helped shape the visuality of the Japanese public sphere, as their designs mediated public perceptions of health and beauty from the boudoir to the storefront. Two are the focus here: Kao and Shiseido.³

Kao and Shiseido both played vital roles in inculcating official hygiene regimes that capitalized on the new consumer identities of Japan’s modern domesticity.⁴ At the same time, by necessity their corporate identities were tethered to luxury consumption as cosmetic products still catered to an upscale clientele. On this key point, however, the companies diverged over time. By the 1930s, touting the modern virtues of quality, purity, value, and health, Kao no longer promoted its soap as a high-end beauty product but instead shifted to marketing it as a staple good, essential for a vigorous and productive nation. Alternatively, Shiseido maintained a connection to its core concept of “richness,” which encompassed the notions of luxury, glamour, and cosmopolitanism, selling a stylish *élan vital* predicated on the beauty of good health.

Cosmetics Advertising in Japan

Commercial advertisements for modern, Western-style cosmetics appeared in the Japanese mass media as early as 1876. There were in fact many early players in the field with fierce competition. Hirao Sanpei Shōten entered the market with its popular products: Komachisui perfume in 1878, Diamond tooth powder in 1891, and Cream Lait face balm and lotion in 1906 and 1909 respectively. Nakayama Taiyōdō’s Club Cosmetics launched its beauty line soon after, in 1910. Professionalization also began early, as companies based in the capital joined the Tokyo Sundries Association (Tōkyō Komamono Goshō Kumiai), formed in 1900. Still, only a handful of these companies and brands survived the vicissitudes of Japan’s tumultuous twentieth century. These enduring companies shared some important strategies—as well as some random good luck. First

and foremost, they invested heavily in advertising, including some of the earliest full-page newspaper advertisements. They were early developers of corporate identity systems and were clever at mood advertising.⁵ And, last, they employed talented designers and copywriters who developed influential images and catchphrases that not only stuck in the public imagination but reimagined daily life. Kao soap's campaign "From Baby's First Bath," for example, tapped into notions of virtuous motherhood while ensuring proper domestic hygiene by creating body-washing regimens that are now standard. Shiseido's "rich" cosmetics opened the door to an aspirational world of extravagance and transnational cosmopolitanism. By articulating new ideologies of a hygienic modernity and new aesthetics of personal beauty that they linked to pleasurable emotions or virtuous attitudes, these companies shaped consumption practices and constructed new consumer identities, producing wants and presenting them as needs.

Early Meiji enlightenment thinkers such as Fukuzawa Yukichi strongly believed in the promotional efficacy of advertising but were concerned about its use in newspapers, which they viewed more as political organs. They saw publicity and politics as incompatible.⁶ Nevertheless, newspapers soon became the main beachhead for commercial advertising, which quickly expanded to all of Japan's burgeoning print culture. Shiseido's second president, Fukuhara Shinzō (1883–1948), who had his finger on the pulse of contemporary global artistic trends and capitalized on this knowledge to keep the company at the forefront of tastemakers in Japan, made an enormous contribution to the development of advertising design. Ironically, however, he did not like the word *advertising* (*kōkoku*), a sentiment actually shared by many of his contemporaries around the world. Fukuhara argued that his goal was to enhance the company image and not to advertise commodities; consequently, he felt that illuminating the inherently attractive features of a product would elevate the image of the company. While Fukuhara was clearly ahead of his time in understanding the associative dynamics of brand construction, his earnest statements overlook the fact that these attractive features were not just based on the product's inherent quality and functionality but also accrued through packaging, display, and print promotion, which were in effect advertising. Despite Fukuhara's ardent claims that the product should speak for itself, it is clear from the company's investment in design and advertising that it did not.⁷

The Origins of Kao Soap

When Nagase Shōten opened for business in 1887, cosmetic soap used for the face and body was not commonly seen in the average Japanese household, and neither handwashing nor hair washing was the general custom in Japan that each

is today. Now known as Kao Corporation, the company is still a leader in the Japanese health and beauty industry and has played a central role in the transformation of the daily hygiene and cosmetic practices of the Japanese nation over the past century. Nagase began marketing Kao brand soap (Kaō sekken)—one of the earliest domestically produced brands of cosmetic soap—in 1890, and by 1910 it was a national brand.⁸ At the time, relatively few products had brand-name recognition—even less national recognition—and the identity of the merchant was often more a selling point than that of the manufacturer.

Commonly called *savon* in Japan from soon after its introduction by European traders in the mid-sixteenth century, soap was used for mainly medicinal purposes by only a small sector of the Japanese population, with most people using forms of rice bran, pumice, and loofahs for washing. With the importation of mass-produced, higher-quality soaps in the late nineteenth century, cosmetic soap for the face and body began to be marketed to a broader array of upper-class consumers for about ¥0.05 per bar, while no-name domestic soap of lower quality was sold for ¥0.10 per dozen (in comparison, a five-kilogram bag of rice sold for ¥0.23). Because of the relatively high cost of production, Nagase marketed its soap as a luxury and gift item, selling initially for a steep ¥0.12 per bar. A gift box of three was priced at ¥0.35.⁹ Even by 1926 the average monthly household income for laborers was still only ¥102.07, of which nearly a third went for food and an additional 50 percent went for nonfood expenditures including lodging. A little over 7 percent, or ¥7.37, was designated for medical and hygiene expenses.¹⁰ The average household income for salaried workers was not much higher, at ¥137.17, with close to a third spent for food and over 60 percent for nonfood expenditures, with just a slightly higher portion devoted to medical and hygiene expenses. The small margin of discretionary income indicates the relative luxury of purchasing name-brand cosmetic soap at the time.¹¹

The high profit margin on cosmetic goods was a major incentive for manufacturers, although initially half of this profit was cycled back into advertising. From the beginning, they considered a soap's image, name, and packaging of preeminent importance in effective marketing. Each bar of Kao soap was imprinted with the company name and distinctive logo. Then Nagase individually wrapped the bars in decorated paper that once again featured the company name and logo imprinted in black, green, and gold. Popular three-bar sets were further packaged in an upscale paulownia wood box. Early advertisements mostly featured images of the product itself, emphasizing its unsurpassed quality, hygienic and cosmetic efficacy, and modern stylishness. Nagase also exhibited Kao soap at various national and international industrial expositions, entering it in many sponsored competitions. The product consistently won, taking top

prizes at Japan's third and fifth Domestic Industrial Expositions and a silver medal at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.¹²

At the time Kao entered the market, regular lower-grade soap was referred to as *arai sekken* (cleaning soap), while more refined (often scented) cosmetic soap was known as *kao arai* (*kao* meaning “face,” and *arai* meaning “to clean”). Concerned to associate the company's domestically produced soap with cosmetic applications for the face, the founding president, Nagase Tomirō, experimented with a variety of homophones for the word *face* (*kao*) when selecting characters for the product brand name. Advertising copy announcing the product launch explained that the combination of the characters for *flower* (花) and *king* (王), creating the sound “ka-ō,” referred to the pristine beauty and heavenly fragrance of the peony, commonly known as the “king of a hundred flowers.” Chinese poets such as Li Bai, the text went on to explain, associated the peony with the legendary Tang dynasty beauty Yang Gui Fei, who was immortalized in the poetry of Bo Juyi for her snow-white complexion—a complexion that use of the Kao product promised to help reproduce.¹³ As a result, through this poetic, Sinified brand name, the company aurally evoked the majestic image of a clean and beautiful face, and the name served as an inspiration for its pictorial and typographic expression in advertising. To further the connections between science and culture, Nagase also had well-known doctors endorse the product while commissioning famous writers to compose Chinese poetry about it.¹⁴ The calligraphic brand-name typography was later codified and used everywhere, including on promotional delivery trucks (figure 3.1), electrically illuminated signboards on top of city buildings (figure 3.2), and billboards along railway lines. Nagase had quickly recognized the significance of Japan's newly expanding railroad network for promotional purposes. By 1896 he had installed a Kao billboard at every station along the Tōkaidō train line between Tokyo and Kyoto. Expansion of Kao sales around the country was keyed to the development of the railroads.¹⁵

From the product's inception, Kao's multipronged marketing strategy advocated regular soap use as the first line of defense against the transmission of disease while simultaneously promoting it as the key to beautiful skin. Nagase reinforced the Kao soap brand identity as a facial cosmetic product by choosing for the company trademark the image of a crescent moon with a face uttering the words “Kao soap” in a cloud of bubbles (figure 3.3). Pictorial images associated with shining were consistently popular for use in trademarks in Japan because they were thought to imbue commercial products with auspicious associations, specifically the illumination of heaven and the gods.¹⁶ These principally included the “three shining symbols” of the moon, star, and sun. While company lore credits Nagase with selecting the crescent moon logo (which was initially



3.1 Kao signage on delivery trucks (with balloon bubbles) decorated for an advertising parade. Kao Corporation

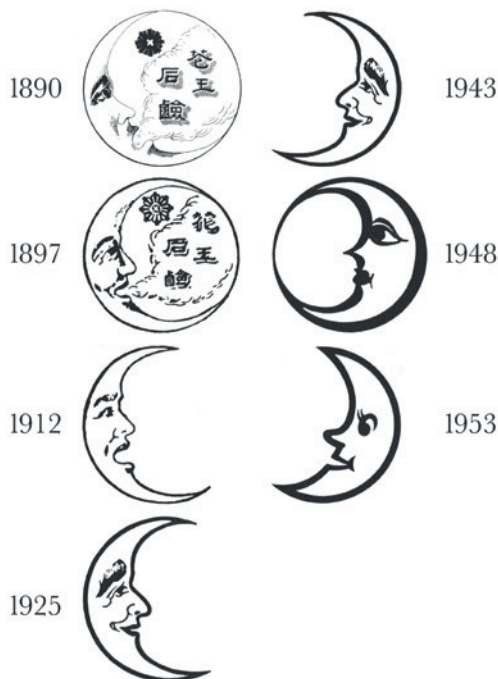
combined with a star), in fact several years prior to his registration of the Kao logo, the image was already associated with imported soaps, most notably Procter and Gamble's popular product Ivory soap, marketed widely from 1879. The crescent moon was also associated with the cycles of the month, and by extension the ocean tides and women. It became a common feature in the trademarks of companies in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries (particularly products related to hygiene).¹⁷ The physiognomy of the face in Kao's crescent moon logo changed over time, becoming slightly more wizened and approachable by the mid-1920s.

The brand name and the crescent moon logo were two common sites of typographic and pictorial elaboration in company advertising throughout its history. Already representing an image of the man in the moon, the logo was further anthropomorphized in early company advertising, which showed the crescent moon face engaged in various activities. The moon face was placed on an array of human bodies: a kneeling samurai in traditional Japanese male attire extolling the product's superior hygienic efficacy or a standing figure nattily dressed in a Western-style morning coat offering New Year's greetings in a cloud of bubbles. On the back cover of publisher Hakubunkan's serial *Actual Accounts of the Russo-Japanese War* (*Nichiro sensō jikkō*), published in 1904, a Kao advertisement showed a disembodied crescent moon face floating over a globe reading from a book that



3.2 Kao electric signboard illuminated at night in Ueno Hirokōji, Tokyo, ca. 1930s. Kao Corporation

3.3 Evolution of Kao soap
crescent moon logo from 1890
to 1953. Kao Corporation



touted the urgent need for Kao soap's high quality during wartime, when, as the copy reminded the reader, matters of hygiene and economy were of utmost importance. This necessity implicitly extended to Japan's imperialist expansion (an expanding dominion signified by the moon over the globe), as the war was being fought over contested holdings in northern China that would eventually become the foothold for establishing Manchukuo. The connection among hygiene, economics, and national standing in the world theater of imperialism was a theme revisited in subsequent promotional campaigns.

Kao Consumers and Gendered Hygiene

Kao targeted several consumer groups, with upper- and middle-class urban women initially constituting the major portion of the company's national consumer base. By 1930 there were over seventeen million women between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four in Japan, and even the limited marketing data available from the prewar period indicate the importance of women consumers as a market for new Western-style health and beauty products.¹⁸ Japanese publishers and mass media outlets were similarly recognizing the profitability

of new markets centered on women consumers, founding at least ten major magazines directed at female readers between 1885 and 1912.¹⁹

As Kao democratized its soap, the company expanded its target clientele to include blue-collar women and their families. Women were also essential industrial laborers in the manufacturing of new consumer goods, and companies were prominently featuring them as their modern workforce. According to the 1930 census, out of Japan's ten million factory workers, 14 percent, or over 1.5 million, were women.²⁰ Together with a host of other working women who were entering new professions as nurses, train conductors, telephone operators, and waitresses, they constituted a major consumer block.

Social historian Narita Ryūichi has identified the gendered nature of Japan's emerging modern discourse on hygiene, which provides a crucial analytical framework for understanding how, and to whom, health and beauty product manufacturers marketed newly constructed rituals of cleanliness. Narita has shown that from 1900 to 1930, when modern hygiene information was widely disseminated in Japan, the home was the primary locus of daily attention to hygiene, and women were designated by official and nonofficial sources, including neighborhood associations and the mass media, as the chief managers of this domestic sphere. Women's active contributions to public forums on matters of hygiene, such as question-and-answer sections in popular journals, indicate their continued concern with these issues and their gradual assimilation of institutionalized notions of a healthy ("normal") body.²¹

Kao sold its products at upscale and everyday retail establishments.²² Keen to attract a large pool of consumers, Kao and many other corporate advertisers found it beneficial to link their marketing strategies to the public policy objectives of the patriarchal Japanese state, which was already attempting to mold women of varying ages into educated consumer-subjects. State and social reformers of often surprisingly different political persuasions were involved in a broad-based national movement to make women into efficient domestic managers (modern housewives) and hygienic, rational mothers, an ideal represented by the highly moralizing slogan of the period "Good wife, wise mother." Historian Sheldon Garon has dubbed these interventions a form of "social management," which was increasingly evident across Japanese society through the 1920s and intensified in the 1930s as the government mobilized imperial subjects in "moral suasion" campaigns.²³

A Kao company newspaper advertisement from March 1930 rendered in the style of a simple, roughly hewn woodblock print shows the head of a modern young woman, identifiable by her up-to-date bun hairstyle and her clearly Westernized features. The copy text is literally embedded in her otherwise empty brain. It reads, "If you were to ask the doctor you most trust, the first

3.4 Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, March 9, 1930, a.m. ed., 6. (This ad also ran in other major national newspapers.) Kao Corporation



thing he would say is—soap should be Kao” (figure 3.4). Drawn like a radiant sunburst, the inner outline of the woman’s head frames the copy as a brilliant idea, implying that in consultation with an array of “scientific” experts, the Japanese woman was being enlightened about how to consume properly.

While the aestheticization of soap as a luxury commodity was critical to Kao’s early success in the cosmetics market, aesthetic strategies continued to be important even from the 1920s, when the state officially endorsed cosmetic soap as a staple good and removed it from the government’s list of taxed nonessentials, resulting in a marked increase in the personal daily use of soap products.²⁴ After the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923 devastated the area in and around the national capital, Tokyo, cosmetic soap gradually went from being a largely upper- or middle-class specialty item to something used by average imperial subjects on a regular basis.²⁵ As Louisa Rubinfién has noted, “What in 1920 had been considered novelties were by the late ’20s gaining the status of ‘necessities.’”²⁶ As a 1932 Kao newspaper advertisement showed, imitating the layout of a tabloid-style journalistic photomontage, soap use was for every daily activity of the modern middle-class family: after returning home from school, before eating a meal, after visiting the dusty library, after playing sports, before cooking, before and after applying a woman’s cosmetics, after riding the trains to and from work, and when leaving the office.²⁷

Paradoxically, Kao’s success in bringing its brand-name product to national recognition also encouraged a flood of new competitors, requiring the company

to redouble its efforts in advertising and marketing. In 1911 close to two thousand soap manufacturers registered for trademarks.²⁸ While leading the field, Kao still competed with imported brand-name cosmetic products such as Japan Lever Brothers' Velvet soap. And in terms of domestic competition, it went head-to-head with high-quality products such as Marumiya's Mitsuwa soap and Shiseido soap.²⁹

Rampant unregulated and unauthorized price slashing among retailers in the mid-1920s, combined with severe competition, however, caused additional problems for Kao that sapped profits and eventually prompted radical rethinking of the company's business policies. When Nagase Tomirō II took over as company president in 1927, just two years after the company went from being a limited partnership to a corporation, he began a thorough overhaul of the company's production, management, promotion, and distribution strategies. This included a radical change in its marketing strategy from promoting Kao soap as a high-class luxury item to presenting it as a mass-market daily consumer good, which also meant cutting the price per unit by a third, to ¥0.10 apiece. This bold move effectively democratized high-quality soap.

“New and Improved Kao”

In 1931 the company mounted a massive new advertising campaign for this even higher quality and lower-priced commodity, called New and Improved Kao (Shinsō Kaō), which was overseen by the newly hired Ōta Hideshige (1892–1982), considered one of the first professional art directors in Japan.³⁰ Trade journal reviewers were already recommending that Kao shift its advertising approach, criticizing the company's designs as stiff and out of date due to the repeated use of similar soap bars and crescent moon imagery.³¹ Since Ōta joined Kao right at the time of a leadership change to a new president, he was able to exert tremendous influence in reshaping the company's image and advertising strategies at a crucial juncture.

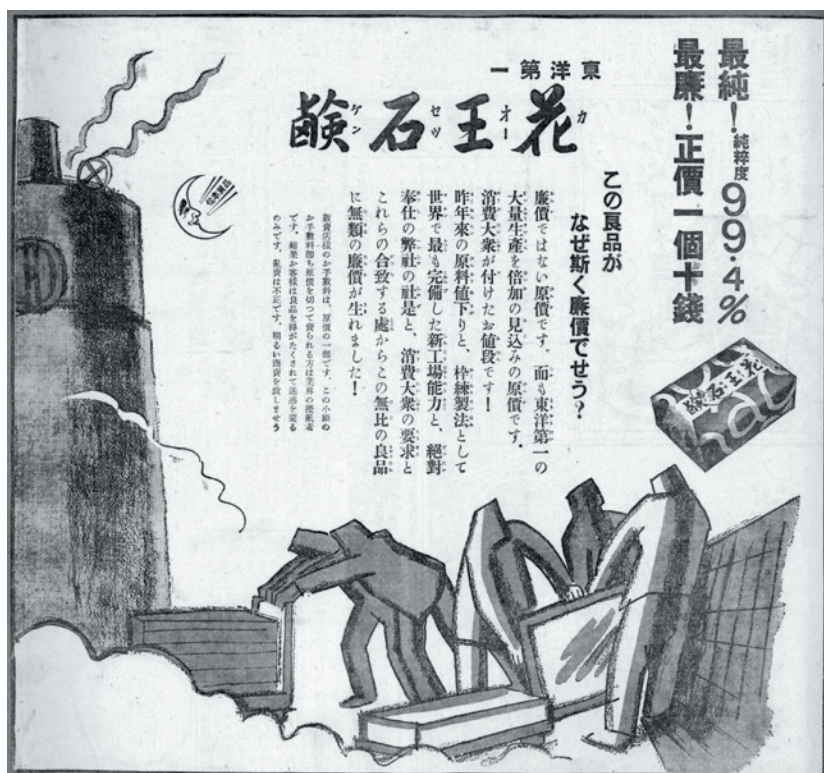
The vast amount of innovative design produced for the New Kao campaign and related subsequent campaigns into the 1930s constitutes one of the company's major contributions to the development of the commercial design field in Japan, introducing what Japanese critics later lauded as a distinctive “Kao whiff.”³² That effort also exposed a fascinating connection between the democratization of soap and the instrumentalization of modernist styles, despite what one might presume to be the elitist connotations of these high-art aesthetics. Designers wielded a potent cultural weapon of persuasion when they deployed modernist aesthetics in the mass media, as it allowed unprecedented liberty in

formal manipulation that keyed stylistic innovation to ideologies of progressive civilization. One message this implicitly conveyed was that even through a commodity as mundane as a bar of soap, every man or woman could tap into an international culture of modernity. This was certainly the message that the Japanese government was communicating to its imperial subjects, so Kao's advertising reinforced such official ideologies constructed around hygiene praxis.

As the artistic director for Kao's new design division within the advertising section, Ōta was personally responsible for selecting all the visual imagery as well as composing all the new copy for the New and Improved Kao campaign.³³ This included several overarching thematic catchphrases that appeared on advertising series, of which undoubtedly the most memorable is "From Baby's First Bath, Kao Soap." This simple yet affecting phrase was a direct call to mothers to implement the new rituals of cleanliness at home to ensure the well-being of their children—the future of the nation. Ōta's other copy, however, included several statements that read more as exhortations to social revolution than as invitations to buy cosmetic soap: "A revolution in factory profits!" "A popular soap born of the masses!" "Listen to the vanguard of the reformation movement." This tied into his close personal affinity with Christianity and left-wing politics. He was a protégé of the well-known Christian leader Ebina Danjō, who published the magazine *New Man* (*Shinjin*), an influential forum for the discussion of socialist humanism in a Christian faith context. Two years after Ebina left Tokyo in 1920 to take up the presidency of Doshisha University (*Dōshisha Daigaku*) in Kyoto, he handpicked Ōta to replace him as editor in chief of the magazine.³⁴

Still on close terms with his mentor, Ōta was introduced by Ebina to Nagase Tomirō II in Kyoto while the latter was a theology student at Doshisha University, right before he was called back to Tokyo to take up the reins of his father's company. The young Nagase also held strong leftist sympathies and was deeply influenced by Ōta. After Nagase hired Ōta at Kao, the two began mobilizing the company workers, much to the dismay of the preexisting management, to reform the internal structure of the company to form "an ideal organization of production and sales" as part of the implementation of a larger social reformation movement. This gradually alienated labor from management, with the president in this case uncharacteristically siding with labor. This philosophical shift was partly responsible for the company's attempts to democratize cosmetic soap by lowering the per-unit price, but the decision was also based on a practical need to stimulate consumption during the economic downturn of the Great Depression.³⁵

Ōta quickly set about visualizing a new image of Kao soap for the consumer market. To augment his staff, in April 1930 he hired two graduates of the design division of the prestigious Tokyo School of Fine Arts—Asuka Tetsuo (aka Taka-



3.5 Asuka Tetsuo, Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, March 8, 1931, a.m. ed., 6. Kao Corporation

hashi Tetsuo; 1895–1997) and Okuda Masanori (1901–1967)—to execute his programs in-house.³⁶ A skilled oil painter who had studied under renowned Japanese academician Okada Saburōsuke, Asuka, like many artists of his generation who trained with conservative painting masters, took his work more in the direction of new expressionistic styles. And in 1925, at Ōta's request, he designed covers for several issues of *New Man*, for which he produced dynamic, abstracted figurative sketches of workers and factory scenes that resonated with the leftist orientation of the journal—a style and content that he then brought to Kao advertising. Advertising critics quickly praised this new Kao design work as “fresh” and boldly expressing the “strong new mood” of the company’s transformation (figure 3.5).³⁷

The New and Improved Kao campaign included everything from entirely revamping the product’s packaging to initiating direct marketing nationwide. The shift to direct marketing, as opposed to the use of middlemen distributors,



3.6 Original drawings for the New and Improved Kao soap package design competition by (clockwise from top left) Hara Hiromu (winning entry), Hirokawa Matsugorō, Sugiura Hisui, Yoshida Kenkichi, Murayama Tomoyoshi, and Okuda Masanori. Kao Corporation

was very significant from an advertising standpoint because it meant relying even more on consumer recognition of product brand names and manufacturer identity. The first step in this direction was a major facelift for the Kao soap bar. In 1930 the company sponsored an invitational competition for a new package design and, as a result, switched to a radically different red packaging. Eight individual artist-designers submitted a total of twenty-eight separate design concepts, which included artistic approaches as diverse as the logo-oriented, repetitive patterns suggested by Mitsukoshi's Sugiura Hisui to the more abstract designs of self-proclaimed avant-garde artists like Murayama Tomoyoshi (figure 3.6). Others who submitted designs included well-established applied arts and textile designer Hirokawa Matsugorō, a regular exhibitor in the crafts divi-



3.7 Hara Hiromu, New Kao soap wrapping paper, ca. 1930. Kao Corporation

sion of the annual imperial art salon. The competition attracted such talent because Kao paid ¥100 to each entrant and an additional ¥300 for the winning design. The combined amount of ¥400 constituted a considerable portion of a year's income for most people in the design field.³⁸

Ōta recommended to the planning division and production conference Hara Hiromu's bold modern red package design, launching an illustrious career that established Hara as one of the most important and powerful graphic designers in Japan until his death in 1986. The company had actually invited Hara's teacher Miyashita Takao to submit to the competition, but he was unavailable and recommended that his student, who had graduated in 1921 and was now heading the printing program at the Tokyo Metropolitan School of Industrial Arts, take his place.³⁹

Hara's design on a vermillion background became emblematic of the new company image, so much so that designers commonly referred to the red as the "Kao color." He also supplemented the calligraphy-style characters used for the company's name by surrounding them with stylish Western typography spelling out "Kwaō." The *w* in the older style of transliteration was removed when the package went into production (figure 3.7).⁴⁰ The new design and vibrant color

greatly simplified, while intensifying, the visual impact of the product. This also represented a radical reduction in text on the packaging. The loopy letterforms in Hara's typography rolled off the corners of the soap bar but were just legible enough to make out *soap* and the brand name Kao. Near the subtly outlined form of the crescent moon logo sat the only other text, "quality standard."

The redesigned Kao soap bar figured prominently in all subsequent promotional campaigns, and the red stood out in the otherwise predominantly monochromatic settings of prewar publications. The same Kao red and Hara's distinctive typography were selectively applied across the company's spectrum of soap-related product packages, including canned shaving powder and boxes of medicinal soap. Hara's newly designed brand image was also quickly integrated into Kao's retail-oriented promotional materials, such as storefront signboards, which the company produced and distributed to local retailers. The image was then emblazoned across Kao brand promotional materials, handed out to distributors and retailers, which served as small token gifts of gratitude for their loyal collaboration with the manufacturer. Many of these gifts were intended as decorative publicity items to adorn shop interiors, like the Kao calendar previously discussed (see figure 2.9), which in 1932 cleverly used an image of the eye-catching red soap bar to serve as the calendar itself. The bar image opened to reveal a monthly schedule with pithy sayings on each page exhorting the reader to buy Kao products.

Advertising New Kao

New Kao soap began sales in 1931. The decade prior to that, Kao had spent around 3 percent of its annual budget on advertising, but after launching New Kao, this amount leaped to 16 percent and remained between 15 and 18 percent thereafter.⁴¹ In 1922 over 160 million lines of advertising were sold in Japan (cosmetics, food products, medicines, and publications were the leading advertised products). Kao consistently ranked in the top fifteen companies purchasing advertising space.⁴² Like the Nagases, Ōta believed fervently in the efficacy of newspaper advertising and devoted considerable resources to this medium. The full-page newspaper advertisement that kicked off the New and Improved Kao campaign, running in all the major Japanese newspapers, featured a striking photographic image shot from overhead by Kanamaru Shigene (figure 3.8).⁴³ This was, incidentally, one of the earliest examples of a full-page photographic newspaper advertisement in Japan.

Kanamaru's photograph showed a crowd of company employees standing outside the production factory holding up banners and energetically raising their hands in triumph. The copy, reminiscent of Procter and Gamble's renowned



3.8 Kanamaru Shigene
(photographer), Kao soap
advertisement launching New
and Improved Kao (Shinsō
Kaō) campaign. It ran in all
major Japanese newspapers in
March 1931. Kao Corporation

3.9 Cover of Kao company magazine, *Nagaseman* 6 (June 1930). Kao Corporation



scientific endorsement for Ivory soap's purportedly unadulterated ingredients, read "Today is the day of New and Improved Kao, 99.4% pure, net price 10 sen apiece."⁴⁴ Bleeding off the edges of the image, the sea of Kao workers seemed to go on indefinitely—a flood of cheerful labor, male and female, interspersed with a convoy of Kao soap trucks ready to charge out into the streets. The image responded to Kao president Nagase Tomirō II's rallying cry printed in the new company house organ *Nagaseman* (Nagase man), in which he enjoined all employees to be soldiers in the company fight on the battlefield of the consumer market (figure 3.9).⁴⁵

Kanamaru's photograph also clearly drew from triumphal images of industry and social revolution emanating from the Soviet Union in widely circulated propaganda journals such as *USSR in Construction*.⁴⁶ At first glance, this might seem an odd choice of inspiration for depicting production under a capitalist system. Yet it is less strange if one remembers that in 1918 Vladimir Lenin, known to have a photograph of the great American industrialist and scientific manager Henry Ford over his desk, stated, "The possibility of building socialism

depends exactly on our success in combining the Soviet power and the Soviet organization of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism. We must organize in Russia the study and teaching of the Taylor system and systematically try it out and adapt it to our ends.”⁴⁷ And as hard as Soviet designers tried to distance themselves from embourgeoisement, according to art historian Leah Dickerman, in the context of the Soviet Union’s New Economic Policy implemented in the early 1920s, it was increasingly difficult to distinguish “Soviet labor from the alienated labor of capitalism, the revolutionary commodity from the commodity fetish, and Soviet technology from the oppressive machines of the industrial revolution.”⁴⁸

Many Japanese manufacturers positioned themselves as progressive producers in terms of their technologized precision manufacturing and their high-quality products, marketed as bringing a healthy new life to the Japanese collective in line with state objectives. Thus, in Kao’s case, this conflation of labor and capital in a burst of revolutionary victory presented the company at the core of the imagined community of the nation, surrounded by concentric rings of enthusiastic consumer-subjects. Moreover, like the modern housewife-mother, the modern industrial laborer represented a critical building block of the nation. Both worked in spheres where concern for health and hygiene was paramount. This opened another potentially profitable marketing sector for Kao soap products. As representatives of the rapidly proliferating new forms of industrial capital, Kao and other modern manufacturers were engaging increasing numbers of factory workers to produce their products. Therefore, company publicity material deployed aestheticized images of happy, clean, and productive industrial laborers of both sexes as a testament to its cutting-edge production standards and as an invitation to labor itself to participate in these new hygiene practices through its “close friend” Kao soap, thus effectively conflating the producer and the consumer.⁴⁹ The focus on industrial labor was part of Kao’s bid to further democratize soap use, and the full-scale application of modernist pictorial strategies was keyed to this process of democratization.

In one advertisement for the popular science magazine *Scientific Information* (*Kagaku chishiki*) from October 1930, an abstract figure in overalls rendered in a painterly postimpressionist style is shown casually leaning against a simple smokestack that emits puffs of smoke. Next to the figure, the brief copy reads, “Quality, purity, value, and health.” This leisurely image of the worker seems to imply that Kao’s modern production offers labor the luxury of some relaxation, a desirable notion for anyone toiling in factories, although fundamentally misleading. Akin to the work of the American “modern aestheticists of industry,” Charles Sheeler and Margaret Bourke-White, Kao designers em-

3.10 Kao soap advertisement,
Another Universe, January 1931.
 Kao Corporation



ployed glorified images of stalwart workers and gleaming factory complexes in publications issued in the Japanese metropole and its colonies, such as Korea.⁵⁰

One brightly colored advertising image that ran in *Another Universe* (*Betsu kenkon* or *Pyölgön'gon*), a literary journal with proletarian leanings published in Korea, shows a square-shouldered worker confidently looking to his side as he surveys a vast industrial complex (figure 3.10). The copy text, provided in a mixture of kanji characters and Korean hangul, reads, “Best Wishes in the New Year, 1931! This year we are even more determined that Kao (Hwawang) soap, renowned for its good quality and low price, be embraced by more people [*issō minshū*]. A thoroughly good product resulting from forty years of research, at an absolutely low price due to the mobilization of Asia’s best production facilities. Please don’t change. Use our product regularly.”⁵¹ While unlike the profoundly racialized images in British imperialist soap advertising that Anne McClintock has identified, the Kao image similarly relies on the economics of empire building through imperialist expansionism on the Korean peninsula and Asian continent.⁵² It annexes



3.11 Kao soap advertisement, *Yomiuri shinbun*, February 26, 1931. Kao Corporation

what is presumably Korean labor, or elides the difference between Japanese and Korean labor, superimposing Japanese hygiene practices onto the colony as part of the colonial civilizing mission. A common Kao copy phrase calls out to the viewer above the product brand name, “Number One in the Orient” (*Tōyō daiichi*)—a position the Japanese empire was also increasingly claiming for itself.

Despite the masculine identity of the industrial sphere, the growing population of female factory workers was a regular topic of impassioned discussion among Japanese social reformers, who were attempting to reform them into an idealized image of “the Japanese woman.” They envisioned this reformed female factory worker as a buttress to the nation and a critical cog for maintaining Japan’s capitalist expansion.⁵³ Kao’s substantial female labor force frequently appeared in company advertisements and promotional material in the 1930s. “Double-time production day and night!” is preparing for “the approaching day of New and Improved Kao’s arrival,” read one advertisement that ran in the *Yomiuri shinbun* just a month before the product’s launch (figure 3.11). “Precisely because we have confidence in the product’s quality, we are taking this profitless risk with this fine product at this price; we will actually prove the rationality of this revolutionary profitability by attracting the support of the

3.12 Cover of *Kao Bulletin*, no. 72 (August 1939). Kao Corporation



consuming masses!” exclaimed additional copy placed above the heads of rows of apron-clad female workers with their heads bowed, focusing intently on their work, their image expanding across the page in a seemingly endless assembly line. Shooting vertically out of this mass of women is a surging arrow that encompasses the machinery of mass production, appearing as if it is producing the women as well. The arrow simultaneously reads as a visual emphasis of the product’s elevated purity asserted to the left. As company workers (but also as women and mothers), the female employees attest to the product’s quality.

Later in the decade, in 1939, a cover for the internal company publication *Kao Bulletin* (*Kaō buretin*) showed a montage of photographs in which an image of a small child holding up her hands for inspection is superimposed on a bustling image of Kao female factory workers packaging soap bars (figure 3.12). Above the child’s head, the text reads, “Easy disinfection, handy soap” (*tegaru na shōdoku, tejikana sekken*). The text and visual design revolve around the image of hands—the site of contamination and disinfection. Hands are the visual centerpiece of the composition, they are the instrument of the women’s

labor, and the character for hand (*te*) appears in both Japanese words in the copy, “easy” and “handy,” highlighted by having the rest of each word written out phonetically in script.⁵⁴ The expansion of Kao marketing to the working class, including invocations to its own employees, continued to identify women as the primary agents of family hygiene. Here women policed their family’s cleanliness and were themselves policed by rings of authority, starting with their employer and extending to the state. At the same time, as diligent Kao employees, they were responsible for the collective future health of the nation, symbolized by the child. These images complicate the scholarly debate about whether capitalist mass consumerism was controlling or emancipatory for women, since it was simultaneously both.

In the New and Improved Kao campaign, even salespeople were cloaked in the new Kao wrapping. The company hired mannequin girls to stand at all major department stores throughout the Kantō region holding balloons to promote the campaign.⁵⁵ On several occasions Kao enlisted well-known popular film actresses, such as Hosokawa Chikako, to greet consumers at point-of-purchase displays and in front of stores (figure 3.13). Hosokawa and the other mannequin girls wore logo-patterned sheaths and headscarves that prominently displayed the new Kao typography dynamically rippling across their bodies. Just as Paris-based artist Sonia Delaunay had mapped a vibrant and sensuous abstract geometry onto the bodies of models adorned in her “simultaneous clothing” that transformed them into “luxurious and ornamented surface[s]” at the 1925 Paris International Exhibition, so too did the Kao-logo garb exploit the curves and movement of the female body to animate the decorative patterning of the costume.⁵⁶ This suited the fashionable context of the upscale department store. But the superimposition of an apron on top of the logo costume, one of the classic prewar Japanese ciphers of female labor (domestic and industrial), mitigates the sensuality of the mannequin’s body, countering it with a desexualized (procreative or productive) image of woman as wife, mother, and worker. Here the contradictory identities of women and cosmetic soap are revealed to be intertwined, woman as sexualized and rationalized consumer, soap as luxury commodity and hygienic necessity.

French critics interpreted Delaunay’s draped models as implying a fundamental need for the surface modification of women’s bodies in the quest for aesthetic beauty.⁵⁷ In the Japanese context, the adornment of the Kao garb implied a similar call for surface modification; however, in this case it was not just the transforming maquillage of *la toilette* but the hygienic reformation enabled by cleansing. On-site advertising banners pictured in extant photographs of these events indicate that they were often launched in collaboration with women’s magazines



3.13 Actress Hosokawa
Chikako dressed in Kao
promotional costume, ca. 1931.
Kao Corporation

like *Women's World* (*Fujin sekai*), *Ladies World* (*Fujōkai*), and *Housewife's Companion* (*Shufu no tomo*), all journals that combined entertainment and publicity with helpful hints on practical reforms for improving daily life. New advertising techniques of imaging the commodity thus allowed manufacturers to insert their products into the consumer's consciousness or apply it directly onto her body.

Spatializing Soap “From Baby's First Bath”

Kao's living mannequins, its marching bands with banner bearers and men dressed as vermilion soap bars, and its show window designers transformed metropolitan and provincial cityscapes throughout the country.⁵⁸ Japanese manufacturers sought to harness urban space as a promotional venue on which to stage the commodity. Writing in 1931 in the trade journal published by Kao, *Sales Movement* (*Hanbai undō*), Shirokiya department store representative Sasaki Yoshio argued that the “most urgent need for retailers is to go out into the streets.”⁵⁹

A full-page montage-style advertisement for Kao soap that ran in *Asahi Graph* (*Asahi gurafu*) on October 8, 1930, provides a kaleidoscopic view of the bustling Tokyo metropolis, expressing the fragmented, dynamic nature of experience in the modern city (figure 3.14). With Kao advertising pillars repeatedly bisecting the frame, the image self-referentially demonstrates advertising's saturation of the modern visual field, from the street to the mass media. This matrix of media representations also frames the potential consumer. At the center of the composition walks a kimono-clad woman, a mother holding her child's hand while she carries an infant on her back. The only other figure in the image who is facing the camera is seen standing in the lower right-hand corner, where she anchors the triangulated composition. This flapper-style modern girl in her signature cloche hat is easily identifiable, and her presence (although shunted to the side) demonstrates once again Kao's concern with targeting a range of emerging categories of female social identity.

While most of the photography for the New Kao campaign has not been attributed, scholars reliably credit several images to the now-famous photographer Kimura Ihee (also spelled Ihei; 1901–74). Although a skilled commercial photographer, Kimura is recognized more for his evocative photographic portraits of celebrated Japanese cultural figures as well as for his journalistic photographs for pictorial graph magazines.⁶⁰ He was also a founding member of the celebrated avant-garde photography journal *Kōga*. Contributors to the journal included Hara Hiromu, as well as several others working in the commercial sphere. Yet Kimura was careful to differentiate commercial and art photography. Unlike a modernist still life, he argued, the commodity could



3.14 Kao soap advertisement, *Asahi Graph* 15, no. 15 (October 8, 1930). Kao Corporation

not just be shot “absentmindedly with detachment.” It had its own “individuality” and a distinct “social nature” that the photographer needed to understand. Together with its unique points of appeal, the commodity also had an inherent “class nature” that had to be expressed. Detailing his approach to photographing the physical attributes of tube products, in this case Kao Pâte soap in a tube, Kimura revealed the careful technical manipulations of angle, scale, and filtered light that subtly transformed the visual impact of the diminutive tube into an ample, gleaming commodity, subliminally justifying the relatively high price of ¥0.35 per tube. A purist who rejected nonphotographic editorial techniques such as airbrushing, he likened the collaborative process between the skilled photographer and the newspaper publisher to the traditional collaboration between the *ukiyo-e* woodblock print designer, who produced the initial block sketch, and the other craftsmen who carved and printed his design.⁶¹

The use of Kimura’s photographs in the Kao campaign is significant not only for their high level of craftsmanship but also in terms of the larger history of Japanese commercial photography, as the series was among the earliest to employ sustained use of photographs in newspaper advertising.⁶² Part of Ōta’s visual strategy was to reinscribe Kao brand-name soap as an everyday item in the mind of the average Japanese consumer. To this end, Kimura’s work displayed a series of stark, almost documentary snapshots of industrial laborers, factories, railroads, everyday urban sights (such as laundry hanging on the line) (figure 3.15), and common dwellings (some no more than ramshackle shanties). In the newspaper printing process, the images became slightly washed out and hovered between the documentary and a form of romanticized urban pictorialism, emphasizing the formal composition of the scene over the human element within. In a time when advertising photographs in print media consisted almost entirely of smiling young women or children holding up products, Kao’s images startled the consumer public as well as advertising professionals.⁶³

In one newspaper advertisement from the first half of 1931, Kimura created a dramatically skewed grid of electrical wires and poles cutting across the metropolitan skyline, an aesthetically pleasing formalist composition that was simultaneously a meditation on the technological nature of modern daily life—and presumably its attendant grittiness (figure 3.16). A promotional balloon seen in the background pushes its way through the grid, pulling a text trailer reading “New and Improved Kao.” The bubble-shaped balloon humorously reinforced the copy on the right, which read, “Not one bubble wasted.”

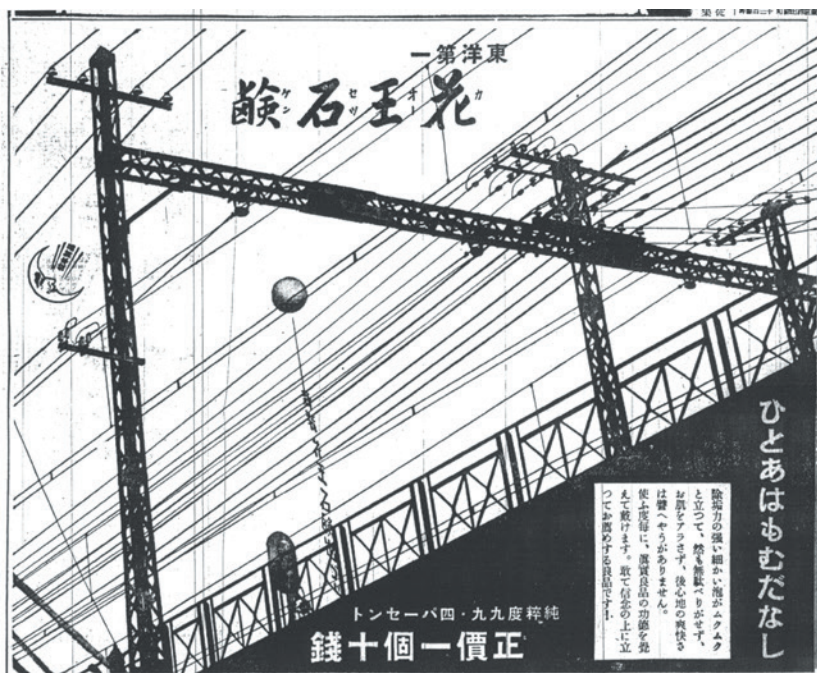
Use of Kao soap “From Baby’s First Bath” did not stop with infancy but implied the cultivation of consumers from cradle to grave. This specifically included the important period of early adolescence, when, of course, children



3.15 Kimura Ihee
(photographer), Kao soap
advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi
shinbun*, April 26, 1931, a.m.
ed., 8. Kao Corporation

get very dirty. Kimura's work for Kao included a humorous series of advertisements of abstracted images on a blank background depicting children frolicking and blowing soap bubbles, which cleverly used the bubbles to tie together the image of play and cleanliness under the general rubric of domestic hygiene. The image of the bubble further reinforced a crucial sales point for the product, reliable sudsing (figure 3.17). The overall message to mothers implicit in this series was that with the help of soap, their children could play in the dirty modern city without a care in the world.

The use of children in advertising was already a long-standing practice around the world, as it evoked sentimental and nostalgic reminiscences of a simpler, purer, more carefree time of life. Children, particularly babies, commonly appeared in American soap advertisements because manufacturers saw this as an effective means of emphasizing their product's mildness and suitability to delicate tasks.⁶⁴ Kao advertisements often showed smiling infants in the



3.16 Kimura Ihee
(photographer) and Asuka
Tetsuo (designer), Kao soap
advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi
shinbun*, March 17, 1931, a.m.
ed., 6. Kao Corporation

bathtub or young children washing their hands under direct address copy like “To mothers!” reminding women that the delicacy of their children’s skin (and their own) demanded high-quality soap. Images of healthy children also resonated with emerging nationalist ideologies of eugenics that would come to the fore in Japan from the late 1930s.

As was the case with the Kimura series, the same advertisements could be placed in mass-market newspapers, general- and special-interest magazines, and retail trade journals such as *Tōkyō Sundries and Cosmetic Industry News* (*Tōkyō Komamono Keshōhin Shōhō*). The designs were also run in a range of sizes depending on the publication. In newspapers an ensemble of images and texts on the page framed individual advertisements. Moreover, many of the adjacent news stories amplified the health and beauty themes in Kao’s promotional copy.



3.17 Kimura Ihee
(photographer), Kao soap
advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi
shinbun*, August 8, 1932, a.m.
ed., 6. Kao Corporation

Kao show window designs spatialized the promotional elements of the company's print advertising onto the commodity stage of the retail environment, enticing and structuring the gaze of the passing consumer. Writing in *Sales Movement*, Kao designer Asuka Tetsuo described the company's show window designs for New and Improved Kao (figure 3.18) as "expressing Kao's new dynamic industrial spirit with sounds, moving gears, flashing lights, and the faintest hint of smoke that 'made it seem as if you were looking at the factory process itself in motion.'"⁶⁵ Like an intersection of Russian Aleksandr Vesnin's constructivist stage designs in London for *The Man Who Was Thursday* (1922–23) and the boldly painted New York cityscapes of Italian futurist Fortunato Depero, such displays tried to reproduce the excitement of the urban factory



3.18 Kao soap show window display, ca. 1930s.
Kao Corporation

environment in the consumer theater to underline the company's image of productivity and the product's high quality. Moreover, this kind of production—and, by extension, consumption—constituted, as the text in one display read, “soap patriotism.”

Another Kao show window set Hara's new Western-style typography and figures of moon-faced schoolchildren with Kao soap backpacks in a pristine bathroom, a dream environment that surely catered to the desires of upwardly mobile Japanese consumers. Employing the hygienic image of a brightly lit, tiled Western-style bathroom, Kao aimed at those who aspired to modernize their homes and have private baths, although most Japanese homes did not have private baths until long after the war. And even in the fervor for modernization, the Western-style bath with foaming bubbles shown in the Kao fantasy was unlikely to have ever replaced the beloved Japanese bath (*ofuro*) used primarily for soaking—and collective soaking at that.

Unfortunately, no amount of creative energy expended in Kao's new and improved soap campaign was able to counter the ravages of the worldwide economic downturn of the Great Depression. It did not help that Kao had taken

a risky gamble by reinventing itself and incurred enormous expenditures for publicity during the launch years, not to mention the serious profit losses from counterfeit soaps masquerading as Kao around the country and unexpectedly large amounts of returned stocks of “old Kao,” all of which left the company in perilous financial straits for several years.⁶⁶ It was also quickly apparent to Nagase that the working-class consumers he and Ōta had hoped to attract were not flocking to Kao soap, as the average worker’s hygiene situation was far removed from the ideal Euro-American model Kao followed. Advertising critics even noted that it was difficult at times to pinpoint which classes the company was targeting.⁶⁷ Transitioning quickly from idealism to pragmatism, Nagase asked for Ōta’s resignation just three months after the launch of New Kao and turned over sales and advertising responsibilities to the more conservative Tani Mago-roku (aka Yano Masayō), who had been hired away from the newspaper *Yomiuri shinbun* to work on Kao’s marketing journal, *Sales Movement*.⁶⁸ Tani’s more elitist approach rankled the workers but proved more practical in business terms, and he continued working with Asuka and Okuda to build on Ōta’s innovative design strategies.

Kao was already diversifying its product line and expanding its consumer base to buttress against market competition. Only through the social overlay of new rituals of cleanliness could it set the stage for increased consumption of its products. When the company launched its shampoo in 1927, most of the Japanese public did not wash their hair with soap but only on occasion rinsed it with water and then applied camellia oil for protection and styling. The company’s stated marketing goal was to get people to wash their hair once a week, a plan that required aggressive advertising to reeducate the public. Under Okuda as principal designer, the company released a landmark campaign for hair washing in 1932 with the simple copy “Even if I am exhausted, once a week” (*issshū ichidō wa tsukaretemitemo*), and then later codified the practice in the well-known slogan “Today is hair washing day” (*kyō wa kami o arau hi*).⁶⁹

By 1931 the Tokyo Sundries and Cosmetics Industry News Company (Tōkyō Komamono Keshōhin Shōhōsha) listed 109 hair-cleaning products on the market, and by 1934 Kao was the leading manufacturer in the sector. The success of Kao shampoo even in this glutted and competitive market was due in large part to the company’s skillfully designed and widely disseminated advertising campaigns. In recognition of this success, the company promoted Okuda to section chief of the design division, where he continued to work through the war, later serving an instrumental role in the resuscitation of Kao soap in the postwar period.

Soap and National Politics

From 1932, advertisements for Kao soap also regularly appeared on the back cover of the armed services journal *Sea and Sky* (*Umi to sora*), published by the Japanese navy. Many countries at the time considered a strong modern military an essential pillar to support the nation. Military demand for Kao products grew markedly during Japan's imperialist expansion and the intensification of the Asia-Pacific War through the 1930s. Kao's contracts for hospitals and the military lent inestimable credibility to the company's claims of high quality, closely linking the product with technological and scientific modernization.⁷⁰ Images targeting this sector, however, were no less aestheticized than those designed to sell products for the home. Kao's ads for *Sea and Sky* display dramatic, often highly abstract compositions featuring Japan's cutting-edge military technology paired with the floating bar of soap. In one image from May 1934, the disconnected smoking guns of a navy warship, dramatically viewed from below, project diagonally into a blue sky. The negative photographic image renders the guns and smoke white against a dark background, causing them to appear as if glowing. A bar of Kao soap sails into the image from the lower left, implying that it, too, is a weapon being fired at the enemy. Text immediately below the bar reads proudly, "Product used by the navy."

Commerce was never far from politics. Both of these dynamic spheres of visual culture production were dedicated to the act of persuasion and the glorification of iconic symbols, in one case, those of political ideology, in the other, those of capitalist consumption.⁷¹ In a stunning reformulation of content from the political sphere into the commercial, in this case from the right, a Kao advertisement for *Sea and Sky* from March 1934 (figure 3.19) appropriated Willi Ruge's aerial photograph of a zeppelin flying over a 1933 Nazi rally at Berlin-Tempelhof airport, originally published in *Das Deutsche Lichtbild* (The German photography) photoannual of 1934.⁷² The Kao image boldly substitutes a bar of soap for the mounted political icon of the swastika, denuding the image of its fascist connotations and transforming the gathering into a form of collective worship of capitalism and the commodity. The erasure of the swastika also elides the pictorial middle ground between sky and earth, flattening the image into a two-dimensional decorative backdrop for the vibrantly red soap bar, which floats over the picture surface in a surrealistic collage. This nonnaturalistic composite of disparate images conjoined and overlapped to construct a compelling new visual promotional narrative.⁷³

While Kao soap profits increased steadily after the Great Depression, they never returned to their mid-1920s levels, largely because of the price cut of 1931.⁷⁴ It is worth noting that due to the Depression and falling wages, most



3.19 Kao soap advertisement,
Sea and Sky, March 1934. Kao
 Corporation

Japanese manufacturers cut prices by 25 percent across the board to remain competitive, so Kao's actions were in line with its cohort. It is also significant that sales for Kao soap doubled in volume, so the lack of profitability is no indication of advertising effectiveness in terms of increasing product recognition and consumption, which makes it difficult to gauge the overall visual impact or success of the campaign design. Not only did sales double between 1931 and 1937, but Kao boosted its share of the market by 1.5 percentage points, with New Kao soap sales peaking in 1937.⁷⁵ By that year Kao soap was consumed at a rate of one bar per twenty-three people per month, an average that had been increasing each year.⁷⁶ The company's stated goal was to increase consumption levels to "one bar of soap per person per month-and-a-half," which Kao promoted as a perfect balance between hygiene and thrift.⁷⁷

Shiseido Cosmetics and Cosmopolitan Chic

There is no Japanese company whose advertising design better represents the aesthetic of cosmopolitan chic seen throughout the global visual sphere in the early twentieth century than Shiseido. The Shiseido cosmetics company opened its Western-style pharmaceutical business in the Ginza district in Tokyo in 1872. It began producing its own beauty products in 1896 and just a few decades later, under the banner of its stylish camellia logo and signature designs, emerged as one of the leading cosmetics manufacturers in Japan, a position it still holds.⁷⁸ Shiseido advertising design employed a variety of artistic styles, and its product list is legion; some of the best-known products include scented skin toners, hairstyling balms, white and tinted face powders, lipstick, rouge, perfumes, vanishing and cold creams, toothpaste, and soap.

The company put a particular emphasis in its advertising on the beauty of the face. As company beauty consultant Komai Reiko notes in *Approaches to Three-Dimensional Beauty Cosmetics Methods* (*Rittai bishōhō zukai*), quoted in the epigraph to this chapter, the company sold cosmetic products and techniques for making the female face more dimensional, touting its proprietary method as the only cosmetic technique that systematized this process. Implicitly valorizing Caucasian features in this three-dimensional aesthetic, Shiseido publicity also simultaneously championed a timeless, deracinated, cosmopolitan concept of beauty. The company's commercial success was due to its uncanny ability to merge images of a transhistorical fantasy lifestyle with rationalized notions of the scientification of beauty. At the core of this nexus were products with an aesthetic of cosmopolitan chic that were also hygienic and effective. In other words, Shiseido offered consumers an exotic, sensuous embodied

3.20 Cover of *Shiseido Monthly* 40 (January 1928).
Shiseido Corporate Museum



experience of cosmetics that satisfied their scopic and physical desires as well as the moral necessities of a healthy lifestyle.

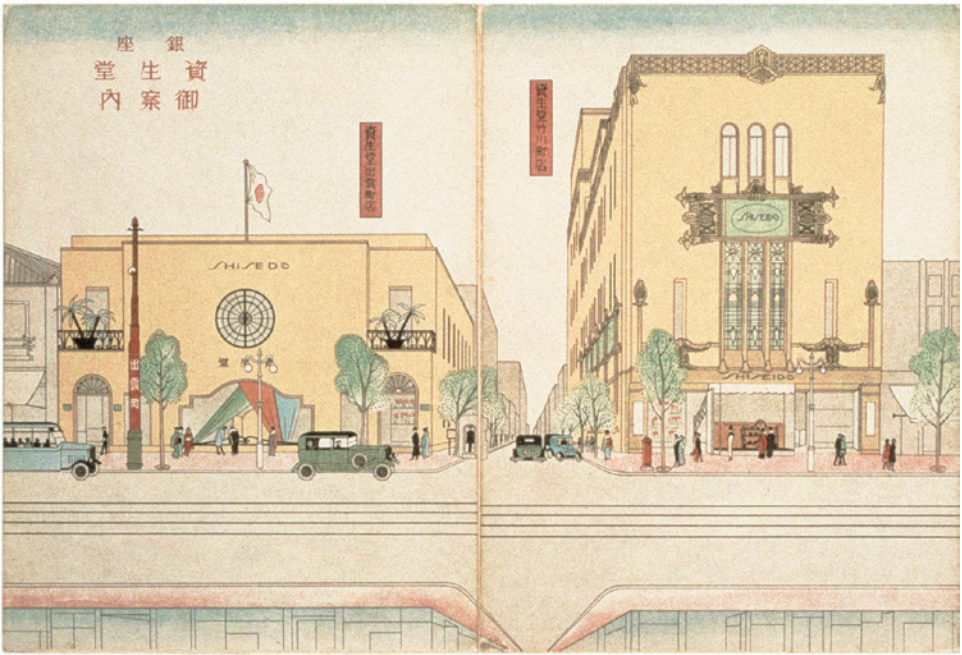
Shiseido advertising design comprised everything from elegant wrapping paper to illuminated show windows with cutout jars of cold cream. The company published various public relations magazines, *Shiseido Monthly* (*Shiseido geppō*; 1928–33) (figure 3.20), *Shiseido Graph* (*Shiseido gurafu*; 1933–37) (figure 3.21), and *Camellia* (*Hanatsubaki*; 1937–), as well as notebooks and daily diaries for women, home calendars, guides to the Ginza district, cosmetics guides and information booklets, and beauty charts with movable parts. It also had a robust marketing strategy of distributing branded goods as giveaways for loyal customers, such as those in the Camellia Club (*Hanatsubaki-kai*) established in 1937, including stylish cosmetics cases, silk brocade handbags and tissue holders, camellia-decorated mirrors, and decorative kimono accoutrements like brooches for the obi sash (*obidome*). This marketing included traveling promotional performances at department stores by the team of Miss Shiseidos,



3.21 Cover of *Shiseido Graph* 5 (November 1933).
Shiseido Corporate Museum

living mannequins who enacted “modern beauty fashion shows” featuring product demonstrations. The company presented the Miss Shiseidos themselves as icons of modern beauty, models for Japanese women who hoped to cultivate the fashionable look of cosmopolitan chic.

A prominent aspect of Shiseido advertising promotion was the built environment of the retail store with visually and physically accessible products neatly laid out on a capacious sales floor bathed in luxurious indirect lighting. The company’s fashionable locale in the Ginza district was a critical value-added element of the brand identity that promoted Western-style products with Western-style names and logos over cheaper generic goods. Ginza connoted a cachet of “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*) from its planned redevelopment in the Meiji nation-building period, and it continued to develop into a stylish shopping and leisure destination in the capital with large boulevards and luxury stores.⁷⁹ Shiseido branded Ginza in the



3.22 Illustration of Shiseido buildings in the Ginza district, cover of *Ginza Shiseido Guidebook*, 1929. Shiseido Corporate Museum

late 1920s as part of its corporate identity, issuing neighborhood guides that spotlighted the company's storefront as part of Tokyo's chic cosmopolitan cityscape (figure 3.22).

Early on, the second company president, Fukuhara, seized on the English term *rich* in Shiseido's advertising copy to connote the luxury, elegance, glamour, and stylishness he hoped to associate with the company's products. This image of richness was visually amplified in advertisements through colorful illustrations of exotic women of leisure in gorgeous dream environments. In one poster for Shiseido's Eau de Neige (or Snow Water) (figure 3.23), a kind of liquid white face powder, a woman draped in a fur-collared couture-style evening coat lingers on a luxurious balcony (perhaps awaiting an amorous rendezvous) while snowflakes float down around her, evoking a romantic and invigorating sensibility. These images were tastefully erotic, as they gestured to the possibility of romance but were not overtly sexual. They evoked the feminine, the lyrical, and the mysterious but left the world beyond to the imagination.



3.23 Poster for Shiseido Eau de Neige liquid white face powder, 1927. Shiseido Corporate Museum

Shiseido's advertising design relied heavily on female beauty and visual allure to construct the company's unique corporate identity. The diversification of ideals of beauty moved both diachronically and internationally. Familiar classical images of Japanese imperial beauties were joined by recognizable classical images of Greco-Roman antiquity, symbols of enduring beauty. In one advertisement for peroxide cream with cucumber, Diana, the legendary Roman goddess of the hunt, who is associated with nature, chastity, athletic grace, and beauty, was accompanied by a leaping deer and stood poised with bow and arrow under a classical edifice. She was joined by Renaissance beauties rendered in the famous painting styles of the Italian masters, invoked to sell liquid face powder. Female figures from other historical periods and geographic places abounded, ranging from the grandiose ball gowns with corsets and hoopskirts of the age of Marie Antoinette to the modern flapper with her bobbed hairstyle and luxurious furs. There was a constant, seemingly random, variation of female types. The message was that Shiseido cosmetic products promote beauty and elegance that

is both timeless and freshly contemporary. They contribute to a worldwide, universal aesthetic of beauty that is cosmopolitan and transnational.

Like the French editors of upscale women's magazines such as *La Gazette du Bon Ton* (The journal of good taste), who made fashion the fourth of the beaux arts, Shiseido sought to elevate its cosmetics advertising design to an art form, imparting a sophistication and sense of aristocratic taste to consumer goods.⁸⁰ The pleasure of the eye was to be indulged. These cosmetics advertisements sold the fantasy of a total cosmopolitan lifestyle of elegance. Although this lifestyle was unattainable for most Japanese consumers, it represented a constructed aspiration—a virtual fantasy life—that could be experienced vicariously through the bodily consumption of Shiseido products; this lifestyle clearly appealed to the large number of women buying these products, who were willing to pay a premium. Even during the Great Depression, starting in 1929, when the company was in dire straits due to a 30 percent reduction in sales that required the temporary closure of the Osaka branch and the reduction of staff by 50 percent and factory workers by 10 percent, the brand image persisted. By 1929 Shiseido had already established seven thousand stores in its chain store network.⁸¹ The rapid expansion of this network in the late 1930s was the key to the company's long-term success.

Richness was synonymous with the notion of “deluxe,” which even became a separate Shiseido skin care line launched in 1936. On the advertisements and packaging for this product line, the word “De Luxe” was penned in romanized script calligraphy framed by delicate signature arabesques. *Deluxe* was then translated into Japanese as *saikōhō* (the pinnacle) and glossed in Japanese katakana script immediately above as *dorukkusu*. Most Shiseido products had two brand names, one Japanese and one Western and rendered in romanized letters. These were among the earliest domestically produced Japanese cosmetic products that used romanized Western brand names. Shiseido did this to appeal to consumers who tended to look for imported goods. This sophisticated linguistic and visual layering reinforced a central prong of Shiseido's corporate marketing strategy—purveying Western exoticism to the Japanese female consumer. Such strategies inverted the widespread exoticizing tendencies of advertising in Europe, particularly France, where Orientalist fantasies were pervasive in the revivalist luxury fashion trends created by the Ballets Russes and haute couture “deco dandy” designers like Paul Poiret, which were circulated internationally in the upscale fashion press.⁸² Shiseido's in-house design team included now-legendary designers Yamana Ayao, Yabe Sue (1893–1978), Sawa Reika (1896–1970), and Maeda Mitsugu (1903–1967), who together have secured the company a distinguished place in world design history.

Shiseido advertising frequently pictured Japanese women wearing stylish modern kimonos and coiffures or modish Western-style dresses shopping at its

company stores or engaged in leisure activities. They were often accompanied by their equally stylish children in Western-style jumpers. Like Kao, Shiseido designers appealed to a host of new Japanese female types, particularly their desire for independence, enhancement of their public visibility, and an active role in their own self-fashioning. Writing in *Advertising World*, Shiseido advertising section chief Takagi Chōyō (1887–1937) even highlighted the importance of female consumption in the market and the variety of ways that advertisers could draw them in.⁸³

Corporate advertisers asserted their role as arbiters of fashion and good taste by mediating the dissemination of relevant current information that promoted their products as requisite tools for achieving specific beauty effects. From the 1910s Shiseido advertising featured Japanese women with smart contemporary upswept coiffures, such as the *hisashigami*, inspired by the enormously popular American Gibson Girl, celebrated for her wit, intelligence, and independence. Illustrated instructions on how to do such contemporary “all back” hairstyles were featured regularly in Shiseido’s free consumer-directed public relations publication *Shiseido Monthly* along with articles on current fashions and domestic trends.⁸⁴ In one 1916 advertisement for Hanatsubaki hair oil, a scented hair product for women made of pure camellia oil, designers mirrored the art nouveau-inspired graphics of the female figure with stylized blocky typography for the product name (figure 3.24). Then, with the sweep of a single curved line, they provided a delicate visual frame for the product below as well as a bold layout that suggested the form of a modern armchair, a characteristic feature of the new Westernized domestic interior of the Japanese bourgeois home. The Hanatsubaki hair oil product was itself a modern update on a commonly used Japanese cosmetic product. It was advertised as not making hair sticky or dirty and sold for a pricey ¥0.40 per bottle. Advertisements proudly proclaimed that it “vastly improves the nutrition and shine of your hair; does not cause cowlicks [*kami no kuse*] and helps keep hair’s good color until old age.” “Better than conventional preexisting products,” the product, they claimed, “does not cause dirty odors, keeps hair’s beautiful shine, stops hair from falling out, and does not harm skin.”⁸⁵

The Female Gaze

Shiseido advertising conjured an implied female gaze to implicate the consumer in her own beauty regimen. It was able to produce desire by creating a core set of beauty knowledge that the company then disseminated through creatively designed graphic beauty guides. The guides and their regimens inculcated a sense of obligation within the consumer-subject to surveil and maintain her own

3.24 Hanatsubaki hair oil advertisement, Shiseido, *New Performing Arts (Shin engei)* magazine, 1916. Shiseido Corporate Museum



appearance and health by using the company's products. They expounded on a range of topics such as invigorating facial massage, manicures, rapid makeup application for women on the go, makeup for social events and entertaining, Japanese-style makeup, perfumes, and bathing practices. Single-sheet, three-dimensional diagrammatic cosmetic application charts with dramatic arrows further bolstered this scientific image of cosmetics as a reliable technique of physical transformation.

Shiseido advertisements repeatedly pictured mirrors as a trope of self-surveillance as well as self-absorption (figure 3.25). The gaze was a visual centerpiece of the company's publicity, which exhibited women looking at themselves in mirrors for self-inspection or showcased mirrors reflecting their images to an external audience, implying both the generalized gaze of society and the scopic pleasure of the consumer herself as a voyeur. In these images the viewer was presented with a self-consciously multiperspectival view that included the sanctioning gaze of



3.25 Poster for Shiseido
Eudermine and cold cream,
1926. Shiseido Corporate
Museum

society, the captivated gaze of women, and the sexualized gaze of men. While a woman might ostensibly use cosmetics for her health and well-being, she was also encouraged to use them to look better, and hence be more appealing. Presenting women with the opportunity to be the architects of their own self-fashioning, these advertisements were empowering and disempowering at the same time.

This ambiguity pervades advertising imagery, which was already imbricated in an established pictorial history. Representations of women with their reflected mirror images were common in Japanese print culture and Western painting, which were mutually influential in the modern period. In the Japanese prints of the pleasure quarters, such as the well-known pictures by Kitagawa Utamaro (ca. 1753–1806) of courtesans gazing into mirrors during their private toilettes, images provided visual access to a secret world and hidden erogenous zones like the nape of the neck, associating the voyeur's surreptitious scopic pleasure with imagined impending physical gratification.⁸⁶ In late nineteenth-century Europe, mirror images became a popular metaphor for the

primal nature of women living a self-contained and circular existence. As such, male observers widely criticized the mirror image, with its perceived egotistical self-preoccupation, as redolent of narcissism and vanity. Mirror images, particularly those of oval handheld mirrors, which had clear vulval connotations, also blatantly reinforced the potential pleasures of autoerotic satisfaction; a woman could literally fall in love with herself.⁸⁷

Cosmetics manufacturers around the world, who profited from the excesses of such purported vanity, however, had an investment in shedding a positive light on this self-absorption; hence, they promoted it as both a privilege and an obligation of the modern woman. She was simultaneously indulging *and* disciplining her body. Thus, Shiseido advertising encouraged the consumer to examine her skin and reinforced this through images of the scrutinizing gaze. The female consumer-subject had to monitor her own beauty through attentive inspection, and by using “scientific Japanese” products like Shiseido’s “perfect oil-based cream,” she could strengthen and nourish the layers of her skin “from the core, to enliven the outer visible layer.” Along with advertisements targeted at younger women, some clearly addressed “middle-aged women,” who were told that they could look as if they were in their twenties again. Despite the traditional veneration of age and wisdom in Japan, clearly the cult of youth already prevalent in Euro-American advertising was well implanted by the 1920s. In an advertisement for Shiseido Hormoline cream, the world’s first skin cream enriched with female ovarian hormones, launched in 1934 and targeted at middle-aged women seeking to turn back the clock, just a hand holding the mirror and its reflected visage are shown, implying the substitution of the subject with the consumer herself as she presumably gazes at her own potentially younger-looking reflection. The message of these images was that diligent efforts would bring tangible rewards.

Shiseido advertising frequently deracinated the image of the female consumer-subject from an Asian woman to a Western woman, something seen throughout Japanese consumer advertising of the period. While one might view this trend in advertising as simply a reinforcement of the hegemonic values of white (Euro-American) normativity, I would suggest a more multivalent reading of these images where they do not connote a denial of Japaneseness or Asianness but rather affirm the cosmopolitan mutability of consumer identity and the ability of commodities to enable self-fashioning unhindered by national, racial, cultural, or even historical limitations.

Ambiguous racial and ethnic transpositions were common throughout the global contemporary graphic design sphere. For example, well-known French designer and deco dandy Georges Lepape’s provocative fashion plate illustration “Serai-je en avance?” (Am I early?), published in the *Gazette du Bon Ton*’s

second issue (1912), shows a woman in a brilliantly colored, fur-collared couture evening coat that takes the form of an oversize kimono-style wrap, which is accented by a jeweled and plumed turban, exemplifying Poiret's *style sultane* (sultan style). As she stands behind a decorative balustrade in front of her seat in an elegantly appointed theater, the figure's abstracted facial features are revealed behind her program to be decidedly Asiatic, producing a racial ambiguity comparable to that of the female figures in Shiseido ads. Both imagined a worldly cosmopolite whose cultural sophistication and fashion tastes blurred and transcended race, ethnicity, and nationality.⁸⁸

From the 1920s, the rebellious, sensual modern girl with her short, sleek hairstyle; elegant shift dresses; visible makeup; and public cigarette smoking became a prominent stylistic inspiration for Shiseido imagery and women's fashion around the world.⁸⁹ She was not the sole preserve of any one country or region, and she had transcultural and multiracial characteristics inflected by a wide range of locales. Conventional notions of femininity were undergoing profound transformations across the globe, which had widespread social consequences. Scholars have amply demonstrated that as much as she was a fashion icon, the Japanese modern girl was also perceived by many as a threat to the national patriarchy.⁹⁰ Corporations, however, sought to capitalize on this notoriety. One abstract 1933 Shiseido poster representation of a woman's impromptu gaze at her mirror compact to reapply her rouge and lipstick highlights the still-new experience of witnessing a woman applying makeup in public, demonstrating her new social status outside the home (figure 3.26). Designer Maeda Mitsugu tantalizes the viewer with a secret gaze that is reflected only to the depicted subject, inviting us to share this surreptitious yet enticing scopic pleasure. Designs such as this show the Shiseido team's intimate familiarity with the vibrant global contemporary advertising and design culture, particularly the exuberant geometric styles of art deco.⁹¹ Maeda foregrounds the packaging of the commodity itself in his layout, featuring the luxurious gold rouge compact with a bold red wedge cut out, designed by Yamana Ayao in 1932.⁹² The red emphasizes the hue of the rouge cake and lipstick, extending to the coloring of the figure's lips in contrast to her otherwise-white outline. The visual merges with the haptic as consumers associate their scopic sensations with bodily impulses to hold the colorful object and to apply the brilliant red cosmetics.

Embodying Skin Care

Shiseido's packaging reinforced the brand's association with stylish women and the bodily—presenting curvaceous glass bottles of toners and lotions that emulated the graceful lines of the female body. The bottles, ornamented with



3.26 Maeda Mitsugu, poster for Shiseido Rouge Stick and Cheek Blush, 1933. It shows Yamana Ayao's package design for the blush in the form of a gold compact with a bold red wedge cut out (1932). Shiseido Corporate Museum

elegant labels, were again scopically, tangibly, and olfactorily inviting. Fukuhara, the company president, was jokingly referred to as Hana no Fukuhara (Nose or Floral Fukuhara) not just because of his rather pronounced proboscis but also because of his enthusiasm for perfumes and scented creams. The product bottles featured prominently in print advertisements as stand-ins for the female form. In one well-known early newspaper advertisement from 1907, a young Japanese female student with a fashionable coiffure dressed in the new stylish girl's school uniform wields an oversize bottle of Eudermine cosmetic toner that is nearly as large as she is. The stylish bottle with crowning bow matching the girl herself is both a prosthetic and a metonym for this new female type of the Meiji period, who was newly empowered by state-mandated compulsory access to basic education, which launched her into public view and defined a new modern femininity that clearly demanded a powerful new cosmetic arsenal.⁹³

In other, later images, hands literally reach into the pictures to touch the products—an invitation to the consumer to do the same. Like their containers, cosmetic creams themselves were sensuous, and the tactile sensations they provided were part of the pleasurable embodied experiences linked to the desires and fantasies of cosmetics consumption. Cosmetics containers were also a beauty accessory that enhanced the visual appeal of a woman's dressing table or vanity, and their display value (not to mention their symbolic value as indices of cultural capital) was an important marketing consideration for manufacturers.

The scented skin toner Eudermine launched the Shiseido skin care line in 1896. It has been one of the company's most enduring products and is still sold today, now known internationally as Shiseido Eudermine Revitalizing Essence. Eudermine, whose name means "good skin" in ancient Greek, was first sold in an elegant corked glass bottle with a red-colored ribbon, and the liquid itself was a vibrant red, evoking wine and hence prosperity and vitality. Color was a central design element of Shiseido's product line, and Eudermine was touted as "Shiseido's red cosmetic water." The color of Eudermine was graphically accentuated in a striking 1925 poster designed by Yabe Sue that juxtaposed its tall, slender red profile with the shorter, more curvaceous lily-white container of peroxide vanishing cream. From its inception, Eudermine was promoted as a product beneficial for the health and beauty of one's skin that could be applied under white powder (thereby also helping women avoid the poisonous effects of lead in powder) and would help prevent sweat in the summer, making one "smell like an angel (as one played outside in the gardens)."⁹⁴ Skin care formed the mainstay for many cosmetics manufacturers around the world, and advertising promoted the notion that beauty began with the skin. In the nineteenth-century United States, a fundamental distinction was already drawn between skin improvement (products that fostered a good complexion) and skin-masking substances (makeup), with the former constituting part of a hygienic regimen critical to the morally invested notion of general bodily cleanliness.⁹⁵ In 1922 the Shiseido design division converted the second floor of the company's showroom into a beauty salon where customers could consult with a trained dermatologist about "skin damage therapies." The company offered this free service to promote its scientific skin care products. The resident dermatologist also published articles on related subjects to bolster the company's profile.⁹⁶

An emulsion of water and fat that derives its name from the cool sensation it leaves on the skin, cold cream has been around for centuries, but it came to the fore in twentieth-century cosmetics production as the single most fundamental and important facial care product for keeping skin sanitary and protecting against both the elements and the harmful effects of makeup. The foremost



3.27 Maeda Mitsugu, poster for Shiseido's cold cream and vanishing cream, 1927. Shiseido Corporate Museum

brand name in cold creams from the 1910s was Pond's cold cream, produced by the Pond's Company.⁹⁷ Pond's cold cream was often marketed in tandem with the company's other best-selling product, Pond's vanishing cream, under the didactic copy "Every normal skin needs two creams."⁹⁸ Hence, the company tied cold cream to the normative image of a healthy body and promoted it as an everyday staple of skin hygiene. Cold cream could nourish a woman's "under skin," while vanishing cream protected and enhanced the look of her outer epidermis. A repeated claim was that two creams were needed for a woman's "two skins."

Shiseido launched its cold cream and vanishing cream in the 1920s as complementary upscale designer products that were the core of a woman's beauty regimen—and implicitly the linchpin to her success in marriage and long-term happiness. This common pairing is seen in Maeda Mitsugu's poster for the two creams (figure 3.27), which reinforces the combination through two stylized representations of Western women who have contrasting complexions. The visualization of this new science of skin enhancement through chemical creams,

which augmented the array of increasingly refined skin-whitening foundation creams and powders, melded the long-standing East Asian feminine aesthetic of skin whiteness, signifying high class and leisure, with the appeal of Caucasian whiteness and facial features.⁹⁹ As historian Annika Culver has argued, this also invoked a symbolic “imperial aesthetic of whiteness” that the Japanese equated with the progressive achievements of modernity. In other words, even when Asians could never become racially white, they could take on the civilizational mantle of whiteness by behaving like white imperial powers. Scientific cosmetics like Shiseido products were a tool for producing artificial and symbolic whiteness on women’s bodies, which were themselves a visible barometer of modernity.¹⁰⁰ Maeda’s poster emphasizes this whiteness by highlighting the extremely pale complexion of the figure on the right, whose cheeks are strikingly dotted with rouge, like her companion’s. At the same time, the green hair of the other figure is a vivid reminder that advertising designers were not beholden to naturalistic body images, cautioning the viewer about reading these representations as indexical symbols of race or ethnicity. Further complicating the matter, recent scholarly studies of the still-pervasive Japanese penchant for skin whiteness in women has shown that most people view whiteness as a distinctive Japanese racial feature, and the common linguistic expression for skin color being white or fair (*iro ga shiroi*) is never used to mean Caucasian.¹⁰¹

It is worth mentioning here that Japanese consumers at the time were also increasingly embracing tooth whiteness as a positive cosmetic value. So it is no coincidence that Shiseido started targeting its toothpaste specifically to women smokers, as smoking was an important part of the modern girl’s identity. Not only did Shiseido toothpaste make teeth white and healthy, but its aroma could mask the smell of tobacco. It was advertised in tandem with perfume-scented tobacco. The company had launched its Fukuhara Sanitary Toothpaste Soap (Fukuhara Eisei Hamigaki Sekken) in 1888, expressly connecting dental care with modern hygiene. Tooth whiteness became a visible manifestation of proper sanitary care and good health. It was also a cosmetic asset coupling health and beauty. Thus, the value of whiteness extended across the company’s products. In fact, it extended across the entire market sector to other major companies championing dental health, particularly T. Kobayashi and Company, established by Kobayashi Tomijirō in 1895, which launched Lion tooth powder in 1896, beginning decades of extensive research and development of the dental market. Like Kao, Lion inculcated in Japanese consumer-subjects the importance of its product as part of their new rituals of cleanliness by creating the original instructional tagline, “Three minutes before bedtime,” which made nighttime brushing a household regimen and eventually expanded to

morning and night.¹⁰² Lion marketing even successfully inaugurated a new holiday in 1928, crowning June 4 as Japan's national "anticavity day" (*mushiba yōbō de*), directed at children, the country's "small citizens" (*shōkokumin*). Linking beauty and hygiene, Shiseido toothpaste advertisements exhorted female customers with the tagline "Make your teeth shining white."

Designing Shiseido

Shiseido designers enveloped their fashionable female subjects in beautiful, winding arabesque patterns along with stylized decorative applications of the company's signature camellia motif, which was also its brand logo. These were the distinctive motifs that pervaded the company's promotional visual vocabulary across its print advertising, posters, packaging, and built environment. Fukuhara chose the camellia for the company mark around 1915, replacing its earlier hawk emblem, because the flower was associated with one of the company's most popular products, Hanatsubaki scented camellia hair oil (Western brand name Euthrixine). He felt that the flower expressed the freshness and newness of the company's products and the Taisho period in general. It was also clearly much more feminine. While the hawk emblem, rendered in a detailed engraving style more akin to Meiji trademark images, implied strength and vigilance (in quality), the camellia conveyed an aromatic, gentle femininity. The colors of the camellia blossom and leaves, rose and emerald green, also became Shiseido's signature hues. Yabe Sue oversaw the development of the camellia logo based on Fukuhara's original design. He simplified the shape of the leaves and reduced their number to seven, giving the overall formal design an organicism and lyricism in the curvy outer boundary lines of the logo. Gradually, all of Shiseido's products were registered under this trademark, and it became the company's official logo.¹⁰³

Arabesques, winding floral vines, expressed a natural sensuality. Yamana called the arabesque the "backbone" of Shiseido design, noting how this motif suggested the luxurious tresses of a woman's hair winding around in braids and patterns. He even imagined figures of women in the white spaces between the forms.¹⁰⁴ From a design perspective, Yamana felt that arabesques offered individuality, flexibility, expressivity, and adaptability within a visually cohesive and readily recognizable design program. With flowing hair like arabesques, the designer's abbreviated, ethereal Shiseido faces peeked out from the cluttered pages of contemporary newspaper advertisements in the 1930s. They stood out not only because of their distinctive visual aesthetic, emphasized over text, but also because of a significant innovation pioneered by Shi-

seido's advertising manager, Matsumoto Noboru, who introduced the use of white margins in advertising (which ran against the standard practice of paying by the text line and filling in an entire ad space). Designers used this white space, complemented by the company's distinctive faceted, decorative borders, to convey Shiseido's "rich" aesthetic. So even though Shiseido could afford only small-scale advertisements in newspapers, it maximized the visual effect by leaving conspicuous and capacious open space on the page.

Elegant femininity and the sensuality of the female form were visual touchstones of Shiseido design. Company images of women oscillated between more representational and more abstract rendering as designers experimented with the plastic malleability of the female form, abstracting and attenuating the figures featured to give them a sinuous and sensuous quality that was decidedly nonnaturalistic. Long, attenuated fingers, hands, arms, and legs make the body lithe and willowy; it does not accord with any realistic body image anywhere in the world. The objective was not realism. These figures wore kimonos and Western-style clothing; they had a diverse range of coiffures, from dark straight hair to wavy bobs in a variety of colors—including blue.

After studying in Osaka at the Akamatsu Rinsaku Institute of Western Painting (Akamatsu Yōga Kenkyūjo), Yamana brought his seductive linear graphic works to Shiseido. Together with his wildly popular commercially published collections of illustration designs, this work quickly catapulted him into luminary status in the design world.¹⁰⁵ Yamana's design activities were so widespread that they connected to almost every major area of publishing during this period.¹⁰⁶ He was regularly featured in prominent trade journals like *Advertising World*, where editor Murota Kurazō wrote in 1929 that after joining Shiseido, Yamana "has continued to awe us with his talents." Murota further gushed that the girls that Yamana drew were simply "one of a kind," resonating with the current aesthetic style of the modern girl and "invigorated with energy and liveliness."¹⁰⁷

Yamana's stylized depictions of beautiful women for Shiseido were full of lightness and grace. His virtuosic pen-and-ink drawings highlighted expressivity of line and the evocative abbreviation of form, putting a strong emphasis on the billowing gowns and sinuous curves of the body. This distinctive physical morphing created an ethereal sensation. As curator Yanai Midori has written, Yamana's work had a chilly purity that was refined but still erotic and slightly dangerous.¹⁰⁸ In one Yamana design for the cover of Shiseido's *New Cosmetics* (*Shin keshō*), a series of small beauty pamphlets produced as promotional material for the company's chain stores (figure 3.28), a slender, dark-haired woman cuts a striking figure as her elongated body is animated by the rose-and-gold pattern of her kimono, and her graceful, long hand daintily holds a stylish



3.28 Yamana Ayao, cover of *New Cosmetics*, a mini-pamphlet beauty manual, directed to chain store retailers, with interior design advice, 1932. Shiseido Corporate Museum

black clutch bag.¹⁰⁹ The elegant camellia motif on her high-waisted obi sash echoes the large abstract camellias diagonally set in the corners.

Yamana minimally depicted the facial features of his female figures, intentionally accentuating their large, haunting eyes to draw in the viewer. Their eyes are set wide apart, giving a doe-like appearance. In an advertisement for cold cream and vanishing cream that ran in the women's magazine *Ladies Pictorial* (*Fujin gabō*) in 1938, he even substituted camellia leaves for the female figure's wide-set eyes, metaphorically alluding to the application of the "Shiseido vision" to the consumer's face, which underscores her unique identity as a Shiseido woman (figure 3.29). *Advertising World* wrote in 1929, "Yamana has been so lionized that we can almost believe that there are young ladies out there who believe that they will become 'modern girls' if they simply write out the letters AYA O from Yamana Ayao's name on paper and swallow it."¹¹⁰ When he joined the Shiseido design division in 1929, critics writing for the same journal in May humorously asked, "Will Yamana become Shiseido-ized or will Shiseido become Yamana-ized?" They concluded that Shiseido was Yamana-ized, as the designer's distinctive style became synonymous with Shiseido advertising all the way through the early postwar period, even though he left the company briefly from 1932 to 1936 to work for Nippon Kōbō and then again for an extended period during the Asia-Pacific War from 1943 until 1948.¹¹¹

By the 1930s, new typographical and photographic layout techniques were clearly influencing Shiseido editorial design. In the company's small beauty manual and product catalog *Makeup* (*Yosooi*), which was circulated through the company's chain stores in 1932, designers Maeda and Yamana collaborated with innovative commercial photographer Ibuka Akira (1901–1978) to produce an engaging composition of line drawings and photomontages to highlight different Shiseido products.¹¹² Ibuka wrote for the journals *Photo Times* and *Advertising World* as well as Shiseido's in-house public relations magazine, the *Chainstore Research*, on new techniques in commercial photography, and he was an early champion of the use of photomontage for commercial purposes.¹¹³ In *Makeup*, the designers dynamically interspersed photographs of modish young women with cosmetic products, other luxury items (such as champagne), and associative text fragments in English reading "smart woman," "chic," and "modern" to produce a nonlinear promotional narrative linking beauty practices and lifestyle.

When *Shiseido Monthly* became *Shiseido Graph* in 1933, the magazine shifted to a photographic pictorial format. The cover designs feature contemporary Japanese women engaged in a variety of modern upscale leisure activities: skiing, hiking, swimming, bicycling, driving, boating, camping, fishing, playing



3.29 Yamana Ayao, magazine ad for Shiseido cold cream and vanishing cream that uses camellia leaves for the figure's eyes, published in *Ladies Pictorial* in 1938. Shiseido Corporate Museum.



3.30 Cover of *Shiseido Graph* 7 (February 1934).
Shiseido Corporate Museum

tennis, golfing, and even flying airplanes. Women are represented as confident and active. They live a dynamic and adventure-filled lifestyle of leisure and travel. Although Shiseido's consumer base included many working women, they are not the subject of these images, which instead conjure up visions of independent wealth—certainly an aspiration with which all could identify if not experience directly. Only a few covers show women within the home, and these are also highly idealized images of modern middle-class domesticity.

One cover features the repeated image of a female skier, whose replication evokes images of synchronized chorus line dancers such as the famous Tiller Girls, whose almost mechanistic precision dancing was identified by German cultural theorist Siegfried Kracauer as part of the mass spectacle or “mass ornament” of modernity (figure 3.30).¹¹⁴ A symbol of the precision mass production of the machine age and the reproduced mass culture of modernity, the replicated image is used on several other covers and extended to images of commodities, where the modern face color powder tins, rouges, and cosmetic tubes are conversely substituted for the commodified human form (figure 3.31). One



3.31 Cover of *Shiseido Graph* 26 (September 1935).
Shiseido Corporate Museum

might even see this mass replication as indicative of the construction of the mass-culture consumer herself.

Health and Beauty in a Wartime Economy

In September 1938 the Japanese government issued a series of antiluxury edicts that were part of an effort to reduce consumption and boost household savings to support the war effort. One of the most well-known wartime slogans, “Luxury Is the Enemy!” (Zeitaku wa Teki da!), appeared soon after the government issued its “Regulations Restricting the Manufacture and Sale of Luxury Goods” in July 1940.¹¹⁵ Like many consumer-product manufacturers, Kao and Shiseido faced challenges at this time, as they needed to straddle the line between staple good and luxury item. Yet surprisingly, until well into the war years, these commercial manufacturers skillfully balanced patriotic practicality and conservation with capitalistic luxury and consumption.

Kao advertisements reveal an inventive blurring of politics from the left and right, of rationality and luxury, and of modernism and classicism. Even under Japan's increasing wartime restrictions, company product sales in general continued to increase steadily, peaking in 1940.¹¹⁶ The company also expanded its overseas operations, particularly in the colonies, motivated by a search for both new markets and access to raw materials. It opened an office in Seoul in 1932 (which became a full branch office in 1943). It launched a Manchukuo office in 1934 and a Taipei office in 1938, then that year consolidated its Korean and Manchurian operations in Dalian (Dairen). The Shanghai office opened in 1939. In 1939 and 1940, Kao established independent companies in Shanghai and Manchukuo respectively. The company even took over Procter and Gamble's production factories in Surabaya in Indonesia as Western businesses fled the war in Asia.

Kao reinforced its connection to state policies of rationalization at the beginning of 1937 by establishing the Household Science Research Center (Kaji Kagaku Kenkyūjo), which started publishing a promotional magazine in April that year entitled *Household Science* (*Kaji no kagaku*). The articles in the magazine examined women's household activities from a "scientific" perspective, including mending of clothing, cooking, nutrition, child rearing, hygiene, beauty, and laundry techniques. The research center held classes in many regional branches, including those in the colonies. In the six years that the courses ran (from 1937 to 1943), until governmental restrictions stopped them, they held over four thousand classes, and 1.5 million people attended.¹¹⁷

How did Shiseido's "rich" cosmopolitan consumer culture fare in the face of wartime scarcities, mounting governmental rationing, and antiluxury campaigns? Despite boom-time profits through the late 1930s as the company expanded into the lucrative regional domestic spheres of the chain store network and across the empire, the government's campaigns in the early 1940s substantially turned the tide in the company's fortunes, forcing Shiseido to cease manufacturing most of its cosmetic products and reposition itself as a pharmaceutical and sundries manufacturer, two areas of commodity production that fell under less severe regulation.¹¹⁸ Not only was advertising radically more subdued from 1941 until 1945, but the products were decidedly more medicinal and marketed as staple hygiene products to promote strong imperial subjects or as basic household goods.¹¹⁹ The Shiseido image of "rich" did not accord with a wartime culture of austerity. And yet it covertly persisted, as the desire it created never entirely went away.

Images of nationalistic sentiment such as the Japanese *hinomaru* national flag started to appear in Shiseido publications gradually from around 1935. By October 1937 more overt images of wartime mobilization became evident, as

3.32 A woman packs a “comfort bag” for soldiers on the front. Cover of *Chainstore Research* 28 (October 1937). Shiseido Corporate Museum



exemplified by the cover of that month's issue of the *Chainstore Research*, which featured the image of a young wife, with the silhouettes of airplanes behind her, packing up Shiseido soap bars in wartime “comfort bags” (*imon bukuro*). People on the home front sent such bags as care packages to soldiers fighting on the war front (figure 3.32).¹²⁰ She looks confidently at Japan's flag, placed in the upper right-hand corner of the composition, which is suggestively contiguous with the journal's masthead and visually associated by color through the use of red for both the sun and the title. The bag itself displays the *hinomaru* sun of Japan's national flag and together with the label “comfort bag” on the bottom may have had a wartime slogan such as “eternal good luck in war” (*buun chōkyū*) printed on it. These comfort bags were profitable retail items that were even sold at upscale department stores like Mitsukoshi. Manufacturers were interested in having their goods included as comfort items for the troops. Two months later, in December, the cover image of the *Chainstore Research* featured a group of women in aprons wearing banners for the Greater Japan Women's National

Defense Association (Dai Nippon Kokubō Fujinkai).¹²¹ Groups such as these spearheaded the preparation and sending of comfort bags nationwide. School-children were also an important part of this effort. Images of wartime nationalism in advertising were both direct and indirect: Japanese troops on the front line were featured on the cover of the September 1939 issue of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater*, while the majestic nationalistic icon of Mount Fuji graced the February 1940 cover, and women engaged in military training with bamboo spears appeared in March 1940. These politically reactionary subjects could, however, still be rendered in experimental aesthetic idioms like montage.¹²²

Shiseido did not want to abandon its hard-won deluxe brand image, but it also could not continue to promote wasteful luxury in the face of state ideological injunctions to the contrary. The selling points of health, high quality that maximizes efficacy, and patriotic national production were put forward as compensatory features. A magazine advertisement for “Shiseido Deluxe Cosmetics” that ran in the popular journal *Housewife’s Companion* in 1940 clearly tries to have it both ways. It exhorts consumers to show their patriotism by partaking in the “pride of pure national production,” glossed in katakana as Nippon (Japan) to the right, which offers products superior to imported goods. And right above this copy sits the elegant English script reading “deluxe,” alongside the image of a stylishly dressed woman in a jauntily tilted pert hat fashionable through the early 1940s.

While the term *deluxe* was still clearly in evidence in 1940, by September of that year Shiseido’s glossy public relations magazine stopped publishing to conserve precious resources. For similar reasons, the company also changed its containers from glass to ceramics, cardboard, and aluminum, depending on the product.¹²³ Shiseido was also able to join in the mobilization effort by spearheading a consumer campaign to recycle empty cosmetics containers. Under the slogan “Recycle empty containers for victory,” the company showed its customers how and where to recycle. Different varieties of collection boxes, which were distributed throughout cities, were illustrated in the August 1940 issue of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater*.¹²⁴ Again, the reactionary and restrictive ideological context of this recycling effort did not entirely restrict its creative mode of expression, as evidenced in the playful editorial layouts using cut photographs of piles of recycled containers for the contours or actual shapes of bottles with the copy “One container can be the power of Asia” (figure 3.33).

Another strategy the company used to negotiate the antiluxury ordinances was to tie its products to the morality messages of the wartime spiritual mobilization movement. A newspaper advertisement from 1941 for Shiseido shampoo told women that “dirty hair makes a dirty spirit/mind!” The illustration



3.33 Container recycling campaign, back cover of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* 2, no. 6 (June 1940). Shiseido Corporate Museum

shows a clearly Western-looking woman gazing upward as if for spiritual guidance as she strokes her long hair. It does not emphasize the beautifying aspect of the product, which might be linked to vanity and luxury, but rather promotes cleanliness (as next to godliness).¹²⁵

Shiseido also endorsed the practical effectiveness of its products against medical ailments; for example, vanishing cream was good for soothing chapped skin (*are dome*) as well as providing valuable skin protection under light cosmetics. The company continued to diversify into a range of products, adding Hifumoto cream to heal skin wounds and burns (1942). Visually, the advertisements displayed a marked graphic simplification in terms of composition and color from the early 1940s, both responding to government publishing regulations and seeking not to look ostentatious during a time of national sacrifice.

Yet even within the stripped-down wartime palette, it is evident that designers developed creative approaches to their editorial layouts, maximizing the three colors of black, white, and red in eye-catching simple compositions. And Yamana's lovely muted blue camellia package design for Shiseido toothpaste was still attractive in aluminum. Neither manufacturers nor the consumer public entirely abandoned their quest for style, sophistication, and a certain cosmopolitan elegance even during the dire circumstances of the final years of the war, as women clung to their Shiseido lipsticks, even when they had to be sold in chunky wood containers.

ONE ADVERTISEMENT FROM the back cover of the April 1933 issue of several general-interest magazines boldly exclaimed, "Scholars say that the use of soap is a barometer of the culture of a first world nation," explicitly identifying soap consumption as a sign of a highly developed civilization (figure 3.34).¹²⁶ To emphasize the point further, the designer superimposed bar charts comparing national soap consumption rates using units that depict hands washing, overlaid onto the same disembodied handwashing image in the background. This collage aestheticized rituals of cleanliness and visually reinforced the image of Kao soap's utility in matters of national hygiene by inserting the product into a seemingly scientific statistical framework. In this image the United States is shown representing the highest level of consumption, and Japan the lowest. It thus presented soap use as profoundly connected to national identity and tied to Japan's quest for global status.¹²⁷

To promote proper consumption of its products, the company launched educational initiatives that buttressed state policies. And when the manufacturer provided its retailers with supplies of educational materials like the 1938 pamphlet entitled "How to Bathe Your Baby," for distribution at the company-sponsored

STATE IS ZAPSI

圖表は日・獨・佛・英・米の一ヶ年一人當り
石鹼消費量(單位一・五キロ)の比較です



清潔好きで入浴好きの國民といはれ乍ら我國の傳染病率も小兒死亡率の何と多うなことをせう

語文文明國中国日本は清潔習慣が一番少くないのを見てもいいやうに考へられる。この關心が足りないでもうた清潔にしたいです

石鹸で手を洗つただで二十七種の細菌が除かれます。石鹸と肌を美しく清潔にするばかりでなく目に見えぬ微菌と戦ひます

★花王石鹸は美と健康の精です★花王石鹸はとてゝも安心して貰へる標準石鹸です★皆様の美と健康のためにもつて花王石鹸をお供ひ下さい

阪大・會商瀨長社會式株鹺石王花・京東

(MADE IN JAPAN)

3.34 Kao soap advertisement, back cover of *King* (*Kingu*) 9, no. 4 (April 1933). Kao Corporation



3.35 Poster for Shiseido cosmetics, 1930. Shiseido Corporate Museum

lecture series during national Hygiene Week, Kao was promoting daily practices that it hoped would continue well after baby's first bath.¹²⁸

While similarly trying to justify the hygienic and spiritual value of its products as Japan entered a wartime footing, Shiseido maintained its core connection to the concept of "richness" and its associations with luxury, glamour, and cosmopolitanism. This richness was communicated from the very beginning through a dazzling array of elegant women from around the world and from across the ages, spanning from classical antiquity until the present. Thus, unhindered by the restrictions of history or geography, Shiseido could bring into conversation Marie Antoinette and the kimono-clad modern Japanese new woman (figure 3.35), as they both gazed at a small handheld mirror, inviting the consumer to peek and envision her own image of beauty.

Food + Beverage



Remember to prioritize the user experience!
—MINEMURA KŌZŌ for Morinaga in *Advertising World* (1929)

“It is easy enough to say ‘buy this’ or ‘buy that,’” confessed the editors of the book *Modern Publicity* in 1934, “but the real persuasiveness and art of advertising commences with the secondary matters, the envelopment of the goods in some desirable atmosphere, the association of pleasurable emotions with them.”¹ Pleasurable emotions were at the core of the food and beverage market, which sold products sweet and flavorful, fun and intoxicating, but also satiating, nutritious, and sometimes even therapeutic. Companies tied hunger and thirst to desires for emotional and physical experiences like romantic love and athletic leisure. Advertisers stylized this desire.² The Japanese mass media was awash with products from the food and beverage market by the 1920s, but as in

other markets, the Western-style commodities were most invested in advertising design because they were neither staple goods in the local cuisine nor well-known products among the public. Like other brand-name goods, they also sold at higher price points, requiring compelling advertising design to persuade consumers. The companies Morinaga and Calpis stand out in this lively field for their creative advertising and contribution to the development of modern Japanese design across the century more generally.

These companies marketed eating and drinking as distinctly modern experiences that enveloped the consumer in pleasure on multiple sensory levels. Drinking in Japan, primarily tea and alcoholic beverages like the brewed rice wine sake and the distilled alcoholic beverage *shōchū*, was intrinsically social, dating back centuries. Modern advertisers continued to market it as social and sensual. They extended these associations to soft drinks and Western-style sweets. They also linked this consumption to a host of bodily practices, particularly modern sports, which connected sensory gratification with physical health in the construction of a vigorous citizenry. These manufacturers simultaneously saw themselves contributing to national industrial progress through innovative new technologies and the domestication of production.

While hunger and thirst are related bodily appetites, the advertising for food and drink remained largely separate. They did, however, come together in the myriad new spaces of consumption popping up all over Japan. This was the age of upscale restaurants and soda fountains where one could have Western-style meals and hot cocoa and sweets. It was also when popular cafés, modern bars, beer halls, and beer gardens became all the rage, offering savory set menus with drinks. Stylish beach concessions also began appearing across the country. Beverage companies catered to these new social spaces, supplying their products to independent purveyors of food and drink, including traditional teahouses and taverns (*izakaya*) that served alcohol. They also launched their own branded establishments. Such new environments spatialized Japan's modern pleasurable experiences of consuming and imbibing and often employed attractive female servers to augment the pleasure quotient for the male gaze.

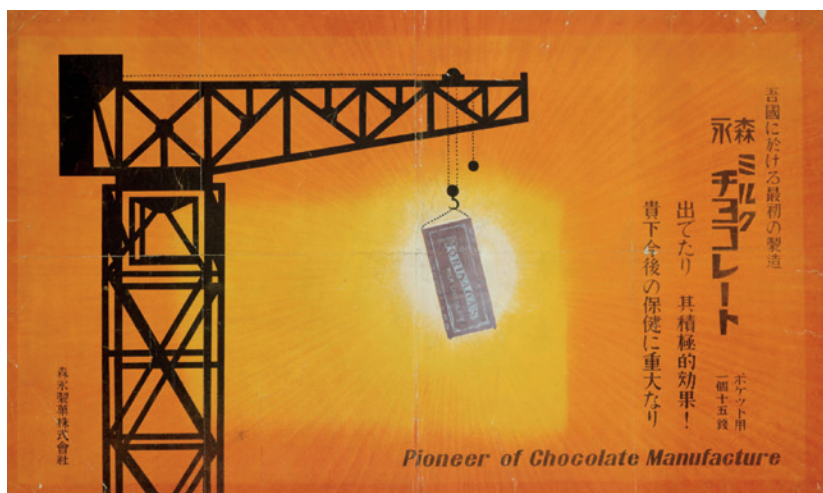
Food: Morinaga Confectioneries

Confectioneries—chocolate, caramels, and cookies—are at the center of this story. As Kushima Tsutomu has documented in his historical survey *The Candy (Za okashi)*, the company Fūgetsudō first marketed chocolate in Japan around 1877, and the first newspaper advertisement for chocolate appeared the following year. It was initially marketed mainly to foreign residents. The Ameri-

can company Hershey tried to market milk chocolate in Japan in 1894, but it garnered little interest among local consumers. It was not until Morinaga Taichirō (1865–1937) established the Morinaga Western Confectionery Shop (Morinaga Seiyōgashi Seizōsho) in Tokyo in 1899 (incorporated as Morinaga and Company Ltd. [Morinaga Seika Kabushiki Kaisha] in 1912) and produced “creamy chocolate,” after spending over a decade in the United States learning about confectionery production, that chocolate became a popular domestic product.³ The company marketed both its chocolate and caramel as luxury treats with nutritional benefits offering healthy calories for the still comparatively undernourished Japanese population. Later it also promoted chocolate as a healthy alternative to tobacco. In September 1901 the Japanese Imperial Household Ministry began ordering Morinaga creamy chocolate, establishing what would become a long-term pattern of mutual reinforcement between state objectives and this private enterprise.

Starting with marshmallows, Morinaga’s product line quickly diversified into caramel, chocolate, cocoa, dry milk, lactic acid beverages (Chorus), chewing gum, hard candies, and a wide assortment of biscuits. In March 1909 the company began mass-producing chocolate bars, spurring their widespread dissemination among Japanese consumers. Soon after, Meiji Confectionery (Meiji Seika), Morinaga’s main rival, also began marketing its chocolate at three different price points: ¥0.10, ¥0.20, and ¥0.70. Cheaper than imported goods, these Japanese chocolate bars were more affordable. The pocket-size portability of many Morinaga products was key to its marketing success. The bars and boxes fit in your hand. They were perfectly child-size. And later, they fit in wartime comfort bags sent to soldiers on the front.

While Japanese companies previously purchased all the necessary ingredients for chocolate production from the United States and simply processed them locally, Morinaga was the first domestic company to develop techniques for producing cocoa and all the other requisite ingredients for chocolate. By 1918 it was domestically producing chocolate with entirely local ingredients, which it rebranded as Morinaga milk chocolate.⁴ As with Kao, high-quality domestic production was a selling point for Morinaga advertising. One Morinaga poster designed for display in trains, created under the auspices of advertising section chief Kataoka Toshirō, celebrated the launch of the company’s milk chocolate bar in 1918, showing a large industrial crane lifting a bar with the English words “Pioneer of Chocolate Manufacture” at the bottom (figure 4.1). The vertical Japanese copy to the right, featuring the product’s new beveled katakana logo mark, heralded the company as the first chocolate manufacturer in the country. The poster’s eye-catching orange palette glowed golden



4.1 Kataoka Toshirō (ad director) and Ikeda Eiji (designer), train poster for Morinaga milk chocolate, 1918. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

yellow in the center around the dangling chocolate bar as if it had just been forged in the fires of a metalworks. The radiant imagery also related to the auspicious national emblem of the rising sun. At ¥0.10 apiece, the chocolate bar was touted not only as a product important for one's health but also as an industrial achievement of national significance.⁵

In 1919 Morinaga launched the first Japanese cocoa drink. After having started a condensed milk business to ensure the supply of this important secondary ingredient for its milk caramel, the company successfully manufactured Japan's first domestically produced powdered milk. Sales of Morinaga dry milk began in 1921. By the mid-1920s, a host of chocolate makers started appearing in Japan, including the soon-to-be-well-known "nutritional candy" (*eiyo kashi*) company Glico, whose iconic logo of a male runner raising his arms in triumph as he crosses the finish line became familiar throughout the empire, a symbol of good health and Japan's sporting vitality. In the public imagination, chocolate was inextricably linked with modernity, a modern foodstuff emblematic of the aesthetics of the age.

Caramel had a parallel story. Morinaga began manufacturing and selling individual caramel cubes in 1899. Even more than chocolate, which Japanese consumers often perceived as bitter, caramel was immediately popular. In 1908 the

company first attempted to market a pocket-size tin of ten caramels with an endorsement in English on the package that read “T. Morinaga & Co.’s Pocket Caramels—‘Really Wholesome Confectionery.’ This sweetmeat is made to be given with confidence to the young people who do not care for tobacco.” But the product failed miserably due to unpleasant melting and high cost. Only after extensive technological experimentation that improved preservation and stability did Morinaga rebrand its product as Morinaga milk caramel and start successfully selling a pocket-size paper package of twenty cubes for ¥0.10 in 1914 at the Taisho Exposition in Ueno Park.⁶ This innovative portable product in a distinctive (now deeply nostalgic) yellow package became enormously popular and further propelled the company’s reputation among consumers. It was followed in 1923 with the major launch of Marie biscuits, a mild-tasting milk cookie, which quickly caught on and went into full-scale production two years later. Each popular product contributed to increasing the sales of others.

Morinaga exploited Japan’s widespread practices of seasonal giving of gifts, often consumables, as tokens of appreciation. It mounted gift sales for *Ochūgen* (midyear summer holiday), *Oseibo* (end-of-year winter holiday), and *Oshōgatsu* (New Year’s), as well as for many Western holidays like Christmas and Valentine’s Day, the latter of which was first celebrated in 1936 but caught on in the late 1970s when the Japanese National Confectionery Industry Association (Zenkoku Amegashi Kōgyō Kyōdō Kumiai) inaugurated its counterpart, White Day (Howaito Dē). Morinaga introduced many new gift products in decorative packaging to cater to such occasions. These occasions came to include a host of invented national holidays like Mother’s Day (Haha no Hi) and company-specific celebrations like Morinaga Beltline Day (Morinaga Berutorain Dē), held on the first day of every month to promote new products. Also recognizing the enormous potential in the children’s market, the company sponsored many Children’s Day (Kodomo no Dē) events and profited greatly from its Manna teething biscuits for babies, launched in 1930. Manna sales catapulted in the 1940s as the product was marketed across the empire. Along with chocolate and caramel, which were cleverly marketed for inclusion in comfort bags, the biscuit business turned out to be a backbone of the company’s wartime production because its Kanpan (literally, “dry bread”), or hard-tack, launched in 1937, was ideal for long preservation for use at the front.

After the widespread devastation of the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, a lively full-page 1930 newspaper advertisement by Ikeda Eiji announced the opening of Morinaga’s brand-new, “hygienic” caramel manufacturing plant in the Tsurumi ward of Yokohama (figure 4.2).⁷ His design incorporated a photograph of the massive facility at the bottom and an oversize hand-drawn smokestack

4.2 Ikeda Eiji, advertisement for Morinaga milk caramel, Morinaga Seika New Tsurumi Factory, *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*, January 5, 1930. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

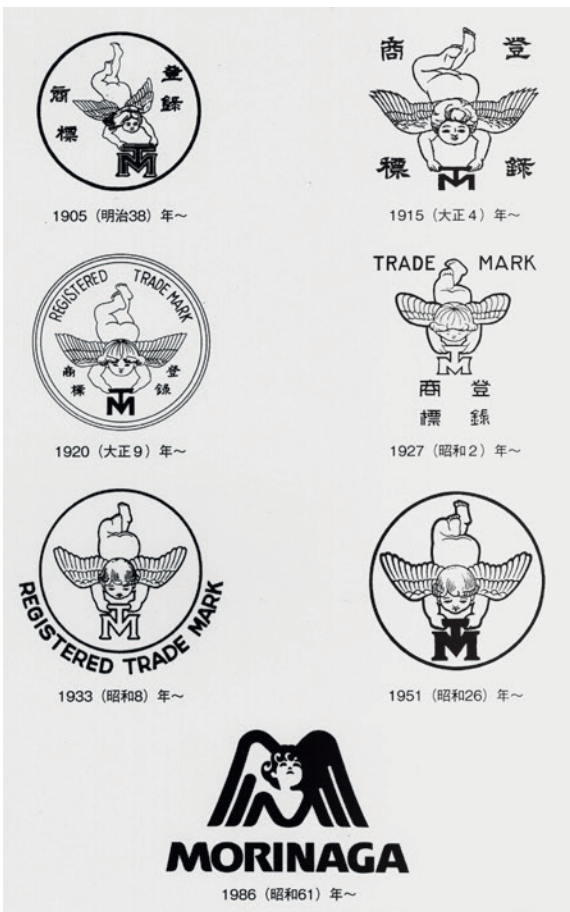


that extended vertically from the factory to the top of the page, emitting the large word “Morinaga’s.” All around the page were annotated illustrations of the company’s manufacturing process and extensive workforce—male and female.⁸ By the 1930s Morinaga was a large national company that was exporting to the United States and to Japan’s colonies.

Morinaga Advertising School

Business historians universally recognize Morinaga as a pioneer in Japanese advertising and marketing, especially in its development of a chain store retail network called the Morinaga Beltline. The company was so influential it was often somewhat jokingly referred to among field specialists as the Morinaga Advertising School (Morinaga Kōkoku Gakkō). Company president Morinaga Taichirō was himself on the front lines of advertising development. He personally selected the company’s well-known angel logo trademark, which pictured a naked winged angel upside down grasping his initials, TM, which was registered in 1905. Designers gradually updated the logo in 1915, 1920, 1927, 1933, and 1951, making the

4.3 Morinaga angel logo mark, 1905 to 1986. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



angel more cherubic and stylized, and the TM alternately black with white outlining, white with black outlining, sometimes white against a dark background, and then finally entirely black in the postwar period (the logo was changed completely in 1986) (figure 4.3).⁹ The inspiration for the angel mark was the company's first product, marshmallows, because it was referred to as *angel food*. The cute angel also tacitly suggested the image of a young child, the company's target consumer. Taichirō's own personal Christian beliefs added other moral subtexts.¹⁰ As later advertisements explicitly convey, the angel trademark became the sign of quality and domestic production. It also symbolized Morinaga's enduring corporate vision of nourishment mixed with pleasure, expressed in its current tagline, "We offer good health with delight & taste." Throughout its decades of campaigns, the company's main publicity themes centered around health (*kenkō*, *boken*, or *genki*) and nutrition (*eiyo*) mixed with pleasure (*yukai*).

Morinaga milk caramel's eye-catching yellow box featured the product name in outlined vertical block sans serif katakana running down the center, flanked by brushed characters reading "nourishing" and "excellent flavor." It was sold with an obi, or paper sash, placed vertically down the center of the box. On the lower right, the box read "Registered trademark no. 449283." On the back was "Morinaga & Co. Ltd." Packaging, particularly for Morinaga caramels, was not only a silent salesman that enticed consumption but also a toy or collectible that lived on in the consumer's daily life. The designs and cutout figures on the inside of the box amplified the enjoyment. It was a toy in a box. The figures ranged from animals to airplanes. From its inception, the box was a seemingly unlimited site of innovative marketing with the inside of the cover envisioned as a "fun message space." Whether it was cartoonist Okamoto Ippei's curated popular series of over five hundred varieties of "insect cartoons" printed on the inside of the box in 1936, proof-of-purchase campaigns where consumers were rewarded with prizes for sending in the most cutout angel trademarks, or the sponsorship of enormously popular nationwide package art contests to create "caramel art," the company transformed the empty box from something to be discarded into a creative medium.¹¹

The caramel package was so recognizable that it became a prominent feature in many advertising designs. In 1926 Saitō Yoshirō illustrated a charming poster of a young Western girl dangling languidly off a chair, surrounded by a concentrically radiating halo of overlapping packages (figure 4.4). Originally designed with a collage of actual boxes, the poster was able to represent the sweets as both an imaginative conjuring and the actual product the girl sees, reinforced by the product brand name, which is directly in her sight line.¹² In photographic publicity, mostly black and white, the yellow box provided a pop of color that drew the eye.

Morinaga invested heavily in all forms of publicity, particularly newspaper advertising in the major press outlets, including two English-language papers, the *Japan Times* and the *Seoul Press* in colonial Korea. The company also aggressively advertised in popular magazines.¹³ The first advertisement for its creamy chocolate ran in the *Hōchi shinbun* in October 1904. Morinaga brand-name goods quickly became so desirable that copycat products with similar names, such as Morimizu chocolates, soon flooded the market, forcing the company to sponsor newspaper advertisements alerting consumers to these "fake" (*nisemono*) products.¹⁴ Advertising, therefore, assisted the consumer in distinguishing "real" brand products from counterfeits. This need to differentiate Morinaga's products in the marketplace and elevate their aesthetic level prompted the company to invest in trained designers and even fine artists



4.4 Saitō Yoshirō, poster for Morinaga milk caramel, 1926. Morinaga and Co., Ltd. Collection of Naomi Pollock and David Sneider

like oil painter Wada Sanzō (1883–1967), who during his student days in 1908 painted a popular Morinaga confectioneries poster picturing a Western female nude seated in a pastoral arcadia with two golden-haired cherubic angels gazing admiringly at a container of Morinaga sweets—one angel’s dimpled pink bottom greeting the viewer (figure 4.5).¹⁵

The company hired a talented pool of professional experts to advertise and market its products. It consistently used the angel trademark and distinctive product logo marks but never imposed a uniform house style or design policy, instead deploying a staggering variety of styles and themes. Morinaga’s advertising copy was also distinctly literary. Many Japanese corporations had started to use famous intellectuals and artists as writers for their copy.¹⁶ Still, advertising historians credit Kataoka Toshirō, who served as chief of Morinaga’s advertising division from 1914 to 1919, with inaugurating a new vocational sphere of professional copywriters (*bunnanka*). Kataoka worked directly with the company’s two leading partners, Morinaga and Matsuzaki Hanzaburō (who joined in 1905), both deeply invested in advertising and creative copy. He brought



4.5 Wada Sanzō, poster
for Morinaga Western
Confectioneries (Morinaga
no Seiyōgashi), 1908.
Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

literary creativity and humor to the company. He was also a skilled marketer. In 1915 he took a series of advertising trucks with blue photographs on their side panels around the country to promote Morinaga products. Later in the 1920s, he was a key figure in developing aerial advertising.

Kataoka created the now-famous early publicity campaign in 1918 for the company's milk caramel using the large handprint of the celebrated highest-rank champion sumo wrestler (*yokozuna*) Tachiyama Mineemon with the tagline "Invincible" (*Tenka muteki*).¹⁷ Known for his exceptional strength and undefeatability, with only one loss between 1909 and 1916, Tachiyama was already an advertising symbol of strength, virility, and Japanese masculinity. The shipping company O.S.K. (Ōsaka Shōsen Kaisha) used his towering figure in full sumo regalia on its poster designed by Machida Ryūyō (1871–1955) promoting international travel to and from Japan (figure 4.6). A veritable Japanese colossus, his feet were shown straddling the Pacific Ocean from Japan to North America, following the ship routes that were connecting the archipelago with the rest of the world. Tachiyama's large handprint in black against a stark white background in Morinaga publicity was a personal imprint of stardom and a metonym for physical prowess (figure 4.7). It promised the same to young consumers and their devoted mothers. Encouraging fandom with the collectability of the wrestler's print, the advertisement mixed health, nutrition, and pleasure. It also reminded the consumer of the tangible (and sticky) experience of eating caramels with one's hands.

Sumo wrestlers appeared regularly in Morinaga advertising for more than a decade, their large hands grasping fistfuls of caramels as a tasty and nourishing treat (figure 4.8). They simultaneously embodied both traditional and modern Japanese masculinity. One striking poster design from 1938 that also circulated in newspapers employed a close-up portrait photo of celebrity *yokozuna* Futabayama Sadaji (1912–1968) holding up a box of milk caramels (figure 4.9). It not only capitalized on Futabayama's fame as a fierce champion but also showed him uncharacteristically smiling, garnering significant public attention. Other advertisements in the campaign touted the caramels as "the 3 o'clock of complete victory" (*zenshō no osanji*), referring to Japan's common afternoon snack time and the wrestler's successful record (with the double meaning of cheering for complete victory in the Second Sino-Japanese War, which had started the previous year). The copy was then glossed "Futabayama's snacks."¹⁸ The message was clear: eating milk caramels made you happy, strong, and victorious. Other sports figures abounded in Morinaga publicity. As the sumo wrestler's contemporary counterpart, the baseball player was a new masculine symbol of strength and vitality. In 1930 Morinaga issued College



4.6 Machida Ryūyō, poster of sumo champion Tachiyama Mineemon for O.S.K. (Ōsaka Shōsen Kaisha) shipping company, ca. 1915–17. Musashino Art University Museum and Library Collection. Courtesy of Mitsui O.S.K. Lines Ltd.



4.7 Kataoka Toshiro (art director), sumo champion Tachiyama Mineemon's handprint with text "Invincible" (*Tenka muteki*), newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk caramel, *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun*, January 20, 1918, a.m. ed., 10. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



4.8 Kataoka Toshiro (art director), newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk caramel, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, May 18, 1918, a.m. ed., 6. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

4.9 Sumo champion

Futabayama Sadaji, poster for
Morinaga milk caramel, 1938.
Neko Publishing



Chocolate and Sportsman Chocolate bars to commemorate the enormously popular big-six university baseball league teams. The colorful college wrappers had individually printed names of fan-favorite schools while the elegant royal blue wrapper of the sportsman bar featured a baseball player at bat and text in gold. Morinaga's strong-body publicity focusing on sportsmen merged into national strong-body ideology that was easily applied to soldiers when the war started.

Like many innovative advertisers at the time, Morinaga employed humorous illustrations and manga-style figures, hiring talented artists Ikeda Eiji, Enomoto Eiichi, and Okamoto Ippei. A 1931 poster for milk caramel featured Enomoto's lighthearted drawing of two children, a brother and sister, with rosy hatched cheeks (a sign of good health) snugly tucked into bed, their contented faces reflecting anticipation of fun and sweets in the future (figure 4.10). The copy, written in childlike katakana, a typographic signifier of children speaking or being spoken to, says, "Tomorrow is happy sports day" (*Ashita wa urechii undōkai*; here *ureshii*, the word for "happy," is intentionally misspelled as if a



4.10 Enomoto Eiichi, poster for Morinaga milk caramel, “Tomorrow is happy sports day” (*Ashita wa urechii undōkai*), 1931. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

child were speaking).¹⁹ As later Morinaga advertisements repeatedly emphasized, “A good child is a strong child!” (*Yoiko tsuyoi ko!*), and childhood physical fitness was associated with the consumption of sweets.²⁰

The company reinforced the direct connection to children’s culture by commissioning one of the best-known and most prolific children’s story illustrators of the century, Takei Takeo (1894–1983), who produced whimsical figures and fantastical creatures, often with oversize heads, in a signature line-drawing style that appeared regularly in *Children’s World* (*Kodomo no kuni*) magazine from the inaugural issue. He worked for many commercial brands, including Lion and Calpis, as well as actively designing toy boxes. For Morinaga, Takei created an eye-catching full-page newspaper advertisement for milk chocolate that featured a boy and girl in knitted caps playing cards at a table (figure 4.11). Small Morinaga angels fly around the room delivering both chocolaty goodness and perhaps a shot of romance. The romantic subtext is reinforced by the girl provocatively extending her foot under the table to touch the boy’s leg. All around them are fairy-tale-like characters: kings and queens, princes on horseback. Takei’s unique illustrations brought the fanciful world of children’s

4.11 Takei Takeo, newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk chocolate, *Ōsaka mainichi shinbun*, February 23, 1930, 6. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



culture to the Morinaga product line. Not simply a dependent child, this new girl consumer-subject was an incipient young student with modern tastes and a world of her own. She was also now not just an object of male desire but the bold initiator of such romance with her own desires. And most important, she was a coveted target of much consumer advertising, especially for chocolate.

Advertising Sweet Dreams and Healthy Leisure

Many people in the design world worked for Morinaga at one time or another. *Advertising World* editor Murota Kurazō even did a stint. In 1927 he created a highly acclaimed large-scale horizontal poster for milk caramels using a portrait photograph of the young model Kozakura Yōko, a small angelic girl with a modern wavy bobbed hairstyle who displays a devilish grin as she eats a box of caramels with her arms on the table (figure 4.12).²¹ Full-page advertisements of the winsome Kozakura clasping a box of caramels that she lifts toward her mouth also ran in newspapers that year, making a strong impression on viewers



4.12 Murota Kurazō, poster
with Kozakura Yōko for
Morinaga milk caramel, 1927.
Neko Publishing

during a time of economic hardship and fiscal austerity. Impish and adorable children taking delectable bites out of chocolate bars or caramels, or thinking about taking bites, or licking their fingers after taking a bite, became mainstay images for the company. Chocolate and caramels made for happy and healthy children. These sweets were also the object of desire. Advertisements capitalized on this desire. Morinaga images perfectly encapsulated the consumer's longing for its delicious products. One photographic poster showed a young boy ecstatically wrapping his arms around a large pile of chocolate bars.²² Another showed a child dreaming of Morinaga caramels with the brand logo marks floating in the air over her bed as a stand-in for the product (figure 4.13). Declaring, "Papa, Mama, definitely!" the ad revealed a carefully placed box of milk caramels sitting on the pillow as the text invited parents to fulfill their children's sweet dreams.

Western-style sweets also satisfied the desires of other contemporary consumer types, like the modern couple. The modern couple was generally a self-identified love match rather than family arranged. Ikeda Eiji created a colorful pastel train poster in 1926 for Morinaga milk chocolate showing a dapper young man with fedora, cane, and spats seated outside in the park next to his kimono-clad female companion, whose modern "ear-hiding" hairstyle, shawl, and parasol quickly identified her as a "new woman" (figure 4.14). They are

4.13 Newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk caramel, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, July 29, 1928, p.m. ed., 3. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



4.14 Ikeda Eiji, train poster for Morinaga milk chocolate, “Resonate, you and me” (*Kyōmeiru, anata mo, watashi mo*), 1926. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



4.15 Newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk chocolate, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, June 7, 1929, a.m. ed., 10. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

matched by two lovebirds sitting in the tree behind. The copy read “Resonate [*kyōmeiru*; literally, chirp together], you and me.” Romance was in the air in the Taisho period, and love matches, in contrast to arranged marriages, were on the rise. Chocolate was unequivocally part of the language of love and was associated with the modern leisure pursuits of these new urban consumers. It was a fashionable luxury item.²³ A host of advertisements spotlighted such modern cosmopolitan couples; for example, one that ran on the back of concert programs and in newspapers showed a stylized abstract drawing of a modern boy (*mobo*) with a mustache and a sporty boater hat and a modern girl (*moga*) with a flapper-style bob (figure 4.15). Their sketchily delineated faces emerge dramatically out of a lively musical score simulating the cool contemporary vibe; they are the café denizens who listen to jazz, smoke cigarettes, and drink assorted new alcoholic beverages late into the night. And Morinaga chocolate was their stylish companion. As the copy proclaims, it “dances and sensitively accompanies the taste of modern people.”²⁴

Morinaga advertised its products as part of the “cultured life,” or *bunka seikatsu*, that modern Japanese were cultivating. This was highlighted in the announcement for the opening of the first Morinaga Candy Store in the trendy

4.16 Advertisement announcing the opening of the first Morinaga Candy Store in the Marunouchi Building (Maru Biru) on April 3, 1923. *Ôsaka mainichi shinbun*, April 2, 1923, a.m. ed., 4. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



Marunouchi Building (Maru Biru) on April 3, 1923 (figure 4.16).²⁵ Touted as an American-style soda fountain with sanitary and nutritional food including Western-style sweets and desserts, fountain sodas, hot cocoa, ice cream, and bread, the store was heralded in print publicity by the figure of a dapper young man, the archetypal dandified modern boy, in a Panama hat and a fashionable, or “high-collar” (*haikara*), suit complete with bow tie, pocket square, and bold striped pants, as well as a cane and spats on his shoes.²⁶ Defined in relation to the modern girl, the modern boy was also an ambivalent media construct embodying the new urban male consumer navigating Japan’s cosmopolitan modernity, alternately effete and masculine but always fashionable.²⁷ By 1939 Morinaga had opened forty-five candy stores across the country catering to this new cli-



4.17 Morinaga Camp Store,
1930s. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

entele, all with modish American-style interior designs occupied by neatly uniformed servers and soda jerks wearing pristine white caps.

The cultured life also included healthy modern leisure activities like sea bathing, alpine walking, hiking, and skiing. Company advertising spotlighted these activities to reinforce its core marketing themes of health, nutrition, and pleasure. Small figures in newspaper ads for caramels whimsically climb the character for “mountain” (*yama*) and swim through the character for “sea” (*umi*).²⁸ Morinaga cultivated a particularly strong association with water leisure by setting up ads and stands at popular beach resorts, and even later establishing its own beach chain, called the Camp Stores, from 1928. Clean and comfortable resting places, these stores were designed as sleek white modernist structures with streamlined art deco signage, colorful marquees, striped awnings, and red pennant flags flying the company name from projecting towers (figure 4.17). They also employed salespeople in crisp white uniforms.²⁹ Morinaga Camp Stores were at the leading beaches in Japan, such as Zushi in the Shōnan coastal region of Kanagawa and Hamaji near Osaka. Also, in 1945 the company added a series of “Student Camp Stores” run by university students. The Student Camp Store project engaged university advertising research circles to manage the stores independently during their summer vacations. The



4.18 Ikeda Eiji, poster featuring fireworks that spell out the company and product name, 1927. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

program increased the number of participating universities every year, and in 1945 each university opened a total of fourteen stores at beach locations. While wartime exigencies forced the Camp Stores to close in 1945, Morinaga reopened them and the student stores in 1954.³⁰

In addition to new leisure activities, Morinaga capitalized on long-standing seasonal festivities that went back to the Edo period, such as watching fireworks during the summer over the Sumida River in Ryōgoku and other waterways. A series of advertisements that ran in all Tokyo newspaper evening editions in July 1917 spotlighted fireworks with the bursts at the top forming the three “tree” parts of the character *mori* and the bottom lights forming the shape of *naga*.³¹ A hand-rendered train poster from 1924 showed spectacular multicolored fireworks exploding from two actual caramel boxes floating in the air. And another 1927 photographic poster by Ikeda cleverly pictured fireworks shimmering over a reflective river with the bursts forming the characters and letters for “Morinaga Milk Caramel” like an electric signboard (figure 4.18).

In 1928 designers Okuda Masanori and Fujimoto Michio joined Morinaga from the design studio run by Akimoto Takao in Tokyo. Akimoto had worked for over a decade in the United States, rising to chief designer at Sears, Roebuck and Company, and was an innovator in photographic advertising, spe-

cifically the use of airbrushing. Because Akimoto spoke fluent English, his studio had many foreign clients, particularly those in the film and music industry. Fujimoto not only learned advanced photography techniques while working at the studio but was also in charge of lettering design. A year after joining Morinaga, he was transferred to the design section (*ishōbu*) of the company's internal wholesaler, which was charged with advertising and marketing, Morinaga Tokyo Product Sales Company (Morinaga Seihin Tōkyō Hanbai Kaisha, predecessor of Morinaga Shōji Kabushiki Kaisha [Morinaga Sales Company]), where he worked as an advisor to smaller retail stores concerning their displays and design. His section chief was Hiranuma Fukusaburō, a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts design division and classmate of Okuda.³² The division employed ten people and divided work by region. Their work was very hands-on, producing everything from price boards and posters to window displays and interior decoration. They were particularly busy with year-round seasonal promotions. Every month the company provided retailers with “beautiful” new publicity “hangers” (hanging placards) to enliven their shops and draw in consumers.³³

When Okuda and Fujimoto joined Morinaga, the company had about fifty total employees in the advertising (*kōkokubu*), publicity (*sendenka*), and product planning (*seihin kikakuka*) divisions.³⁴ By the early 1930s, there were two primary product design teams representing Morinaga milk caramels and milk chocolate. The former included Koike Tomihisa (1903–1962), a graduate of the design division of the Tokyo Higher School of Industrial Arts, and Noishi Yusei. The latter was led by designer Imaizumi Takeji (1905–1995) and copywriter Arai Seiichirō (1907–1990). While advertising production for caramels outstripped chocolate by three times in the 1920s and four times in the 1930s, the partnership between Imaizumi and Arai is still one of the most successful professional collaborations in this early formative history of Japanese commercial art.³⁵ A graduate of the commerce department of Meiji University (Meiji Daigaku), Imaizumi joined Morinaga in 1930, effectively serving as art director (although without that formal title). Arai graduated from the economics department of Keio University (Keiō Gijuku) in 1932 and immediately joined Morinaga's advertising division to work with Imaizumi. Linguistically adept, Arai was specifically assigned the challenge of taking long copy and editing it into short, pithy advertising text. Imaizumi created many of Morinaga's most memorable chocolate ads of the 1930s, remarkably churning out upward of ten designs per week as the company was locked in a fierce competition with Meiji.³⁶

Morinaga designers aspired to be recognized as independent commercial artists. To this end, as Imaizumi recounted in *The History of Design* (*Kiki kaki*



4.19 Kuwabara Kineo
(photographer), photograph
of Horino Masao's photomural
of a Spanish flamenco dancer,
Morinaga Candy Store, Ginza,
1936. Tokyo Photographic Art
Museum/DNPartcom

dezainshi), published in 2001, they formed a group called Kōzusha (Composition Group) in 1932 to exhibit their own design work.³⁷ Koike and Hiranuma were central figures in forming this group, whose membership overlapped with Sugiura Hisui's Group of Seven. Similarly advocating for "creative design" (*sōsaku zuan*), Kōzusha members envisioned themselves independent of Morinaga, able to design freely around various themes. According to Fujimoto, they were dedicated to studying design expression that was "not bound by necessity." Active from 1932 to 1938, until the war heated up, they held two exhibitions per year in the fall and spring, while also participating in the exhibitions of other groups. They even had an exchange exhibition with Parisian designers.³⁸

Like Kao's, Morinaga's designs also contributed to the creative use of photography in Japanese advertising. In the fashionable Ginza district, the design team worked with freelance photographer Horino Masao (1907–2000) to create a dramatic photomural montage of a Spanish flamenco dancer to adorn the back wall of the Morinaga Candy Store, one of the company's dessert and soda fountain parlors (figure 4.19). The free monthly public relations maga-



4.20 Imaizumi Takeji (art director) and Horino Masao (photographer), poster for Morinaga milk chocolate, featuring actress Hara Setsuko, 1937. Collection of Naomi Pollock and David Sneider

zine *Beltline Graph* (*Berutorain gurafu*) recorded the construction and installation process in detail to entice customers to the store, and Tokyo photographer Kuwabara Kineo took a dramatic shot of the store interior featuring the wall in 1936. With her enlarged face smiling seductively as it boldly projects from the center of the wall, the Spanish dancer is seen multiple times from different angles, posing and dancing in costume. Horino's composition animates her figure, bringing it into the space of the store to dance among the customers. A master modernist who wrote extensively on his craft, Horino went on to produce many evocative figure studies and portraits for Morinaga advertising, including several of the young actress Hara Setsuko, whose name is now synonymous with images of the loyal daughter, sister, and wife in Japanese cinema.

In 1937 Imaizumi turned Horino's smiling portrait of Hara into an iconic poster, with her hair tousled in the sun as she holds a carnation and a bar of Morinaga chocolate (figure 4.20).³⁹ Another Horino photograph of Hara appeared in black-and-white print advertisements, again showing her smiling coyly

4.21 Poster for Morinaga milk chocolate, featuring famous female illusionist Shōkyokusai Tenkatsu, 1929. Neko Publishing



but this time set against an abstracted background and wearing a stylish hat. These were updated interpretations of the classic beautiful-woman picture that was eternally useful for publicity. Morinaga's women stood out in this genre, however. Already in 1929 the company had issued a provocative chocolate poster featuring the elegant flapper-style portrait of famous female illusionist Shōkyokusai Tenkatsu seductively smiling as she turned in her chair to meet the gaze of the viewer (figure 4.21). Both she and chocolate were tantalizing. Particularly dedicated to photographing women, Horino later wrote an entire book on the photographic aesthetics of women from different countries, highlighting their native dress and ethnicized activities.⁴⁰ For Morinaga, he spotlighted their lively expressions and active poses, imbuing the subjects with a modern *élan vital* that appealed to the young female customers that the company hoped to target. And they were always smiling to radiate the joy associated with consuming Morinaga products. Morinaga's beautiful woman was, as the tagline in one advertisement exclaimed, "the young lady of spring" (*haru no ojōsan*).⁴¹ Design historian Maekawa Shiori has observed that Morinaga chocolate marketing and tie-up events specifically targeted a new generation of

educated schoolgirls with their own tastes and sense of independence, clearly differentiating advertising styles, with more hand-drawn illustrations directed at girls and photography directed at women. The copy for younger girls was also distinctly more emotional, with poetic expressions of yearning, while also incorporating contemporary schoolgirl slang and markedly more exclamation points.⁴² Morinaga's engaging images of women expanded to encompass a range of female types, including international figures like the Spanish flamenco dancer. To underscore this perspective, the company sponsored a sale with the theme "International Beautiful Women in Native Costumes" (Kokusai Bijin Fūzoku Sēru) with Japanese women dressing up in the national costumes of France, the United States, Spain, Italy, Denmark, and Manchuria. The company encouraged its retailers to have at least three representatives of each country grouped together to amplify the internationalism and excitement around this campaign.⁴³

Photography had quickly become a pillar of Japanese advertising. And of the hundreds of proposals submitted to Asahi Shinbunsha's yearly competition, many displayed in its International Photographic Advertising Exhibition (Kokusai Shōgyō Shashin Tenrankai), a significant number focused on Morinaga products. Taking advantage of newspaper publicity from the competition, since the *Asahi shinbun* ran full-page coverage of winning submissions, the company incorporated several of the prizewinning proposals into its campaigns. They ranged from abstract formal studies to multiperspectival montages. One winner perfectly exploited the geometrically gridded structure of the unwrapped chocolate bar, setting bars in different directions to create an abstract layered composition.⁴⁴ Another selected work, from the fifth annual competition in 1934, showed the double image of a happy young woman in a smart ski outfit with her cap jauntily cocked to one side placed next to the name of the milk chocolate product, rendered in its signature faceted blocky katakana type (figure 4.22).⁴⁵ The image reinforced the copy, which proclaimed Morinaga chocolate as a perfect treat to share with a friend when one hit the slopes for winter sports. Combining disparate spheres of consumption, in this case food and sports, was an effective tactic of doubling pleasurable expectations. For contemporary audiences, eating chocolate and skiing were both healthy activities. The double portrait also cinematically superimposed a framed close-up of the woman's face over her torso, tripling the leisure connotations by alluding to moving pictures. The allure of cinema and Hollywood was already part of Morinaga's successful marketing tie-up in its line of Paramount chocolates, launched in 1931, which spotlighted a range of Japanese and Western movie stars like Joan Crawford and Charlie Chaplin. With each Paramount chocolate bar, customers

4.22 The Fifth International Photographic Advertising Exhibition Call for Submissions, one of the selected designs advertising Morinaga milk chocolate (lower right corner). *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 31, 1934, 5. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.



received a free bromide photo of a popular actor or actress tucked inside the bright red, white, and gold wrapper.⁴⁶

From the spaces of the candy store to newspaper ads, Morinaga employed montage aesthetics in a variety of visual formats. In one full-page newspaper advertisement that ran in the *Ōsaka asahi shinbun* in 1929, a sea of smiling children's faces fills up the shape of the company angel logo (figure 4.23). The copy reads, “Morinaga milk caramel that I like, that I love . . .” In addition to Horino’s Candy Store flamenco dancer, Morinaga installed photomurals in some of its Camp Stores in 1939 to promote healthy new summer products: vitamin B–infused nutritional biscuits and aromatic fruit syrup for beverages. Large figures energetically popped off the white walls around the store space, floating next to appealing fruit and biscuits.⁴⁷

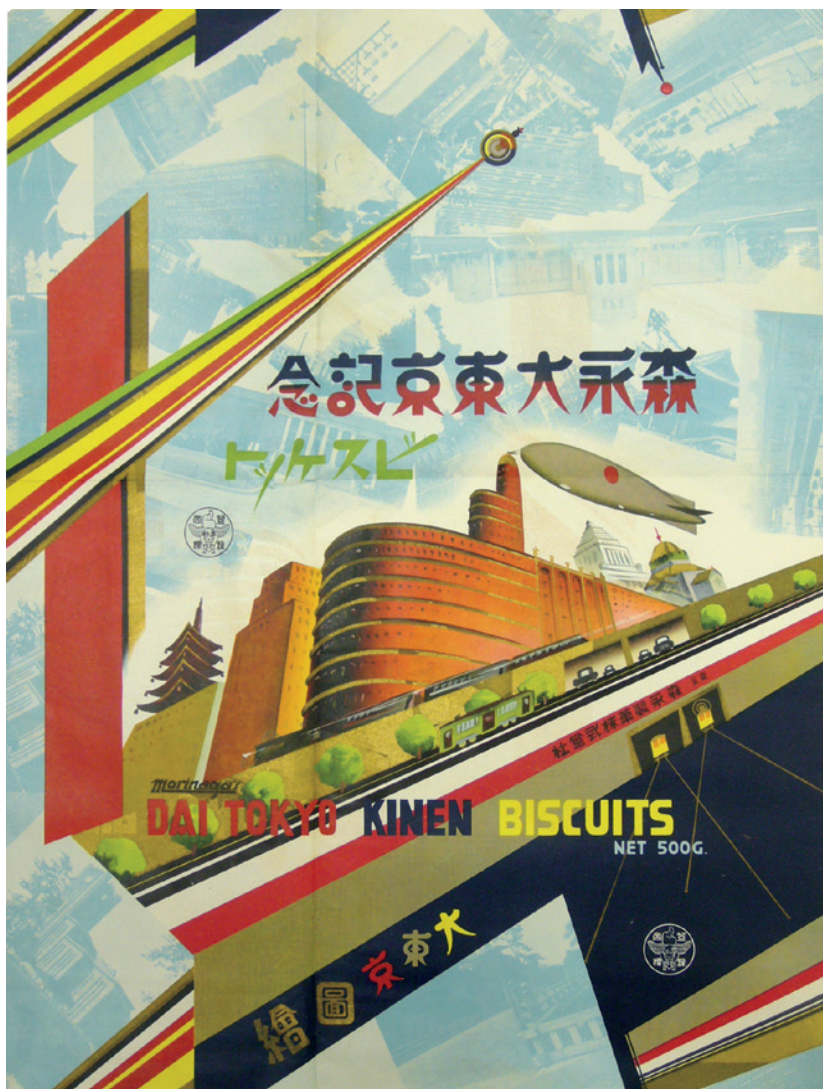
Montage even appeared on Morinaga’s wrapping-paper design for tins of biscuits commemorating the theme of the Great City Tokyo (Great Tokyo Commemorative Biscuits [Dai Tōkyō Kinen Bisuketto]), issued in September 1932 (figure 4.24). At this moment city residents were celebrating Tokyo’s reemer-



4.23 Newspaper advertisement for Morinaga milk caramel, reading “Morinaga milk caramel that I like, that I love . . .” (*Watashi no sukina, daisukina, Morinaga miruku kyarameru*). *Ōsaka asahi shinbun*, March 1, 1929, 10. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

gence from the catastrophic devastation of the Great Kantō Earthquake almost a decade earlier. Echoing the cinematic kaleidoscope in Walter Ruttmann’s landmark film *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City*, released in 1927, the wrapping paper had a colorful graphical image of high-rise department stores, the new National Diet Building, the five-story pagoda at Sensōji temple in Asakusa, a flying zeppelin, and a modern high-speed train, all superimposed on a faintly printed, topsy-turvy photographic montage of the city. According to archival records, the company produced 22,500 units of the commemorative biscuits.

Both Morinaga and its main rival, Meiji, invested significant resources in decorative packaging to make their products attractive. Minemura Kōzō, the chief of Morinaga’s design department, wrote “Planning Product Packaging” in *Advertising World* in 1929, where he underscored the importance of packaging.⁴⁸ Even a patented product or a monopoly needed good packaging. In a free market teeming with variegated goods, the quality of packaging was inextricably intertwined with sales. He enumerated a list of key design considerations. First was a package’s suitability to its target consumers. Children’s goods, for example, should be easy to carry. For women, packaging that was heavy or inconvenient would negatively impact sales. Second, the design needed to be conspicuous. This required in-person field research on shop displays to evaluate color and shape in relation to actual display racks and lighting. If the package did not



4.24 Wrapping paper for
Morinaga Great Tokyo
Commemorative Biscuits,
September 1932. Morinaga
and Co., Ltd.

stand out, it was worthless. Third, a package's color needed to be compatible with its product. Color preferences, he argued, were gender based, with men preferring blue and women red. They were also age dependent. This required opinion polls to ascertain preferences. Finally, he reminded designers to think about potential uses for the package after it had been opened and the product consumed—a Morinaga strong suit.

Colors, he observed, were the key to differentiating a brand from its competitors on the shelf. They were perceptible and affective and made an impression. They had the power to impact one both physically and mentally. Colors also had their own connotations. From color, consumers could deduce information about the product. After selecting signature colors, producers should employ them whenever possible. Combining colors, he also reminded readers, did not mean juxtaposing them, or joining them haphazardly. They needed to be harmonized. The relative proportion of each color needed to be scientifically and empirically tested. To this end, he cited the work of American professor Richard Franken from the Business School of New York University, coauthor of *The Leadership of Advertised Brands* with George Hotchkiss, who did an experimental study of packaging colors, surveying over a thousand American brand goods. Franken asked a group of male and female students from the same university to rank their favorite colors from one to eight. In the first experiment, the setting was a well-lit room with a black background. The package color was brown, and he asked them to rank the colors that they thought best matched. Minemura was impressed with Franken's strong emphasis on quantitative data gleaned through focus groups and other empirical market research. Ultimately, this work proved that subjects preferred warm colors like orange, yellow, and red, while black was at the bottom of the list. Unlike Minemura's previous supposition, both sexes in the United States tended toward the same colors, with up to 85 percent concordance, downplaying gender-based differences.⁴⁹

In addition to color, packaging material was a major concern, whether it was aluminum, paper, or cloth. Material and shape even impacted color perception and vice versa. Packaging material could not be too fragile or easily breakable. It needed to effectively prevent dirt, moisture, and sun exposure. Minemura noted ironically that some package designers were so concerned about their designs that they did not pay enough attention to the ease of opening the container and removing the goods. He chided these egocentric designers, reminding them that "a good design should cater to people from all walks of life." And a good package needed to be "relatable," especially to children. If necessary, instructions should be added to facilitate ease of use. He encouraged his colleagues to embrace the new and relinquish the old, as nostalgia for familiar designs

was on the decline. Of course, one needed to keep in mind budget limits. He concluded with the strong advice that package designers always “remember to prioritize the user experience!”⁵⁰

Relationship Marketing

Morinaga was not only a hotbed of design but also a pioneer in marketing. The company published the research journal *Sales Research* (*Hanbai kenkyū*) from 1928. Continuing the company tradition of active engagement in publicity at the highest levels of management, partner and second Morinaga president Matsuzaki Hanzaburō, who took over in 1937 after Taichirō’s death, was also closely involved in company advertising and marketing. In fact, he was responsible for creating the Morinaga Beltline chain store network to implement his philosophy of “selling deeply” to inculcate customer and retailer loyalty, a strategy now commonly known as *relationship marketing*. Beautiful, stylishly dressed female ambassadors, the popular Morinaga “Sweet Girls” facilitated this relationship marketing. The “Sweet Girls” marketing campaign (1932–37) hired young women between the ages of eighteen and twenty to demonstrate and promote Morinaga sales at retail sites. It was also Matsuzaki’s brainchild.⁵¹ It was inspired by popular department store girls such as those at Takashimaya. Arai was put in charge of the “Sweet Girls” campaign. Out of the staggering six hundred women who applied the first year (1932), five were chosen to be photographed, and the company eventually selected Kuwano Michiko (1915–1946) as the lead. The competition became an annual fixture in the Morinaga campaigns for several years with over 3,900 women applying in 1937.⁵²

Promotional tie-ups with cultural and artistic events, films, and celebrities were a popular global advertising trend at the time.⁵³ Morinaga’s advertising division staff referred to these as “event promotion advertising” (*saiji senden*), and they were the lifeblood of the company’s marketing. Relationship marketing was inherently participatory, sometimes competitive, and always offered customers clear-cut rewards. Such aggressive marketing campaigns were necessary to stem the company’s financial downturn during the economic depression that hit Japan following the earthquake and to vie aggressively with its competitors. A fierce caramel war began in 1931, with severe price undercutting on the market. Even with the economy in a depression, thanks to advertising and marketing, Morinaga was able to increase sales. Tie-ups were the weapon of choice. Morinaga was a master. The company was particularly innovative in tie-ups with popular entertainment; for example, the full-scale promotion of the film *Daphne* (*Jinchōge*) in 1933, based on the popular novel by Kume

Masao, in collaboration with the Asahi newspaper company and the Shochiku Kamata studio included the creation of a Morinaga Daphne Day. They transformed every event into a celebratory occasion requiring the consumption of sweets. And consumers who collected ¥0.50 worth of chocolate wrappers were eligible to win a tour of the Shochiku film set or received free tickets to screenings. In addition to launching its Paramount chocolate series to capitalize on Hollywood stardom, the company forged partnerships with Columbia Records to promote its roster of popular singers.⁵⁴ With similar star power, aviators and airplanes became the focus of campaigns. From June to October 1931, young Japanese star aviators participated in the major national Morinaga Airplane sales campaign, traveling all over the country using a biplane borrowed from Nippon Dentsū Tsūshinsha (now Dentsu). For every ¥0.30 of caramel purchased, customers received a paper model biplane. The company distributed over three million models.⁵⁵ The sale capitalized on Charles and Anne Lindbergh's visit to Japan, advertising the "Japan-America model airplane," one of three model types offered, as the "Lindy plane." The campaign's enormous success was also due to extensive publicity support by local news outlets, full enthusiastic participation of the Beltline stores, and the spectacular visits of the Morinaga airplane, which delighted spectators. In addition, the airplane dropped thousands of promotional leaflets and paper parachutes with attached caramels while the stores issued stylish commemorative medals with soaring airplanes to loyal customers in recognition of their participation in these events, which included airplane model-making competitions (figure 4.25).⁵⁶

In June 1935 Morinaga sent Fujimoto Michio to work on sales in Manchuria under section chief Gotō Hisao; he stayed for five years and became deeply involved in the company's "airplane sale" campaign as well as the intracompany competition for store decoration among retailers. Because this was considered a hardship post, he was paid an inflated salary of ¥100 per month (a large increase over his previous ¥63), a sum equivalent to that of a domestic section chief. A free trade zone where it was easy to obtain foreign goods, Dalian (Dairen) was the gateway to the Manchurian market. When Fujimoto arrived, he noted that Kao and Jintan were already highly visible there. Much advertising in Manchuria was painted directly on walls. Parades of horse-drawn carts decorated with flowers and accompanying costumed marching bands (*chindonya*) that scattered pamphlets were also a popular advertising strategy. Sandwich men accompanied them. Morinaga's designers were charged with converting the lettering on products for the Chinese market. While few people in Manchuria had enough money to afford biscuits and sweets, Morinaga dry milk sold well and represented half of the company's sales.⁵⁷



4.25 “Morinaga Airplane Sale” campaign, including a giveaway paper model airplane. Store employees are dressed up and holding banners and musical instruments. June–October 1931. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

One of Morinaga’s most popular, high-visibility campaigns, conducted from 1933 to 1936, involved the “Caramel General” (Kyarameru Taishō) (figure 4.26). The General was a human giant measuring over 7.87 feet tall (7 shaku 3 sun, or 2.4 meters). He was originally a sumo wrestler born in Korea who took the professional name Mount Baekdu (Baekdusan) after the country’s highest and most spiritual mountain, a volcano and caldera lake that many Koreans consider the birthplace of the god Tangun, the mythical progenitor of the Korean nation. Costumed in different pseudomilitary uniforms, one khaki for officers with over-size decorative epaulettes and medals, the other the naval whites of an enlisted seaman, the General was an impressive spokesman. He would show audiences how many caramels he could hold in his gigantic hand, and the company used the imprint of his hand (as it had with the sumo wrestler Tachiyama) to connect the product with invincibility—both Morinaga’s and Japan’s invincibility. He traveled all around the country and through Japan’s colonial territories in Korea



4.26 Morinaga Caramel General, ca. 1933 to 1936. The General's signature is visible at the lower right. Neko Publishing

and Taiwan, and in 1939 Fujimoto was put in charge of bringing him to Manchuria. Crowds flocked to stores to see the popular Caramel General. Referring to him as “the Giant” or “Phantom Adult” (*kaikan otona*), company photographs frequently pictured the General surrounded by shop staff and crowds at various Beltline stores. One showed a small child holding a print of the General’s giant hand that was bigger than his own head.⁵⁸ No longer simply invincible sportsmen, Morinaga masculine mascots were becoming superhuman giants.

Morinaga Beltline

Morinaga’s systematic data-driven approach to marketing was coupled with an aggressive expansion plan. By the late 1930s, the company had nearly four thousand chain stores, which were collectively known as the Morinaga Beltline.

The beltline was formed of high-end Western-style confectionery retail stores with fixed prices and coordinated advertising. To facilitate coordination, as in modern-day franchises, stores were frequently reminded to use only approved emblems and logotypes.⁵⁹ Matsuzaki was a staunch believer in monopolistic retail practices and required associated retailers to sell Morinaga products at set prices exclusively without any competition in the same market. According to business historian Usui Kazuo, the company replaced contract-based wholesale agents with a sales company in which Morinaga coinvested. The salespeople in this new company worked with retailers to help sell products. The system constituted a *keiretsu*, an informal allied business group.⁶⁰ The company also encouraged the modernization of the industry through a professional society with representatives doing live demonstrations of store designs and show window displays. Beltline marketing campaigns featured special products available only on the first (Morinaga Beltline Day) and fifteenth of the month as well as designated special consumer days for member stores in certain regions.

The network formed a monthly subscription service called the MB Club (MB *Kurabu*) that sent members special confectioneries twice a month and invited them to exclusive events. This was one of the first club marketing programs in Japan and became a model in the industry. Business historians see this as a supreme example of Matsuzaki's marketing philosophy of "selling deeply" to cultivate loyal retailers and return customers.⁶¹ In 1949, soon after the end of the war and during the Allied Occupation, Morinaga restarted its organization of retail stores with exclusive selling rights under the name Morinaga Angel Shops (Morinaga Enzeru Shoppu).

To maintain their chain store networks, manufacturers found it necessary to be proactive in educating retailers in new promotional tactics, and they routinely delivered truckloads of banners, leaflets, and showcases, sending representatives to teach shopkeepers how to use company materials. Morinaga published several public relations magazines for chain store retailers: *Morinaga Beltline* (Morinaga berutorain; figure 4.27), *Beltline Graph* (Berutorain gurafu), and one called simply *Sweetland* (Suitorando; figure 4.28).⁶² That is not to mention a host of shorter pamphlets, evocatively titled *Delicious, Mother's Choice*, *The Story of Chocolate*, *Candy Clan*, *Morinaga Gifts*, and *How Sweets Are Made*.

The longest-running internal publication directed at retailers, *Morinaga Beltline* launched in January 1929 with a statement by Matsuzaki about the founding of the network, proudly displaying the encircled Beltline MB symbol (*hyōchō*) for all storefronts.⁶³ Issues regularly included his hortatory messages. They provided detailed instructions on how to make show window display decorations for each season and occasion with carefully annotated illustrations



4.27 Front (left) and back (right) cover of *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 12 (December 1931). Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

and photographs. They were titled “Ways to Make Display Windows That Anyone Can Do” to encourage nonspecialists. Rotating copy was suggested for retailers to convey new sentiments for each product. The magazine repeatedly emphasized the importance of the storefront. When you meet a person, store owners were told, you could tell their status or dignity (*hinkaku*) from their face. When you visit a store, you could similarly tell the store’s status by its windows. Like keeping one’s hair from becoming unkempt or shaving diligently, the window should be kept crisp and clean, which would make the owner and the customer feel good. They were reminded to be sure to use all the various Beltline “cosmetics” (logos, etc.) on the store’s “face” or facade.⁶⁴ Later issues even detailed how to make the store stand out in the busy urban cityscape using the ethnographic observational strategies of self-proclaimed modernologist Kon Wajirō.⁶⁵

Every issue touted the ever-increasing ranks of the Beltline, listing new stores and their owners. They announced the opening of new stores with fanfare and photographs. Stores that had popular window displays were featured with their designs illustrated.⁶⁶ Retailers were asked to send photographs of



4.28 Front (*right*) and back (*left*) cover of *Sweetland 5* (1930s). The photographs are by Horino Masao, although not credited. Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

their stores and their families in the stores along with essays about their impressions of the Beltline. The company even sponsored competitions for the best storefront displays. Individual store owners contributed short articles on their philosophies and wisdom, and the keys to their success, which always centered around dedication. A positive selling attitude was essential.

A constant focus of the magazine was the ever-changing seasonal decorations, which frequently accorded with traditional themes from nature and culture such as birds and flowers, as well as auspicious and festive motifs like *noshi*, a kind of ceremonial origami decoration with yellow or white paper folded over colored paper, used for gifts to express good wishes.⁶⁷ New Year's

origami cranes and *chōchin* lanterns appeared regularly.⁶⁸ Dolls were invoked for *hinamatsuri*, or the girl's-day festival on March 3.⁶⁹ Carp kites appeared for Children's Day (Kodomo no Hi), which celebrated boys, on May 5. These standard themes and motifs were updated with abstract decorative patterning and modern typography.

Stores celebrated new national holidays like Navy Day (Kaigun Kinenbi) on June 25 with dramatic show window imagery of Japan's national hero Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō and the *Mikasa* battleship on which he bravely served during the Russo-Japanese War.⁷⁰ Making model ships for their windows in 1930, the Kansai-area Beltline stores fully embraced the occasion. The *Morinaga Beltline* described their dedication as an all-out publicity campaign to disseminate military thought—with the permission of the military, of course. They considered this a double success in both disseminating ideology and meeting company goals by bringing passersby into the store. Some stores reported children so mesmerized by the displays that they stood staring at the windows all day.⁷¹ Fall was designated as “sports season,” and displays switched to team insignias and triangular pennants: baseball, tennis, and track and field. Shops were encouraged to individualize the pennant initials for any schools nearby and to be sure to put a fixed price tag in the center of the display.⁷²

Christmas (often abbreviated as X'mas) sales replete with photos of live Santas at stores overlapped with *Oseibo*, or year-end gift sales. The end-of-the-year window combined decorative *noshi* and wrapped gift boxes with festive floating polka dots. In front of the store, there were outdoor decorative pillars that publicized sales with pointing fingers directing customers into the shop or holding gift boxes for sale inside. The store interior was a winter wonderland with bells, trees, and snowy adornments. These motifs also carried over to the X'mas show window displays, featuring a tree with bells, stockings, candles, and decorative ornaments.⁷³

The company created its own festive occasions such as Morinaga Beltline Day, which it first advertised with flying balloons carrying streamers over Ueno in 1931.⁷⁴ This was accompanied by the distribution of MB logo pennants and balloons. In one of his regular inspirational columns for the magazine, Matsuzaki described seeing a young child with his mother on the train enjoying these publicity goods well after leaving the store. They were enduring salesmen. And what made all this publicity most effective, he emphasized, was the elimination of competition within the store so that when consumers were drawn in, they would not be tempted to buy anyone else's products. He exhorted members to bring others into the Beltline circle to eliminate competition, especially during difficult economic times.⁷⁵

The Beltline went so far as to educate its store owners in proper behavior. In one article describing service for customers, each bullet point started with the word “always” (*itsumo*), underscored by being written in katakana, followed by the expression “let’s try” (*tsutomemashō*). Owners were told: Always, let’s try not to impart our own personal likes and dislikes when dealing with customers, but instead deeply research the customer’s feelings, take hold of them firmly, and put our effort into expanding sales based on this. Always, let’s try in our words and bodily movements to be kind and patient and convey a cheerful demeanor. Always, let’s try to learn the details of our products, including where they are displayed, their selling points, quality, amounts, use, and so on. Always, let’s try to show a “can-do” spirit when it comes to the customer, the store, and the products.⁷⁶

The *Morinaga Beltline* magazine covers became livelier and more decorative by the end of 1929, spotlighting popular modern leisure activities like alpine walking, hiking, skiing, horseback riding, tennis, bicycling, and hunting, which were featured in company advertising. The MB mark first appeared on the cover in May 1930.⁷⁷ The magazine promoted free giveaways (*keihin*) and coupons (*kūpon*).⁷⁸ It reported on advertising parades and Morinaga’s prize-winning decorated floats (*sōshoku jidōsha*).⁷⁹

Coverage of Beltline stores and promotional events extended to colonial Taipei (Taihoku), Seoul (Keijō), and Dalian (Dairen).⁸⁰ The magazine noted that Taiwan’s celebration of the three-hundred-year anniversary of Taiwanese culture was a good advertising opportunity. The office of the Taiwan governor general sponsored an exhibition of “favorite domestic products” (*kokusan aiyō shūkan*), and during that week it held an advertising campaign. The Beltline’s Taiwan team was the first to jump on this opportunity with decorated floats and a marching band that visited all the stores explaining products and handing out free giveaways. At the Taiwan Exposition (Taiwan Hakurankai) in 1935, celebrating forty years of Japanese colonial rule, Morinaga built an ultra-modern, colorful pavilion with a striped facade, decorative awnings, projecting vertical tower, and bold signage that rivaled anything on the archipelago. It was pictured in a large advertisement for both caramel and chocolate alongside an attractive Chinese woman in a polka-dot *qipao* dress holding an array of Morinaga products, under the copy in katakana, as if spoken by a foreigner, “Learn well, play well, in your child’s pocket.” This was followed by kanji characters reading, “Eat one every day, you won’t be tired, and your youth will be born!”⁸¹

As for marketing in Korea, the magazine described Seoul as having shifted from a combat battlefield in the Sino-Japanese War to becoming a fierce economic battlefield. The Seoul team launched a Pierrot promotion campaign with sales

representatives traveling around the city dressed as French-pantomime-style Pierrots who danced as they handed out advertising flyers. Every time they stopped somewhere, they were quickly surrounded by crowds that bought products.⁸² The Pierrot theme was creatively adapted in Morinaga's posters, bringing the figure into three dimensions. One example covered in *Advertising World* showed a Pierrot with an accordion body and arms holding a bar of chocolate in one hand and a box of caramel in the other.⁸³

Morinaga Beltline magazine moved markedly toward photography in 1936, and the masthead typography shifted to attenuated sans serif type. The cover for January featured the *hinomaru* flag.⁸⁴ By this time, Japan had entered the so-called wartime *hijōji*, or "time of crisis," and seasonal gift giving like *Ochūgen* became "time-of-crisis *chūgen*," scaled down for appropriateness.⁸⁵ Show window display instructions explained how to properly display the national *hinomaru* flag along with an extensive array of wartime motifs of weapons like tanks, planes, and ships.⁸⁶ By December 1937 a large-scale tank was being recommended for in-store point-of-purchase promotional display at the counter.⁸⁷ Comfort bags appeared on the magazine's covers. And soldiers became the new mascots for pop-up displays.⁸⁸

Thank You, Mother! Thank You, Mr. Soldier!

A montage simulating a pinwheel presents the national symbols of Japan, Germany, and Italy. This was the central motif that graced the cover of Morinaga's gifts brochure marketing boxes of cookies and biscuits around 1937–38 (figure 4.29). Evoking imagery commemorating Japan's signing of the German-Japanese Agreement (the Anti-Comintern Pact) in 1936 and a protocol with Italy and Germany in Rome on November 6, 1937, this everyday advertising pamphlet marked the alliance that would be solidified into the Three-Power Pact (Tripartite Alliance) creating the Axis powers, later signed in Berlin on September 27, 1940. On the front of the brochure, the pinwheel displays the national symbols over the head of a German eagle, all superimposed on a collage of urban maps and cityscapes, blending the metropolises of the three partners. Three small cartoon boys with their arms raised in salute are just visible on the lower left. In the center of the brochure, the flip side of the pinwheel is rendered with three collaged images of young Japanese children holding Morinaga sweets, and the right-hand panel shows floating images of Morinaga's gift products for sale. This brochure was part of an international campaign that included soliciting children's "goodwill" drawings to celebrate the new alliance. A total of 632 prizes worth ¥50,000 in cash and other awards were offered to



4.29 *Morinaga Gifts News*,
trifold brochure (left panel is
front cover), 1937–38.
Morinaga and Co., Ltd.

elementary and middle-school children in all three countries. Advertisements featuring the three small, allied figures under their respective flags displayed copy in all three languages, including English.⁸⁹

On Empire Foundation Day (Kigensetsu [National Foundation Day]), February 11, 1938, Matsuzaki announced the competition with a signed appeal:

The conclusion of the anti-Comintern Pact by Japan, Germany and Italy, three rising nations of the world, is a matter of congratulation for the establishment of permanent world peace. In the hopes of bettering friendly sentiments and relations among the boys and girls of these three nations by the exchange of their drawings, an international expression of goodwill, I have decided to undertake the proposal of asking all children to contribute their drawings which are to be exhibited in the three countries, with the support of the Government, public organizations, and others. It is my sincere hope all will support this plan to make it a success.⁹⁰

His effort was supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of War, the Ministry of the Navy, the German embassy, the Italian embassy, the Society for International Cultural Relations, the German-Japanese Cultural Society, the Italo-Japanese Institute, and the

German-Japanese Society. The ad displayed a long list of esteemed advisors and judges, including former mayor of Tokyo Nagata Hidejirō and well-known Western-style artists Wada Eisaku and Wada Sanzō, both members of the Imperial Academy of Arts.

In September, Matsuzaki publicly welcomed the Hitler Jugend, led by Heinrich Schultze, to Japan to view the exhibition of over four million drawings submitted by Japanese children at the Joshi Kaikan event hall in Shiba Park in Tokyo. It was slated to travel to Berlin and Rome afterward. Writing in another full-page advertisement in the *Japan Times and Mail*, he greeted the visitors:

Young gentlemen of Germany, will you kindly report to your fathers and mothers, to your brothers and sisters, when you return to your homeland that these 4,000,000 drawings are the wholehearted and sincere expressions of the great happiness which the Japanese young people cherish in their hearts, because of the intimate and fraternal relations and feelings that exist between we, three nations and that the Morinaga Confectionery Company, in conformity with the national policy of Japan, is doing its share in the busy whirl of industrial activity? In conclusion, I wish you an enjoyable and beneficial sojourn in this country and a happy journey back to your home. Heil Hitler!⁹¹

Morinaga marketing wove grand-scale international politics into the fabric of daily consumption.

Jingoistic images of wartime patriotism were soon everywhere, but subtler affective representations were the bread and butter of Morinaga advertising developed by Arai Seiichirō, who possessed a savvy sensitivity to the emotional side of war. Arai first developed a campaign around an image of a woman—pictured from behind—who is seen sending off her beloved son. Unlike the more heraldic departures with communal banzai chants, this heartfelt image of a mother's love and implied sacrifice resonated deeply with Japanese audiences. Thinking about all the mothers sending their sons off to the front, Arai then came up with the idea of celebrating a Morinaga "Mother's Day," first held on May 8, 1937, which eventually evolved into a national holiday. The company established an association in 1937 to honor mothers and collaborated with various other groups to promote the national observance of Mother's Day. During the first celebration, the company held a competition for songs praising mothers that received fifteen thousand submissions. It also included a large event hosted by the company at the popular Yushima shrine in Tokyo, where 200,000 people invited their mothers. This holiday spread to Taiwan and Manchuria and later became one of the annual events and festivals (*nenjū gyōji*) celebrated across the nation and empire.⁹²

Mother's Day in the United States was itself an invented tradition spurred by commercial interests, purportedly created in 1908 by Anna Jarvis with the financial backing of John Wanamaker, owner of the famous Philadelphia department store. While ostensibly a day intended to honor the labor of mothers and motherhood, Wanamaker's retail stores in Philadelphia stimulated sales by drawing thousands of people to their sponsored Mother's Day events. By 1912 many states, towns, and churches had adopted Mother's Day as an annual holiday, and in 1914 President Woodrow Wilson signed a bill making it a regular annual holiday held on the second Sunday in May.⁹³

After the official onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War in July 1937, Morinaga shifted its focus to soldiers. Author Hino Ashihei popularized the use of the term *heитай* in discussing and addressing Japanese soldiers, akin to the American term GI. In his writings, he brought to life the world of average Japanese soldiers. These images became popular in films as well.⁹⁴ A Morinaga newspaper advertisement from November 1937 proclaimed, "Thank you, Mr. Soldier!" (*Arigatō heитай-san*), featuring a waving young boy with rosy cheeks wearing a national flag on his chest and a helmet to emulate his hero—likely his father or older brother. The copy below read, "Let's put milk caramel in comfort bags and cheer up our soldiers."⁹⁵ Special "Imperial Army Sale" displays were set up at Beltline stores with the rousing slogan "Let's comfort our imperial army!" (*Kōgun o imon shimashō*).⁹⁶

The government propaganda magazine *Weekly Report* (*Shūhō*) announced a competition for a patriotic parade song in September 1937. Arai again seized on this as an opportunity for Morinaga to do a tie-up with the government's campaign that would help promote both the company and the national effort. Advertising in newspapers, Morinaga increased the dissemination of the competition information as "a duty to the nation." To this end, it encouraged people to drop off their submissions at any nearby Morinaga Beltline store to be forwarded to the government's Cabinet Information Board.⁹⁷

Then the Japanese army commissioned a group of twenty-two thousand Tokyo schoolgirls to produce 400,000 comfort bags for soldiers at the front. Newspapers advertised the most desirable items for these bags, and sweets topped the list, particularly sweets in cans that could be used as containers for the oilcloth used to take care of guns. Deeply immersed in this mobilization culture, Arai came up with a range of catchphrases to show gratitude to soldiers and tie into comfort bag preparation campaigns. Consequently, Morinaga's candy sales increased fivefold. Advertisements featuring beautiful young girls surrounded by the many bags they had assembled offered an auxiliary form of cheer for Japan's fighting forces.⁹⁸

The company also began selling its Kanpan hardtack for the battlefield, which was classified as a “national defense food product” (*kokubō shokuhin*). Arai simultaneously marketed Kanpan as a product good for home-front health and sports activities like hiking. Home-front civil defense became another focus of company campaigns that included “air defense sales” (*bōkū sēru*) in 1933 and 1936–37, which were synchronized with local defense drills and offered free paper gas masks as giveaways with qualifying purchases.⁹⁹ Every major national holiday elicited a new campaign, including a major effort for the 1940 National Foundation Day (Kigensetsu) celebration with Morinaga’s pocket-size Mizette candy, launched in 1933, sold in a special new package featuring the eye-catching red 2600 AD Memorial Japan World Exposition poster of Mount Fuji.¹⁰⁰ Planning started in 1934 for the exposition to be held in Tokyo and Yokohama, with Imperial Prince Chichibu as planning president of the Japan World Exposition Association (Nippon Bankoku Hakurankai Kyōkai) and Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro as vice president, appointed in 1937. But like the Olympics, the following year the government decided to postpone the exposition indefinitely due to the war. It became the “Phantom Exposition.”

Eventually, as plans were mounted for the National Foundation Day celebrations, Morinaga shifted focus to seemingly more virtuous products like Manna, Kanpan, and vitamin B biscuits. But before claiming virtue, companies needed to address their own potential profligacy, which they did through recycling campaigns to reabsorb their waste into donation funds for wounded warriors. Consumers were exhorted not to discard caramel and milk chocolate packages, cold cream glass jars, or toothpaste tubes but to deposit them in designated boxes so that they could be recycled for capital to direct toward soldiers who were sacrificing for the nation. One’s recycled toothpaste tube became a bandage on the wounded body of the nation. Exclaiming, “Don’t throw away empty boxes,” a Morinaga caramel newspaper ad from June 1942 advocated recycling, chiding those who might carelessly throw away crucial materials.¹⁰¹

Eventually foreign markets were cut off during the Asia-Pacific War, and wartime restrictions on the importation of cocoa beans severely curtailed chocolate production. By 1940 cocoa imports were completely prohibited, requiring the development of a substitute. In anticipation of that, companies like Morinaga were already diversifying into other businesses. In 1943 Meiji completely stopped producing milk chocolate and produced only its creamy chocolate product, while other companies stopped producing chocolate altogether. Production was limited to supplying the army, and no private distribution was allowed. At that time, chocolate’s role as a nutritional food for soldiers and pilots and thus a weapon to maintain national health for winning the war became paramount.¹⁰²

Beverage: “Calpis the Taste of First Love”

The Japanese beverage industry had long-standing traditional products like sake that continued to be the most widely imbibed alcoholic drinks in the country, but newer items such as beer, wine, and nonalcoholic soft drinks made significant inroads. Most were sold through the well-established system of wholesale distributors (*tonya*), with new middlemen like Meidiya cropping up to broker modern beverage products along with newly available canned goods. For beverages, these middlemen played a role equal to manufacturers in advertising and marketing, with several serving as proxy publicity firms. These products had their own unique marketing challenges, particularly beer. But as the prominent commerce pundit and consultant Kuramoto Chōji wrote for *Advertising World* in 1929, of all the market sectors, beer had most clearly proven it was the power of advertising that sold products.¹⁰³ This was also true for soft drinks like Calpis.

According to company lore, while visiting Inner Mongolia in 1904, Calpis founder Mishima Kaiun discovered people drinking cultured “sour milk” (*sannyū*) fermented with lactobacilli. The drink was purportedly responsible for helping the Mongolian people maintain their health. Surprised by the drink’s good flavor and healthful properties, Mishima also noticed that his digestion was restored after it had suffered during the long journey. As he recounted, he discovered that both his body and mind were refreshed by the power of the cultured milk, viewing it as a kind of “wonder drug of perpetual youth and longevity.”¹⁰⁴ He was convinced that the secret of the tastiness and healthfulness of the drink lay in the milk and lactobacilli. After returning to Japan, he cofounded the company Lacto Company Ltd. in 1917, committed to developing a cultured milk product with lactobacilli that would be similarly tasty and healthy.¹⁰⁵ “I want to make a drink that can contribute to people’s lives,” he wrote virtuously. The result was Calpis (Karupisu in Japanese). This popular lactic acid soft drink was made by adding sugar and other ingredients to cultured, slowly fermented nonfat milk. With a milky white color reminiscent of its dairy origins, the sweet and tangy Calpis beverage was first sold in July 1919.

The product’s brand name had a similarly interesting origin story connected to Mishima’s devotion to Buddhism as the eldest son of a Pure Land priest at a temple in Osaka and his religious education through college, which eventually led him to China.¹⁰⁶ The name Calpis is a portmanteau made up of *cal* and *pis*. *Cal* is derived from the chemical element calcium, known to be good for health (and a main nutrient in milk). And *pis* comes from a Sanskrit Buddhist sutra in which fermented milk beverages were often drunk as a panacea for illness. After drinking these beverages, according to the scholar Watanabe Kaigyoku, one would feel

a sense of rejuvenation, and the Sanskrit word for rejuvenation is *salpis*. Combining these two elements, the company came up with the name Calpis.¹⁰⁷

An equally devoted patriot, Mishima frequently couched his entrepreneurial endeavors in terms of working for the national good, espousing the popular Meiji-period expression “national interests and the people’s welfare” (*kokuri minpuku*) as the core of his work ethic. He later reflected on his early years, “After I went over to China, no matter what I did, I always kept the ‘nation’ [*kokka*] in mind. My priority was to develop Japan’s national power overseas. Making a profit was always second.” He continued, “As young people say, leave your selfishness. Be ambitious. Yet if we are human, there will never be a person entirely without desire. That desire, however, should not be a small selfish desire, but rather a greater desire that benefits the nation and society.”¹⁰⁸

To this end, Mishima was a firm believer in the communicative advantages of advertising that used both catchy copy and eye-catching design. For his Daigomi drink product, first marketed in 1916 before Calpis’s launch, he sponsored ten thousand advertisements and leaflets touting a wide range of benefits for health and well-being that set the stage for later campaigns. He promoted the beverage as nourishing, pleasing, energizing, rejuvenating, and preventing disease and stomach ailments—even staving off senility.¹⁰⁹ Two years later, Calpis was first sold touting these same health and taste benefits during the Japanese summer Tanabata, or Star, Festival in July. As the product gained traction, the bottle packaging was redesigned in 1922 with polka-dot wrapping paper to tie into summer seasonal imagery and evoke the stars in the Milky Way.¹¹⁰ This motif drew not only on festive local traditions but also on the global popularity of polka dots, which started with the European craze for the Czech polka dance in the mid-1800s and extended to polka-dot fabrics, first mentioned in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* in 1857. The polka dot continued to have great appeal around the world, coming to the fore in the 1920s in popular fashion through the Miss America Pageant and then with global icon Minnie Mouse, who debuted in the Disney animation *Steamboat Willie* in November 1928 wearing a polka-dot dress and later added a polka-dot hair bow.¹¹¹ Calpis’s 1922 redesigned packaging originally had white dots on a blue background, but then the colors were reversed. The dots were also supposed to evoke the product’s refreshing, slightly effervescent character. These signature polka dots were deployed throughout the promotional sphere to signify the distinctive Calpis product, including prominent outdoor signboards, kiosks, and illuminated neon towers. From polka-dotted giraffes with playfully extended necks to dotted bottles substituted for the fuselage of airplanes, Calpis publicity stylishly kept pace with seasonal and historical entertainment trends for children and adults.¹¹² It was aggressively marketed

to young urban women and their families, who were part of the growing middle class aspiring to the “cultural life” and then, from the mid-1920s onward, specifically targeted pregnant women as a palliative for morning sickness. As both a tasty energy drink and a pro-natal tonic, the product straddled the line between pleasure and necessity.¹¹³ The product, distributed nationally and throughout China and Manchuria, was so popular that it represented 99 percent of Lacto’s total sales, prompting Mishima to change the company’s name to Calpis Manufacturing Company Ltd. in 1923.

Racialized Design

In the first issue of *Advertising World*, editor Murota Kurazō credited Mishima with leading the Japanese design world from advertising design to the age of bona fide “commercial art.” He identified this transition specifically in the company’s widely publicized 1924 international Calpis poster competition.¹¹⁴ Professionals across the field acknowledged this competition as inaugurating a new genre of commercial art that invigorated Japanese design. News of the competition became a great sensation in Europe as well, catapulting Japan onto center stage in the international design arena despite its remote location and perceived peripheral status. The initiative even had official participation from Masaki Naohiko, president of the prestigious Tokyo School of Fine Arts, as competition director, and the powerful politician Count Uchida Kōsai, then serving as foreign minister and later prime minister, who was the brother-in-law of Dokura Ryūjirō, the company’s statutory auditor. Uchida arranged for the various Japanese ambassadors in Germany, France, and Italy to serve as guarantors for the competition. The event was an unexpected success. Art magazines and major newspapers covered the competition with great interest. Over 1,400 designs were submitted for the three prizes (\$500 for first, \$200 for second, and \$100 for third). A host of high-profile designers applied, with even the Prince of Bavaria throwing his hat in the ring. After arriving in Japan, the submitted entries were publicly exhibited at Mitsukoshi department store in Tokyo and then in Osaka, Fukuoka, Fukui, and Ishikawa.¹¹⁵

First prize went to Arno Jähne (Dresden), second to Max Bittorf (Frankfurt), and third to Otto Dünkelsbühler (Munich, 1898–1977), but Calpis ultimately chose to use Dünkelsbühler’s design, which featured the now-famous image of a Black figure with grinning crescent-moon-shaped eyes and highly exaggerated racialized features drinking the beverage through a straw, producing a whimsical slurpy spiral at the bottom of the glass (figure 4.30).¹¹⁶ As prominent magazine editor Watanabe Soshū noted, Dünkelsbühler’s poster design appealed to



4.30 Otto Dünkelsbühler,
postcard of poster for Calpis,
1924. Kjeld Duits Collection

the judges because of its simple expressionist style and the power of the Black figure's smile. Sugiura Hisui, although abroad at the time of the competition, served as an aesthetic advisor to Calpis and was purportedly highly influential behind the scenes in the selection of the Dünkelsbühler design.¹¹⁷ Writing in Hisui's magazine *Affiches* in 1929, Shimizu Takanori even evaluated the design based on the traditional geomantic and numerological divination principles of the classical Chinese text the *I Ching*, which was highly valued in Japan and often mixed with "Confucianized" Shinto belief in the Edo period.¹¹⁸ Carefully assessing the balance and proportions of Dünkelsbühler's composition and

converting it into numerological information, Shimizu elevated the aesthetics of advertising to that of painting and other traditional art forms.

Arrangement and composition were, in a good sense, a form of dissonance (*fuchōwa*), Shimizu explained, a complex beauty that was effectively unified in skillful painting. Quoting Paul Cézanne to underscore the visual strategies of using geometry to construct a powerful composition, he emphasized that “nature must be treated as spheres, cones, and cylinders. All of these, objects and plans, front, back, left, and right must be focused on points in the center according to perspective.” This approach was consistent with the secret of the *I Ching* in relation to painting, which was mentioned in classical texts on art appraisal and appreciation. As a Chinese scientific method, the *I Ching* mixed the view of nature in the universe with astronomy and natural mathematics.

Further elaborating on the configuration, Shimizu explained that based on the straight and broken (crossed) lines that constituted the *I Ching*’s six-line hexagrams, Dünkelsbühler’s triangular composition achieved the supreme balance of *taiji*, or “the absolute,” considered the condition that existed before the creation of the world. *I Ching* hexagrams represented yin and yang forces, which are the basic polarities of Chinese cosmology. Dünkelsbühler’s Calpis poster used five colors, and its majestic black hue and bold lines were the work’s “eyes” and “life,” helping it achieve *taiji*. In addition, the basic use of the five colors was a so-called invariant (*muhen*), giving it considerable force, as there were only these five primary colors between heaven and the earth. These five primary colors are the five elements or five phases: water (black), wood (blue), fire (red), gold [metal] (white), and earth (yellow). According to Shimizu, these features enabled the poster to communicate the pleasure of astonishment to viewers and made Dünkelsbühler’s design particularly effective for outdoor publicity.¹¹⁹

Combined with advertising director Mannen Amehashi’s tagline “Calpis the taste of first love” (*Hatsukoi no aji Karupisu*) and the description “nourishing drink” (*jyō inryō*), the poster was an instant national sensation. The company adapted Dünkelsbühler’s design for all publicity formats, from metal signboards to matchbox labels, disseminated throughout the mass media. The Black figure was even reproduced in three dimensions on large parade floats, visible from rooftops as it extended boldly into the air. The float was followed by its own miniparade consisting of a walking polka-dot bottle and large, happy round heads with puckered mouths interspersed with glasses and straws (figure 4.31). The company used Dünkelsbühler’s design until 1987.

Marketing the experience of drinking Calpis as akin to love reveals the deep ambivalence of Black and blackface imagery in a global context, which was often considered endearing while simultaneously underscoring denigration.¹²⁰



4.31 Aerial (*top*) and ground (*bottom*) photographs of Calpis parade floats with heads, glasses, and bottles at the Tokyo advertising festival parade. *Affiches* 3, no. 5 (June 1930): 134. Private collection

Blackface was part of American diplomacy in Japan from the time of Commodore Matthew Perry's arrival when his crew presented a minstrel show in 1854. Nineteenth-century imperialism catapulted the representation of Black faces and bodies into advertising around the world, defining colonial products in European metropolises.¹²¹ By October 1931 *Advertising World* was noting the wide popularity of Black figures in contemporary global advertising, pointing out that not only did the prevalence of jazz in the United States bear witness to the impact of Black culture in America, but it was also very much in evidence in the French revue. Ignoring the racist underpinnings of such racial parodies and stereotyping in minstrel-style imagery, the editors emphasized the importance of Black culture's influence around the world.¹²² Such trends beg the question of what role race and racialized depictions played in Japanese design and the popularity of marketing campaigns, an issue complicated by the intraracial identity politics among Asia, Europe, and the United States. The American worldview had an imagined racial hierarchy of world civilization that was absorbing Japan, Asia, and a variety of Others. Orientalist discourse was widely applied to Asian countries along with those in the Middle East, with slippage between race and ethnicity. Such discourses always positioned Black peoples as primitives in the lowest position in this imagined evolutionary order.

Yet Japan's tenuous position in this order and the deep American fear of miscegenation between white and nonwhite races was never clearer than in the racist vitriol directed at Japanese and Chinese immigrants in California, especially during the mounting of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. Fear of the "yellow peril" taking over the American West Coast was articulated in overtly racist policies like the Alien Land Law of 1913 and various immigration exclusion acts, and fearmongering public statements linked racial politics across all people of color. As one alarmist statement read, "Near my home is an eighty-acre tract of as fine land as there is in California. On that tract lives a Japanese. With that Japanese lives a white woman. In that woman's arms is a baby. What is that baby? It isn't a Japanese. It isn't white. It is a germ of the mightiest problem that ever faced this state; a problem that will make the black problem of the South look white."¹²³ Racial politics and discrimination had widespread implications for Japanese businesses that were increasingly engaging in the sphere of global trade, not to mention the profound impact on individual Japanese people as immigrants abroad or consumers at home. This multidirectional and complicated racialized worldview affected the Japanese domestic market.

While plenty of racist images of African Americans circulated from the United States to Japan, it was Germany that served as a major conduit for the design world. Japanese saw racist depictions of African Americans via German



4.32 Julius Kupfer-Sachs (designer), caricature of Josephine Baker in dance costume, cover of *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5, no. 5 (May 1928). Collection of the author

design magazines; for example, the cover of *Gebrauchsgraphik* from May 1928, by Julius Kupfer-Sachs, depicted a caricature of Josephine Baker in dance costume performing in the Parisian Revue Nègre (figure 4.32).¹²⁴ Kupfer-Sachs's image shows Baker as a modern-day eroticized primitive, topless and barely covered by a skimpy feather skirt. She is accompanied by a stylized Black minstrel character, the "dandified coon," an animated vaudeville performer. Baker seductively tosses her head backward while holding a painter's palette as if she is going to capture the likeness of her companion, who himself holds an oversize pencil. A product of the German *Americanismus* that flourished between 1915 and 1933, analyzed by Beeke Sell Tower in her landmark exhibition *Envisioning America*, this cover reveals the widespread infatuation among German artists with an imagined America of the Wild West, cowboys and Indians, and jazz. Despite the racist connotations, for these Germans, who saw their own surroundings as a decaying civilization, America represented a frontier of endless possibilities. Evoking Black musicians and minstrelsy in their adoration of jazz as primitive symbols of the exotic was part of this incongruous admixture, leaving them



4.33 Okamoto Shūkichi, “The Age of Rampant Black Boys: A Story of Trademarks on the Streets,” *Advertising World* 8, no. 10 (October 1931): 16–17. Sankō Library

blind to its racist connotations. As Michael Kimmelman has pointed out in his review of the exhibition for the *New York Times*, the connection between race and degeneracy typified by the image of the Black saxophonist and Jews, however, was not lost on the Nazis, who illustrated the cover of a 1938 catalog of degenerate music with a Black saxophonist wearing a Star of David on his chest.¹²⁵

In the broader commercial world of advertising, the popular internationally marketed German antiseptic mouthwash brand Odol, for example, similarly used blackface imagery, frequently using images of broadly smiling Black figures, African and African American, to sell its product and promote what the company called “the smile of confidence”—adding good breath to white teeth as necessary signs of status and success in the world. This was another important source from which designers in Japan drew these motifs.¹²⁶

Using what was referred to in Japanese as the *kuronbō*-style figure, carrying the connotation of “darkie” or sometimes “Little Black Sambo,” this strategy was visible throughout Asia. The contemporary rise in popularity of *kuronbō* imagery, explained Okamoto Shūkichi of the Osaka Municipal Trade Center (Ōsaka Furitsu Bōekikan) in *Advertising World* in 1931, was directly linked to jazz

(figure 4.33). He expounded, “As everyone well knows, the entire global music world is engulfed in the noise of jazz.” And even though traditionalist musicians were trying to ignore it and bemoaning this as a mistaken direction, he noted, this music from “American natives” (*Amerika no dojin*), like chaos itself, was “exciting our ears.”¹²⁷ At the same time, while jazz was becoming popular in the United States, the Black (*kuronbō*) dancer Josephine Baker was lighting up the stage with her skillful savage-style “banana dance” in the French revues. But what those in the advertising field should not forget, reminded Okamoto, was that this “Black age” not only harmonized with the modern period but was rampant throughout the arts and advertising worlds. Pointing to an article in a previous issue, he noted that there was *Amos 'n' Andy*, a popular blackface radio show with white performers playing the caricature roles of two Black men from the Deep South. Okamoto focused his essay on trends in Black imagery in company symbols and trademarks. Such imagery, to his mind, was clearly a version of the trendy “grotesque taste” (*guro aji*) that was related to the popular “erotic-grotesque-nonsense” culture craze grabbing people’s attention.¹²⁸

The Calpis figure’s oversize mouth as a site of ingestion with its vivid, heart-shaped lips, red when rendered in color and white in monochrome printing, underscored advertising design’s active use of racist facial distortion as a grotesque enticement to consume. As theorist bell hooks has compellingly argued in her essay “Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance,” it is in mass culture that pleasure was publicly located in the acknowledgment and enjoyment of racial difference. “The commodification of Otherness,” she writes, “has been so successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling.”¹²⁹

For Okamoto and his colleagues, Calpis’s design was the example par excellence of the effective use of Black imagery in its corporate trademark because it not only harmonized with the contemporary cultural trends but did not forget the fundamental purpose of a trademark, which needed to take such trends and make something that consumers would identify as unique to the company. Illustrated with his essay was a doubled version of Dünkelsbühler’s Black figure and its enlarged projection behind. The Calpis mark met all the requirements of a well-conceived trademark. It effectively communicated standardization in terms of the product’s quality, quantity, and other key features, relieving consumers of the inconvenience of having to discern this on their own. It made identification simple and assured consumers that they were buying the precise product from the exact manufacturer. Last, such distinctive trademarks individualized the product and differentiated it in the market. Unquestionably, the bold central figure rendered in a stark color palette contrasting black and white was highly

effective in the increasingly cluttered visual field of Japanese print culture. But except for Calpis, Okamoto argued, in Japan figures such as Black musicians jiving or Black bellhops lined up in rows attentively carrying bags were simply gratuitously inserted into posters and show windows without any connection to the trademark or the product itself—just another eye-catching visual device connoting American jazz, cosmopolitan hospitality, or the Parisian revue.

In Japan advertisements for Smoca whitening tooth powder extensively used figures in blackface or actual Black figures with outlined white mouths and exaggerated physiognomies from Harlem and Africa, associating blackness with the tarnishing effects of smoking, and whiteness with cleanliness. Pictured sitting alongside the Calpis design in Okamoto's essay was Smoca's blackface image of the Great Buddha bronze statue with an unusual smile showing gleaming white teeth that contrasted with his dark skin to create a humorous visual focal point. Perhaps the most infamous and enduring example of this connection between blackface and tooth whitening in Asia is Hawley and Hazel Chemical Company's Darkie brand toothpaste, launched in Shanghai in 1933 and later moved to Taiwan. While the company changed the brand name to Darlie in response to mass protests in 1989, the name in Chinese characters still reads "Black people's toothpaste."

Blackface continued to appear in Japan in the most surprising commercial venues. At its beach resort Camp Stores in the early 1930s, Morinaga sponsored "sun tanning contests" that challenged customers to tan their bodies to the "healthy" color of milk chocolate, transforming themselves into *kuronbō*. Winners who tanned the darkest were then triumphantly lined up and photographed. Columbia Records cosponsored this event.¹³⁰ There was a fine line between brown and black—civilization and primitivism. The company similarly promoted its peppermint chewing gum brand Tap Gum for the summer months with display images of Black tap dancers in 1936. The exaggeratedly jiving bodies of three Black dancers adorned the design, two dressed in black suits and hats flanking one in a bright white suit in the middle. The magazine explained unabashedly that the more Black figures one could put in the window, the greater the visual interest.¹³¹ Morinaga chocolate sponsored a Hot Jazz Contest (*Hotto Jyazu Taikai*) in the 1930s with the company's jazz band performing beside Japan's most popular prewar jazz singers, Japanese Americans Betty Inada and Ricky Miyagawa. The poster advertising the contest illustrated three cartoonish caricatures of Black jazz musicians with rounded white mouths playing saxophone, trumpet, and trombone.¹³²

For Calpis, Dünkelsbühler's image served to draw immediate public attention. It was current and fashionable, cheerful, and bold in a distinctly graphi-

cal, nonnaturalistic style. The slurping swirl at the bottom of the straw was an added subtle but eye-catching feature. This Black figure was another new early twentieth-century mascot for the modern age that the company continued to use until the 1980s. Other racialized, ethnicized, and sexualized images also came into play with the appearance of Ri Kōran, the famous “Chinese” movie star, who was all the rage in films being produced on the continent by the Manchuria Film Company, commonly known as Manei. Born as Yamaguchi Yoshiko in 1920 to a Japanese expatriate family in Manchuria, where her father worked for the South Manchurian Railways, the actress later performed under the name Li Xianglan to masquerade as Chinese and was widely considered to be from North China among audiences across the empire.¹³³ The embodiment of Japan’s erotic fantasies about the continent, she was pictured in one Calpis ad coyly sitting behind an ornate Chinese chair in her *qipao*-style Chinese dress, about to sip from the straw (figure 4.34). Her sideward glance and rosy cheeks are alluring and lush.¹³⁴ The copy to her left reads, “This delicious taste, now widely available on the continent,” conjuring the double entendre of the beautiful taste of both the beverage and the continental woman. In another newspaper image, she stands with the same inviting expression. Starring in the wildly popular film *China Nights* (*Shina no Yoru*) in 1940, Ri Kōran was a symbol of exotic otherness and the Japanese desire to possess and consume the continent. She appeared in advertising for a wide range of products, including National light bulbs and Shiseido cosmetics, promoting an enticing “empire of consumption.”¹³⁵ By fusing thingness and personhood in and on Ri’s body, Japanese advertisers effectively purveyed exoticized notions of ornamentality that were then refracted back to colonial consumers. Described as a “shape-shifting diva” by Jennifer Coates, Ri was the counterexample to Hara Setsuko’s wholesome daughter and sister, instead a continental femme fatale, dangerous but impossible to resist.¹³⁶ She was tragic as well. Deploying these varied modern images of beautiful women, Japanese advertising artists juxtaposed otherness and typicality, appealing to a range of tastes, and complicating the genre of the *bijinga* (pictures of beautiful women).

“Delicious, Nourishing, Healthy”: Modernist Marketing

Colorful *bijinga* images of stylish women sitting in cafés suggestively drinking from straws became a standard motif for Calpis company advertising. Both the drink and the woman were objects of attraction. A poster from 1928 by well-known modernist oil painter Ihara Usaburō (1894–1976), a professor at



4.34 Magazine advertisement for Calpis featuring Ri Kōran, *Advertising World* 16, no. 6 (June 1939). Collection of the author

the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, featured an elegant flapper-style woman sporting the popular “ear-hiding” hairstyle with a red rose tucked into her coiffure, red silk dress, and elegant pumps, sitting at an outdoor café gazing intently at her drink (figure 4.35). In other advertisements from the 1930s, modern girls gaze at or caress the milky liquid. One from 1932 shows a stylish woman in a white dress and cloche hat sitting cross-legged against an abstract blue back-



4.35 Ihara Usaburō, poster for Calpis, 1928. Ad Museum Tokyo. Asahi Group Japan, Ltd.

ground. The Calpis bottle sits below her in lieu of the absent chair, its erect form sticking straight up in front of her rear end (figure 4.36).¹³⁷ Such images offered gratification for female consumers and satisfied the desire of the male gaze. “Delicious, nourishing, healthy,” Calpis was a drink that both stylish women and men had at modern establishments as a symbol of cosmopolitan sophistication. Akabane Kiichi’s whimsical 1937 poster of a young man in a dark turtleneck with large, bulbous eyes gazing intensely at an oversize glass of Calpis under the copy “fresh and powerful” (*ajisayaka ni chikara tsuyoku*), for example, spoke to the modern male student experience (figure 4.37). Youthful, suave, and cultured, Akabane’s figure is a veritable precursor of the ultracool beatnik who would later emerge around the world in the 1950s.

4.36 Poster for Calpis, 1932.
Asahi Group Japan, Ltd.



Calpis adapted Dünkelsbühler's design for each season, with a straw for the iced beverage during summer and without a straw during the colder seasons. Marketing was heavily keyed to seasonality, especially for gift giving, and advertisements emphasized the breezy aesthetics of "coolness" (*suzushii*) for the hot months. Like Morinaga, Calpis strongly leveraged *hinamatsuri*, the girl's-day festival in March, with doll imagery, and Children's Day celebrating boys in May with carp kites. The drink was also marketed as an appealing modern gift for Christmas or *Oseibo*, promoted in an advertisement featuring a photograph of three female chorus line dancers provocatively posed holding oversize bottles with the copy "That person loves Calpis!"¹³⁸

Well-known Western-style artist Tōgō Seiji (1897–1978) was hired in early 1930 to create a series of Calpis advertisements in his signature modernist line-drawing style for the back of *Affiches* magazine; they featured attractive women who were "intimately familiar with Calpis" (*Karupisu ni shitashimu onna*) (figure 4.38). A highly feted painter known for his modernist portraits of stylish

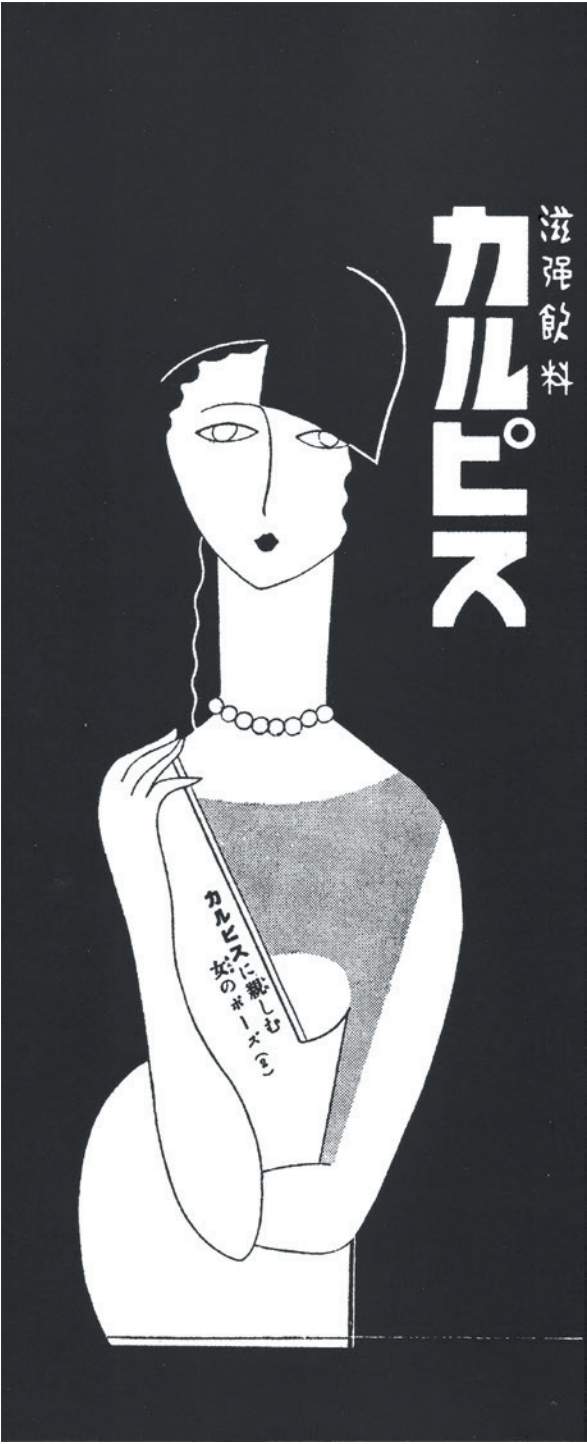


4.37 Akabane Kiichi, poster for Calpis, 1937. Musashino Art University Museum and Library Collection. Asahi Group Japan, Ltd.

women, Tōgō was dedicated to the art of persuasion while keeping a strong presence in the world of fine arts. An avid enthusiast of cubism and futurism and an art student in Paris in the 1920s, he successfully exhibited his work throughout his career with the Second Section Association (Nika-kai), a prominent offshoot of the official Japanese government art salon. He also designed modern *bijinga* posters for Morinaga chocolate. He was a regular design contributor to *Advertising World*, which glowingly reviewed his work for Calpis in February 1930. One critic lauded Tōgō as a first-tier artist who was effectively bringing the avant-garde style of surrealism into the sphere of advertising. His figures' empty, wide-set eyes were sometimes compared to Yamana Ayao's designs for Shiseido.¹³⁹ Even after the Asia-Pacific War, Tōgō continued to design for Calpis while helping to establish an influential advertising art group allied with the Second Section Association.¹⁴⁰

Increasing its advertising budget eightfold in 1920, Calpis continued to invest heavily in newspaper publicity, expanding its financial allocations in proportion to sales. The company sponsored large, three-quarter-page newspaper

4.38 Tōgō Seiji, magazine advertisement for Calpis, back cover of *Affiches* 3, no. 3 (March 1930). Also published in *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, February 16, 1930, p.m. ed., 3. Private Collection. Asahi Group Japan, Ltd. Courtesy of the Sompō Museum



ads that spotlighted Dünkelsbühler's slurping mascot, sometimes doubled with its silhouette. After the design's initial dissemination, the first half of the 1925 fiscal year saw the company's most outstanding performance to date with sales increasing thirty-six times compared to those in 1919. This jaw-dropping result was due to the company's fierce promotion and advertising activities, coupled with the influential guidance and support of its powerful wholesalers. These activities included (1) special gift and holiday promotions; (2) frequent sales visits with samples to liaise with small retail shops; (3) distribution of designed signboards and leaflets; (4) organization of tasting fairs, primarily at department stores in major cities; and (5) stalls and booths at major exhibitions and fairs.¹⁴¹ Most important, Calpis advertising promoted the company itself as much as the product. According to Mishima, advertising activities were not yet viewed favorably by the Japanese public and were mostly associated with street hawkers, solicitation, and cheap goods. "Therefore," he wrote, "I decided to render the company, instead of the product itself, a primary [focus] in our advertisements." Like Shiseido's president Fukuhara Shinzō, he understood that cultivating a good impression of the company through advertising would ultimately translate into a favorable impression of the product. While this is standard corporate practice today, it was considered a novel publicity strategy at the time.¹⁴²

These promotional activities included staged media events. One such event involved the cosponsorship with an animal welfare organization of a homing pigeon race in 1922. They released ten army homing pigeons from the peak of Mount Fuji that delivered messages to an audience of dignitaries gathered in Hibiya Park in Tokyo, including members of the imperial court, the cabinet, and various embassies. Titled an Aerial Marathon Competition (*Kūchū Marathon Kyōsō*), the race offered prizes for correct wagers on the pigeons' exact arrival times. Crowds thronged the park to await the pigeons, making the event a resounding success that was covered by the mass media nationwide.¹⁴³

The following year, the company created another sensation by organizing a children's song competition for elementary-school students. Famous poets and singers were recruited as judges, and the student who won first prize was awarded an expensive German piano. These popular events continued: a Go game match with renowned players competing on an oversize board installed in Hibiya Park, complete with a professional commentator; a recital by a noted *koto* harp virtuoso; and recruiting events for part-time employment opportunities at the company, aimed at high school students.¹⁴⁴

In the meantime, Calpis's new advertising slogan "all-season year-round beverage" (*shiki tsūnen inryō*) began to appear widely in contemporary newspapers. It was joined by a host of other publicity catchphrases tied into Japanese modern

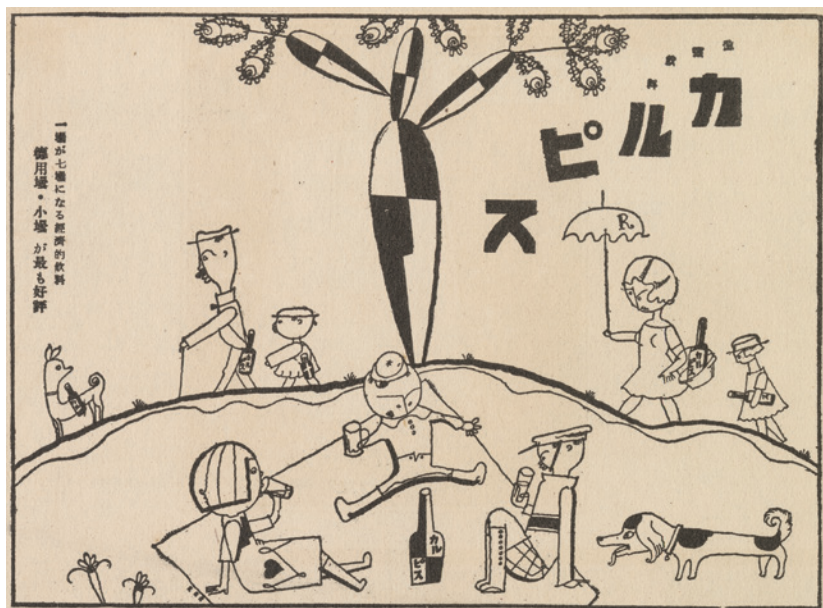
life through the four seasons: “In cold weather, *pocket* Calpis makes a good match with hot water,” “On New Year’s Day, Calpis in place of *toso* [ceremonial sake],” “In March, Calpis for *hinamatsuri*,” “In May, Calpis to boost your child’s health on Boy’s Day,” “Calpis, economical and healthy,” “Refreshing summer with tonic,” “delicious, nourishing, cool,” and “icy Calpis after a workout.”¹⁴⁵

As with Morinaga, humor, manga cartoons, and children’s illustrations were also mainstays of Calpis advertising. Yusa Makoto, who worked in the Calpis advertising department, was particularly inclined to incorporate such humorous manga imagery into company publicity. He later cofounded the Humor Design Agency (Yūmoa Zuansha) and was a member of the Japan Association of Manga Artists (Nihon Mangaka Renmei).¹⁴⁶ Calpis also hired the popular children’s illustrator Takei Takeo to design its advertisements. With his recognizable RRR signature in the lower right-hand corner, Takei created one whimsical design with a black-and-white checkerboard of cartoonish fairy-tale figures within which the katakana letters for the brand name, Ka-ru-pi-su, were spelled out by contorted bodies cascading diagonally down the page from right to left against a black background (figure 4.39).¹⁴⁷ Quirky and lighthearted, the pictorialized letterforms conveyed the indisputable fun of the product. Another Takei design conjured up an Alice-in-Wonderland-style Calpis picnic under a black-and-white tree (figure 4.40). A host of modern characters are shown carrying bottles of Calpis through the park: a fashionable young woman holding a parasol with the letter *R* has one in her bag, and an older man with a panama hat and cane has one slung from his waist. A bottle sits in the middle of the picnic blanket in the foreground between three children and their dog; the dog’s tongue hangs out as it thirsts for a sip of the delicious beverage. Again, youthful and fun, this nourishing drink offered pleasure for a new generation of consumers.

Mishima continued to innovate in advertising and marketing. He cleverly placed small Calpis advertisements in between other, larger ones to maximize their visual and psychological impact through contrast. And he experimented with offering different-sized bottles, halving the per-bottle price of the regular bottle for small Calpis, which sold for ¥0.80. To address consumer concerns about the product’s relatively high price per bottle and to cater to increased demand, the company released economy Calpis in 1922, emphasizing the economy bottle’s significantly lower per-cup price and cost advantage, especially when the beverage was diluted. In the same year, targeting restaurants and cafés in major cities, the company released Calpis for businesses. The following year, economy Calpis for dilution was released for sale at railway stations. In 1925 and 1928 respectively, Mishima issued new economy and pocket sizes.¹⁴⁸



4.39 Takei Takeo, newspaper advertisement for Calpis with katakana letters for Ka-ru-pi-su spelled out diagonally from right to left. Source: Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 13:24. Also published in *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, November 19, 1927, a.m. ed., 12. Courtesy of Okaya City



4.40 Takei Takeo, newspaper advertisement for Calpis, Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 13:54. Also published in *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, May 12, 1929, p.m. ed., 3. Courtesy of Okaya City

In newspaper advertisements, the company repeatedly attempted to convince consumers of the cost advantage of Calpis when diluted. Beverages in those days, be they carbonated soft drinks like cider (¥0.22 per bottle) and *Ra-mune* (based on lemonade at ¥0.08) or milk (¥0.10), were sold with a single fixed volume per bottle. Therefore, Mishima's strategy of marketing the same product in different sizes for different purposes was well ahead of its time. In 1928 the company released its new small pocket Calpis in coordination with major advertising campaigns in the *Tōkyō asahi* and *Tōkyō nichinichi* newspapers that linked the product with recruitment of sales trainees among technical high school students. Due to its cheap and competitive price compared to cider, pocket-size Calpis was a major success. Releasing this product enabled the company to democratize its identity and distance itself from solely upper-class consumers. The size itself was appealing as a novelty. Moreover, during a time when picnicking and hiking were becoming popular pastimes in Japan,

the ability to carry one bottle that could be diluted to produce three cups of beverage gained Calpis a devoted following.¹⁴⁹

But in 1929 the high estimation that critics had accorded Calpis design took a nosedive when *Advertising World* took aim at the company. Noting the new trend of having artists specializing in children's illustrations design commercial advertisements, one critic pointed to the widely circulated Calpis newspaper advertisement by Takei Takeo picturing a male baseball player and female tennis player face-to-face looking upward with open mouths to receive drips of Calpis from the trickling trophy above. Today's Calpis, the critic complained, could hardly compare to what it was like when first established. This loss of potency, however, could not be blamed on Mannen Amehashi, the chief of the design department, but was squarely the responsibility of the president, Mishima Kaiun, who, he explained, "lacks a sense of business management and squandered the company's assets on extravagance." Looking at Calpis's recent advertisements, he felt anyone would perceive a lack of creativity and originality and see how dire the situation had become. He speculated that those in management were not letting the designers follow their imaginations. Instead, they were relying overly on illustrations for children.¹⁵⁰ Yet Calpis persisted, continuing to diversify its advertising strategies. Like other companies, it also tapped into the masculine vigor of sportsmen such as sumo wrestlers, featuring *ozeki* champions (ranked just below *yokozuna*) in its 1930s advertisements under the same tagline "Invincible" that Morinaga had used a decade earlier.¹⁵¹ During this period Calpis emphasized its product's explicit benefits for gut health and relief from digestive issues, particularly for soldiers on the front.¹⁵² In 1941 vitamin-infused Calpis was launched to support Japan's fighting forces. And wartime advertisements showed young boys holding the recognizable Calpis polka-dot bottle like a rifle, proclaiming that drinking it made them strong and, by implication, able to fight.¹⁵³ A bottle held like a rifle—the beverage as weapon—was a visual tactic that other drink manufacturers, like Kirin, deployed during wartime as well. Replacing the rifle-toting soldier with a child or a woman holding a bottle (or projecting a soldier's shadow behind the figure, as in Tada Hokuu's famous 1939 wartime *bijinga* poster for Kirin), implied that home-front consumption intrinsically supported the war effort.¹⁵⁴

FOOD AND DRINK WERE marketed to satisfy a host of desires—social and sensual. Children dreamed of Morinaga sweets. Couples daydreamed of eating chocolate and sipping Calpis together on picnics in the park. Still, traditional seasonal gift giving continued to provide an important structure for marketing these commodities, only now augmented by newly imported holidays like

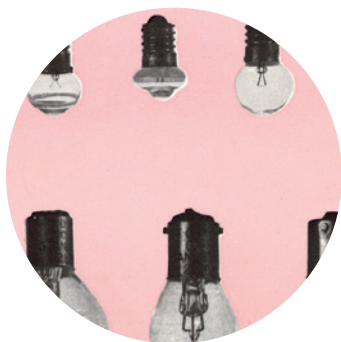
Christmas and Mother's Day. Advertising across this market sector also sought to construct and exploit gendered modes of consumption, targeting both men and women, young and old. The popularity of racialized imagery that accompanied the globalization of Black culture during the jazz age catapulted blackface into Japanese advertising in curious and unexpected ways that, seen together with Japanese imperialist exoticization of the Asian continent and American yellow-peril racism, profoundly complicate our understanding of shifting hierarchies of race and ethnicity in the visual field.

Morinaga and Calpis innovated in all spheres of advertising, specifically packaging, varying product designs, and novel pocket sizes that offered portability for the modern lifestyle. Designing and marketing these modern consumables as both pleasurable and healthy enabled manufacturers to bridge the gap between luxury and necessity. Consequently, pleasure was not divorced from patriotism but rather an intrinsic benefit of virtuous consumption. The companies also deployed modern sports imagery to tie into strong-body discourses on health and hygiene. These promotional strategies later seamlessly meshed with state-led campaigns to mobilize the militarized body in wartime.

5



Light, Labor + Leisure



Strong, bright, economical.

—NATIONAL LIGHT BULB SLOGAN (ca. 1930s)

Like the last glimpse of a departing train thundering out of the station in a cloud of smoke, “the age of simple wound filament light bulbs is disappearing!” Or so proclaimed an advertisement sponsored by the Tokyo Shibaura Electric Company (Tōkyō Shibaura Denki Kabushiki Kaisha)—commonly known by the acronym Toshiba (Tōshiba)—for its New Mazda brand light bulbs (Shin Matsuda Ranpu) (figure 5.1).¹ “Why are new Mazda bulbs recommended as the ‘key’ to economizing on electric power?” asked the copy below. According to Toshiba, that key was the bulbs’ innovative double-coiled filament technology, a feature denoted by the pointed finger of a smartly dressed modern woman in a green suit with stylish pumps standing on the station platform gesturing to a bright white billboard displaying an

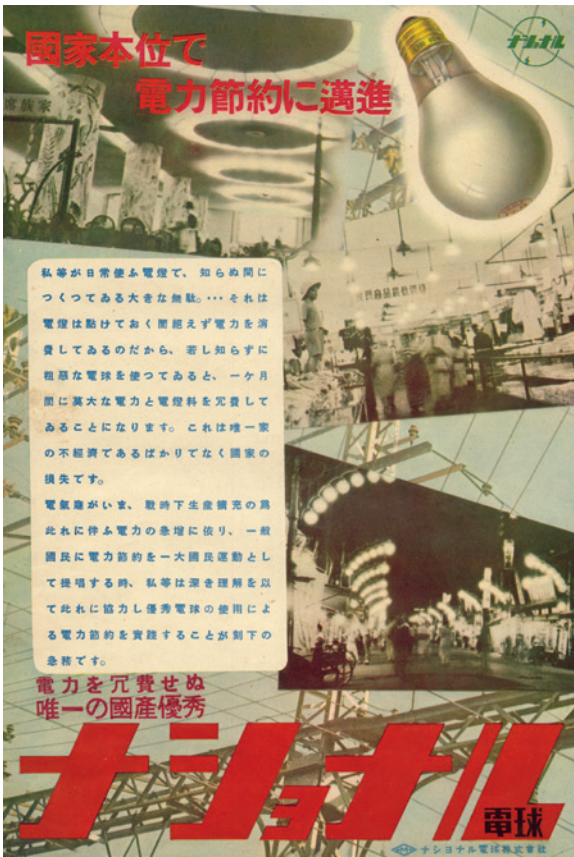


5.1 Advertisement for New Mazda light bulbs, back cover of *Sunday Mainichi* 18, no. 59 (November 6, 1939). Collection of the author



enlarged image of the new bulb and a diagram of the filament. This technology, the copy continued, “was invented by Toshiba’s world pioneering company engineer Miura Junichi.” The advertisement, a montage of images, photographic and painterly, a blur of speed and smoke, not only champions the efficiency of Mazda incandescent light bulbs but also visually expresses the profound compression of time and space enabled by new technologies built on the foundation of electricity. The year was 1939. This full-page color advertisement ran on the back of the large-format *Sunday Mainichi* (*Sandē mainichi*) graphic magazine, published in Osaka. It was the same year that Tokyo Shibaura Electric was born out of the merger of two major players in the electrical goods market: Tokyo Electric (Tōkyō Denki) and the Shibaura Engineering Works (Shibaura Seisakusho).

Not to be outdone, Toshiba’s main rival, Matsushita Electric Industrial Company (Matsushita Denki Sangyō Kabushiki Kaisha, now known as Pana-



5.2 Advertisement for National light bulbs, back cover of *Sunday Mainichi* 18, no. 41 (August 13, 1939). Collection of the author

sonic Corporation), similarly touted its National brand electric light bulbs in the same magazine under the twin banners of energy economy and excellent domestic production; the copy read, “Pushing forward undaunted by economizing on electric power thanks to the national standard,” and “No unnecessary expense for electric power—only with the excellence of domestic production” (figure 5.2).² It reminded consumers that waste in the daily life of one household was a loss for the entire country, and wartime policies demanded electric power conservation for vital national production. Underneath, a photomontage displays brightly illuminated leisure locales shimmering down the page: a restaurant for fine dining, a department store for shopping, and the brilliant spectacle of the illuminated street at night, images that nearly obscure the electric power station looming behind. The images display light for leisure and power for production. The economy produced electricity to be consumed, but it was also a valuable resource that needed to be conserved.

5.3 Poster for National light bulbs showing Thomas Edison's face, 1939. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.



Electricity is a powerful enabling technology.³ It is not simply a technology, however. It is also a social and cultural force of unparalleled proportions that has forever altered the landscape of daily life around the world. Claiming credit for this revolution, Thomas Edison's General Electric (GE) Company has proudly boasted, "With power and light, GE provided the basis of modern life, quickly redefining everything from the length of the day to our knowledge of the human body through the development of the first X-ray machine."⁴ This is not an overstatement. People around the world celebrated Edison, his wizened face seen on a 1939 Japanese advertising poster and street billboards, sixty years after his initial invention, gazing wisely from the ether over National brand light bulbs (figure 5.3). Yet, as Matsushita boldly claimed in the accompanying copy, their company had perfected his technology.

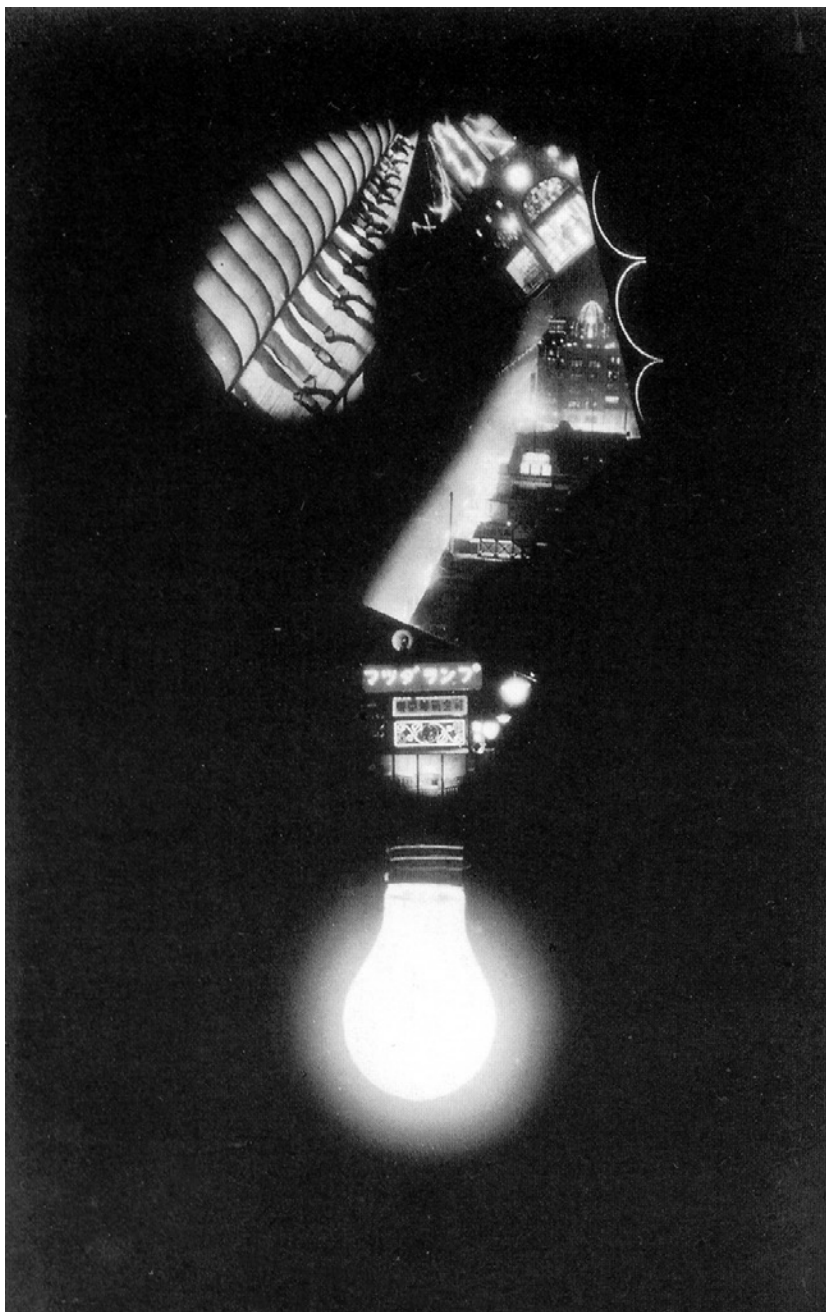
Technology is also not a unilateral, deterministic force imposing the dehumanized will of modernization on people's lives. It is an animate, mutable entity

shaped by those who use it and the exigencies of everyday life. This begs the question, posed symbolically by a whimsical 1933 advertising design proposal by well-known modernist photographer Ōkubo Kōroku (1900–1936) for Mazda light bulbs featuring a chorus line of dancing legs and the illumination of urban nightlife in the shape of a question mark punctuated by a bulb at the bottom (figure 5.4): How did the consumer market impact this radical redefinition of modern life? And more significantly for this study, how did modern commercial design guide and respond to consumer needs and desires to shape this process?

The Story of Electricity

Electricity produced bright lights in big cities; it was the visual language of the modern urban metropolis: burlesques, cinema, and illuminated signboards. As the editors of the book *Cities of Light* have observed, with artificial urban lighting, human wakefulness effectively “spilled into and colonized the night for purposeful activities, industrious and otherwise.”⁵ Electricity also facilitated the production of modern domesticity through the purveying of goods in the burgeoning consumer market. But electricity did not market or sell itself. In his landmark study of the postwar Japanese electrical goods industry, historian Simon Partner has noted that companies manufacturing these goods “consciously engaged in market-creating activities” before the war even though average incomes among most of the nation’s consumers were too low to sustain such a market.⁶ Therefore, a vital preamble to Partner’s compelling postwar story is the industry’s cultivation of a nascent consumer market for electrical goods in the prewar period, and the role of graphic design and advertising in aestheticizing, visualizing, and commodifying the seemingly transformative social powers of electric energy.

Two companies at the forefront of creating this market that were actively engaged in innovative advertising design throughout the twentieth century were Toshiba and Matsushita. Both companies invested heavily in brand identity construction through creative design and purchased copious advertising in newspapers, magazines, and other print media, including posters, spawning a family of nationally renowned products marketed under the shared visual umbrella of easily recognizable trademarks and logotypes. They utilized their creative capital to brand electrical goods under the Mazda and National trademarks respectively by exploiting the symbolic capital of electricity in the cultural field more generally. Thus, something as seemingly unassuming as a light bulb could communicate a vast array of ideas and values, including productivity,



5.4 Ōkubo Kōroku,
advertisement design for
Mazda light bulbs, 1933. Tokyo
Photographic Art Museum

physical health, leisure and visual pleasure, energy conservation, national vitality, and even national peril when it became necessary to mask household lights to evade potential air raids during wartime.

Before the market for electrical goods could be established, an energy infrastructure was required. Electrification was a gradual process around the world, and by 1920 Japan was one of the world's leaders in per capita electrification (*katei no denka*) with seven million of the nation's eleven million households connected. By 1933 the country topped 90 percent nationally and neared 100 percent in all major cities, although, as Partner points out, electrification often "meant little more than providing electric light, with usually no more than one outlet per family."⁷ Electrification certainly exposed immense disparities of income across the country and contributed to a yawning divide between urban and rural standards of living.

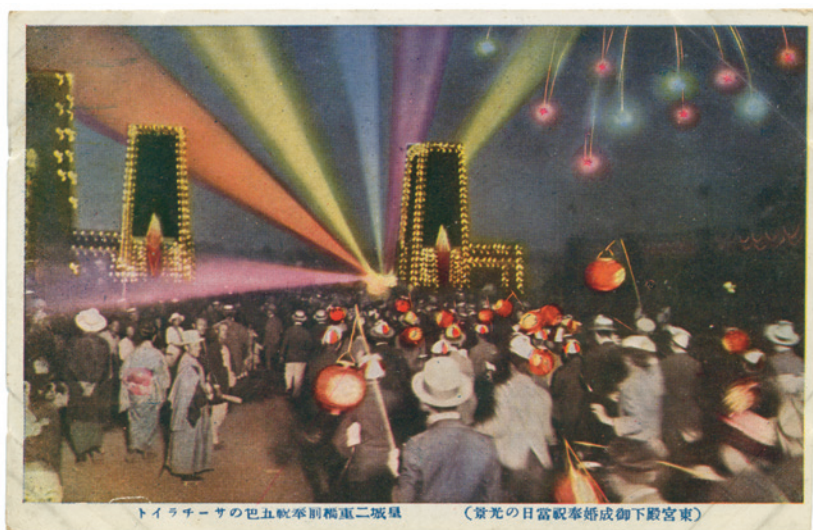
By 1913 almost 90 percent of all incandescent light bulbs used in Japan were produced domestically.⁸ Their appearance was followed by a legion of new consumer electrical products that offered to improve daily life: electric irons that made household laundry chores less oppressive, electric fans that were cooling in the sweltering summers, electric heaters for warmth in the chilly winters, electric clocks that assured accurate timekeeping, bicycle lamps to illuminate the road for safer nighttime transportation, and consumer radios for entertainment and dissemination of critical civic information.

As households became electrified, consumers needed to be trained in how to incorporate these new technologies into their daily lives. Like many other cultural media forms, *sugoroku* board games, such as the Game of Home Electricity Education (Denki Kyōiku Sugoroku) issued by the Society for the Promotion of Home Electrical Appliances (Katei Denki Fukyūkai) in 1927, served this didactic role by gamifying the domestication of knowledge (figure 5.5). The 1927 game board has a series of amusing panels that depict home life with and without electrical appliances, centering on the experience of a newly married housewife as its central protagonist. The game begins in the starting space (*furidashi*) with the new bride in her wedding garb arriving at her new home with trousseau and all. It then details a series of different household chores first done manually, often to the consternation of the woman's husband, then done more efficiently and effectively with an appliance, for example, sweeping with a broom versus using a vacuum cleaner, washing clothes by hand with a screaming baby on one's back versus using an electric laundry machine, sewing by hand versus using a modern sewing machine, and using hot coals for pressing clothes (which also presented a fire hazard) rather than using an electric iron. The game amply demonstrated the increased security of one's body

and property with electrification. Refrigeration protected against food spoilage. Electric burners prevented smoke inhalation while cooking. Electric fountains were warmer and safer than coal braziers. And radios provided critical information on inclement weather. The “bad” old ways were labeled with blue cartouches, and the “good” new ones were labeled in red to clearly differentiate the correct choices. The lesson in electrification included visualization of the appropriate volume of visible light by contrasting two portrayals of a house, one dark and one bright. The former is dimly illuminated by a single naked bulb and causes the woman to break a household item, eliciting a shocking (and regressive) beating from her husband. In contrast, other panels show well-illuminated houses with new lamps and ceiling fixtures that implicitly produce a happy home life devoid of domestic strife. Such is the image pictured in the game’s goal square (*agari*) of the “electrified home,” where the whole family, including the grandma and the cat, sit in a modern living room with couch and armchair under a stylish ceiling fixture with an electric heater warming their feet and an open door to the kitchen that reveals an electric kettle and hot plate. As librarian Minjie Chen has explained, by the end of the game, players “learned that electrical appliances are good for personal health and wellbeing, family relations, and neighborhood safety.” The final panel suggests that electrical appliances are, in fact, the key to modern domestic happiness.⁹

Historian Jordan Sand has similarly noted that electrification was promoted as offering the future prospect of both efficient homes and happy families. In the Japanese consumer market after 1922, “culture” (*bunka*) was synonymous with practical modern conveniences such as gas fixtures and electrical appliances. A host of Japanese housing reform advocates promoted these goods in the mass media. “In their depictions,” Sand writes, “the cultural life was a world not only of greater efficiency, but of bright colors, harmonious communities, and happy families.”¹⁰ By 1924 two extravagant promotional “electric homes” had even been built in Tokyo to demonstrate this modern cultural life. One was private, the other public with free admission as publicity for a new garden-city suburb development. Both, however, while promoted in housing journals and newspapers for their possibility of economizing on household maid services and cleaning labor costs, “were more like performances of the future possibilities of electrification in the home than strategies for marketing appliances,” Sand argues. Overall, these electric houses communicated a “fantasy surplus” inherent in the cultural life by demonstrating the “promise of an electrified future more than the convenience of electric appliances in the present.”¹¹

At the same time, electrification was used to express civic and national pride, featuring prominently in celebratory urban spectacles and expositions around



5.6 Postcard, five-colored searchlights for celebration in front of the Nijūbashi bridge, scene of the imperial palace on the day of the imperial wedding, 1924. Lafayette College Special Collections

the world. From the multicolored Tower of Jewels and Fountain of Energy, illuminated at night by more than fifty spotlights at San Francisco's Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915 to Albert Speer's "Cathedral of Light," created using 152 antiaircraft searchlights aimed toward the sky to create vertical columns of light that surrounded the audience at the Nazi Nuremberg rallies from 1933 to 1938, light became a modern promotional medium of epic proportions. Such radiant lighting was effectively deployed in Japan's national celebration of the marriage of the future Showa emperor, Prince Michinomiya, to Princess Nagako, later Empress Kōjun, in 1924, illuminating the famous Nijūbashi bridge leading to the Imperial Palace in Tokyo with five-colored searchlights (figure 5.6). And Mazda lights, advertised in Tokyo Electric's floodlight (*tōkōki*) product catalogs, offered the radiant material for such dramatic illumination.¹² They were used to convey the spectacular grandeur of traditional and modern landmarks like Osaka Castle and Japan's new National Diet Building interchangeably, the latter pictured on the title page of the 1934 floodlight catalog and depicted again in a Mazda light bulb adver-

tisement on the back cover of *International Exposition (Banpaku)* magazine in 1939, just a year before the country would stage a large-scale illuminated exposition and pageant to celebrate National Foundation Day, commemorating the 2,600th anniversary of Emperor Jimmu's legendary enthronement in 660 B.C. This was "Japan's light" (*Nihon no hikari*), as the ad copy announced. And "lasting forever like heaven and earth" (*Tenjō mukyū*), the New Mazda light bulb was pictured in Foundation Day event tie-up publicity as a globe-like orb beaming light through the map of Japan and its expanding empire, presumably shining brilliantly forever like the imperial nation itself.¹³ Similarly conveying technological sophistication and visual spectacle but with an emphasis on pleasure and leisure more than the majesty of nation and empire, Osaka's Luna Park (Runa Pāku) fairgrounds, opened in 1912, were also brilliantly illuminated at night, and its majestic Tsūtenkaku tower (shaped like the Eiffel Tower) was connected to an electric cable car for added amusement.

As historian of technology David Nye has aptly noted, electricity is a powerful symbolic medium, not simply a functional form of power. Brightness and darkness came to take on valences of civilization and primitivism in the discourse of modernity. Electric light offered increased safety by freeing people from the noxious fumes and fear of fire that were inherent to gas lighting. The brightness of electric illumination also improved security through greater visibility, literally bringing spaces out of the shadows. It embodied scientific achievement. It was in every sense a "visible correlative to the ideology of progress."¹⁴ It is no coincidence that the Toshiba advertisement mentioned at the opening of this chapter heralded the accomplishments of the company's engineer Miura Junichi. The engineer was a hero of the modern age around the world, a pioneer of scientific inquiry, and a dedicated advocate for electricity as an instrument of rationality and social reform.¹⁵

Electricity powered everything from Broadway's Great White Way to theater stages around the world. Light itself was theatrical and spectacular. For advertising design specifically, electric lights were both a commodity and a medium. They represented an exciting new visual form to harness for publicity, from creatively designed electric billboards that illuminated main urban boulevards in the Ginza district in Tokyo to dramatic spotlighting in show windows. Tokyo Electric promoted its Mazda brand show window light shades (*Matsuda kazari mado sēdo*; figure 5.7) as a vital professional device for choreographing light to enhance a display's visual appeal on this important modern commodity stage. Many volumes and special issues of trade journals were dedicated to the topic of electric light and its various accoutrements. *The Complete Commercial Artist* even devoted an entire volume to electric advertising.¹⁶ Lighting produced the



5.7 Cover of *Mazda Show Window Shades*, Tokyo Electric product catalog, November 1936. Toshiba Science Museum, Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corporation



5.8 Cover of Shiseido's *Chainstore Research* 8 (February 1936). Shiseido Corporate Museum

exciting spectacle of the commercial emporium, transforming goods into celebrity commodities. Commercial photographers soon began shooting with dramatically staged lighting to accentuate a product's aesthetic features and stylish packaging, as seen on the cover of Shiseido's in-house public relations magazine, the *Chainstore Research*, revealing the behind-the-scenes process of such theatrical photo shoots (figure 5.8).

While illumination primarily engaged the ocular senses, it also created seemingly palpable spaces through shadows and silhouettes. As architectural historian Sandy Isenstadt has persuasively argued, electric light fundamentally changed the underlying nature of space itself, serving as a new kind of building material that compelled new behavioral protocols and new codes of social relations.¹⁷ Commercial art professionals wrote prodigiously about the malleable qualities of light. In his regular column for *Advertising World*, Miyashita Takao observed that light was *the* primary issue for advertising design. It was not merely a question of illumination; light itself as an “element” of design was crucial. “Artificial light,” he wrote, “allows one to see objects beautifully, but



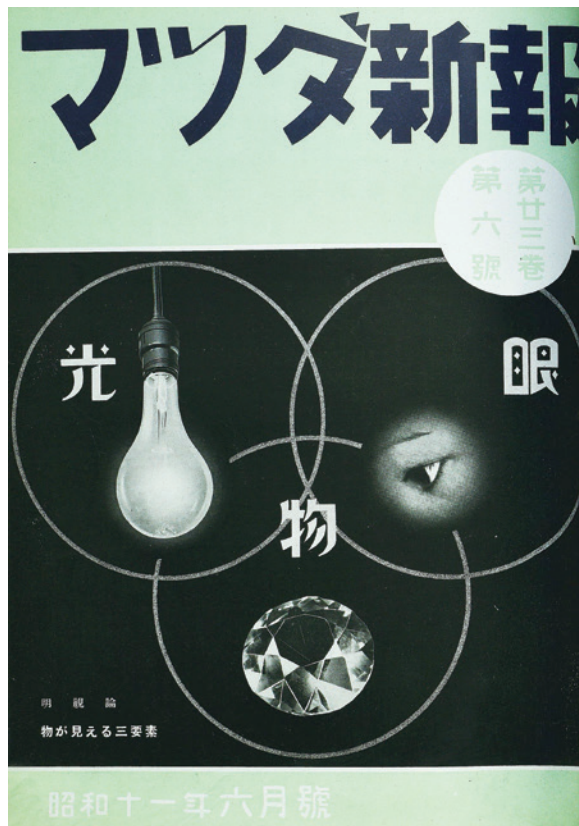
5.9 Matsushita National brand store interior, display with sample bulbs and slogan “strong, bright, economical,” ca. 1930s. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

also somewhat mysteriously served as a method of observing objects.” It created silhouettes.¹⁸ Designers could use the rhythm of light and the ability to project or “throw” light (*nagesasu*). They could focus light onto a single point. And they could overlap shadows to create dimensionality (*dekoboko*). Light was a dynamic element. By the same token, reverse lighting could similarly create powerful imagery. The bathing of objects—even whole buildings—in flood-lights could produce strong contrast and evocative shadows. In other cases, soft light enabled the creation of a picture with a deeper artistic sense of taste. These techniques not only made advertising design more artistic but carried it into the expressive mood-oriented (*kibun honi*) work of the artist’s domain. Miyashita encouraged the use of a three-way mirror to redirect lighting and urged designers not to be intimidated by seemingly complicated machines such as the kaleidoscope or kaleidograph.¹⁹ When one looks at Matsushita’s interior store displays (figure 5.9), it is evident that light played a variety of roles: as products or models (bulbs and fixtures); as values represented by slogans like “strong, bright, economical” (*tsuyoku, akaruku, keizaina*); and as artistic illumination



5.10 Advertisement for National light bulbs: light bulbs float weightlessly in a hazy ether, casting evocative shadows on National's logo mark projected in the background. Back cover of *Sunday Mainichi* 18, no. 33 (June 25, 1939). Collection of the author

5.11 Tokyo Electric, “eye—light—object,” cover of *Mazda News* 23, no. 6 (June 1936).
Toshiba Science Museum,
Toshiba Lighting and
Technology Corporation



for spaces, goods, and attractive salesgirls. As the editors of the volume *Cities of Light* have observed, “Artificial light—instantaneous, ubiquitous, evanescent—is modernity’s medium.”²⁰

The Light Bulb

Light bulbs, luminous and curvaceous, immediately recognizable by shape, became iconic motifs of sector marketing (figure 5.10). Transparent or opaque, their filament revealed or concealed, installed or free floating, light bulbs were a sensuous, tangible commodity that evoked a range of senses from the ocular to the haptic (figure 5.11). Bulbs could even be titillating, especially when pictured as a surprisingly phallic substitute projecting across the body of a reclining pinup girl, offering power and pleasure as a countermanding masculine correlative to the potentially frivolous feminine realm of leisure and entertainment (figure 5.12).

昭和 18 年

國策線上へ 純國產電球



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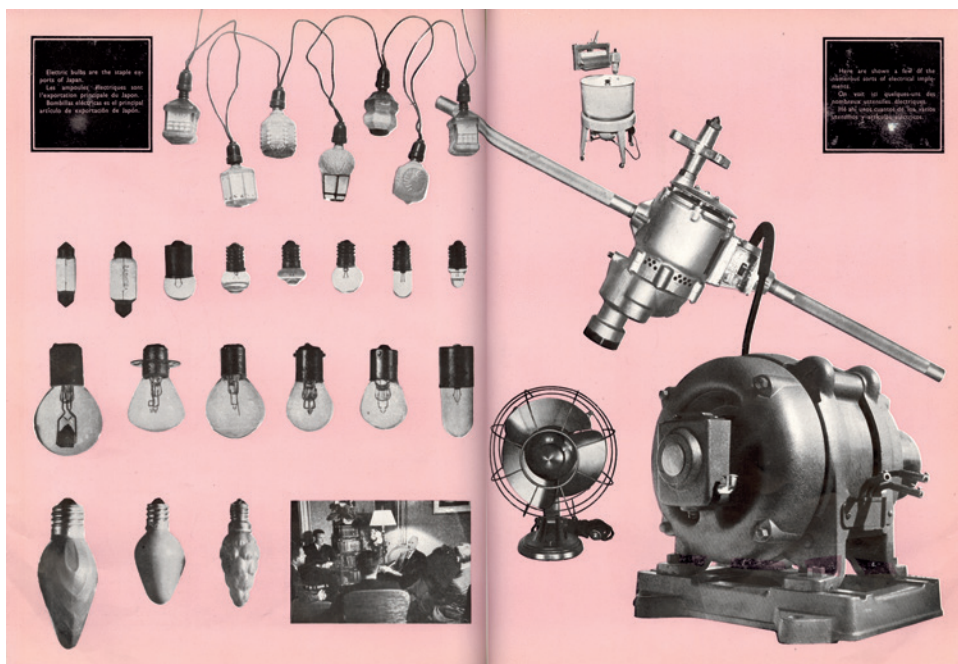
ナショナル電球株式會社

5.12 Poster for National light bulbs, 1938. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

5.13 Cover of New Mazda light bulb sales pamphlet, Tokyo Electric, January 1936. Toshiba Science Museum, Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corporation



The light bulb's curvaceous contour was used as an enticing cutout on the brightly colored yellow cover of the New Mazda lamp sales (*Shin Matsuda Ranpu Shinhatsubai*) pamphlet published in early 1936 for distribution to Tokyo Electric branch locations across the nation and empire, proudly listed as Tokyo; Osaka; Kanazawa; Hiroshima; Nagoya; Sendai in Tohoku; Sapporo in Hokkaido; Fukuoka and Kokura in Kyushu; Taipei (Taihoku) in Taiwan; Seoul (Keijō) in Korea; Dalian (Dairen), Shenyang (Mukden), Changchun (Shinkyō), and Harbin in Manchuria; and Shanghai in China (figure 5.13).²¹ The cover sports cheery red and white lettering in an arc and a semicircular double filament coil motif bordering a light bulb, which is set against a vivid blue and gold background. When the pamphlet opens, the bulb is revealed to be on the page behind, and the cutout of its absent form creates a recognizable profile. Inside, extended copy describes how bulbs are now sixty times more efficient than the original tungsten incandescent bulbs first marketed in Japan,



5.14 “Electric Bulbs” (*left*) and “Electric Implements” (*right*), in “Made in Japan Potpourri in Pictures,” *Commerce Japan* 11 (December 1940): 14–15. Cornell University Library

representing a tremendous cost saving not only for the consumer but also to the national economy. By this time, bulbs had become available in a vast array of wattages, and such catalogs provided myriad illumination options. Multilingual journals such as *Commerce Japan*, from the Japan Foreign Trade Federation (Bōeki Kumiai Chūōkai), geared toward promoting Japanese goods abroad, amplified this publicity message, featuring electric bulbs as “staple exports,” alongside a host of other “electrical implements” that were redefining Japan’s modern manufacturing sector (figure 5.14). Set among the ordered yet abstractly floating electrical implements, a photograph of a warmly lit gathering of Western gentlemen in a cozy interior setting underscored product utility in producing convivial domestic ambiances abroad. Supporting this ambition, the Association of Japanese Electric Lamp Exporters (Nippon Denkyū Yushutsu Kumiai) and its UK branch sponsored full-page advertisements

in *Commerce Japan* in 1939 displaying a luminous light bulb shining incandescently over ships in the ocean during a starry night.²² Both the bulb and the ship traverse the oceanic divide between Japan and distant consumers, as electricity compressed time and space, linking the island nation to world markets.

It is important to note here, however, the political, and imperialist, implications of Japan's sourcing of tungsten for incandescent light bulb filaments. For twenty years, from 1925 until the end of World War II, Korean tungsten satisfied 60 percent of Japan's industrial needs for tungsten (which mostly served steel alloy production). The tungsten mining operation in Korea was dominated by one Japanese-owned concern, Kobayashi Mining. As historian Chad Denton has explicated, Korean minerals—tungsten in particular—enabled the Japanese war economy. In this transnational imperial history, the exploitation and restriction of strategic minerals in the context of global politics are a critical backdrop for understanding the development of the lighting industry. Already in the mid-1930s, American scholars were identifying Japan's "mineral deficiency" and the geopolitical potential for future conflict over the uneven global distribution of natural resources. Without these necessary natural minerals, Japan depended on the United States and Britain for an array of critical resources that were fueling its industrialization; consequently, its quest for economic autarky drove the nation's aggressive colonial expansion to secure new supply lines. Korean mineral resources, therefore, became an essential part of Japan's technological development strategy, especially when the war blocked Chinese tungsten exports to Japan. Maintaining modernity required such critical resources, whether derived domestically or elsewhere. Japan imported all its tungsten from colonial Korea until 1937, and even Japanese light bulbs themselves were manufactured in Korea, with only the filaments manufactured in Japan and then exported back for completion.²³

With their advanced tungsten filaments, Japanese light bulbs glowed brightly and emitted golden rays like the sun, sometimes referred to as the "nighttime sun" (*yoru no taiyō*). As such, they were metonymically associated with the Japanese nation through the image of the sun, the centerpiece of the Japanese flag. Their visible and symbolic power verged on the divine, as seen in one well-known 1940 poster that playfully overlaid a widely recognizable gesture of exultation—reverent hands reaching upward toward a radiant orb—onto the more mundane act of changing a light bulb, cleverly sanctifying the product (figure 5.15).

The connection between electric lighting and the sun was not limited to Japan. In fact, GE's advertising had invoked the image of the sun in combina-



5.15 Poster for National light bulbs: "Light without wasting any electrical power . . ." (*Denryoku o muda naku hikari ni*), 1940. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.



5.16 Maxfield Parrish, “His Only Rival,” desk blotter advertising Edison Mazda light bulbs, ca. 1910s. General Electric NELA Park Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

tion with its popular tagline “His Only Rival. GE Edison Mazda Lamp,” starting in 1910 (figure 5.16).²⁴ Celebrated artist Maxfield Parrish illustrated the logo featuring a decorative image of the sun with a bemused male face peeking up over the horizon across the globe, enviously eyeing Edison’s light bulb emanating a brilliant glow on the other side. The implication that Edison’s technology was the sun’s only rival made a powerful statement and became an ongoing theme in lighting advertisements thereafter. This logo was the visual centerpiece of the company’s early advertising campaigns, featured on everything from packaging to billboards—and even desk blotters.²⁵ It was designed to highlight the increased brightness and whiteness of the new incandescent tungsten bulbs over their carbon-filament predecessors. Counter displays for GE’s Mazda light bulbs featured different models of bulbs plugged into a fan-shaped set of sockets that looked exactly like the sun peeking out over the horizon when all the bulbs were illuminated. Colorful or sheer white, the bulb display asked, “How Are You Fixed For Lamps?”

A consummate marketer and showman himself, Edison understood the value of publicity, and GE invested heavily in advertising in all media, hiring a host of popular illustrators, most famously Parrish and Norman Rockwell (who created over twenty separate designs for GE), to aestheticize company products. Parrish produced the images *Daybreak* and *Enchantment* for GE, with the latter depicting a romanticized, neoclassical female figure standing on stairs with her long, flowing hair adorned with a laurel garland. Her languid body stood bathed in luminous light, both a literal and allegorical symbol of Edison's contribution to human civilization. Parrish pictorially inflected his annual GE Mazda calendars, issued from 1918 to 1934, with exotic Orientalist fantasies of magical Eastern illumination, and they became highly sought-after promotional items that consumers used to decorate their homes year-round.²⁶ Between 1922 and 1930, GE's annual advertising budget increased from \$2 million to \$12 million, generating upward of two hundred magazine advertisements per year, attempting to reach every American family.²⁷

In 1927 the *Saturday Evening Post* ran a picturesque advertisement for the Edison Mazda Lamp with the tagline "*Light up . . . for beauty.*" It shows a young woman having a party dress tailored as she gazes at her reflection in the mirror. "Good lighting adds the final touch of perfection to beauty. For without light beauty fades. With proper lighting you add charm to every room in your house—at insignificant cost." While having enough light to see and maintain good vision was the first requirement of any quality light bulb, the consumer, gendered female here, was not getting the full value out of her lighting until she dressed and decorated with it.²⁸

Edison also predicted somewhat fantastically that good lighting might have the long-term benefit of reducing the need for sleep, facilitating a potential boon in human productivity.²⁹ Other GE photographic advertisements for Edison's Mazda lamps in 1931 amplified this message, contrasting two office settings, one with a man and his secretary working diligently, the other with an empty chair. The copy reads, "WHY JONES IS AT WORK WHILE SMITH IS AWAY."³⁰ Jones, on the left, can be productive because he has the advantage of "good light," meaning healthy light that is well distributed to facilitate his sleep and ultimately enhance his efficiency and productivity. Smith does not have that benefit. His poor light causes headaches, sleeplessness, and functional disorders. Therefore, he cannot contribute. While one might interpret this in hindsight as the beginning of Jones's physical downfall with the unending workday, which became a major health consequence of industrialization, here it is marketed as a positive feature increasing productivity. This positive message of productivity was clearly reinforced by an illustration of "Edison's

Dream Come True” that showed him looking out over the illuminated industrial complex enabled by his invention; on the desk in front of him sits the simple individual incandescent bulb. The company used this image to celebrate its invented holiday, Edison Day, on October 21, 1909, commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of incandescent lighting.

Japanese manufacturers harnessed the evocative power of electric light through imagery and concepts that associated light bulbs with health, progress, productivity, efficiency, and even transcendence. Commercial artists then wrapped these core concepts in bright, colorful cloaks of modernity fashioned in trendy abstract artistic styles drawn from a global design vocabulary. Health was a cornerstone of marketing electrical lighting. Compared to other forms of illumination, electric light provided “vision protection” that was important for the health of one’s eyes, particularly the eyes of children.³¹ Advertisements exclaimed, “Protect their eyes from childhood onward,” touting the health benefits of switching to electric light, which would enable extended hours for studying without causing any undue harm to young eyes.³² This would undoubtedly yield superior, and ultimately more productive, imperial subjects. It also reinforced the rationalized ethos of modern motherhood whereby mothers were expected to provide safe and healthy environments in which to raise their children in the interest of society in general. In the same poster for Mazda bulbs, the floating beacon of the bulb and brand logo hang majestically above two smiling, happy brothers who beam at the product and the tagline above, their cheerful well-being evidence of its message.

Toshiba’s brand-name “Vita-Lite” or Life Light (Baita Raito) full-spectrum light bulbs were marketed in the late 1930s under the tagline “For Health, bathe in brilliant ultraviolet light” (*Kenkō e! Sansantaru shigaisen o abite*), offering ultraviolet light baths to promote children’s health.³³ Such resplendent light was considered nourishing and could provide energy to cultivate bigger, stronger, healthier children just as it helped plants grow. *Commerce Japan* magazine pictured children in 1939 receiving ultraviolet light baths to enhance their development (figure 5.17).³⁴ And a 1939 pamphlet for Vita-Lite presents a bright yellow cover featuring a smiling young girl with bobbed hair under the radiating light fixture. The pamphlet unfolds to reveal an array of floating light fixtures: standing lamps, desk lamps, and wall-mounted models. Among them, to the lower left, sits a rectangular frame with photographs of three innocent-looking toddlers, their naked torsos just visible, receiving a stimulating light bath from the fixture mounted above. The image is conspicuously set off in a frame and cocked slightly to the left with shadowing behind to draw attention. A list of the light bath’s health benefits, such as the production of vitamin D and cal-



5.17 Children receiving light baths. Nippon Kōbō, “Ultra-Violet Rays,” in “Education in Japan,” *Commerce Japan* 5 (April 1939): 25. Cornell University Library

cium, floats between the light fixture and the figures as if the healthy children are also being emitted with the light.

Two Brands: Mazda and National

Brand identity was built on a visual vocabulary that started with an eye-catching logotype. Toshiba used its Mazda logo almost uninterrupted from 1911 until 1962 (figure 5.18) with only a short hiatus during the war years (from 1943 to 1945) when overtly foreign names were proscribed.³⁵ Despite its Japanese-sounding name, Mazda was an American brand selected by the pioneering Shelby Electric Company for its associations with the principal god of Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda, whose name means light and wisdom. Shelby was bought by GE, which then licensed the brand Mazda to Tokyo Electric, its Japanese business partner, which transliterated it into katakana and placed a circle around the

5.18 Metal retail shop sign for Mazda light bulbs, with prewar company logo. Toshiba Science Museum, Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corporation



name to sell tungsten light bulbs in Japan in 1911. It used the Mazda brand for a range of electric products, including vacuum tubes for radios.

The logotype was widely deployed, even as a repetitive motif on the company wrapping paper. Decorative flourishes animate its encompassing circle, an adorning element drawn directly from the GE logo created in 1900 during the heyday of art nouveau design, which was inspired by natural forms and flowing motifs. This design gives the logo a sense of movement and energy, like the dynamic wind rotation of a fan, and is effective for conveying the corporate identity of a purveyor of electrical goods that harness the power of electricity. As GE advertisements reminded the public, Mazda was “not the name of a thing, but the mark of a service.” This service, which extended to all products, would throw a “brighter, whiter light” on both lamp manufacturing and the home by always guaranteeing the most up-to-date technology. According to GE publicity, Edison’s Mazda light bulbs literally transported one “out of the past into

the present,” vividly illuminating the stepping stones of civilization from olden times to modernity.³⁶

Toshiba's prehistory goes back to 1873, when the Japanese government commissioned Tanaka Hisashige to develop technology for telegraphy. Two years later, he established the Tanaka Engineering Works (Tanaka Seizōsho), renamed Shibaura Engineering Works (Shibaura Seisakusho) in 1893 after the company went bankrupt and was taken over by Mitsui Bank. Around the same time, in 1878, Fujioka Ichisuke developed Japan's first arc lamp while studying at the Imperial College of Engineering (Kōbu Daigakkō) and subsequently developed an incandescent light bulb using bamboo filament. In 1890, together with Miyoshi Shōichi, he established Hakunetsusha, which became the first domestic company in Japan to manufacture light bulbs in a market dominated by imports. They renamed the company Tokyo Electric in 1905 when it entered a partnership with GE in the United States (with GE as the major share-owning partner) and began manufacturing and marketing GE products in Japan using imported technology. Mazda light bulbs were part of this deal.³⁷ Edison, in fact, had a long-standing relationship with Japan because some of his earliest successful filaments were made from bamboo that was sourced in 1880 in the groves around Iwashimizu Hachimangū shrine south of Kyoto, one of the country's most powerful Shinto shrines. The bamboo is purported to have lasted over a thousand hours in Edison's first bulbs. He visited Japan in 1922, and many Japanese engineers worked in his laboratory in the United States. A stone memorial is dedicated to him on the grounds of the shrine, and every year in early May, thousands of bamboo lanterns are lit in Edison's honor as part of a festival of light.³⁸ Tokyo Electric's partnership with GE was enormously successful, and by May 1933 the company had contracted forty-nine authorized dealers to sell its products. Like its manufacturing cohort in other market sectors such as cosmetics and foodstuffs, Tokyo Electric established a powerful chain store network of authorized dealers and 350 Mazda Associations (Matsuda-kai). Matsushita did the same with its Matsushita Electric chain stores (Matsushita Denki Renmeiten), later renamed National shops after the war.³⁹

Edison understood the value of showmanship for selling electricity and often used world expositions as his promotional stage. His assistant William Hammer even designed the first electric sign, spelling out Edison's name for display at the Crystal Palace Exposition in London in 1851. At the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, Edison exhibited his telegraphic inventions and then went on to send exhibits to Paris, London, and Vienna.⁴⁰ Japanese manufacturers were similarly drawn to the public visibility and legitimating

authority expositions offered, often submitting new products for consideration and potential prizes. From March 20 to May 31, 1926, the Kansai branch of the Japanese Electricity Association (Nippon Denki Kyōkai) sponsored the Great Electricity Exposition (Denki Daihakurankai) in Osaka, which was avidly covered in a special issue of Tokyo Electric's public relations magazine, *Mazda News* (*Matsuda shinpō*).⁴¹ The *Far Eastern Review* also promoted the exposition in January before the opening:

A grand electrical exhibition, which is unprecedented, not only in Japan but also in the Far East, in points of grandness of the scale and the excellence of substance, is now under way in Osaka, Japan's water metropolis, to be opened March 20, 1926, to last until May 31, under the auspices of the Electrical Association. The Exhibition will feature the development of electrical knowledge, industrial application of electricity, and promotion of electrical enterprises.

All the commercial and industrial companies and people of Far Eastern countries, as well as those of European and American countries, have been invited to visit the exhibition and participate in it by sending their exhibits of electrical appliances and machineries under their control.

It is intended by the Exhibition authorities to give users of electrical equipment and to the general public a better idea of the electrical industry in all its phases in Japan. To do this in the most effective manner, and to make it more instructive and interesting, it is planned that the actual methods of manufacture and operation of the article or its final use will be shown in such a way as to depict actual working conditions.⁴²

With impressive legitimating authority, Prince Kanin Kotohito served as exposition president, former prime minister Kiyoura Keigo as the vice president, and Den Kenjirō, former minister of communications, as the chairman. The exposition drew nearly three million visitors to its two venues in the city, one of which was in Tennōji Park. The exposition was divided into four districts; the southwestern part was the main exhibition area. The western part was the district for foreign pavilions. The eastern part was an amusement park. And the northeastern part was an entertainment area. Professor Takeda Goichi from Tokyo Imperial University designed all the buildings in what was described at the time as a Spanish mission style with added "Oriental flavors." In front of the first venue stood a fountain honoring Benjamin Franklin, by then a global icon in the world of electrification.⁴³ There were over 150 buildings, large and small, including a transportation hall with panoramas of Japan's railway

lines and a power building with models of domestic and foreign products. Two annexes featured ships, equipment, instruments, and household appliances. One building displayed statistical information and a government-sponsored exhibit. Another was a laboratory demonstrating printing technology and other electrical equipment. There was an agricultural garden with electric machinery. One entire building was dedicated to home electricity, featuring appliances for domestic use. The Colonial Hall displayed special products from Japan's colonies. In addition, there were separate pavilions representing Taiwan and Korea, as well as a symbolic Seika Crystal Tower standing over one hundred feet tall with nighttime illumination. Even with an abundance of futuristic electric technology on display—hydraulic lifts, elevators, radios, medical equipment, and aviation—the exposition's public entertainments, indoor and outdoor, were still the most popular attractions, including a train for children that traveled around a model of the world, ocean sports, a seaplane, and an electric hot spring that simulated a favorite Japanese leisure pastime.

Investment in electric publicity extended from expositions to commercial advertising design. By the 1930s Tokyo Electric employed the art director and designer Shinoda Tomio (1910–1985), who also worked with Nippon Kōbō, and hired the studio photographers Natori Yōnosuke, Domon Ken, and Watanabe Yoshio, as well as designers Kumada Gorō and Kamekura Yūsaku, for company projects.⁴⁴ After the war, in 1951, Shinoda collaboratively established the advertising production company Light Publicity Company Ltd. headquartered in the Ginza district.⁴⁵ Dedicated to planning and producing advertisements and commercials, the firm included now-famous copywriters such as Tsuchiya Koichi and Akiyama Sho, as well as renowned art directors Hosoya Gan and Asaba Katsumi.

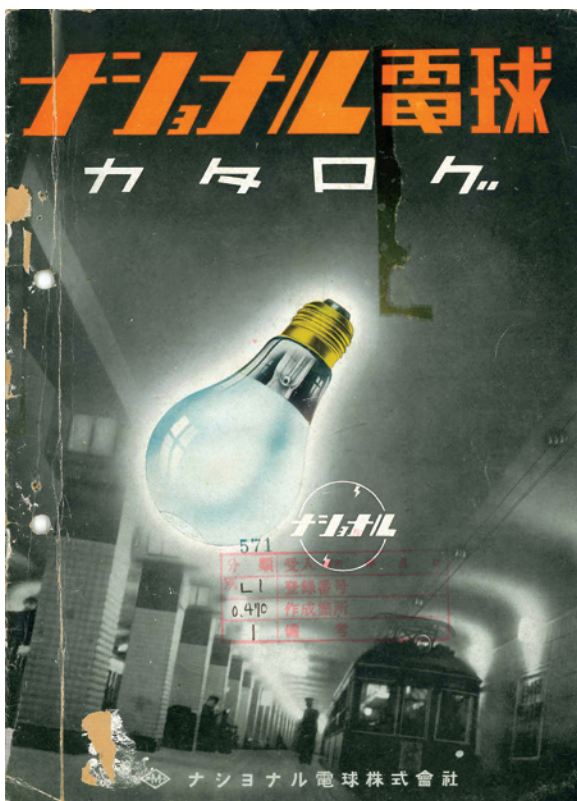
Toshiba's and Matsushita's investment in creative design is evident across their print publicity, including company public relations magazines and sales materials. Toshiba published *Mazda Communications News* (*Matsuda tsūshin shinpō*) and *Mazda News* (*Matsuda shinpō*) as well as a host of product brochures and catalogs.⁴⁶ Matsushita similarly had its own in-house publications with evocative designs, such as the *Matsushita Electric Monthly* (*Matsushita Denki geppō*) and a range of catalogs. The title page of the *Mazda Wiring Accessories* (*Matsuda haisen kigu*) catalog issued in April 1937, for example, featured an eye-catching abstract design of a mechanical hand holding sockets and plugs in a rich blue hue (figure 5.19). The geometricization of the human body into its constituent parts, highlighting the hand as the consummate symbol of manufacture or making, reinforced the increasing mechanization of production and

5.19 Inside front page of *Mazda Wiring Accessories* catalog, Tokyo Electric, April 1937. Toshiba Science Museum, Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corporation



human life in general, as well as gesturing toward a futuristic image of robots, which were appearing in contemporary science fiction at the same time that electrical manufacturers were making them a reality.

In Germany the designer Max Burchartz (1887–1961) shared a similar sensibility, working for the Bochumer Verein für Bergbau und Gussstahlfabrikation (Bochumer Association for Mining and Cast Steel Fabrication) metallurgical industry in the 1920s, creating brochures for its high-grade steel locomotive wheels, springs, rails, and bolts. He used a sleek editorial style with photomontage as an expression of optical efficiency that reflected the most up-to-date Taylorist style of scientific industrial management.⁴⁷ Matsushita's National brand light bulb catalogs, monthly public relations magazines, and wiring product brochures disseminated this modernist electrical imaginary through abstract compositions of aestheticized technology. Floating radiant light bulbs powerfully illuminate subways as trains speed through underground tunnels (figure 5.20). Masses of batteries form an energy hub to power heating appli-



5.20 Cover of National brand light bulbs catalog, Matsushita Electric, 1930s. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

ances. And photographic montages of sockets interspersed with fragments of promotional text herald Matsushita's top-grade wiring devices (*Matsushita no kōkyū haisen kigu*; figure 5.21). This publicity design embodied the aesthetic synergy between modernist sensibilities and electricity's futuristic world.

Now-famed industrialist Matsushita Kōnosuke had founded the Matsushita Electrical Appliances Engineering Company (Matsushita Denki Kigu Seisakusho) in 1918 as a vendor of duplex lamp sockets. Renamed Matsushita Electric Industrial Company in 1935, the company is now known as Panasonic Corporation after it began branding audio speakers and lamps for markets outside Japan as PanaSonic in 1955. By 1962 *Time* magazine was heralding Matsushita on its cover as a prominent Japanese industrialist, lauding Japan as "Asia's first consumer market."⁴⁸ Furthering this global veneration, Panasonic opened a museum dedicated to Matsushita Kōnosuke in Osaka in 2018 to celebrate its centennial, also establishing a museum in Beijing that the press called a "shrine" to the company's "god of management," commemorating the fortieth anniversary of Deng Xiaoping's historic visit to the company's first manufacturing facilities in China in 1978.⁴⁹



5.21 Cover of *Matsushita High Grade Wiring Devices*, Matsushita Electric, May 1935. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

A charismatic founder who came from simple origins, Matsushita became known for his corporate leadership philosophy that still reverberates throughout the company's literature today. His dedication infused the corporate ethos with mystical notions of community and mutual responsibility. He was known for earnest sayings like "You are duty-bound to quickly inform people that the product is good and is convenient," "It is foolish to advertise to make money," and "Advertising must never exceed factual data. You must never exaggerate." He championed honesty and forthrightness. For Matsushita, advertising served an educational role, which included conveying the company's life and social philosophy, yet he acknowledged that it might need to persuade customers from time to time. He was a staunch believer in in-house advertising because company employees knew the products better than any external agencies. They could best communicate the company's sincerity. In 1936 he told his employees a moral anecdote about how he read the newspaper every morning

at breakfast with the sole purpose of checking Matsushita's advertisements. If he felt that the advertisements had hit the nail on the head, his breakfast was delicious and satisfying. If he felt the opposite, his breakfast had no taste at all. As he explained, with this story he hoped to instill in them a similar emotional investment in the company products to ensure that these values were adequately conveyed to customers. He underscored the role of good advertising as the single most important means of corporate communication, imploring everyone to pay attention to it, critique it, and help make it the best possible. He later wrote, "Advertising provides a balm to people's hearts, and elevates culture," but cautioned that people should not get caught up in the new and forget key underlying principles.⁵⁰

The company's beginnings were modest, starting with cheap light sockets. In 1927 it began producing square bicycle lamps that boasted extralong battery life and were marketed under the newly trademarked brand name National (Nashonaru). Matsushita chose the name National in contradistinction to "international" to invoke the local and the Japanese people. Consequently, the expression *kokumin no*, the Japanese term for "national," was frequently used in taglines. Experimenting with the popular contemporary mode of street advertising, the company featured its signature square lamps in public processions, parading large-scale mock-ups of the lamps through the streets, accompanied by marching bands and heraldic banners proclaiming the National brand name (figure 5.22). This product was an enormous success and sold over thirty thousand units within a year.⁵¹ The lamp success prompted Matsushita, later in 1927, to establish an electric heating appliances division, which began adding a host of lifestyle products associated with the "cultural life," starting with an electric iron priced at ¥3.20, followed by an electric heater and an electric *kotatsu* (generally a heating source underneath a low wooden table frame covered by a heavy blanket under a tabletop), merging global and local needs.⁵² Like Edison's Mazda, Matsushita promoted the National brand as a mark of quality and service that applied to a range of products.

The company's business strategy was to decrease prices through economies of scale, basically producing more products and selling them more cheaply, which proved highly effective in the Japanese market. These goods were expensive for the average household, but the company strove to make affordable, high-quality appliances. With the starting salary for an elementary school teacher around ¥50 per month, few people could afford an array of costly appliances. The electric iron price undercut the current market prices of ¥4 to ¥5 per unit. Matsushita irons were so well made that the Japanese Ministry of Commerce and Industry gave them an excellent domestic product commendation.



5.22 Street parade advertising
National brand square
portable lamps, October 1934.
Panasonic Operational
Excellence Co., Ltd.

Among the local products of daily life customized to the domestic market, the electric *kotatsu* was very important. It was, and still is, often the center of home life as the family gathers around for warmth. While some form of in-ground, wood- or charcoal-heated *kotatsu* has been used in Japan dating back as far as the fourteenth century, modern *kotatsu* are mobile heaters or heaters directly attached to the bottom of tables. Matsushita's *kotatsu* had a built-in thermostat, allowing for efficient and consistent temperature regulation. By 1927 the company's sales were over ¥100,000 a month, and it employed three hundred people, although sales fell by half in mid-1929 when the Great Depression hit worldwide (in Japan as a result of the Hamaguchi Osachi cabinet's deflationary economic policies). In 1933 Matsushita adopted a new organizational structure with three divisions, one for radios, the second for lights and batteries, and the third for hearing apparatuses and synthetic resins.⁵³



5.23 Poster for National square portable lamp, 1936. The brand logo is in romanized letters with the katakana version in large yellow characters beneath it. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

Graphic design was central to National brand identity from the outset with the creation of colorful and dynamic layouts and striking, recognizable logotypes. Management of advertising design continued to shift within the company along with its corporate restructuring. In 1932 the planning division chief, industrialist Iue Toshio (1902–1969), Kōnosuke’s brother-in-law and later founder of the Sanyo Electric Company (Sanyō Denki Kabushiki Kaisha), briefly took over the advertising section when the company launched the use of a new National brand logotype in katakana. The modern geometricized letterforms in katakana script and the frequent pairing with a romanized logotype belied the name’s purported domestic roots and gestured to the exotic cachet of imports (figure 5.23). A year later, the company established an independent advertising division under Kawai Tsuneo, winning an array of awards for poster design. Designer Takeoka Ryōichi (1909–1990) was largely responsible for laying the foundation for Matsushita’s advertising from the late 1930s into the postwar

5.24 Poster for National electric goods, Chinese version with slogan “Durable, bright light, and power saving,” featuring actress Ri Kōran holding the new National brand logo, 1939. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.



period. A graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Takeoka joined Matsushita in 1929 and became chief of the advertising division in 1935. By that time, he had already received the Minister of Commerce and Industry Award and the Mainichi Design Award in 1933, and he later went on to win numerous awards in the field, including career awards for distinguished service. In 1936 he briefly moved to Japan General Motors but then rejoined Matsushita in 1939, remaining there until 1956.

In 1935 Matsushita introduced a bold, new, highly stylized National typeface in chunky geometricized katakana type, employing thick, exaggerated slanted vertical strokes that contrasted with thin horizontals. Two years later, in 1937, a dynamic ring of lightning bolts was added to encircle the text, charging the brand with the very power of electricity itself (figure 5.24). The company then registered this new electrified brand logotype as the now well-known National trademark. As John Mendenhall, historian of American trademarks, has noted,

by the 1930s there was no design element more popular for logos than the stylized jagged line representing the lightning bolt. Its “dynamic, concise geometry” symbolized “new frontiers of speed and communication,” and, as Nye has added, the lightning bolt “encapsulated the popular understanding of electricity as a quasi-magical force with utopian potential.”⁵⁴ Held by the sexy, exotic continental imperial screen siren Ri Kōran in a poster issued in Chinese with the copy “durable, bright light, and power saving” (*nai yong, guang liang, sheng dian*) and in Japanese with the copy “Brightness! For the construction of the continent!” the electrified orb of National’s trademark sends energy coursing through her fingers, vividly reminding everyone of the critical role and profitability of electrical products and power in Japan’s expanding empire.⁵⁵

A Radio in Every Home

Starting with the introduction of the telegraph, electricity became the foundation for the development of revolutionary forms of mass communication, first and foremost the radio, which entered people’s homes in the United States in the early 1920s and was commonplace around the world by the 1930s. Radio began broadcasting in Japan in 1925 and quickly attracted a large following of urban listeners. The Japanese government decided to keep radio under its own official auspices by creating the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai [NHK]), and the Ministry of Communications charged listeners a fee of ¥1 per month to use the service, which was initially too expensive for most of the Japanese populace. As a public concern, the Japan Broadcasting Company had no commercial broadcasting or advertising to offset the costs of programming. Japan’s national radio network initially anticipated ten thousand listeners in the first year but instead was overrun with thirty-five thousand license requests within three months.⁵⁶ Alternately referred to as a *jushinki* (receiver) or *radio* (radio), this new consumer product linked the local to the national, and the national to the international, becoming a primary source of news and entertainment with the broadcasting of daily headlines and sporting events, while also serving as a vital means of communicating state policies. By 1937 it is estimated that over three million households in Japan, not counting overseas territories, had a radio.⁵⁷

As a new technological form of media, radios were portals to dynamic worlds beyond, bursting with music, theater, and sports competitions that could now permeate the home experience of every Japanese person. This was vividly visualized in one National advertisement for the cabinet-style R-402 radio with a cacophonous photomontage simulating the diverse and vibrant sounds being

5.25 Advertisement for National's cabinet-style R-402 radio, late 1930s. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.



transmitted (figure 5.25). National even had a tie-up arrangement with Columbia music and its radio products, featuring a musical note in the corner of all related publicity. Radios provided in situ leisure during a time when most people were not able to travel—this was vicarious pleasure through the broadcast experience of sound. As objects, radios were fashionable domestic decorations for the modern home. They were “living decorations” (*ikita sōbokuhin*), as one National advertisement proclaimed, fanning out sound to cover the nation and the empire.⁵⁸

National radio advertisements extolled parallels with Nazi media policy, praising the Third Reich’s highly effective “one household, one radio,” campaign in 1934 that provided promotional incentives to ensure that every German family owned the hardware of the new medium of indoctrination. The year before, the German government persuaded manufacturers to design and mass-produce a “people’s receiver” (*Volksempfänger*) priced at seventy-six reichsmarks with state subsidies, making it the cheapest set available in Europe. Pictured



5.26 Poster for the *Volksempfänger* (people's receiver): "All Germany hears the Führer with the People's Radio," 1936. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

in a 1936 poster surrounded by an ocean of people listening en masse, viewed from behind, the colossal radio looms majestically in the center (figure 5.26). It is a new technological monument to German culture. Its only adornments are the national symbols of the eagle and swastika on either side, unequivocally identifying it as part of the Nazi state communication apparatus.⁵⁹ Although the "people's receiver" had only a limited listening range, the Nazis considered this a benefit because they wanted to prevent Germans from tuning in to foreign broadcasts.

As Partner has discussed, after 1937 the Japanese government followed suit, working actively to increase radio ownership, culminating in Japan's official "one household, one radio," campaign of 1938. "Posters advertising the importance of radio for national defense appeared under the joint sponsorship of the army, navy, communications, and home ministries. Large numbers of lectures and public demonstrations were also held. License fees were reduced or, for the families of servicemen and other targeted groups, eliminated altogether."⁶⁰ The



5.27 Poster for National radio: “The birth of national radio,” 1942. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

“one household, one radio,” campaign greatly benefited private manufacturers like Matsushita and its National brand radios. These consumer radios served as a vital outlet for individual households to stay abreast of current affairs, and they disseminated the directives of wartime mobilization, including warnings of potential air raids that threatened Japan’s cities.⁶¹

Manufacturers promoted radios in wartime as “national policy mouth-pieces” (*kokusaku kuchigane*).⁶² One 1942 Matsushita National brand radio poster shows a dramatic overhead photograph of a crowd of enthusiastic young Japanese children waving national flags to promote “the birth of national radio” (*kokumin rajio no tanjō*)—something enabled by the availability of an affordable personal radio for individual household use (figure 5.27).⁶³ In the poster montage, the radio floats over the crowd. As the copy notes in a series of arrows dynamically propelled out of the radio into the oceanic crowd—arrows that mimic the trajectory of sound itself—the radio could be used for transmission of pub-

lic policy decisions from the authorities, for communication among regional residents' and city associations, for cultural improvement, and for recreation (rest and relaxation) in rural farm villages. In short, it was an essential commodity for national citizenship—or, in this case, imperial subjecthood.

The use of mass communications technology ensured discipline and simultaneity. It was also a technology of the future—aimed at the nation's children—that could unite the population in synchronized patriotism. This kind of synchronized patriotism was demonstrated through national health exercises like radio calisthenics (*rajio taisō*), first introduced to Japan in 1928 from the United States as part of the commemoration for the coronation of Emperor Hirohito and still common today.⁶⁴ Such synchronized acts virtually orchestrated bodily practices and could even reconfigure geospatial relationships reaching across the empire simultaneously. Corporate manufacturers joined the government bandwagon by sponsoring tie-ups for broadcasting simultaneous mass toothbrushing and handwashing exercises.

The scale and reach of the radio media enterprise were, in fact, quite staggering. As historian Kenneth Ruoff points out in his study of the plans for the National Foundation Day celebrations in 1940, twelve thousand events were staged for the celebration (such as a mass game exercise using people to spell out 2,600 at Meiji Shrine Stadium), with the crowning celebratory event in Tokyo on November 10, 1940, attended by fifty thousand people and simultaneously broadcast throughout the empire by radio. At the time, there were 105 million imperial subjects, 73 million in Japan proper, the so-called *naichi*. During the Foundation Day celebrations, there were at least twelve instances in which imperial subjects throughout the empire were expected, at a precise time, to bow in the direction of the imperial palace, to observe a moment of silence, or to shout “Banzai!” The participation of every imperial subject in a simultaneous action demonstrated the extent to which the national community was unified. Such “national theater”—as Ruoff calls it—would not have been possible without modern communications technology, particularly the radio and the wireless.⁶⁵ Such coordinated action produced patriotic energy. National's advertising images celebrated the media itself as a symbolic mode of technological modernity and revealed the fundamental impact of new communication modalities on the dissemination of information and the production of civic identity. Like the new technologies of warfare, such as the airplane pictured in one poster, the radio, more specifically the National brand radio, was promoted as revolutionizing human experience by delivering acousmatic sound to each individual ear (figure 5.28).⁶⁶ It was sound whose origin was not seen or detectable, disembodied, which facilitated the omnipresence of state



5.28 Poster for National radio: “Radio for news of current affairs . . .” (*Jikyoku no nyūsu wa rajio de*), ca. 1940. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

power in mass communication. Radio brought the dynamic—electrifying—power of information right into the consumer’s body.

Labor and Leisure, Light and Darkness

Labor and leisure, public and private, were commingled in the world of electricity. One 1939 National light bulb advertisement promoted “progressive lighting,” perfect for cultural figures, while equally good for work and reading (figure 5.29). A stylish man in a suit sits at a desk off in the distance, his work lit by the enlarged bulb hovering above. In the foreground lies a languid, prone female reader rendered in a simple modernist outline. The style itself speaks to the modern sensibility and aesthetics, binding light, labor, and leisure. Economic efficiency and cost-effectiveness were main selling points, particularly as improved technology enabled light bulbs and dry cell batteries to provide longer service for the same or even lower expense. Advertising vividly revealed the tension between energy consumption and conservation. “Saving



5.29 Advertisement for National light bulbs: “What is progressive lighting?” (*Shinpoteiki shōmeihō to wa*). Back cover of *Sunday Mainichi* 18, no. 61 (December 10, 1939). Collection of the author

electricity,” or *setsuden*, soon became a central prong of mobilization policy in the 1930s. Manufacturers incorporated it on multiple fronts under catch-phrases for light bulbs, like National’s “brightly save power” (*akaruku setsuden*) or “strong, bright, economical” (*tsuyoku, akaruku, keizaina*).

Along with the energy-saving and purportedly labor-saving benefits provided by electrical goods, comfort, leisure, and pleasure were also on offer, highlighted by myriad associations between company products and the smiling faces of stylish young women. From the wholesome ingenue film actress Hara Setsuko (also a model for Morinaga), leaning contentedly on a Shibaura Engineering Works fan, to popular theater actresses dramatically illuminated by handheld lamps using long-lasting dry cell batteries, beautiful young women endorsed electrical products, bringing connotations of pleasure. Advertisements even pictured Shibaura fans in front of a woman waterskiing, as if a fan could replace the cool breeze of the ocean blowing through her hair. Publicity for exported Japanese fans in *Commerce Japan* noted:

An electric fan, in order to fulfill its purpose satisfactorily, must be safe, durable and attractively compact. The ideal fan has perhaps not yet been produced, but Japanese manufacturers will assert that their products in this line are a very close approach to what the perfect fan should be.

The fan has always been closely associated with the Japanese mode of life, and now local manufacturers are endeavouring to impart to the modern product some of the attractiveness and reliability belonging to the traditional article.

The Japanese electric fan does not, however, sacrifice safety to beauty. It is covered with a sturdy wire netting, which obviates the possibility of cutting through accidental touch or fall. This protection is particularly necessary in Japan, as generally the fan is placed on the tatami or mat floor.

The protective wire coverings of Japanese made electric fans generally bear designs representing water-lilies, considered finest and most beautiful of flowers. This shape was adopted because of the pleasant feeling it gives reminiscent of cooling breezes and peacefully running waters.⁶⁷

Advertising for electrical goods in the 1930s reveals the powerful influence of the government's "domestication of production" movement (*kokusanka undō*), which promulgated nationalist economic policies and campaigned strongly for national production and patriotic consumption. It paralleled the autarkic economic policies emphasizing self-sufficiency of Japan's soon-to-be Axis partners, fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. As Partner has explained, while this trend started in response to the dire economic situation of the Great Depression, it became part of the reactionary turn in political rhetoric that used ethno-nationalist arguments to claim the uniqueness of Japanese "industrial culture" as a means of distancing Japan from the "contaminating elements" of an increasingly vilified West. The domestication-of-production campaign plugged into a range of media with catchy slogans like "By all means, domestic production!" and "Imports in Meiji, domestic products in Showa" that were easily incorporated into commercial advertising. In 1932 the Ministry of Commerce and Industry designated sixty-five product categories for priority purchase from Japanese makers—even when the quality was recognized as inferior. Many Japanese manufacturers and their brand-name goods benefited from this movement. While benefiting in the short term from reduced competition from imports, Japan's electric industry ultimately suffered devastating setbacks by being cut off from international technological developments.⁶⁸ Still, both Matsushita and Toshiba took up the govern-

ment slogan “Let’s use domestic goods!” (*Kokusanhin o tsukaou*), emphasizing domestic production in their advertising taglines.

By the time the two advertisements with which this chapter began appeared in the *Sunday Mainichi* in 1939, the tension between consumption and conservation was reaching a tipping point in many market sectors, and the Japanese government even banned the production of home appliances to conserve vital supplies of iron and steel for the war effort. More important for this story of electric design was the new emphasis on conserving electrical power and new wartime discourses of darkness as security. Moreover, the inauguration of civil air defense drills throughout the country in the early 1930s underscored the centrality of managing electric light in the modern defense state.

In 1933 Tokyo mounted a major civil air defense exercise across the city, initiating over a decade of active mobilization to “Protect the Skies,” with urban blackouts deemed unequivocally essential in preparing for air raids. Around the world, countries were devising such blackout policies. Countering the previous progressive discourses of light as civilization, now darkness was the key to safety. And lighting control at home ostensibly empowered consumers to protect their families (figure 5.30).⁶⁹ Light bulb manufacturers adapted to the new darkened exigencies of wartime by producing tinted blackout bulbs that could be used with national defense fixture shades to prevent any fugitive illumination.

Despite this seeming reversal of fortune in the shift from lightness to darkness, the Asia-Pacific War was a promising time for Toshiba and Matsushita, which operated factories throughout the Japanese empire and produced essential electrical components and machines beyond light fixtures, such as motors, wireless equipment, generators, and vacuum tubes for radio transmission. A Mazda advertisement on the back cover of the magazine *Aviation Asahi* (*Kōkū asahi*) in December 1942 communicated the core value of the simple light bulb, unadorned, proffering power at its purportedly most efficient. It exclaimed the wartime slogan “In order to win!” (*Kachinuku tame ni*), implying that efficient electric energy was the linchpin of ultimate military victory.⁷⁰ Thus, both companies continued to serve the fundamental needs of the battlefield and the home-front consumer market—in light and darkness.

“IT’S FUN TO LIVE . . . *Electrically*,” proclaimed an advertisement for GE showing a well-off husband and wife smiling as they happily reach into a small model kitchen to add new appliances—a fully outfitted domestic setting. The husband looks contentedly at his wife as if he is going to hand her this new labor-saving kitchen. Advertisements for vacuum cleaners, and later a host of domestic appliances, touted their products as “wife-savers.”⁷¹ “She’ll be happier with a Hoover,”

5.30 Cover of *Home Air Defense* (*Katei bōkū*), Fourth Division of the Defense Command (Osaka City and Hyōgo Prefecture), 1938. Collection of the author



proclaimed other commercials. Despite this brightly optimistic view of electrified domesticity, the implied notion of “labor saving” was deceptive, as these efficient appliances shifted an expanded range of household labor responsibilities onto middle-class housewives, who had previously relied on domestic help or outside services. Thus, such liberating devices further shackled them to the home but in new ways.⁷²

Electricity’s fundamental transformation of Japanese domesticity continued unabated. The bright life enabled by electrical appliances slowly expanded into laundry machines and refrigerators in the late 1930s. In 1937 Toshiba launched the Solar Electric Laundry machine with the tagline “Brighten your laundry!!” (*Osentaku o meirō ni*). The brand name itself connoted the brightness of the sun, associating laundry with cleansing illumination. A decade earlier, in 1927, the company had already begun selling GE Monitor Top brand refrigerators in Japan, the same year they became available for residential use in the United States at a cost of \$300. It opened showrooms in Japan to display the newest models. The first domestically manufactured refrigerator (originally called



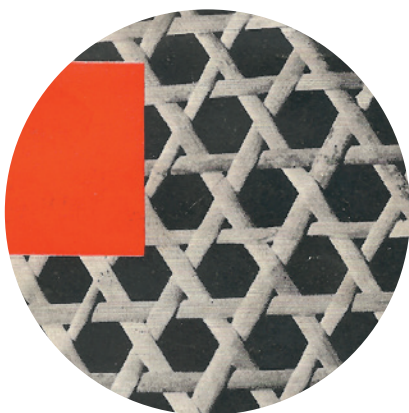
5.31 Poster for National electric fan, “1952’s style leader,” featuring Hara Setsuko, 1952. Panasonic Operational Excellence Co., Ltd.

reizōki) was developed in Japan in 1930, selling for a hefty ¥720, which made it all but unattainable for the average Japanese consumer. In 1935 Toshiba developed and marketed its own flat-top refrigerator model with the compressor mounted underneath the cabinet.

A 1938 *Asahi Graph* advertisement for Toshiba’s refrigerator features a photograph of a middle-class housewife standing in front of an open refrigerator, chock-full of food, pulling out a cold beer.⁷³ It is an image of domestic abundance. The implication is that the family, principally the husband and salaryman breadwinner, who is not pictured, is enjoying a new kind of leisure at home, drinking cold beer, lovingly served by his devoted wife. The solarization of the image, especially the glow around the woman’s head, reinforces the image of the bright life. Like the proverbial light bulb illuminated over one’s head—a symbol of insight—the incandescent glow shows the munificent and progressive aura of electricity in the domestic sphere, setting the stage for the promising conditions of postwar home life.

But production of consumer refrigerators ceased in 1940 due to the competing demands of wartime production and official restrictions on commercial sales. Records from 1937 indicate that there were 12,215 refrigerator units in all of Japan, and by the time production ceased, Toshiba controlled 90 percent of the domestic refrigerator market. It was not until the Allied Occupation forces introduced a stimulus for domestic appliances that consumption began to increase. Toshiba's manufacturing restarted in 1950, but a single refrigerator unit still cost the equivalent of six months of the average starting salary. As for smaller electric appliances, National brand electric fans proclaimed themselves "1952's style leader" with a smiling Hara Setsuko holding the now-adjustable two-position fan, surrounded by radiating waves of coolness (figure 5.31). As the face of electrified comfort and modernity extending from the 1930s into the war years, Hara remained forever cheerful in her endorsements throughout the Allied Occupation as well, smoothing the way for Japan's successful reentry into the world theater of consuming nations as a peaceful and democratic power.

Nation + Empire



Today, they are propagandists; yesterday, they were called advertisers.

—ŌTA HIDESHIGE, *Advertising World* (1941)



The idealized nation was a powerful galvanizing concept integral to Japanese mass culture and consumerism from the founding of the nation-state in 1868.¹ Whether the government was promoting the nation in the new education system, at domestic and international expositions, or during Japan's two wars with China and Russia, it linked the ideal Japan with industrial prosperity.² Marketing the nation extended to commercial tie-ups with national events, such as the broad-based campaigns around the 1928 accession of the Showa emperor or the National Foundation Day celebrations in 1940.³ Commercial interests were inextricably tied to national interests and imperial expansion. As historian Barak Kushner has convincingly argued in his extensive study of wartime imperial propaganda and its successful "thought war," the Japanese government and

military officials not only were not antagonistic to business, as is often claimed, but often eagerly joined hands with business leaders and executives to produce propaganda for the war effort. The state enlisted professional commercial designers to create propaganda from the mid-1930s. Their work united the war front with the home front by linking soldiers and civilians in a shared desire for national manifest destiny and imperial expansion. Empire was central to Japanese national identity. Japanese publicity and propaganda were powerful tools for uniting disparate geographic regions and ethnicities into an amalgamated empire. Wartime national propaganda was by definition imperial.⁴ So was wartime advertising, as manufacturers expanded operations and sales across the empire. Therefore, it is imperative that we examine the interconnections between advertising and propaganda within the contexts of nation and empire building that culminated in total war.

Wartime was remarkably propitious for commercial art despite the increasingly stringent rationing that produced government slogans like the infamous “Luxury Is the Enemy!” (*Zeitaku wa Teki da!*) issued in 1940. Design historian Mori Hitoshi has observed that “each war enlarged the mass media.”⁵ When news coverage of the war swelled after the China Incident (*Shina Jihen*, or Marco Polo Bridge Incident) on July 7, 1937, which launched the Second Sino-Japanese War, advertising volume increased accordingly, with over 250 million lines of advertising sold in the major dailies that year, and high demand continued until legal restrictions enacted in 1941 curtailed it.⁶ Media excitement around the war actually started earlier, in 1932, after the invasion of Manchuria, when there was a brief skirmish on the continent between Japan and China called the Shanghai Incident (*Shanghai Jihen*) that produced one of the most famous and mythologized stories of the war years: “the Three Valorous Human Bombs” (also known as the Three Valorous Human Bullets [*Bakudan Sanyūshi* or *Nikudan Sanyūshi*]). A trio of soldiers had supposedly tethered themselves to a large explosive and self-detonated to help their squadron break through enemy lines; their story was recounted across the mass media and in multiple popular plays and films.⁷ It later fed into the glorification of kamikaze suicide pilots who were physically welded into their airplanes as human bombs during the final desperate years of the war. Advertising exploited this martyr imagery, even unabashedly showing the three soldiers charging with an oversize bottle of Kirin beer in lieu of the explosive, crying “Kirin Beer—Attack!! Attack!! Kirin constantly opens the path.”⁸

Similarly, Morinaga issued Chocolate Bombs (*Chokorēto Bakudan*) to commemorate Japan’s bombings and quick victory on the continent. The company’s bomb-shaped sweets, pictured as delectable dropping missiles in a newspaper advertisement in January 1932, were patriotically positioned as calorie-rich

nutritious food for a healthy diet. The ad proclaimed “New Release Morinaga Chocolate Bombs,” a pun on the idea of releasing a product and releasing a bomb. Referring to the Japanese lives lost during the Russo-Japanese War and the nostalgic yearning to reclaim the land in Manchuria supposedly drenched in Japanese blood, Morinaga evoked in the copy the freighted imagery of the red sunset.⁹

And in case anyone did not know how integral Kao soap was to the imperial nation-state and its military infrastructure, the company reminded them with its New Year’s greeting newspaper advertisement in January 1932, which featured an exhaustive list of its official customers organized around a sharply angled photograph of a towering smokestack imprinted with the company name standing over cartons of product. The list extended throughout the nation and empire to Korea, Manchuria, and Taiwan. The copy emphasized the values of domestic production: “Happy New Year, Number One in the Orient. Kao Soap. We are grateful for your many years of patronage. Quality standard.” A long list of customers followed, starting with the Ministries of the Army and Navy, Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Communications, Tokyo Imperial University School of Medicine and other medical schools across the country and in the colonies, a wide array of military battalions, hospitals, army and navy schools, research institutes, weapons arsenals, railway bureaus, the national Infectious Disease Research Institute, the Physics and Chemistry Research Institute, the Taiwan Governor’s Office Clinic, the Chosun Governor’s Office Clinic, Japanese Red Cross hospitals, major shipping companies, coal mines, paper mills, shipyards, national consumer unions, and national school purchasing departments.¹⁰ This was “soap patriotism.”

Remarking on this trend in publicity, an author with the amusing pseudonym Mussolini (spelled out in Japanese characters as Mussorini) wrote in *Advertising World* that it mirrored the “fascitization of advertising” taking place in Europe.¹¹ In fact, understanding the supreme value of publicity as propaganda, Joseph Goebbels formed the Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda (Ministry for People’s Enlightenment and Propaganda) in March 1933, with the Reichskulturkammer (National Chamber of Culture) established on September 22, extending total state control over the public media, nationalizing radio broadcasting and the press, and making use of public posters and the cinema. Ironically, it was the British successes in propaganda during World War I that inspired the Nazis.¹² Soon after, in 1936, the Japanese Home Ministry created the Cabinet Information Board or CIB (Naikaku Jōhōbu); the board was elevated to a bureau (Naikaku Jōhō Kyoku) in 1940, as a central hub for producing national propaganda, although this agency never had the extensive control that the Nazis did.¹³

Social mobilization for war elevated the status of many disempowered groups, most notably women, and had a similarly powerful impact on designers, whose work was increasingly considered essential for galvanizing the nation through national policy propaganda. This gave design professionals continued access to art materials in a time of extreme rationing and allowed them to hone their skills through high-volume subsidized production.

Everyone in Japan soon understood that “the home front was also a battlefield,” as expressed in the slogan *jūgo mo senjō*. Corporate advertisers used what Wakabayashi Tōru has called “fighting advertisements” (*tatakau kōkoku*) to link their products with current affairs and wartime campaigns such as “promoting national unity” (*kyōkoku itchi*), “domestic production” (*kokusan*), “household savings” (*chochiku*), “power saving” (*setsuden*), “air defense” (*bōkū*), and “national defense” (*kokubō*), as well as the collective virtues of health and hygiene. Such fighting advertisements visualized a host of these wartime slogans that prescribed how loyal subjects should behave.¹⁴ They also cleverly tied brand-name products to this behavior.

Like advertising, propaganda mobilized artistic production for the purpose of persuasion. It appealed to people to enlist cooperation, submission, or agreement. Influencing mass opinion to affect social psychology was one of propaganda’s main objectives. In its more sinister aspects, it propagated ideologically slanted political information or purveyed willful misinformation. And although there was certainly an educational or informational aspect to propaganda, its motivations fundamentally differed from those of general education or news. Some scholars have tried to establish artificial dichotomies defining persuasion as based on logic and propaganda as based on emotion, yet both logic and emotion—not to mention aesthetics—were central to national propaganda campaigns as well as commercial publicity.¹⁵ Wartime advertising communicated national necessity through the moralizing dictums of guidance, enlightenment, unity, and progress, laced with persuasive tactics that ranged from coaxing to coercion.¹⁶ Pleasure and desire were still vital to this enterprise. As parallel modes of persuasion, advertising in a capitalist market focused on stimulating desires for goods and services for economic profit, while propaganda was more focused on stimulating social and political action.¹⁷ Yet the ever-expanding technologies of publicity and propaganda were increasingly interchangeable during this period of mass media. The dual valence of the term *senden bijutsu*, meaning both the art of publicity and the art of propaganda, is indicative of these overlapping spheres that allowed designers to flow from one to the other with little resistance.¹⁸

Marketing the Nation: Travel and Tourism

Commercial enterprises marketing the nation for their own benefit were foundational for modern Japanese advertising from its origins. One area where national and commercial concerns converged was travel and tourism. The strong connection between travel and publicity had deep roots in the Tokugawa period, developing around the new transportation systems of the Tōkaidō and Nakasendō (Kisokaidō) highways that linked the shogunal capital in Edo (now Tokyo) with the imperial capital in Kyoto. Unifying the country and people through travel experiences, sponsors commissioned visual imagery to sell the distinctive qualities of famous places (*meisho*) and the related special products of different regions (*meibutsu*) and exotic local gifts (*omiyage*).¹⁹ In the process, they educated disparate peoples from diverse regions, who even spoke widely different linguistic dialects, about the totality of an emerging Japan.

The creation in 1804 of the Naniwakō, an association of travel inns, was an important turning point for the nationalization of tourism. The organization created travel tickets that participating inns distributed. The association also sanitized the travel experience by prohibiting gambling, prostitution, and rowdy banquets, assuring visitors a safe and secure experience with a reliable lodging reservation along an established route. The service became so popular that other routes were soon created throughout the country. This was in effect a precursor of the Japan Tourist Bureau (Japan Tsūritsuto Byūrō, or JTB) system where consumers could prebook hotel accommodations. It mitigated the previous dangers of travel, which had taken place mostly for expedience and business, shifting the focus of travel to leisure. This was the dawn of modern tourism. During this period, woodblock prints served as pictorial reportage as well as touristic souvenirs of travel throughout the country, purveying a broader national view of Japan to people in disparate regions. Travel and tourism united a previously decentralized Japan and visualized the newly unifying nation to its people. In 1869 the Meiji government removed travel restrictions, leading to a boom in travel to hot springs areas that generated a plethora of publicity for these places.²⁰ Together with the extension of the railway system, this new cultural landscape enabled leisure locales like Atami to become major destinations. Subsequently, the first Western-style hotel catering mostly to foreign visitors was built in Hakone.

After the nationalization of the Japanese railways in 1906 (consolidated in 1920 into the Tetsudōshō, or Ministry of Railways; in English, Japanese Government Railways), the head of sales (Kinoshita Yoshio) and others at the railways' transportation department cofounded the Japan Tourist Bureau in 1912

together with other service providers in the tourism industry (private railways, steamship companies, and hotel owners) as part of its mission to promote tourism to Japan among Europeans and Americans.²¹ Railway vice president Hirai Seijirō (1856–1926) headed the JTB.²² This exemplifies what the political economist David Leheny has termed Japan’s national “politics of leisure,” where travel, tourism, and leisure policy developed as a component of industrial governance.²³ From the start, the JTB invested in multilingual promotion, launching the bimonthly magazine *Tourist* in June 1913, designed by Sugiura Hisui with elegant multicolor art nouveau–style covers stylishly picturing the traditional Japanese motifs of Mount Fuji, temple pagodas, Shinto torii gates, landscapes, and flowers.²⁴ In addition to a range of travel maps that imaged the national “geo-body,” Hisui designed the bureau’s first publicity poster in 1916, which showed the ancient capital of Nara viewed from a cedar grove, spotlighting a five-story pagoda and the city’s famous sacred deer above the romanized text “JAPAN TOURIST BUREAU” in all capital letters decorated with elegant flourishes (figure 6.1).

By 1915 the bureau had set up inquiry offices in major port cities like Kobe, Shimonoseki, Nagasaki, and Yokohama; on the continent in Dalian, Seoul, and Taipei; and abroad in New York and Berlin.²⁵ In 1920 there were already 294 million nonregular passengers such as tourists on the Japanese railways, increasing to 465 million by 1936.²⁶ Responding to the boom in rail travel for leisure among Japanese in the late 1920s, Japanese tourism officials expanded their emphasis on domestic tourism and imperial tourism to and from Japan’s colonies. This prompted the Japan Travel Culture Association (Nihon Ryōkō Bunka Kyōkai) to launch a magazine directed at Japanese travelers, titled *Travel* (*Tabi*), in 1924.²⁷ By 1940 national policymakers were calling tourism a form of “invisible trade,” and most department stores housed JTB service centers or featured their own travel service desks, as well as regularly sponsoring exhibitions encouraging travel. At that time, JTB offices dotted the empire, and the branch in Manchukuo eagerly issued promotional brochures for Japanese-held sites in China. Kenneth Ruoff’s in-depth study of the elaborate festivities planned around the National Foundation Day celebration in 1940, encouraging “2,600th anniversary consumption,” demonstrates that authoritarianism was not incongruous with tourism. In fact, nationalism’s ingrained religious and political ideologies facilitated the movement of bodies to specific sites in what he calls a kind of “self-administered citizenship training” that was educational but also entertaining. Consequently, even though wartime tourism repudiated the notion of “travel for the sake of travel,” as economic historian Oikawa Yoshinobu and others have noted, as a prong of national cultural



6.1 Sugiura Hisui, poster promoting Nara for the Japan Tourist Bureau, 1916. Private collection

policy, imperial tourism to Japanese heritage sites in the metropole and tours throughout the empire boomed until October 1942 when the cabinet declared a Wartime Land Transportation State of Emergency.²⁸ In her assessment of Japan's fluid boundaries as an imperial nation-state, the historian Kate McDonald has deemed tourism "the technology par excellence for producing firsthand experiences and representations of the space of the nation and of the colonies as places within it." She rightly concludes that in Japan's spatial politics, "tourism was essential to the maintenance of empire itself."²⁹

Officially recognizing the critical importance of travel for the economy and cultural diplomacy, the government established the Board of Tourist Industry (Kokusai Kankō Kyoku) in 1930 as an oversight agency for the development and management of tourism initiatives.³⁰ The board's activities included business concerning collecting statistics and conducting investigations, disseminating propaganda abroad, improving tourist destinations and sightseeing facilities, developing the hotel business and improving hotel accommodations, and overseeing guides and those coming in direct contact with foreign tourists. In addition, the Government Committee of Tourist Industry (Kokusai Kankō Iinkai) was formed as an auxiliary organ. It comprised representatives from shipping firms and hotels, government officials, and scholars. When the board was first establishing itself and the world economy was still feeling the effects of the Great Depression, tourism to Japan remained stagnant and even decreased slightly, as it did elsewhere. The fiscal year 1931–32 saw a total of 27,273 foreign visitors to Japan. Chinese accounted for 46 percent; Americans were second, at 23 percent; and British tourists made up 13 percent. Yet among those who identified their travel objective as sightseeing and spent less than three months in the country, Western travelers were a much higher percentage. The money foreigners spent on sightseeing in Japan also dipped from a high of ¥39,932,000 in 1929–30 to ¥23,317,000 in 1931–32.³¹ From 1933 to 1935, however, the board recorded an annual 20 percent increase in visiting foreigners. In 1935, according to Ministry of Finance estimates, foreigners spent ¥96,019,000 in Japan, ¥70,242,000 of which came from tourists. This amount nearly equaled the Japanese export trade in silk textiles, valued at ¥77,000,000.³² By 1936 foreign visitors to Japan spent approximately ¥108 million.³³ One of the board's responsibilities was expanded sponsorship of multilingual publicity directed at international tourists, such as the illustrated Western-language quarterly *Nippon*, designed by the collective Nippon Kōbō (Japan Studio) from 1934 to 1944, and *Travel in Japan*, launched in the spring of 1935, which used many pictures by *Nippon* photographers.

Nippon: Japan's Virtual Travelogue

Seen in tandem with *Travel in Japan*, *Nippon* reads as a virtual travelogue, an image reinforced by periodic features on topics concerning the Board of Tourist Industry and the Japanese Government Railways. Advertisements for the board were occasionally emblazoned on the inside back cover of the magazine. One particularly evocative example in issue 17 in 1939 employs a montage of iconic symbols of Japaneseness pastiched together using soft and inviting images of cherry blossom petals to create a halo around the various sights (figure 6.2). Two athletes reaching energetically for a ball are enveloped in cherry blossoms in the center roundel. To the left are the Japanese Alps; to the right, the torii of a Shinto shrine. Various other images show a woman playing the *koto*-style zither, bicyclists, farmers with a horse-drawn wagon, and butterflies floating in the sea of blossoms. The accompanying text reads: "JAPAN is indeed a 'Land of Color, Culture and Charm.' It is the land where East and West meet in perfect accord, where the modern culture of the Occident harmonizes with Oriental civilization. Available throughout Japan are the latest travel facilities from automobile to airplane, plus home comfort and snug hotel accommodation, which assure the tourist a delightful trip at minimum expense of time and money."³⁴

The advertisement sold the touristic experience of Japan as modern and exciting yet deeply cultural with a long history of civilizational achievements that paralleled the West. Okakura Tenshin, a prominent turn-of-the-century cultural ideologue, had envisioned Japan as a museum, both the repository of Asian culture and a living exhibit of this legacy functioning in the contemporary world.³⁵ *Nippon* was an invitation to tour Okakura's imagined museum. Touting the magazine as a representation of "actual life and events in modern Japan and the Far East," *Nippon's* designers used a host of sophisticated modernist visual techniques, including an array of stunning photomontages, as a means of enticing the Western tourist to authenticate Japan by experiencing "the world-as-exhibition," about which Timothy Mitchell has so eloquently written.³⁶ This "world-as-exhibition," explains Mitchell, was "not an exhibition of the world but the world organized and grasped as though it were an exhibition." Like the dioramas and live exhibits at the Parisian world's fair in Mitchell's analysis, *Nippon's* Japan was a world set up as a picture. It was "ordered up as an object on display to be investigated and experienced by the dominating European [Western] gaze."³⁷

As an instantiation of Japan-as-museum, *Nippon* deserves consideration as "a privileged arena for presenting self and 'other.'"³⁸ The anthropologist Jeanne Cannizzo has argued that the museum is a "cultural text, one that may be read



6.2 Nippon Kōbō,
advertisement for the Board of
Tourist Industry and Japanese
Government Railways, inside
back cover of *Nippon*, no. 17
(1939). Private collection

to understand the underlying cultural or ideological assumptions that have informed its creation, selection and display.”³⁹ In keeping with the museum metaphor, the magazine layout can be considered as an analogue to a gallery installation, and the designers as curators of the exhibition experience, the magazine text becoming a kind of expanded wall label that explains the cultural practices and artifacts being presented. Yet the question of who controls the means of representation remains. Everything in a museum is put under the pressure of a “way of seeing,” according to art historian Svetlana Alpers, and it is the purpose of this chapter to elucidate the mechanisms by which *Nippon*’s director, Natori Yōnosuke (1910–1962), and his stable of skilled commercial designers and photographers at Nippon Kōbō constructed a way of seeing Japan.⁴⁰

The Nippon Kōbō members were already individually well known for their work in advertising and photojournalism before they launched the journal. Their integrative techniques effectively blurred the lines among avant-garde art, reportage, advertising practice, and national propaganda. The blurring of boundaries extended to the lines between metropole and colonies, between essays and advertisements, and between culture and industry, visually simulating the annexation of Japan’s colonial subjects into the empire and establishing industrial and commercial interests as fundamental components of Japanese modern cultural identity.

What should not be forgotten in the analysis of this periodical is its intended audience: the Western viewer. Implicit in *Nippon* is the display of one culture by its self-appointed representatives to another culture (or in this case many other cultures, to disaggregate the West). The relationship between presenter and presentee is an integral factor in the configuration of the means and mode of representation. Japan maintained an ambivalent relationship to the West in terms of its status in the world imperialist theater. Although never a formal colony of any Western nation, Japan still figured prominently in Orientalist and primitivist representations of Asia. Many foreign travelers, such as the American Howell Reeves—who visited Japan in 1926—expressed their expectations of an exotic Orient while writing disparaging accounts of their experiences that expressed patronizing contempt for the country’s backwardness:

I wonder if it will be all that our imagination has created? The land of sunshine and flowers—of romantic rain—of oriental mists—of rumbling volcanoes—of thrilling earthquakes—of gardens and bamboo—of rice and silk—of swiftly moving rickshaws—of queer slant eyed people, courteous and quiet. . . .

If you consider Japan as a nation emerging from barbarian, or a semi-civilized condition then you are filled with enthusiasm and admiration for the progress that has been made. If, however, you view Japan as the Japanese insist upon your viewing it—as a first class civilized nation—then the picture presents an entirely different aspect. . . . It may be a “long, long way to Tipperary” but the distance is short indeed compared to that which the Japanese must travel, mentally, morally, and materially to stand abreast of “western civilization.”⁴¹

Japanese intellectuals and state officials internalized many aspects of Western imperialist culture in the process of negotiating a modern national identity. *Nippon* was a part of Japan’s ongoing dialogic response to this Western Orientalizing and primitivizing perception, as it launched an unceasing campaign to gain cultural legitimacy in the eyes of the West. The magazine’s imploring tone was often imbued with a certain degree of melodrama and genuine anxiety over increasing world political tensions concerning Japan’s economic practices and aggressive expansion into Asia in the 1930s, which were leading to rising anti-Japanese sentiment abroad. Ultimately, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933 in response to the organization’s censure.⁴² The prominent cultural critic Hasegawa Nyozeikan, previously a champion of socialism but later a convert to the nationalist cause in the 1930s, wrote an essay for the magazine titled “What Do the Japanese Want?” beseeching Western countries to appreciate Japan:

What do we Japanese ask of the people of the world? Those who know Japan well, fully understand that we are not all anaemic in any sense of the word, and that we are full of life. . . . We would like to be “respected” by good people, men and women, of the world. . . . Some psychopaths living in an illusory world of extreme egoism or suffering from a superiority complex, would greatly exaggerate their own importance. Worse than that, what can be so ridiculous as to see a little monkey with a silk hat on his head wanting to be saluted by the onlookers! Those, who look upon our case as anything analogous to these above instances, may laugh at us to their heart’s content, and reap their own benefit. To those friends who show their friendly attitude toward us without hesitation, how shall we repay their gentleman-like action? The least we can say is that we are prepared to return to them tenfold of what we receive.⁴³

In *Nippon* the invitation to understand Japan was offered on both a diplomatic and touristic level. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that the maga-

zine represented tourism as an integral component of international relations and was designed to facilitate cross-cultural understanding by acclimating the Western viewer to the foreign context of Japan, at the same time adjusting Japan to suit the comfort level of the visitor. By offering a means of “specular dominance” over Japan, *Nippon* was both an attempt at self-representation by state-sanctioned representatives of the Japanese empire and an invocation to the Western viewer to colonize the country through a kind of touristic gaze.⁴⁴ As an official representation of imperial Japan abroad, it produced the image of Japan-as-museum—waiting for the tour to begin.

Nippon Kōbō: News as Publicity

Inaugurated in 1934, *Nippon* published thirty-six issues over the course of a decade, folding only in 1944 toward the end of the Asia-Pacific War. It was available in at least eight countries and was published regularly in four and sometimes as many as six languages; most articles were translated into multiple languages in each issue.⁴⁵ The editor in chief of the magazine, Natori Yōnosuke, graduated from the regular division of Keio University (Keiō Gijuku Daigaku) and then went to Germany, where he studied applied crafts, commercial art, and photojournalism from 1928 until 1932. In Berlin he met designer Erna Mecklenburg (1901–1979), who soon became his wife, mentor, and collaborative partner in design activities. Herman Ullstein, owner of Ullstein Verlag, a publishing house that produced a variety of photojournalistic publications, including the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (Berlin illustrated news), quickly recognized Natori and Mecklenburg’s work. He hired Natori as a contract photographer for the press in late 1931.⁴⁶ Among his various assignments for Ullstein, Natori covered the Manchurian Incident and its subsequent military skirmishes, for which he stayed in China for three months in 1933. Unable to return to Germany afterward due to restrictions on foreign immigration imposed by Adolf Hitler’s government in the interim, he instead returned to Japan, where he acted as Ullstein’s Japan correspondent.⁴⁷ After his return to Japan, Natori founded Nippon Kōbō in August 1933 with designers Hara Hiromu and Okada Sōzō (1903–1983), New Kao campaign photographer Kimura Ihee, and photography critic and *Kōga* founding member Ina Nobuo (1898–1978).⁴⁸

Natori regarded photography more as “a visual language” than an art form. He soon established himself as a pioneer in the functional use of photography and photojournalism in Japan, zealously advocating the “educational” possibilities of these modes and establishing strong links to propaganda production.⁴⁹ This period marked a significant shift in the perceived role of photography

among practitioners in Japan, reflecting similar changes occurring around the world. Ina Nobuo's now-famous manifesto for *Kōga*, titled "Return to Photography," concluded with the statement "Those who hold the camera must never forget that they are social beings."⁵⁰ This declaration represented a radical departure from art photography to a more documentary, socially engaged role for the photographer.

Natori translated the term *photojournalism* (encompassing the implications of reportage and documentary photography) into Japanese as *hōdō shashin*. This new term marked a distinction from the more generic category of press photography, as it implied a more active and journalistic role for the photographer, whose work was seen as paralleling written copy but with the narrative constructed of images—in essence a photo-essay.⁵¹ Photojournalism was, therefore, a construction of multiple photographs (*kumi shashin*)—a series of related photographs, a photocollage, or a photomontage.

Concerning the important truth-telling power ascribed to photography at the time and the way *hōdō shashin* capitalized on it, Ina wrote in 1935, "It has generally become common perception that what is expressed through the eye of the camera actually exists. Due to this attitude, 'hōdō shashin,' which made possible mass communication by being printed, is the greatest weapon for ideology formation."⁵² Photojournalism's claims to reportorial accuracy, however, belied the extent to which the photographs were actually manipulated to produce the sensation of unmediated reality. At the very minimum, we know from archival evidence that Natori did extensive shooting to find the perfect image for any one particular feature.⁵³ Moreover, many of the Nippon Kōbō photographers were concurrently affiliated with modernist photography associations, showing an allegiance to avant-gardist manipulation of the photographic medium and fostering what photography historian John Roberts has called the "dialectical permeation" or the "shared cultural space of the photographic document and the avant-garde."⁵⁴

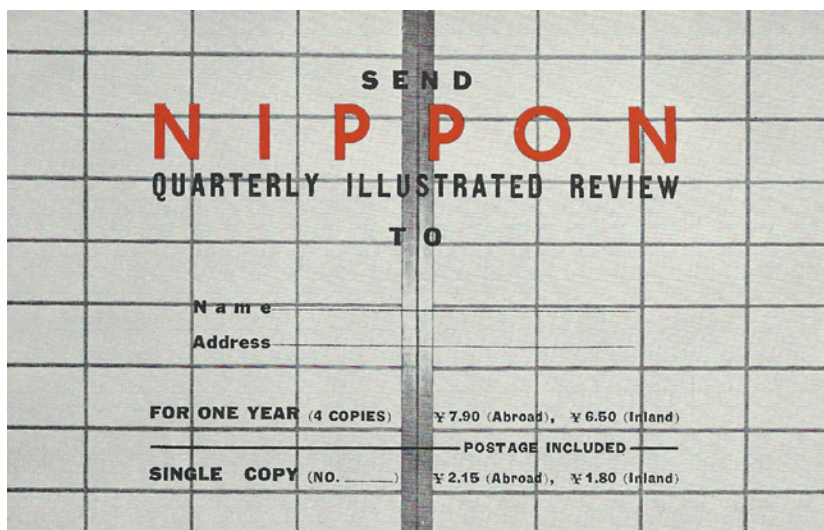
While photographers themselves may have seriously doubted the transparent truthfulness of documentary photography, they still acknowledged that the public received it in such a manner. Nippon Kōbō took its commitment to the promotion of documentary photography very seriously, mounting a groundbreaking exhibition in this area during its first year and publishing a pamphlet titled *Concerning Photojournalism*.⁵⁵ However, due to internal conflicts (principally between Natori and the others), the first incarnation of the studio folded in early 1934.⁵⁶ Natori soon reestablished it with a new group of associates and began publishing *Nippon* in October. The studio changed names in mid-1939 to become the International News Company (Kokusai Hōdō Kōgei Kabushiki

Kaisha), which was responsible for producing a staggering array of propaganda journals in Japanese and other languages across East Asia during the war.⁵⁷

The Nippon Kōbō Aesthetic

The main purpose of *Nippon* was to publicize Japanese culture to the rest of the world; it thus served as a quasi-governmental organ of national propaganda. In this capacity Nippon Kōbō received support from state agencies such as the Japanese national Board of Tourist Industry and the Society for International Cultural Relations (Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai), a nonprofit organization established under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1934 and the forerunner of the Japan Foundation (Kokusai Kōryū Kikin). The self-described main objective of the society was “the international exchange of culture and in particular the enhancement of Japanese and Oriental culture abroad, thereby to contribute toward the advancement of civilization and the promotion of human welfare.”⁵⁸ Representatives of industrial capital joined in supporting the studio, in particular the textile company Kanegafuchi Spinning Company (Kanegafuchi Bōseki), known as Kanebo, whose new president, Tsuda Shingo, provided a substantial loan to bankroll the launching of *Nippon*. Considering the magazine’s state and private support, its integrated vision of Japanese politics, culture, and industry is no coincidence.

The publication was a total collaboration between photographers and designers, not to mention important textual contributions by well-known ideologues and intellectuals, cultural figures, politicians, and high-ranking military officials. The visual and the textual amplified each other in *Nippon* to form a single, symphonic, orchestrated expression of identity. The magazine’s effectiveness as a means of persuasion was due in large part to the extraordinary talent of its contributors, including some of the foremost Japanese photographers and advertising designers of the twentieth century, many of whom went on to lead the postwar design world. Most prominently, the roster included photographers Domon Ken (1909–1990), Horino Masao (a freelancer for Morinaga), Kimura Ihee (a freelancer for Kao), Watanabe Yoshio (1907–2000), Fujimoto Shihachi (1911–2006), Matsuda Masashi (b. 1916), Numano Ken (b. 1912), and Furukawa Narutoshi (1900–1996). The chief designers were Yamana Ayao (Shiseido), Kōno Takashi (Shochiku), and Kamekura Yūsaku (1915–1997). The designers alternated as art director, a job that involved determining the overall layout of the magazine. Each was also responsible for designing several of the eye-catching cover designs. The designer’s overall vision unified each issue, transforming the publication into a visual tour de force.



6.3 Nippon Kōbō, postcard
subscription insert for *Nippon*
magazine, ca. 1935. Collection
of the author

The youngest of the three main designers, Kamekura, was a mentee of former Kao creative art director Ōta Hideshige.⁵⁹ Kamekura joined Ōta's newly established Collaborative Advertising Office (Kyōdō Kōkoku Jimusho) while he was completing his education at the Institute of New Architecture and Industrial Arts (Shinkenichiku Kōgei Gakuin), a Japanese school modeled on the Bauhaus where the curriculum merged art, craft, architecture, and technology.⁶⁰ A few years after graduation, Kamekura joined the art department of Nippon Kōbō in 1938 and started working on *Nippon*.⁶¹ By that time, through Ōta, he had already met several core members of the studio, including Domon and Hara, as well as design critic and art director Katsumi Masaru (also known as Katsumie or Katzumie Masaru; 1909–83), all of whom would become lifelong colleagues who worked together on the 1964 Olympic design program, discussed in the next chapter.

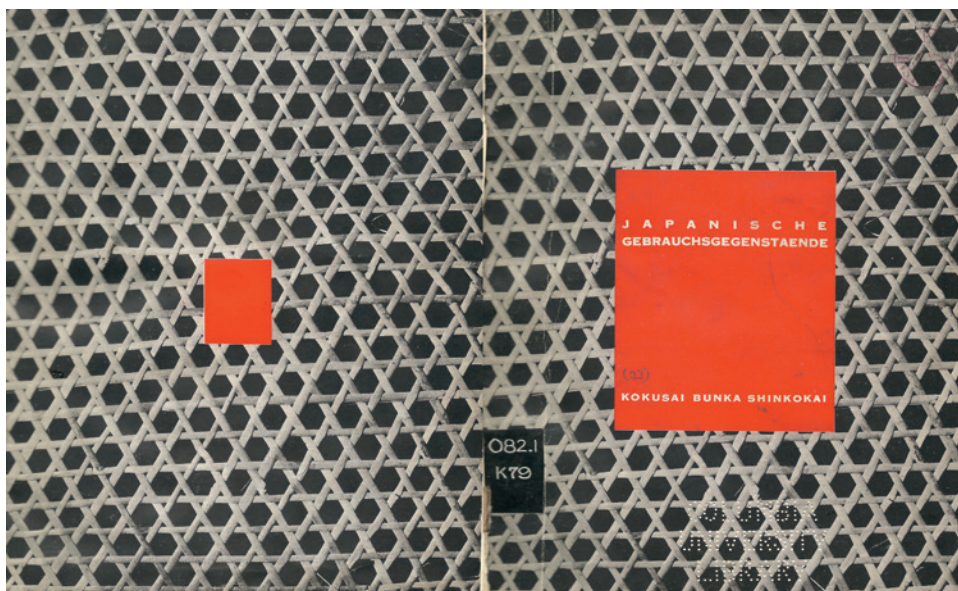
The Nippon Kōbō design aesthetic offered a Japanese twist on Bauhaus-style modernism. A simple postcard for ordering the journal exemplifies its approach, featuring a clean, crisp geometric composition with sans serif text, an ordered grid created by the incorporation of paper shoji screens in the background (figure 6.3). In *Nippon* the designers rearticulated the universalizing language of formal abstraction under a national umbrella, bringing together the



6.4 Nippon Kōbō, *Nippon* magazine stationery letterhead, ca. 1935. Shiseido Corporate Museum

international styles of modernism with familiar local motifs of Japaneseness. This seamless combination inculcated the studio's primary design philosophy, that simplicity was quintessentially Japanese, and even Japanese tradition itself fit perfectly within the modern movement. In other words, Japanese tradition was already modern in sensibility. This same message was circulating in many spheres of design, particularly in architecture, including at the Bauhaus itself. Internationally renowned figures like the German architect Bruno Taut, who lived in Japan from 1933 to 1936 while fleeing the Nazis, championed Japanese architecture and culture as modern *avant la lettre*.⁶² While Japanese design professionals like Katsumi often bristled at foreign modernists' selective and "blinkered visions of Japan and its traditions," they accepted what was beneficial for their own agendas.⁶³ Nippon Kōbō, therefore, was even able to ethnicize and nationalize the ubiquitous red circle of modernist editorial design in its signature stationery letterhead to symbolically double as Japan's national flag (figure 6.4).

One of the earliest works that Kamekura designed for Nippon Kōbō was the cover of a Society for International Cultural Relations booklet, titled



6.5 Kamekura Yūsaku,
*Japanische Gebrauchsgegen-
staende*, booklet published by
the Society for International
Cultural Relations, for an
International Trade Fair in
Leipzig, 1938. Columbia
University Library. Courtesy
of Japan Graphic Design
Association Inc.

Japanische Gebrauchsgegenstaende (Japanese utilitarian objects), promoting Japanese crafts for an international trade fair in Leipzig in 1938 (figure 6.5).⁶⁴ It displays a strong emphasis on movement and stasis through abstraction, crisp graphics, and an evocative close-up photograph of a bamboo basket weave as a backdrop for the bold red rectangles on the front and back covers, the front one displaying the title. Nippon Kōbō designers put this local interpretation of Bauhausian modernism to work for the Japanese state.

Staged Authenticity

Despite positioning itself as a news source reporting on events rather than as a publicity organ, *Nippon* used the semblance of authentic news to market the nation. As Dean MacCannell has noted in his pioneering study *The Tourist*,

sightseers are often “motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived,” to have an “authentic, demystified experience.”⁶⁵ But the very act of representing culture inserts a mediating presence between the tourist and the sight. Ironically, the representations of a sight are usually the initial enticement spurring the tourist’s desire for contact. Touristic representations are coded with “markers,” that is, any information about a specific sight that defines it. Some of these markers take on a particularly symbolic status; in the case of Japan, Mount Fuji is the example par excellence. Recalling his expectations prior to visiting Japan in the mid-1910s, Englishman Frank Lee wrote:

I had, of course, read quite a number of books about Japan and had, as I confidently thought, a most complete knowledge of the country and of its people. From picture post-cards, N.Y.K. [Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Japan’s largest shipping company] and Tourist Bureau posters, etc., I was thoroughly conversant with Mount Fuji from every aspect, with *geisha*, cherry-blossoms, snow scenes, planting rice, paper lanterns, paper umbrellas, *geta*, temple gates, *torii*, and all the other things which make people in Europe and America believe Japan to be a veritable fairyland, without trams or trains or taxis, but only magic carpets wafting the traveller to spots of beauty where, on alighting, he will be served by fair women with the choicest tea in the most dainty little cups.⁶⁶

According to MacCannell, the tourist attraction is generated in the relationship among the sight, its markers, and the tourist. Attempts are made to obscure any glimpse of the mediation of markers by the offering of “truth markers”—markers that set themselves in opposition to other markers deemed somehow less authentic. But American Carol Bache’s anecdote about her trip to Rinnōji Temple soon after she arrived in Japan in the early 1930s pithily expresses the elusiveness of the so-called authentic experience of Japan:

There was the sound of water falling over rocks, and we could hear the monks’ voices in the temple chanting sutras. The lower garden lay in darkness, but the shadows sparkled with tiny points of light as the fireflies wove their way in and out of an elaborate ballet. It was so warm that the lattices had been pushed back, and in one of the rooms I saw a young monk seated at a low table, bending over his work. Light from a standing lantern fell upon his shaven head and intent face, and I could imagine the miracle of calligraphy—the Lotus Sutra perhaps—that was taking shape under his writing brush. The scene was perfect; it was natural; not staged for eager tourists, as we had come upon it quite by chance; and I had a

strong intuitive feeling that what I had been seeking since my arrival lay close at hand—a glimpse of “the real Japan.” At that instant the temple bell boomed. . . . It filled the night, drowning my footsteps and another sound as well, the rapid click-clack of the typewriter on which the monk was writing, using all of his fingers in the touch system. It was a bitter blow, but what a paradox! . . . For years now, I have been diligently collecting [these paradoxes], spurred on, I suspect, by the secret hope that if enough paradoxes could be laid out end to end, the sum total of them all might be that ephemeral thing we are all still seeking—the real Japan.⁶⁷

Aware of this pervasive touristic desire to share “the life behind the scenes,” *Nippon* offered itself as a view of “actual life and events” to satisfy the tourist’s search for demystified experience. Once again, however, we must return to Mitchell’s assertion that since the world itself is a form of exhibition, the positing of authentic versus mystified experience is necessarily an artificial bifurcation. But in this case, positing the existence of false views sets off the purported authenticity of another view. *Nippon*, then, set the record straight.

To quote Spencer Crew and James Sims, “Authenticity is not about factuality or reality. It is about authority”—an authority that *Nippon* possessed as both a seemingly unmediated news source and a government-sanctioned publication.⁶⁸ Perhaps as significant as what was included, however, is what was omitted. In sections where *Nippon* extols the virtues of the countryside, the ongoing domestic agrarian crises are never mentioned. The topic is raised only in the context of the promotion of modern industry and colonialism, which are posited as solutions to the state of chronic agricultural depression, Japan’s overpopulation, and the enforced restriction on foreign immigration. While rising international tensions are not absent from the pages of the magazine and form an important backdrop to the entire production, the tensions between Japan and its colonies, which included continuous raids on Japanese settlers in Manchuria, never appear. The omissions speak volumes.

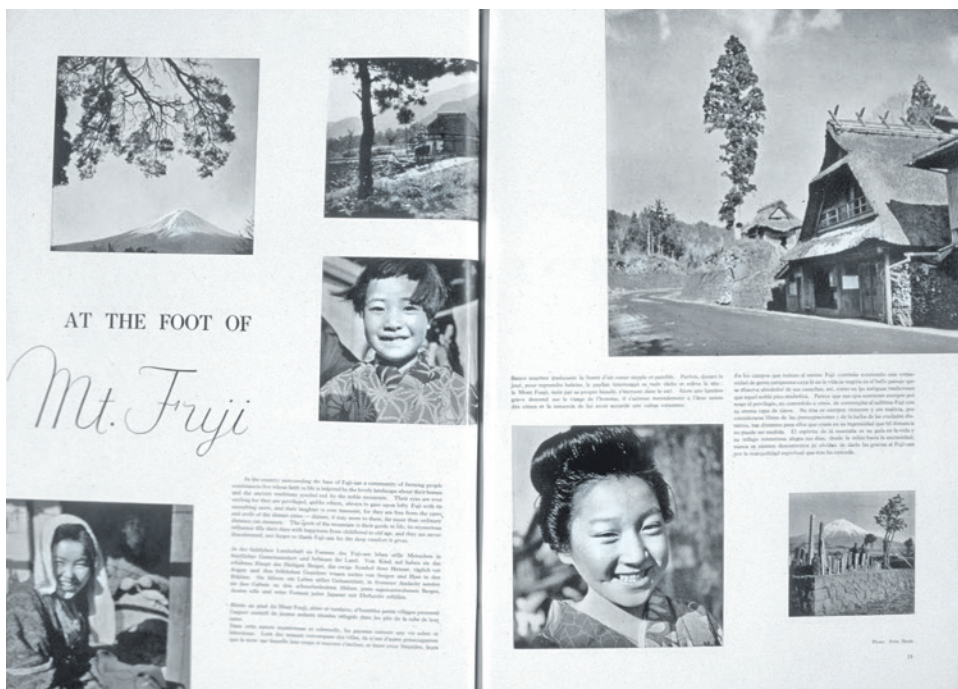
Nippon’s kaleidoscopic view of the Japanese empire showcased a timeless land with verdant peaks, typified by the national symbol of Mount Fuji, friendly natives (the idealized “happy” people of the countryside and the colonies), and refined cultural sensibilities. At the same time, it presented an urban, industrialized, expansionist imperial power that included Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria and was setting its sights on the rest of China. Articulated just when Japanese military and colonial bureaucracies were becoming literal custodians of land and people on the continent, the magazine’s presentation of Japan-as-museum assimilated images of Asianness derived from imperial colo-



6.6 Yamana Ayao (designer) and Watanabe Yoshio (photographer), cover of *Nippon*, no. 1 (1934). Private collection

nial acquisitions. The visual language for metropole and colonies was skillfully blended to obscure internal boundaries and mute the cultural violence implicit in Japanese imperialism.

Each element was portrayed as a symbiotically linked part of a larger whole, a notion that Yamana's montage cover design for the first issue of the magazine pithily expressed (figure 6.6). He superimposed the image of a bright red, kimono-clad Japanese female folk doll, or *kokeshi*, on Watanabe Yoshio's black-and-white photograph of a modern steel-reinforced concrete building, an emblem of the Japanese modernist architecture that was transforming the urban landscape. The images are balanced in a curious manner, with the doll positioned on a sharp diagonal to the left, solidly anchored in the right angle of the building structure, the partial image of which is shown clearly slanted to the right. The images visually interlock and interpenetrate, the transparency of the red form revealing the building behind. The components that constitute "Japan" may be divergent, but they are inseparable.



6.7 “At the Foot of Mt. Fuji,”
Nippon, no. 6 (1936): 22–23.
 Private collection

A striking two-page spread titled “At the Foot of Mt. Fuji” (figure 6.7) employs six different-sized photographs skillfully arranged in an asymmetrical composition to present country people and their majestic environment near Japan’s primary spiritual symbolic marker, Mount Fuji.⁶⁹ The layout expresses a visual dynamism through the juxtaposition of close-ups of people’s faces and rural homes and wide-angle shots of the landscape and mountain, which presides majestically in the distance. Three angelically smiling figures—two young girls and a woman—are situated in a triangular composition in the center, anchoring the piece through human interest. They appear as if caught amid their daily activities; the photographs capitalize on the aesthetic of the snapshot. The accompanying text reads:

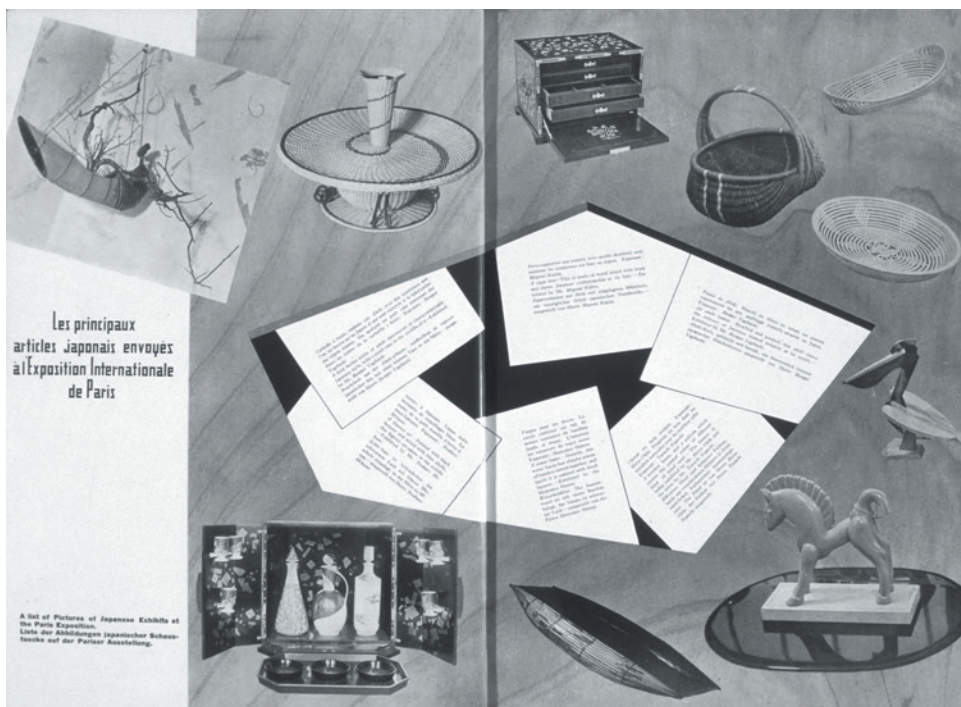
In the country surrounding the base of Fuji-san a community of farming people continues to live whose faith in life is inspired by the lovely landscape about their homes and the ancient traditions symbolized by the noble mountain. Their eyes are ever smiling for they are privileged,

unlike others, always to gaze upon lofty Fuji with its unmelting snow, and their laughter is ever innocent, for they are free from the cares and strife of the distant cities—distant, it may seem to them, far more than ordinary distance can measure. The spirit of the mountain is their guide in life, its mysterious influence fills their days with happiness from childhood to old age, and they are never discontented, nor forget to thank Fuji-san for the deep comfort it gives.⁷⁰

In addition to the metropolitan fascination with the simplicity of the countryside, it is the sheer everydayness of the scenes that is so inviting. Writing in *Nippon*, Kabayama Ayské explicitly identified the realm of the everyday as a space for preserving culture: “In Japan, one can find the very highly developed culture of the East preserved carefully, not only in museums, temples and shrines, but also in the home, and in the daily lives of the people.”⁷¹ The message of the layout was clear: people in the countryside remain spiritually connected with their auratic landscape, thus preserving essential Japanese culture, and a benevolent national government shelters them from the oppressive cares of the modern world.

Nippon frequently expressed the crossover between urban and rural Japan through the figure of the Japanese woman. Special features on all aspects of Japan’s female imperial subjects abound; whether she is dressed as a geisha, a modern housewife, or a textile laborer, the Japanese woman is another significant marker for Japan as tourist site. *Nippon* author Sugiyama Eisuke reinforced this notion in his statement that “Japanese women seem to have an instinctive capacity for hospitality.”⁷² When viewers saw a Japanese woman, therefore, they should feel invited.

Specific attention was given to the aesthetic aspects of Japanese culture as evidence of the nation’s overall civilization. In “Life and Art,” Hasegawa Nyoze-kan asserts, “No nation is capable of producing supreme art without some refinement in the very life of her people. The artistic curves of physical arts are defined by the curves in the movements and gestures in daily life.”⁷³ In addition to theater, music, and the fine arts, Japanese handicrafts were specifically featured in the magazine. Crafts had served the nation-building project exceptionally well by representing Japanese culture on the prominent imperialist stage of international world’s fairs, beginning with their spectacular reception in Vienna in 1873. This practice continued unabated. Of the two special issues on handicrafts (nos. 11 and 13), the former reported on the Japanese submissions to the 1937 international exposition in Paris. A montage illustrating this issue shows selected examples of Japanese handicrafts (figure 6.8). Bamboo and straw



6.8 Nippon Kōbō, “Les principaux articles Japonais envoyés à l’Exposition Internationale de Paris,” *Nippon*, no. 11 (1937): 34–35. Private collection

baskets, lacquerware, metalwork, and ceramics are organized in a circle around their descriptive text in the center. Crafts were held up admiringly in the pages of *Nippon* for displaying the Japanese people’s adroitness at adapting the cultural achievements of other nations (in this case, China, Korea, and Western countries). They were a testament to the Japanese ability to harmonize the two opposing forces of Oriental and Occidental culture. 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, a notion that came right out of Yanagi Sōetsu’s ideology of the Japanese folk craft movement (*mingei undō*). The decorative alcove in the Japanese house was lauded as a kind of altar to aestheticism.

The repeated staging of Japanese labor in *Nippon* also reveals an acute awareness of the tourist’s desire for demystification. The magazine’s designers had

struck on an effective way of seeming to reveal the inner workings of Japanese culture by staging what MacCannell calls a “back region.” Analogous to restaurants revealing the kitchen to their clientele, it is a gesture toward an authenticity that remains mystified.⁷⁴ Examples of such a back region include extensive scenes of staged industrial or agricultural labor, whether in domestic textile factories or on peasant farms in Manchuria. This staged labor served two purposes: it presented the “actual Japan” at work engaged in everyday activities that had a factographic function, and it promoted the integral role of industry in Japanese culture (including industries being developed in the colonies that were indistinguishable from those in the metropole). The latter purpose had a corollary objective, to assuage international fears about Japanese trade practices by presenting a wholesome image of Japanese labor.⁷⁵

In April 1938 Nippon Kōbō began producing for the Japan Foreign Trade Federation the multilingual promotional journal *Commerce Japan*, which reused many of the same photographs published in *Nippon* and featured the same stories, with an added emphasis on statistical information about various sectors of Japanese production and trade. Kamekura was one of the chief designers, working alongside photographer Fujimoto Shihachi. In both *Nippon* and *Commerce Japan*, the intermingling of industry-sponsored advertisements and promotional articles about such industry mirrors the visual blurring of publicity and photo-journalism. The journal placed heavy emphasis on convincing the United States that Japanese imperialism was beneficial for US export trade, as it produced an expanded market for goods. Some examples of products featured from Japan and the broader imperial sphere were cultivated pearls, textiles, silk, rayon and wool, Mongolian wool, Manchurian soybeans, Japanese rag rugs, Chinese wood oil and eggs, timepieces and cameras, electric light bulbs, appliances and instruments, medical equipment, and celluloid toys (like kewpie dolls). The studio’s international visual language of modernism conveyed the progressive optimism of Japanese industry and commerce that propelled national economic development. The Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Tōkyō Shōkō Kaigisho) deemed this approach so effective that it published a new version of *Commerce Japan* after the war under the editorship of Iijima Minoru, former chief editor at *Nippon*, with Kamekura designing several covers from 1956 to 1958.

Spatializing *Nippon*

As Nippon Kōbō associates expanded their activities, images and themes from *Nippon* spilled over into a vast array of contemporaneous cultural projects. As part of a series of publications put out by the Society for International Cultural



6.9 Advertisement for *Nippon*:
The Nation in Panorama in
Nippon, no. 14 (1938). Harvard
 College Library

Relations, the studio issued a special book-length publication also titled *Nippon*. Touting the book as “The Nation in Panorama” and offering “a comprehensive photographic résumé of the changing life and institutions of Japan in a *deluxe* album of montage,” the advertisement in the magazine (figure 6.9) showed representative interior photomontages from the album arranged in a contiguous circular pattern surrounding the copy.⁷⁶ *Nippon* graphic designer Kumada Gorō (1911–2009) handled the art direction and photomontage compositions, using photographs by studio associates.⁷⁷ The individual photographs would have been familiar to any regular *Nippon* reader, as they had appeared in different layouts in previous issues, but their reconfiguration took the use of montage aesthetics to a new crescendo.



6.10 Kumada Gorō, montage composition representing a Shinto shrine, in *Society for International Cultural Relations, Nippon: The Nation in Panorama* (1938). Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York

The book-length collection included over thirty-three montages representing the same kaleidoscopic view of Japan as the magazine. Two examples from the album amply demonstrate the great assortment of themes and the expressive dynamism of the collection. One image represents a Shinto shrine (figure 6.10); the other, the Japanese navy (figure 6.11). The image of the shrine shows the same scene viewed from two perspectives, simulating a spatial progression through the shrine gate up to the inner sanctuary. Multiperspectival visual axes are constructed through the positioning of the stone lantern in the middle, which both links and divides the two views. An enormous guardian stone dog (*koma inu*) standing at the front of the gate is boldly foregrounded, accentuating its function as enunciator and protector. In the distance, people are seen bowing in prayer in front of the shrine. The skillful collage of multiple images thereby stands in for the multiperspectival viewpoint of the modern spectator. Also, here the suturing of symbolic elements claims “a verisimilitude of the synecdochical, or part *for* the whole, as well as a verisimilitude of the discontinuous, the accumulation of disparate parts into wholes which imply the unfinished/expansive/transitive nature of reality.”⁷⁸ The dramatic foreground-



6.11 Kumada Gorō, montage composition representing the Bluejackets (Japanese navy), in *Society for International Cultural Relations, Nippon: The Nation in Panorama* (1938). Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York

ing of the Shinto torii as a symbolic marker of Japanese spiritual culture and the manipulation of scale established a visual hierarchy within the image.⁷⁹ It narrated a cultural story like the aesthetics of pottery, that Shinto spirituality was transhistorical and deeply permeated the daily life of the people.⁸⁰

On the other hand, the montage of the Japanese navy, known as the Bluejackets (originally in *Nippon*, no. 9, 1936), greeted the viewer with a spectacle of modern military fanfare. Two discrete but seamlessly woven views of the sailors at attention create a sharply receding perspectival view of the entire corps; the viewer is addressed directly as the figures stand at attention on the deck of their ship under the resplendently waving rising-sun military flag. Two foregrounded, fragmented images of the same bugler from different angles echo the multiperspectival viewpoint. This is perhaps one of the most engaging images in the collection because the open deck of the ship draws the viewer into the pictorial space.

Akin to many of their colleagues abroad, the Japanese became infatuated with montage aesthetics as a quintessentially modern form of expression and



6.12 Hara Hiromu, photomural with legend (*bottom edge*) reading “VOICI LE JAPON, PAYS DE L’ART ET DU BON ACCUEIL XII^e JEUX OLYMPIQUES ET GRANDE EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE A TOKIO, 1940,” Japanese pavilion, Paris World Exposition, 1937. Private collection

displayed at their world’s fair pavilions, beginning in Paris in 1937 and intensifying through the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition in 1939 and the New York World’s Fair in 1939–40, large-scale photomurals by commercial and state sponsors to spatialize montage promotional aesthetics.⁸¹ Designers around the world propelled variations of this spectacular and immersive mode of mixed-media exhibition centered on photomontage across the war years well into the postwar period.⁸²

Photographers Kimura, Watanabe, and Koishi Kiyoshi, all well known for their work in publicity and propaganda, provided images for Hara Hiromu’s composite design for the large-scale photomural promoting Japanese tourism displayed at the 1937 world’s fair in Paris (figure 6.12).⁸³ The photomural was mounted in Japan’s award-winning, modernist-style national pavilion, designed by architect Sakakura Junzō, a disciple of Le Corbusier. Promoting the diverse leisure options of tourism in Japan, Hara’s montage moved smoothly from timeless images of dancing maidens under cherry blossoms, the medieval fortress of Himeji castle, the spiritual symbols of the Great Buddha at Kamakura and sacred deer in the ancient capital of Nara, and the natural beauty of Japan’s symbolic volcano, Mount Fuji, to the Japan of modernity, represented by the popular sport of skiing, Tokyo’s metropolis, and fine dining in the urbane capital. It was a montage of color, culture, and charm.

Just down the road in the international poster pavilion, Paris-based Japanese designer Satomi Munetsugu exhibited his prizewinning, now-iconic poster for the Japanese Government Railways, a masterful expression of the speed and



6.13 Satomi Munetsugu,
poster for the Japanese
Government Railways, 1937.
Mary and Robert Levenson
Collection. Courtesy of
Pierre Satomi

vitality of Japanese modern transportation (figure 6.13). Akin to the new multi-perspectival viewpoint of montage that simulated simultaneity, Satomi's poster displayed the perceptual impact of speed. Featuring a dramatic diagonal composition viewed from an elevated vantage point, the poster employs a brilliant palette of colors, with green and yellow for the surrounding landscape melded with the brown of the earth and the silver of the train—a silver streak in the center barreling through the countryside. Quoted in the British trade journal *Art and Industry* spotlighting this work, Satomi described publicity as “an art of speed” and stressed the importance of this in the design process. “Posters,” he said, “are distorted in the sight of occupants of a car or bus, in the same way that the real form of a round object is not apparent when passing quickly before one's eyes. It is necessary that the artist take into consideration the angle from which his poster may be seen.”⁸⁴ His poster did just that, incorporating the sensory and spatial distortions caused by the speed of the train bisecting the landscape. The electricity poles are skewed to the side, their contours blurring with the movement. A small Japanese *hinomaru* flag sits next to a cherry blossom tree waving in the wind. Both are unmistakable symbols of Japanese national identity. The beautiful blue ocean and majestic islands are off in the distance. The emotional tenor of the poster is one of excitement—the excitement of modernity. The transparent word JAPAN is visible in white shadowed capital letters at the bottom. This logo-body is the train's destination as the silver streak penetrates directly through the center. The viewer is both above the train and on it, enjoying the thrill of the ride, not just as a means of getting from one place to another but as an experience itself.⁸⁵

Under the sponsorship of the Society for International Cultural Relations, Nippon Kōbō was again hired to design the interior of the Japanese pavilion at the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco in 1939 and the displays of both the Japanese pavilion and the Japanese section of the Hall of Nations at the 1939–40 New York World's Fair. These spaces were decorated with monumental photomurals. Many of the photographs used in the photomurals had already appeared in *Travel in Japan*, *Nippon*, and *Commerce Japan*. Like the dynamic use of montage in *Nippon* magazine and its eponymous album, the display spaces of the expositions provided the sensation of touring living, interactive exhibits.⁸⁶

In its coverage of the San Francisco fair, *Nippon* presented the travel and communications section of the Japanese pavilion, which was decorated with Kōno Takashi's designed photomurals, sponsored by the Japanese Government Railways, the Ministry of Communications, and the Japan Broadcasting Corporation. Under the title “Hallo America!” the spread presented the enormous figure of an American girl in the foreground curiously staring at a



6.14 Double-page spread highlighting designer Kōno Takashi's photomurals at the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, 1939. "Hallo America! Some of Our Exhibits at the Golden Gate World Fair," *Nippon*, no. 17 (1939): 48–49. Harvard College Library

series of disembodied photomurals surrounded by cutouts of assorted fairgoers floating through the empty space (figure 6.14). By incorporating the Western viewer directly into the image, the magazine self-reflexively manifested Japan's presentation of its "national strength, national character and national significance" for Western consumption.⁸⁷ In one panel, Japan's capital, represented by the distinctive ziggurat-style tower of the National Diet Building on the lower left (completed in 1936, just three years earlier), calls to "every corner of the earth" through international telecommunications, as ticker tape weaves around the globe, and operators' hands extend to connect Japan and North America, framing the space of the Pacific. Just as the exposition's organizers in San Francisco were positioning the city as a critical gateway to the Pacific—and America's own colonial holdings in the region—Japan countered by positioning itself



6.15 Kōno Takashi, “Radio Waves Bringing the Charming Echoes Abroad,” photomural for the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, 1939. *Nippon*, no. 17 (1939): 48–49. Harvard College Library

on the other side of the metaphorical Pacific highway, literalized by the extending roadway of the Golden Gate Bridge on the right.

Another panel featured radio, the unifying and information-disseminating technology highlighted in Matsushita’s advertisements (figure 6.15), bringing “the charming echoes” of Japan abroad. Here Asia was not a recipient but a transmitter of culture. Other images showed the radio calisthenics broadcast throughout the country to train the bodies of the youthful and vigorous nation (figure 6.16)—training them to move in unison.

Bauhaus-trained architect-designer and *Nippon* contributor Yamawaki Iwao designed the monumental photomural panels in Japan’s display in the Hall of Nations at the New York World’s Fair using photographs from the Japanese Government Railways Board of Tourist Industry collection (many by Nippon Kōbō) for the display themed *Tourism Japan* (Kankō Nippon) and then using Domon Ken’s photographs to create a visually symphonic series titled *Advancing Japan* (Yakushin Nippon).⁸⁸ Yamawaki declared that the photomurals were the culmination of a Bauhaus ideal of fusing photography and space.⁸⁹



6.16 Kōno Takashi, "Radio Gymnastics Every Morning Awakens the Whole Country," photomural for the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, 1939. *Nippon*, no. 17 (1939): 48–49. Harvard College Library

Invoking the dioramic imagination to produce a multimedia immersive environment, the design incorporated a patch of bamboo with illuminated electric blue, yellow, and red globes at the base in the center of the room (figure 6.17). The surrounding floor was covered in wisteria-purple silk carpet with circular patterns like Japanese family crests. The double-layered, illuminated ceiling rippled with cloud shapes. Yamawaki's large photomural "Tourism Japan" (twenty feet high and fifty-eight feet wide), sponsored by the national railways, undulated across the curved space of the information desk at one end of the room near the main



6.17 Yamawaki Iwao, display with bamboo and colored floor lights for the Japan section of the Hall of Nations, New York World's Fair, 1939. The display included a photomural sponsored by the Japanese Government Railways Board of Tourist Industry, "Tourism Japan" (not pictured), and the photomural "Advancing Japan" (*at right and in figure 6.18, overleaf*), sponsored by the Society for International Cultural Relations, using photographs by Domon Ken. *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 7 (July 1939): 191. Private collection



6.18 Yamawaki Iwao (designer) and Domon Ken (photographer), “Advancing Japan,” photomural in the Japan section of the Hall of Nations, New York World’s Fair, 1939. *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 7 (July 1939): 191. Private collection

entrance, featuring the striking figure of a smiling female farmworker towering over the doorway, her body almost appearing to step off the wall into the viewer’s space. Facing the desk on the right was a sweeping, room-size tableau of “sacred” Mount Fuji titled “Radiant Japan” (*Shūrei Nippon*). On the left was “Advancing Japan,” sponsored by the Society for International Cultural Relations.

Each montage panel in “Advancing Japan” was fourteen feet high and nine feet wide (figure 6.18). The panels thematized aspects of Japan’s social, economic, and cultural advancement, such as “physical training” (*taiiku*), showing group exercises; “manufacturing” (*kōgyō*), featuring airplane production; “social health” (*shakai hoken*), showing a children’s nursery; “science” (*kagaku*), featuring a cyclotron; “industry” (*sangyō*), spotlighting fisheries; and “education” (*kyōiku*), showing schoolchildren. Yamawaki’s designs skillfully integrated the spatial per-

spective of the viewer by placing a strip of boldly captioned photographs at eye level for close inspection, crowned by the monumental photomurals, drawing the viewer's gaze upward and across the expanse of the wall. To assure legibility and impact, he gradually increased the size of the figures as they went up the wall and punctuated the series with several panels that spotlighted a single motif such as the commanding propeller and fuselage of an airplane or a massive cyclotron. Domon's masterful photographs shot from a range of dramatic angles contributed greatly to the dynamism of the compositions. The repeated, yet subtly varied, figures convey a powerful impression of national unity and purpose.⁹⁰

When the organizers extended the exposition for another year through 1940, the Japanese sponsors decided to change their displays. They engaged Yamawaki and Nippon Kōbō again to design and reinstall the interiors. This time, they removed the bamboo patch for better crowd circulation and used a monumental image (twenty-four feet high and twelve feet wide) of actress Hara Setsuko (already the face of many commercial products) to anchor the second iteration of the display under the tourist bureau catch copy "Orient Calls" (*Tōyō wa Maneku*) (figure 6.19).⁹¹ The renowned gentility and amiability of the Japanese woman here beckoned Western tourists to experience this ancient and advanced civilization of agriculture, aesthetics, industry, and sport. As the viewer looked down the hall toward Hara's face, there were two new sets of photomurals. The first set, titled "Contemporary Japanese Daily Life" (*Gendai Nippon Seikatsu*), sponsored by the *Asahi shinbun* newspaper, featured large-scale individual figures (from left to right): a farmer under the copy "fertile furrows" (photograph by Kanamaru Shigene), a pilot with the copy "youth turns skyward," a mother and child under "growing generation," a woman in kimono under "traditional charms," a female diver representing sports competition under "modern activity" (her body notably extending beyond the frame of the image—as if plunging into the panel), a businessman under "commerce," and a factory worker under "industry" (also by Kanamaru). This series formed a curved backdrop to a seating area.⁹²

On the wall across from the information desk, above a shelf of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's Industrial Arts Research Institute (IARI) craft displays, was another series of dramatic montages reminiscent of the 1939 set, titled "Contemporary Industry" (*Gendai no Sangyō*). Hashimoto Tetsurō (1900–1959) was the designer, and the Society for International Cultural Relations the sponsor. The panels highlighted Japan's "contemporary manufacturing" such as ship production ("ships for the seven seas"), handicrafts ("ever a thriving art"), machine-made textiles ("the demand grows"), manufacturing technology (represented by "machine-age men"), and aeronautics ("air-minded



6.19 Yamawaki Iwao, “Orient Calls” display, with photograph of actress Hara Setsuko, behind the photomural “Contemporary Japanese Daily Life,” sponsored by *Asahi shinbun*, Japan section of the Hall of Nations, New York World’s Fair, 1940. *Kokusai kenchiku* 16, no. 8 (August 1940): 199. Private collection

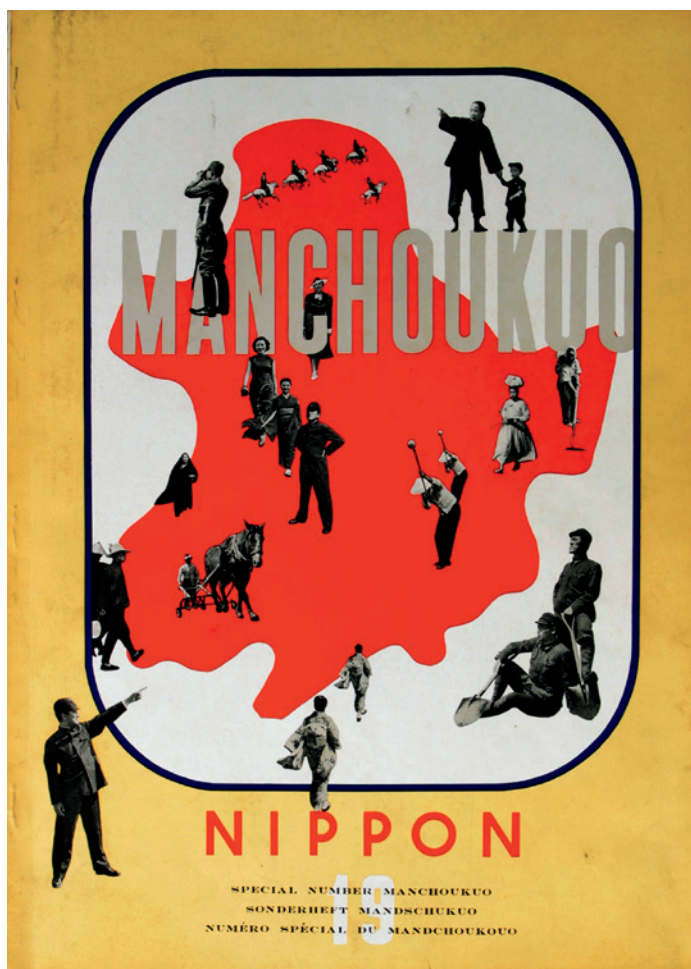
Japan”). The exposition designs envisioned modern industry, daily life, and the nation-state as all dynamically intertwined.⁹³

Staging the Colonies: Up-and-Coming Manchukuo

Nippon’s subtle interweaving of colonial subjects into the fabric of Japan went a long way to legitimizing the imperialist agenda. As a metonym for the Japanese nation—a logo-body—eponymous *Nippon*’s regular incorporation of colonial holdings under the overarching canopy of “Japan” served as a form of cultural annexation.⁹⁴ A special issue from 1939 (no. 19) on the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo (commonly romanized in Japanese as Manchoukuo) is one of the most visually interesting of the entire run of the magazine. It begins with

Kamekura's eye-catching cover design, showing a series of cutout photographs of individual figures from the interior layouts—men and women, farmers, soldiers, and city dwellers—superimposed on a boldly colored orange map of Manchukuo (figure 6.20). The figures are identifiable by costume as Japanese, Manchurian, Korean, Mongolian, and White Russian, the so-called *quinque* (quintuple) racial population of Manchuria.⁹⁵ The layout quickly establishes cooperation among diverse races in Manchukuo as a defining feature of the region. The visible map of Manchukuo rests in a yellow frame, metonymically representing its debt to the Japanese, the people of the sun. The *Nippon* title on the yellow frame reinforces this association. Kamekura's cover attempts to express the utopian excitement of Japanese policies toward Manchuria. A soldier, most likely Japanese—the only figure who stands completely outside the bounded area of the map—points to the visible map with great purpose (a staged photograph supposedly of Natori Yōnosuke himself). In the white space around the map, figures gaze, walk, or gesture toward the mapped landscape. Two women in kimonos seen from behind walking into the map allude to the influx of Japanese women into the colonies as part of the governmental policy of intermarriage between Japanese and native inhabitants to effect colonial integration (a policy employed in all Japanese colonial regions). Two soldiers holding shovels, sitting to the right, are revealed inside the magazine to be assisting in the reclamation of arable land that is transforming Manchukuo's agrarian economy. To the upper left, a soldier standing in defense of the realm looks beyond the border with binoculars. To his right, in the north, mounted riders lead the eye to a Manchurian woman and her small child; the mother points toward the land, indicating the future to the next generation. Manchukuo is a dynamic place. Use of the visible map to define Japanese spheres of interest is given an interesting twist in an advertisement for Kanebo in Manchukuo in the same issue, where the map is blanketed by the company's textiles. In lieu of its residents, the region is dotted with pinned pieces of paper that indicate Kanebo production facilities.

In the *Nippon* Manchukuo special issue, one is immediately confronted with a bold two-page spread displaying a series of Manchurian flags with an inset of the emperor of Manchukuo. The magazine contains several passages of strongly worded text underscoring the benevolent rule in Manchukuo, careful not to assert that it is, in fact, Japanese rule.⁹⁶ Repeated mention is made of the desire for the ruler and the ruled to be “morally united into one harmonious whole, advancing with one purpose to attain the final goal of the state”—a task achieved at least visually in *Nippon*.⁹⁷ The magazine incorporates several four-page foldout spreads that present an integrated exhibition



6.20 Kamekura Yūsaku (designer) and Domon Ken (photographer), cover of the Manchukuo special issue, *Nippon*, no. 19 (1939). Private collection. Courtesy of Japan Graphic Design Association Inc.

of Japan's imperialist goals. A few of the main themes represented are cooperative government, immigration work, the five-year industrial development plan, defense, resources, (land) reclamation, the past (Manchuria's history), mass communication, and the standard of living. All the special issues on Japanese colonial territories state repeatedly that if Western detractors would only visit these utopian regions of modernization, they would see the benevolence of Japanese imperialist policy.

Like Kamekura's optimistic images envisioning Japan's imperial utopia, Hara Hiromu continued to picture Manchukuo as a montage of multiethnic smiling faces, even four years later when the tide of the war had changed dramatically.⁹⁸ He had branched off from Nippon Kōbō to form the design studio Chūō Kōbō (Central Studio) with Okada Sōzō, which was then merged into the publisher Tōhōsha under the auspices of the military's general staff office in 1941. Hara served as art director and Kimura as head of photography for Tōhōsha's propaganda journal *Front*, published in multiple languages from 1942 to 1944.⁹⁹ In the journal's Manchuria special issue in 1943, a double-page interior montage of cheerful smiling figures set against a majestic sky exclaimed, "Once again with Japan, Manchoukuo has built a state of racial harmony, and established a land of security and happiness of the people," extolling a sense of community in the purportedly harmonious *quinque* racial state that supported the visionary expansionist ideology of Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (figure 6.21). This composition in the shape of a winged angel or bird is uplifting and exultant. Hara subtly accentuates this message of uplift by exaggerating the perspective from below. His uplifting composition is reminiscent of Morinaga's lighthearted montage that constructed a community of little angels who all loved milk caramel (see figure 4.23).

"Japan Becomes Comfortable"

In the same manner that the Exposition Coloniale Internationale de Paris (Paris Colonial Exposition) in 1931 claimed to take you "round the world in one day," *Nippon* could claim to satisfy the Western traveler's exotic tastes and quest for adventure.¹⁰⁰ "See Japan! / The Orient's Gem / Land of Romance and Glamour," proclaimed one tourism advertisement. Japan would satisfy the visitor's "craving for the exotic."¹⁰¹ A 1939 issue (no. 17) even provided a "One Month Tour of Japanese Culture," aided by a series of detailed illustrated maps that closely mirrored the tour routes of foreign visitors recorded in published travel accounts. The first two-page spread suggests touring the modern and historical monuments in Tokyo—the National Diet Building,



6.21 Hara Hiromu, double-page spread in Manchukuo special issue, *Front* 5–6, 1943. Tokushu Paper Mfg.

the Imperial Palace, Yasukuni Shrine, and Ueno Park—before departing the city for scenic sights in Nikkō, Yokohama, Kamakura, and Utsunomiya. For trout fishing, they recommended Lake Chūzenji and Lake Towada, showing a foreign couple with their fishing rods in the center to underscore this leisure activity. The tour then veers sharply to the north, as the traveler is guided up to Hokkaido, first to Hakodate, “the most up-to-date city of Northern Japan,” then to Daisetsuzan National Park, which “can show the tourist everything in the way of mountain scenery; high peaks, deep forests, and mountain flowers make a nature lover’s and botanist’s Paradise.” The tourist is further informed that “in ancient days a primitive race lived in Daiset[s]uzan National Park, and archaeologists consider this district to be one of the finest sources of prehistoric flint tools.” Below, the text identifies another primitive race in Hokkaido as the Ainu, the “curious and dwindling race” of whom there are only about 1,500 members left. It explains that “the Ainu are characterized by bodies and features similar to those of the white race, and in ancient times possessed a

great spiritual culture, which is now disappearing.”¹⁰² As one American visitor sarcastically noted after speaking with John Batchelor, the Christian missionary who devoted his life to protecting the Ainu, Batchelor had successfully “preserved one of the nation’s top tourist attractions.”¹⁰³ The association between exhibiting culture and travel was undeniable. They were both impulses to explore and chart the unknown to satisfy a persistent classificatory impulse.

Cultural ideologues hailed Japan as the perfect synthesis of East and West. The nation was “more than herself,” according to Nitobe Inazō; “Asia and Europe in one.”¹⁰⁴ This harmonious synthesis profoundly affected the invocation to the Western traveler, who was assured of familiar and civilized accommodations throughout the country. After all, this was “JAPAN The Land of Silk and also The Land of Rayon!” as the *Nippon* advertisement for the Toyo Rayon Company (Tōyō Rayon Kabushiki Kaisha; now Toray Industries) extolled.¹⁰⁵ Japanese modernization had transformed the country enough to make it a “comfortable” experience for any Western visitor, as attested to in the feature “Japan Becomes Comfortable,” which ran in *Travel in Japan*.¹⁰⁶

Western travelers constantly voiced concerns about having access to familiar food and comfortable transportation and accommodations, and the ability of the Japanese to provide these amenities was often the litmus test of the country’s civilization. Japanese tourism authorities understood this and concentrated on providing “first-class” facilities both within Japan and in the colonies. A large proportion of travelers to Japan relied on national tourism authorities to plan their trips; as American John Patric remarked in the account of his trip to Japan in 1934, “A number of American young women schoolteachers had their complete four-week Japanese itinerary mapped out for them by the Japan Tourist Bureau, a trip that was to take them to most of the show places of Japan. They showed it to me. It included rooms and meals in fine European hotels where, they said, ‘water will be safe and we won’t have to worry about the vegetables.’ From the way they talked, I knew they’d miss the real Japan.”¹⁰⁷

Publicity and Propaganda in Total War

On September 28, 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Alliance with Germany and Italy that formed the Axis powers of World War II, which *Nippon* heralded as leading “Toward a New World Order.”¹⁰⁸ Not surprisingly, the magazine added Italian to its languages. Soon after the alliance was formed, and with the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, subscriptions to *Nippon* in the United States dropped off dramatically. The magazine’s tone shifted to one of more overt wartime propaganda, and it published several issues on daily life on the home front and in

the colonies. It was published less often and more erratically thereafter, averaging only about three issues per year. Most of the material that appeared in *Nippon* prior to the beginning of the Pacific War in 1941 indicates how national propaganda was deployed to ameliorate world political tensions when this was still considered a possibility and when tourists from non-Axis countries could still visit Japan.¹⁰⁹

By 1941 Japan's merging of commercial publicity with political propaganda was complete. Just prior, late in the previous year, Yamana was appointed chairman of the Society for the Study of News Techniques (Hōdō Gijutsu Kenkyūkai, 1940–45), or Hōken for short. The Hōken was a quasi-official propaganda studio manned by a stable of skilled commercial artists with Morinaga's Arai Seiichirō and Imaizumi Takeji leading the pack. Hōken membership included influential scholars of sociology and propaganda like Koyama Eizō, who was employed at the Ministry of Health and Welfare, along with military officials engaged in cultural affairs, like Army Captain Machida Keiji. The Hōken society reached close to fifty members at its height and touted the goal of "unifying the country and the people," producing a range of propaganda projects while promoting research on propaganda at home and abroad.¹¹⁰

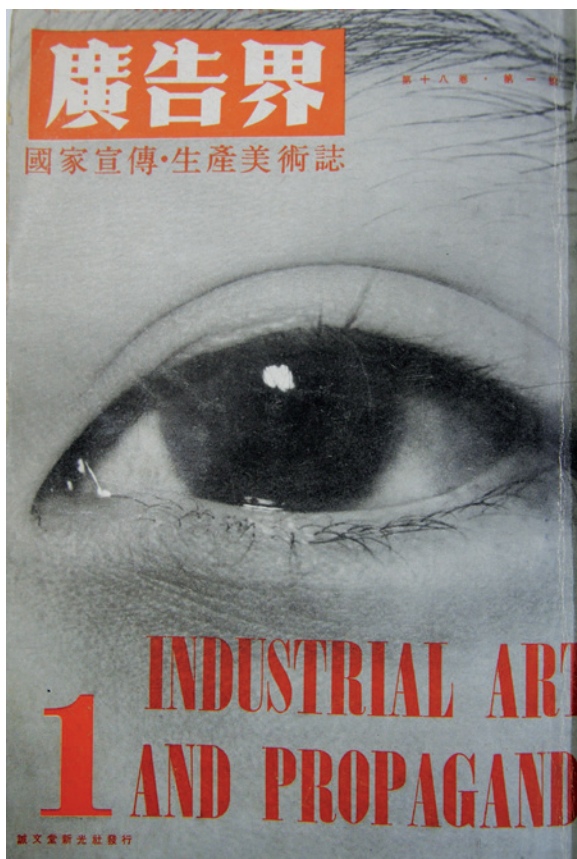
The Hōken membership read like a who's who of corporate advertising and design during the period. It included Arai, Yamana, Kamekura, Kōno, Kanamaru, Satomi, Takahashi Kinkichi (1911–1980; Sanseido publishing), Imatake Shichirō (1905–2000; Takashimaya department store), Yajima Shūichi (lettering designer), Shimizu Shinichi (Japan General Motors), Sugai Kumi (1919–1996; Hankyū railway), and Akabane Kiichi (b. 1910; Toshiba Mazda), among others. With Arai as their liaison, the Hōken coordinated closely with the Cabinet Information Bureau's (CIB) division for "enlightenment propaganda" (*keihatsu senden*) under supervisor Komatsu Takaaki.

The director of the CIB, Yokomizo Mitsuteru, described propaganda in 1937 as a means of waging battle without weapons. He explained that *senden* was not the act of spreading lies or falsities. Instead, by disseminating credible facts, propaganda created a situation in which one could seek understanding and resonance to attain certain goals.¹¹¹ On February 9–26, 1938, the CIB sponsored the Thought War exhibition (Shisōsen Tenrankai), held at Takashimaya department store in Nihonbashi, Tokyo. Divided into three sections, the exhibition was dedicated to explaining the status of intellectual warfare and propaganda in Japan, the world history of propaganda, and the current state of Chinese anti-Japanese propaganda. Over 70,000 people per day attended, with a total attendance of 1,330,000. The exhibition then traveled throughout the country with the sponsorship of various local newspapers, making its way to Seoul.¹¹²

The CIB also launched the national policy publication *Photographic Weekly Report* (*Shashin shūhō*) in 1938 under the editorship of Hayashi Kenichi (later a member of the Hōken); it was published weekly until 1944, utilizing evocative photographs by Nippon Kōbō photographers Domon and Kimura, among others. A central media apparatus for communicating the civil defense education campaign to the public, *Photographic Weekly Report* was the single most influential and authoritative of Japan's wartime news journals. Historian David Earhart has devoted his entire monograph *Certain Victory* to detailed analysis of this journal, so it will not be a focus here. Concerning the function of *Photographic Weekly Report* in the context of photojournalism, Izumi Reijirō commented, "Of course, *Shashin-Shūhō* is, at least for the present, an instrument of national propaganda, and thus, its contents are more than pure photojournalism. They play a major role as publicity photographs. While in principle news photographs naturally contribute to the objective of presenting powerful publicity, unlike photojournalism, which reports events which actually occurred, publicity photographs must be published in advance (using models for instance) in order to facilitate public relations and convey the message, 'It should be like this. We wish it were like this.'"¹¹³

Facilitating this trend, *Advertising World* had already shifted its focus to cover topics that spanned from publicity to propaganda (figure 6.22). Many Nippon Kōbō designers and photographers began writing or designing for the magazine from 1938. Journal art director Fujiyoshi Tsurunosuke collaborated with Domon Ken on many of the covers.¹¹⁴ Kamekura started a regular column covering new trends in Axis propaganda. Yamana wrote regularly on subjects related to the war's impact on the commercial field.¹¹⁵ Hara addressed the new exigencies of the printing world in the context of current affairs.¹¹⁶ And after the China Incident, Kanamaru had begun writing about the propaganda uses of commercial photography techniques.¹¹⁷ By early 1941 *Advertising World* was regularly spotlighting traveling propaganda exhibitions of both posters and photographic wall murals (*shashin bekiga*) promoting the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and total war.¹¹⁸ And in June photographer Fujimoto Shihachi, who first worked in Kanamaru's Kinreisha studio from 1931 to 1934 and then joined Nippon Kōbō in 1937, wrote for the journal about "photography and propaganda." He opened his article with the rhetorical question, "What is propaganda?" He continued, "Men who clearly know propaganda well know that the first thing they must be able to do well is use the photographic medium like they use their hands and feet. In the current great war, the Nazi photographic propaganda that has been distributed to every corner of the world in such a tremendous, organized, and overwhelming fashion has a very special kind of documentary character. Looking back on

6.22 Cover of *Advertising World* (with subtitle *Industrial Art and Propaganda*) 18, no. 1 (January 1941). Sankō Library



how Japan has used photography in national propaganda, what do we have? Unfortunately, other than a meager two or three examples, there are zero that have an aggressive, persuasive character.”¹¹⁹

In addition to its high degree of reality, photography’s power as a medium of propaganda lay in its mass reproducibility and wide dissemination, according to Fujimoto. Well-known Japanese diplomat Matsuoka Yōsuke had created a “diplomacy of honesty” that gained widespread popularity. The secret behind this kind of diplomacy, according to Fujimoto, was that it felt genuine and convinced others to believe. Photographs for the purpose of propaganda needed to be like Matsuoka diplomacy, he observed. Making the most of the camera’s greatest asset—its realism—a good photograph needed to be as real and as convincing as possible. *Signal*, a photo journal and Nazi propaganda tool published by the Wehrmacht armed forces, was a good example. Likewise, the Soviet journal *USSR in Construction* was a notable early exam-

ple, although, in Fujimoto's opinion, it was quickly sliding downhill. Japan, he argued, needed more up-to-date pictorial graphic magazines suitable for propaganda both at home and abroad.¹²⁰ As Kanamaru noted in his essay in the same issue on the effectiveness of American wartime propaganda in *Life* magazine and other pictorials, not only Japan but the whole world was concerned about the power of photography. And there were lessons to be learned from the United States, distinct from Germany and the United Kingdom. For example, the previous year's *U.S. Camera Annual*, a yearly publication focused on the art of photography, had lavishly dedicated its entire edition to the theme of war. This, he observed, suggested how Americans were actively working for victory while maintaining their position as representatives of righteousness. He pointed out the hypocrisy of the publication's so-called internationalist spirit while the contents were purely nationalist, as all the works covered in the issue were produced by Americans and the content was a supreme example of self-lionization.¹²¹

Kanamaru cited an issue of *Life* magazine from October 21, 1940, featuring articles illustrated with photographs of the manufacturing facilities of the US Army, displaying the prowess and might of the American military-industrial complex.¹²² He observed that the photographs, combined with the exact amount of military expenditure (\$33,500,000), were less about how many weapons had already been produced and more about how many could be produced in the future—a cautionary tale for any potential enemies. These photographs were like a blueprint outlining the US government's readiness and next move, offering precise visual information as a means of persuasion. In addition, the photographs offered plentiful details about this manufacturing effort, from gears to warships. They also showed how commercial automobile manufacturers such as Packard and Rolls-Royce had pivoted their vast industrial capabilities to manufacturing tanks, motors, and engines for the war effort. Seeing these images, American readers would feel empowered and mobilized while opponents would feel intimidated. The publishers of *Life*, Kanamaru concluded, clearly understood the persuasive power of photography in wartime.¹²³

Turning Advertisers into Propagandists

Former Kao soap art director Ōta Hideshige, who later joined the wartime publisher Tōhōsha in 1943, wrote in *Advertising World* in March 1941 on the current state of propaganda production, carefully distinguishing between industrial publicity and national propaganda. Concerning the CIB's mission, he

observed that, apart from regulating the organization itself, one of its top priorities should be to regulate the lives of the Japanese people. Since Japan's ideology was different from that of European nations, it was crucial for the media to express these differences to the people in an understandable and matter-of-fact way. "By highlighting the differences in our ideology, not only can we announce our stance," he wrote, "but we can also build relations with other countries that accord with our position. More importantly, in this way, our people can feel empowered and mobilized to create a national spirit [*kokumin seishin*]." ¹²⁴ The key issue for him was Japaneseness or Japanese-style expression that did not continue to mimic Western propaganda. By Japaneseness, Ōta did not mean a complete reversion to the old or the traditional but instead an emphasis on the reinscription of what was regarded as Japanese in the present and a redefinition of the present for the future. He acknowledged, though, that Western-style propaganda was already so deeply ingrained in Japan that such a transition to Japanese propaganda would be difficult, and the way forward was still unclear.

He urged the propaganda department at the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusankai, or IRAA), an organization Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro had just created in October 1940 to promote the goals of the minister's "new order," to professionalize and not rely on amateurs as the government had in the past. Like advertising, propaganda was a field for professionals. ¹²⁵ First and foremost, there was the problem of propaganda bureaucracy, that is, how various functions were divided among the CIB, the IRAA, and the Army Press Agency. Each had its own focus and strengths, but there were unnecessary overlaps. At a parliamentary meeting on January 27, 1941, the prime minister had demoted the IRAA to a supporting government organization with minor responsibilities, which Ōta, who had many friends in the association, deemed a pity. House Representative Kawasaki Katsu, a firm critic of the IRAA, had also proposed extensive budget cuts. He maintained that the allocations were disproportionate, as "the annual budget for the Imperial Rule Assistance Association is as high as ¥35,000,000. But the annual budget for the Diet, which represents our imperial nation, is only ¥4,500,000." ¹²⁶ Enraged by this, Ōta proclaimed that the government should "march with military boots over the stupid men in the Diet." For him, the strong political resistance to the IRAA was due to a lack of understanding of its value in public communication. The association, he contended, was a national movement that engaged everyone. It invoked the awareness of the Japanese people, their moral yearning for a better society, and their determination to reconstruct the economy and the culture industry. Just as the state organized Japan's brave soldiers, the IRAA would or-

chestrate and mobilize the people. It would make the public into a well-trained and well-disciplined troop on the home front.¹²⁷

To that end, he recommended that the IRAA undergo structural reforms so that it could better serve core priorities. At the time, most so-called propaganda work involved checking and censoring materials and not actually producing propaganda, which he felt needed the creativity of dedicated professionals. Propaganda was not just a job; it was also a mission. The work required constant dedication, a serious work ethic, and true devotion. For him, a truly integrated central propaganda office was the only way forward.¹²⁸

Concerned about the capacity of the CTB to handle all the jobs related to propaganda, Ōta advocated for the inauguration of political opinion polls. “In the past, advertisers would conduct extensive market research and questionnaires about their products. Based on their research and management expertise, these advertising professionals can play an important role today, since all industries have now been reorganized for the national goal. I believe that they can be an invaluable asset for the nation.” But this obligated the advertising industry to step up and play a leadership role by practicing its theories based on poll information.¹²⁹ The shift from advertiser to propagandist was a sign of the times when specialists were no longer just working for businessmen but for the nation “bathed in the glow of the rising sun.” “Today’s propagandists who were advertisers in the past,” he proclaimed, “needed to understand their new professional role in disseminating national ideology to mobilize the people as a cohesive group, which was different from selling pomade and hemorrhoid medication.” If propaganda was different from advertising in that it relied on a new system supported by new guidelines and theoretical weapons, it was imperative that the advertisers-turned-propagandists adjust themselves to the new cause as soon as possible. This was not a minor matter. Speaking directly to his colleagues, he proclaimed, “Don’t get confused and try to benefit from this chaotic situation. Advertisers! You are now propagandists! Recently you guys seem confused. What is the matter with you?”¹³⁰

But how did one become a qualified propagandist? First, one had to divest oneself of the logic of the free-market economy and shift to a state-controlled model more in line with the current financial situation. In many ways, this made propaganda production easier than advertising because it did not require a focus on profit margins. For propaganda, there was only one stakeholder: the nation. With the nation as both their new client and their market, advertisers-turned-propagandists could finally justify the expense of production and be a beneficial catalyst for lowering government costs while demanding appropriate allocations to fund propaganda work. Effective propaganda production with

reduced costs and greater efficiency was, after all, an important government priority. It was time, Ōta declared, to recognize advertising design as a professional field.¹³¹ Thus, while importuning his colleagues to shift their mindsets and skill sets, he made a not-too-subtle and sustained plug for raising the professional status of the field by recognizing advertisers' supreme qualifications to be propagandists.

Like his contemporaries, Ōta also recognized the importance of the empire in national messaging, stressing that the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was one of the most important sites for propaganda. It was a place where "one could truly realize one's values and achieve one's dreams." The Co-Prosperity Sphere was not merely a concept but a critical tool by which Japan was fighting its European counterparts for a leading role in the world. "Don't you feel empowered? Don't you feel exhilarated?" he prodded.¹³²

Controlling the market was also key. First, the government needed to strictly regulate it and forbid the exporting of goods without permission. Second, inferior goods and imitations had to be strictly banned. The quality, price, and appearance of goods needed to be upheld as a core value. Even if the Japanese themselves were suffering from hunger or lacking in shelter, he argued, they had to ensure that the "less developed races" (*okureta minzoku*)—their colonial subjects—were well fed and well dressed. This was the obligation of Japan's civilizing mission vis-à-vis the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Helping overseas brothers and sisters even at one's own expense was indicative of Japan's "humanitarian spirit" and would ultimately benefit the economy. In these endeavors, propaganda was indispensable in sustaining the prosperity of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, helping to mobilize the market for the service of the state and to buttress Japan's position in the global trade war.

Ōta proposed creating a publication with a dedicated section for national policy to offer critical insights into the dynamics of the markets both at home and abroad, as well as to investigate the advertising industry and propaganda. In consultation with experts, it would offer general strategies for how many products Japan should export overseas. His advice to fellow would-be propagandists was "Be ambitious!" And to underscore the importance of this work, he compared propaganda to gasoline that propelled the engine of the nation. It was fuel—and the more the better. But fueling the state's propaganda engine required funds, and that funding was being cut. Still, even if budgets were ultimately cut, this should not become an excuse to produce bad work. High-quality work was a moral imperative.¹³³

In an ironic twist, Ōta, a dedicated advertising professional, criticized the government for allowing the persistence of commercial advertisements. He ad-

dressed his colleagues in the IRAA directly about commercial advertisements that were still visible in the media. To him, the most important goal at this time of national urgency was to inform the public and make people believe in the national cause. Propaganda was the weapon for advertising professionals to convince the public of “the truth.” It was a form of truth telling. Commercial advertisements, motivated by profit, were, he implied, inherently less trustworthy and could potentially undermine the public’s faith in the IRAA’s work. How much money should be shifted from the sales of products toward propaganda, he acknowledged, was, however, a difficult question. It had to be calculated scientifically because if not reallocated appropriately, there might be dire economic consequences.¹³⁴

Ōta encouraged his readers to take advantage of all media, specifically radio and newspapers, to maximize their propaganda efforts. In 1929 Japanese companies brought talkie films to market, and sound was becoming a major mode of media communication. By 1932, 1,320,000 people were listening to war news on the radio. Arai Seiichirō similarly stressed the importance of diversifying media modalities for propaganda. As chief of Morinaga’s advertising department and a leading Hōken member, he wrote “On the Reality of News Techniques” in June 1941, concurring with Ōta about the need for a more centrally organized Japanese propaganda machine.¹³⁵ Japan’s recent establishment of the Association of Propaganda Culture (Senden Bunka Kyōkai) and rumors of a new Research Institute of National Propaganda (Kokka Senden Kenkyūjo) attested to a new awareness of this need, but, he lamented, despite the association’s conducting some research, little of their plans had yet been realized. Both the CIB under the Home Ministry and the IRAA were actively recruiting propaganda specialists. It was a booming field flush with professional opportunities. The bureaucracy of these associations, however, was curtailing the effectiveness of the recruits, whose talents could not be maximized. In true entrepreneurial fashion, Arai concluded that it was not enough to rely on government-sponsored organizations, but practitioners should themselves try to collaborate more with nongovernmental organizations in the publication of private propaganda magazines. He recommended creating a new entity that would bridge state and private concerns to actualize plans.¹³⁶

One genre of publicity that he suggested invigorating was “dedication advertisements” (*kennō kōkoku*) in newspapers that expressed the spirit of devotion to the nation by advertising collective causes regardless of their connection to a consumer product. Criticizing the lack of patriotism among commercial advertisers, who were simply jumping on the national bandwagon to advance their economic objectives, he condemned most contemporary commercial advertisements as insincere in their dedication to the nation.¹³⁷ Given the critical

historical moment, Arai called for more cooperation and less focus on profits—for more awareness of “the aesthetic methods of dedication.”¹³⁸ Like his effective strategies at Morinaga, he advocated the use of tie-up advertisements to nest propaganda information within itself. While one might take Ōta’s and Arai’s statements as indicative of a complete shift in field priorities, their repeated mention of resistance among business advertisers to becoming full propagandists and their general anxiety indicate that capitalist profit motives were already so deeply ingrained in the system that they were never entirely subordinated to politics. Nevertheless, it is telling how effectively designers linked national and commercial interests before and throughout the war even in times of extreme privation and despite their colleagues’ criticisms of vulgarity and avarice.

The Body of the Nation

While tourism was selling the geo-body of the imperial nation-state through its color, culture, and charm, many advertisers-turned-propagandists were marketing the nation through its body parts and bodily functions. The fighting soldier, the wartime laborer (male or female), the home-front defender (male or female), and the smallest national citizen (boy or girl) were characters in these promotional narratives, as were their respective body parts, which, as sites of national service, were increasingly becoming exhausted or requiring diligent hygiene. The national body was divided into eyes, hands, teeth, and gut, all necessitating maintenance with consumer products for optimal collective performance. Taken together, they formed a corporeal map of the imperial nation-state.

From July 1941 only advertisements that conformed their products to national policy could be posted. This was not the radical shift that it might have appeared, however, because most companies had already developed ways to tie their products into national issues and policies and were well practiced in this effort. Products were intrinsically part of the nation and the empire. Their deliciousness or intoxicating properties were a given. Their ability to improve appearance was also assumed. But they all sold added benefits that accrued to the national body. They were nutritious, restorative, medicinal, invigorating, hygienic, and even, in the case of cosmetics, helpful in outwardly manifesting the signs of a healthy body through good complexion and white teeth. “Health patriotism” (*kenkō hōkoku*) produced “the beauty of health” (*kenkō no utsukushisa*), as Kao publicity regularly reminded consumers. A series of Kao moon men characters dressed in overalls as factory workers raised their arms in unison to celebrate “50 Years of Soap Patriotism” in conjunction with the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Japanese nation.¹³⁹ As the 1933



6.23 Kao soap advertisement,
Tōkyō asahi shinbun,
 February 25, 1940, a.m. ed., 7.
 Kao Corporation

magazine advertisement for Kao soap had told consumers, “Soap is a barometer of the culture of a first world nation” (see figure 3.34), and to compete globally, specifically with the United States, the Japanese needed to wash their hands. Soap was tied to Japan’s quest for global status. The message had not changed seven years later when Kao advertised in the *Tōkyō asahi shinbun* with a large advertisement that extended across the full bottom border of the page, displaying two small hands with palms up for inspection and the moon logo in between with text in katakana, as if being spoken to a child, “Eat delicious rice with clean hands.” A small figure of a girl floats in the right corner under the copy with arms energetically raised either in the middle of exercise or in triumph celebrating the message. “Summer is when there are a lot of infectious diseases and hand cleanliness is of the utmost importance; before a meal, after exercise, after returning home from being out—Let’s not forget to wash our hands with Kao soap.”¹⁴⁰

“The Kao mark is for the entire family,” the company reminded consumers, showing happy children playing on the Kao crescent moon logo, climbing and jumping on it like a large jungle gym. One little girl stands on the moon man’s nose, grasping the top of his crescent head (figure 6.23). The copy further instructed, “Just as Kao soap is for use from baby’s first bath, Kao shampoo is for washing your hair, and Excellin detergent is for total household disinfection—solidly prepare them all!”¹⁴¹

From cleanliness to exhaustion, advertisers beckoned to consumers’ deficient bodies. Kotobukiya deployed suggestive spiking graphs to demonstrate the

positive effects of drinking Akadama Port Wine for deepening sleep as a strategy for doubling one's energy.¹⁴² Oscillating between science and humor, the company sponsored another advertisement that displayed whimsically attenuated kanji letterforms mirroring bodily fatigue. As the characters scatter horizontally from right to left, their unevenness exhibits a sympathetic exhaustion. The ad announced, "For people who are easily tired—Akadama Port Wine." The simple, almost childlike kanji character for "people" (*hito*) wearily dips downward, and the syllable *ni*, meaning "for," at the end of the line gestures diagonally toward a shadowed box below with the inscribed product name, which leads the eye to extended copy:

Heal your tiredness and work energetically!

If you have a bloody body, it is unpleasant, and you can't get your job done. Overwork can also cause illness. Please heal your fatigue quickly and work well! For that purpose, Akadama Port Wine is the most effective drink. A cup before work is often energizing, and a cup while resting has the excellent effect of quickly replenishing strength.

Why is Akadama Port Wine effective in relieving fatigue?

It is pure sweet wine that matures naturally.¹⁴³

Kotobukiya's tasty fortified red wine had boasted of medicinal benefits from its launch in 1907 and under the creative eye of Kataoka Toshirō touted its advantages as a health drink. These health benefits were now specifically targeted at exhaustion, which was part and parcel of the twenty-four-hour work schedule of industrial modernity (enabled by electric light) and endemic in wartime. Fatigue was a major problem for wartime productivity. The imperial nation-state could not succeed if people were absent from work due to exhaustion or illness. As another advertisement promised, "Reduce illness absenteeism! It's an emergency! You must improve your work efficiency! Nothing is more suitable as a summer health drink than Akadama Port Wine. In summer, your appetite diminishes. It is difficult to maintain your health if your appetite diminishes."¹⁴⁴ A drink in the morning would help one feel good at work, and a drink before bedtime would ensure sound sleep.¹⁴⁵ The product bolstered its assertions with scientific claims of efficacy as a medicinal liquor. It even claimed to purify one's blood under the tagline "Protect the cleanliness of blood!"¹⁴⁶

Eye strain and ophthalmic diseases were also increasingly becoming problems of modernity. Long-lasting light bulbs promoted productivity while protecting vulnerable eyes. But Japan's industrialization, while essential to the war effort, also produced air pollution, which was becoming a public health problem. Advertisers widely marketed medicinal drops as a healing treatment.



6.24 “Smile, a new ophthalmic drug, protects your eyes from soot, smoke, and dust!” Newspaper advertisement for Smile eye drops, *Yokohama bōeki shinpō*, January 9, 1939. Library, National Museum of Ethnology, Japan

Smile brand, which paradoxically sold eye products despite the name’s more natural association with the mouth, used the hovering eye as a central motif in its advertising, drawing from a long genealogy of hovering eyes in modernist and avant-garde imagery. A 1939 Smile advertisement (figure 6.24) featured a gigantic staring eye being emitted amid the smoke of a factory smokestack, proclaiming, “Smile, a new ophthalmic drug, protects your eyes from soot, smoke, and dust!” As the copy continued to the left, the reader’s eye literally swept across the eye gazing back: “The people on the home front during the [wartime] incidents are wary of an increase in eye diseases. We recommend Smile for eye health to those who work in places with a lot of soot and dust.” It then listed various eye diseases that were most prevalent.¹⁴⁷

Hovering eyes stared out across the mass media, ethereal and entreating. One disembodied eye, superimposed on a standing globe, advertised Rohto eye medicine in March 1942. “The Japanese eye is the best in the world!” it exclaimed. “According to the research of authoritative ophthalmologists, the Japanese eye is the best in the world, both functionally and structurally. The main reasons are that the eyes are black and resistant to light rays, the upper eyelids are thick, the protective action and moisturizing effects are perfect, the orbits are shallow, the field of vision is wide, and the color judgment is accurate. But it must be said that it is unfortunate that there are many eye diseases

that make excellent eyes into poor eyes.”¹⁴⁸ Rohto drops offered pain relief as an anti-inflammatory and as an antiseptic for sterilization to treat and alleviate eye diseases. Companies focused on body parts the way industrial engineers focused on machine parts. They were components of a larger mechanism that powered imperial Japan. Like the human giants and seemingly superhuman mascots who were associated with the consumption of milk chocolate and caramel—giant generals and sumo champions—the average Japanese worker or soldier could acquire extraordinary physical abilities to work for the nation assisted by these products.

Healthy notions of the national body also absorbed modernity’s sporting body into the disciplined physique of the soldier and, as the war persisted, embraced the women mobilized as civic defenders on the home front. Celebrating National Foundation Day in 1940, Kao heralded itself as the “national soap” with its crescent moon face trademark now leading an army of moon-faced figures in athletic togs marching across the page in lockstep, “for soldiers, labor warriors [*sangyō senshi*], small citizens, to protect the household, for mothers, march in step, soap is Kao.”¹⁴⁹ Martial vigor easily sublimated leisure sports. While the war may have displaced the 1940 Olympics, in many ways a symbolic arena for demonstrating national virility from their origination, these sporting games had always been thinly veiled surrogates for martial competition. Now the national competitors could engage in real combat.



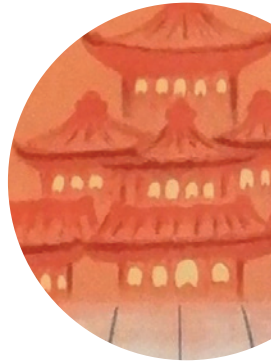
7

Transwar Design

Marketing was not simply a tool of advertising, but rather a tool to create public opinion in postwar Japan.

—NAKAI KŌICHI, “A Testimony from the Postwar Period” (2008)

This final chapter brings the story of Japanese commercial art into the postwar period, proposing a new model of transwar design that reclaims the important—and often ignored—continuities of design practice across the war years to reveal the shared aesthetic, commercial, and ideological concerns through this turbulent time despite the vicissitudes of history and politics. Understanding these continuities goes a long way in helping to explain Japan’s postwar economic “miracle.” Transwar design is a framework that has important implications for the global design community, as many countries experienced comparable challenges across the war years, transitioning through radically different political systems and



international crises where design actively served a central civic function, and publicity and propaganda seamlessly traded places. Despite the tendency to think of wartime as a condition of deprivation and decreasing resources on the home front, for those involved in official or quasi-official projects, it often presented a boon. Moreover, for the emerging Japanese design community, in its incipient stages of professional development when it was still seeking social standing within the arts community, state sponsorship conferred considerable cultural legitimacy, as all the arts were increasingly mobilized. Wartime also provided powerful political connections and patronage networks.

Thinking transwar elucidates the murky ethical issues of design in the service of commerce and the state. It also reveals the active attempts to obfuscate these connections, as prominent design critics like Ogawa Masataka have made bold statements that “the world of graphic design in Japan only came into being after the end of the Second World War.” Fostering this postwar origin myth, Ogawa continued, “It is the establishment of the Japan Advertising Art Club [Nihon Senden Bijutsukai] in 1951 that is generally considered the starting point of the work of true graphic design in Japan.”¹ Yet at the time the club was founded, many of its core participants—Yamana Ayao, Kamekura Yūsaku, Hara Hiromu, Kōno Takashi, Hashimoto Tetsurō, and Takahashi Kinkichi, all former members of the wartime collective Nippon Kōbō—were already in their thirties and forties with long-standing careers in commercial design and propaganda production. This was not a new generation of designers.

While the still-prevalent distaste for discussing wartime activities in Japan is the most obvious reason for this elision, another is some designers’ strong postwar ethical posturing. Kamekura was particularly vocal about his personal ethics in design practice, a stance that the Tokyo Art Directors Club (Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu), or ADC, reinforced, writing about him, “[Kamekura] has never become enslaved by corporate executive policy. He will only work for a company if he is convinced that the work is something that he can conceptually and ethically agree with and work on directly with the executives.”² Championing this personal moral high ground in a field notorious for unethical tactics and dubious compromises with corporate capital, Kamekura himself wrote in *Graphic Design* (*Gurafikku dezain*) magazine, “No matter how much money I am offered, I will not do work that I am not convinced is right. This means that I refuse to do any work for political parties or religious groups because I find that I usually cannot agree with their ideals and purposes. . . . I simply cannot get inspiration to do work that does not seem worthwhile and of interest to me.”³ These categorical statements leave little wiggle room for compromise. They also leave an ethical ambiguity about his work for the Japanese state with Nippon Kōbō from 1938

until the end of the war in 1945, and then again after the war on two Olympic Games and the 1970 Osaka World Exposition. His personal narrative and the larger story of Japanese modern design are fraught with such ambivalence.

Therefore, it is worth considering how the early careers of Kamekura's generation shaped their professional mindsets and aesthetic sensibilities in order to understand these ethical quandaries: how such dilemmas were reconciled or why they were elided. This quickly reveals a deep and paradoxical entanglement between modernist artistic practice and traditionalist cultural essentialism, nationalist and internationalist values, and corporate and state objectives.

Mediating Channels

Restoring Japan's commerce and industry was the highest priority after the war, and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce and Industry took the lead in this effort by reaching out to its former wartime associates. The chamber asked the indefatigable Sugiura Hisui and Yoshida Hideo (1903–1963), the newly appointed fourth president of Dentsu, Japan's leading corporate advertising firm, to resurrect the national Japanese Advertising Association (Nihon Kōkokukai) in 1947 and tapped Arai Seiichirō and Imaizumi Takeji to form a new advertising research association, later formally established as the Tokyo Art Directors Club in September 1952.⁴ As the name suggests, advertising professionals in the role of art director at the highest administrative levels within their companies dominated the ADC, and many, like Arai, who joined Dentsu in 1947, became titans in the field after the war.⁵

According to design critic and historian Nakai Kōichi's engaging memoirs recollecting the Occupation period, GHQ (General Headquarters for the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, or SCAP) under General Douglas MacArthur ironically viewed the rise of Japanese militarism as linked to the country's lack of consumer marketing, which they thought had ultimately concentrated media power in the hands of the military. The Occupation authorities somewhat farcically believed that more public opinion polls would have revealed more opposition to the war and prevented militarists from acting unilaterally, although the commitment to these surveys did not prevent SCAP's "reverse course" of suppressing widespread leftist political beliefs or directing Japanese politics toward American Cold War geopolitical objectives. The art director Ōta Hideshige, one might remember, had also argued for more public opinion polls but for the exact opposite reason, to harness the power of the public more effectively for wartime mobilization. Still, to remedy the perceived past mistakes of the war and facilitate democratization, the occupying authorities, without acknowledging a hint of irony, tasked professionals like Arai and

Imaizumi with assessing Japanese public opinion to create new marketing strategies. But as Nakai pointedly notes, “Marketing was not simply a tool of advertising, but rather a tool to create public opinion in postwar Japan.”⁶ The Occupation leadership at GHQ put this tool back in expert local hands that then helped mold public opinion to form the ideological foundations of postwar Japan. The fine art of persuasion endured.

Reestablishing professional mediating channels like trade journals in the design world was essential for reconstituting the field. Trade journals started publishing again with gusto after the war, picking up where their predecessors left off. They were also rebuilt on existing personal and professional networks. Soon after the end of the Occupation in June 1952, the Orikomi Advertising Agency (Orikomi Kōkokubu) resuscitated the Institute of Advertising Science (Senden Kagaku Kenkyūjo, or Senken), originally founded in 1943 as the Advertising Art Research Institute (Kōkoku Bijutsu Kenkyūjo), and began publishing the magazine *Advertising Art* (*Kōkoku bijutsu*; glossed in English as *Japan Advertising Art*).⁷ Contributors included many design veterans, such as photographers Kanamaru and Watanabe; advertising directors Imaizumi (now at Marumiya), Arai (Dentsu), and Ōta (back at Kao); art critic Itagaki Takaho; and former Nippon Kōbō members Kamekura, Hara, Kōno, and Takahashi, who also designed the covers and were frequently the subjects of articles.⁸

Writing in the second issue of *Advertising Art* about his own professional inspiration as a young designer, Kamekura positioned himself with Kōno and two other former design members of Nippon Kōbō, Hara and Yamana, as leaders for the new age. These designers were, in his words, already “deified.” Kōno’s designs for Shochiku, he described, were “outrageously urban” in the freshness of their style, which exuded a humorous brightness that influenced a whole generation, who sought to emulate his abbreviated forms, distinct colors, and whimsical lettering. Whether it was the influence of Tōgō Seiji, Paul Klee, or Takehisa Yumeji, the origins of Kōno’s unique sensibility perpetually mystified people. Kamekura recounted their time working together at Nippon Kōbō on *Nippon* and *Commerce Japan*. Kōno, he proclaimed, was an “Edokko”—a son of Edo—who laid claim to a unique Japanese sensibility reflected in his art and writing. Kōno’s recently exhibited work exuded a kind of poetic sensibility; “things” (*mono*) plus “poetry” (*shi*) were at the core of his genius. And poetry was not just, as people wrongly assumed, in flowers and nature but could be found in geometric lines (a mainstay of Kamekura’s own postwar style) and the appurtenances of modern life, like jet airplanes.⁹

Like his former Nippon Kōbō colleagues, Kōno also had an illustrious transwar career. In the late 1930s, Natori Yōnosuke had convinced him to take up work

in China in the studio's Shanghai-based press operation, which functioned under a variety of different organizational designations as it expanded into the Japanese colonies and onto the war front to serve as the official press union of the imperial army propaganda department. By the end of the war, he was serving as director of the army press office in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. In 1959 he established the Desca design office. With Kamekura, he served as a designer for the Tokyo and Sapporo Winter Olympics (1972). They also worked together on the 1970 Osaka World Exposition. In 1966 he participated in the founding of Aichi Prefectural University of the Arts (Aichi Kenritsu Geijutsu Daigaku), where he was a professor and later served as president from 1983 to 1989, retiring as emeritus thereafter. He received numerous accolades, including being the first Japanese designer inducted into the British Royal Arts Association as a Royal Designer of Industry and receiving the Japanese government's Order of the Sacred Treasure.¹⁰

Advertising Art also featured writings by critic Katsumi Masaru, who became one of the most influential impresarios of the postwar design world. A graduate of Tokyo Imperial University with a bachelor's and master's degree in aesthetics and art history, Katsumi was a professor at Yokohama College of Sciences (Yokohama Senmon Gakkō) from 1934 to 1940 and from 1940 to 1943 served as director of IARI (Industrial Arts Research Institute) under the auspices of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, promoting mass production techniques and new products. In addition to employing many designers and sponsoring exhibitions, the institute published the influential monthly journal *Industrial Art News* (*Kōgei nyūsu*) (1932–74), playing an important transwar role as liaison with GHQ and Japanese companies such as Toshiba and Mitsubishi during the Occupation while championing the high quality of Japanese goods abroad in the interest of bringing in much-needed foreign capital throughout the 1950s. Katsumi continued to serve as an editorial consultant to *Industrial Art News* from 1951 until 1964; in March 1954 he became a founding committee member of the Japan Design Society (Nihon Dezain Gakkai), an organization dedicated to the advancement of academic research on design. With numerous publications on design practice and theory, he was also a faculty member at two important experimental design academies: Kuwasawa Design School (Kuwasawa Dezain Kenkyūjo), founded in 1954 by Kuwasawa Yōko (1910–1977), a design journalist and designer of the uniforms for the Tokyo Olympics, who like Kamekura also trained at the Bauhaus-inspired Institute of New Architecture and Industrial Arts in Tokyo in the 1930s; and, later, Tokyo Zokei University (Tōkyō Zōkei Daigaku), founded in 1966, again by Kuwasawa, who served as its first president and chairman of the board. Not only was a prize inaugurated in Katsumi's name in 1963, but the Japanese government officially recognized him

for his contributions to the nation with the award of the prestigious Fourth-Class Order of the Rising Sun in 1983, the year of his death. Not coincidentally, Kamekura served as organizer of his funeral committee.¹¹

Announcing the first issue of *Advertising Art*, Itagaki proclaimed its new humanistic mission focused on individual cultivation: “Making good advertisements is all about making the people who are involved in them. Making good advertisements, while subject to various economic and technical restrictions, is not just a matter of education, but a problem of the actual ‘human beings’ who make these advertisements. Therefore, advertisers should start by developing themselves as human beings.”¹²

Although *Advertising World* had been discontinued, its inaugural editor, Murota Kurazō, remained a prolific writer into the postwar period. Among his important works were *Advertising Is the Idea* (*Kōkoku wa aidea da*, Dōbunkan, 1958) and *How to Do Copywriting for Advertisements* (*Kōkoku bunnan no gi-jutsu*, Dōbunkan, 1959). In the opening chapter of *Advertising Is the Idea*, Murota argued persuasively, “Ideas are what kindle the fire of the intellect.” Indeed, the postwar advertising industry in Japan witnessed an increasing emphasis on “ideas,” signaled by Seibundō’s founding of two design magazines titled *Idea* (1953) and *Brain* (1961), both with *Advertising World*’s second editor, Miyayama Shun, as editor in chief (listed on the mastheads as Miyayama Takashi).¹³ Both are still leading journals in the field.

Katsumi then spearheaded the launch of *Graphic Design* magazine in November 1959, serving as editor in chief, with Hara as art director.¹⁴ The quarterly magazine was distributed in the United States and South America. It was also an important transwar bridge in terms of both domestic contributors and global content. A long-standing colleague of Kamekura, Hara, Yamana, Kōno, Ōta, and Ōhashi Tadashi (chief designer for Meiji Confectionery and Noda Shoyu’s Kikkoman brand soy sauce), Katsumi prominently featured their works and writings in the journal along with wide historical coverage of international modernist graphic artists like El Lissitzky and Herbert Bayer, American design mavericks like Saul Bass and Lester Beall, and iconic continental art deco designers like A. M. Cassandre, whose work in the 1930s and 1940s for commercial enterprises such as Dubonnet and a host of French transportation companies was greatly admired in Japan.¹⁵ At the same time, Katsumi’s editorial team commissioned a new generation of up-and-coming graphic artists like Awazu Kiyoshi and Tanaka Ikkō to design the covers, beckoning to the future.

In every issue *Graphic Design* reached back to spotlight some form of traditional premodern Japanese design, craft, or visual practice, featuring decorated wrapping papers, kites, woodblock prints, signboards, religious tablets (*ema*), emblems (*mon*

or *monshō*), and *sugoroku* pictorial board games, as well as in-depth discussions of traditional packaging with Oka Hideyuki, chair of the All-Japan Commercial Art Federation (Zenkokū Shōgyō Bijutsuka Renmei). Oka later authored many important books on this topic, including the seminal *Traditional Japanese Packaging* (*Nihon dentō pakkēji*) in 1965, published in English as *How to Wrap Five Eggs* (1969).¹⁶ This coverage affirmed the narrative of the country's enduring commitment to creative design long before it was even a nation. Katsumi believed that young Japanese designers needed to master these Japanese techniques to create effective contemporary work using new materials and up-to-date production processes. Referring to the distinct national traits of the Swiss, who were known for their development of the precision industry of watchmaking, which was supposedly reflected in the “clear-cut” quality of their designs, he advocated for Japan's next generation similarly to consider the relationship between its national traits and industrial development.¹⁷ He and others seamlessly embedded transhistorical cultural essentialism into Japan's postwar internationalist framework of modern design that championed the individual while still upholding the collective. Once again, picking up on Nippon Kōbō designers' prewar modernist discourses, they positioned traditional Japanese aesthetics as presciently modern before modernity; simple, elegant, and abstract before modernism; and representative of a universal language before internationalism. They also disassociated such aesthetics from the militarist and imperialist ideologies that they had previously been used to promote. But perhaps most significant for Katsumi's instrumental role in carrying the design torch across time was his position as a powerful member of the executive committee for the World Design Conference (WoDeCo), in which Kamekura, Hara, Yamana, and Kōno participated, and his job as executive artistic director for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, when he engaged them all on the design team, drawing on a powerful network of expertise.

Corporate Visions

In the corporate sphere, designers like Yamana returned to their former positions, reimagining brand-name products in the new context of the postwar economy but with the skills of the prewar imaginary. Like most Japanese companies, when the war ended, Shiseido was in dire circumstances, having only two surviving factories in Tokyo and Osaka, just a few employees, three sales shops, and only the Ginza headquarters building left. They immediately started rebuilding their chain store network, adding retail stores throughout the country. However, as in wartime, they ran up against significant government roadblocks, this time the Allied Occupation authorities (GHQ), who placed

restrictions on luxury goods. In fact, they restricted high-quality goods of all kinds and strictly controlled price points and distribution. This was combined with GHQ's increasing controls on all valuable manufacturing materials. The scarcity of materials during the Occupation was a familiar condition from the years of wartime mobilization and spurred Shiseido to return to its active recycling campaigns—a holdover from the company's wartime promotional strategies that fit well with GHQ policies. The years 1946–47 marked a key milestone in Shiseido's resurgence, when it hired back veteran photographer Ibuka Akira and resuscitated its popular canned tooth powder with the camellia logo designed by Yamana, who himself returned in 1948.

Critics writing in *Advertising Art* described Yamana's postwar Shiseido designs as a combination of “design and poetry.”¹⁸ His light, ethereal, arabesque-inspired female form had provided visual escapism and an image of aspirational luxury during the prewar economic depression and the boom-and-bust war years, and he revived her image after the war in his celebrated Eau Deluxe face powder advertisement in 1951 and thereafter. However, now she was used to embody the new buzzword *peace* (*heiwa*) associated with Allied-imposed democracy. Not coincidentally, the Japanese frequently used the term *peace* in the prewar period to symbolize economic prosperity, such as at the Tokyo Peace Memorial Exposition (Heiwa Kinen Tōkyō Hakurankai) of 1922. It appeared often in public discourse in the 1930s after the invasion of Manchuria, amplified with the increase in military aggression as war loomed. War and peace have always been dialectically connected. War purportedly produced peace. Peace justified war. And while Japan was no longer at war in the 1950s, it was deeply implicated in the Cold War and the Korean War as a strategic ally of the United States with mutual defense obligations, experiencing the tensions of nuclear brinkmanship in the escalating arms race with the Soviet Union.

Cloaked in a mantle of happy-go-lucky nonchalance, the Shiseido figure, her entire body alive with dancing arabesques, glided effortlessly across the page, exuding the scent of her personally selected perfume, which was subtly beautiful but also left an impression (figure 7.1). Like her prewar counterpart, she cultivated beauty, elegance, grace, and refinement—enduring Shiseido values—good for all seasons, good for all times. She was also a fanciful vision of the peaceful, carefree, modern woman, ostensibly liberated from wartime hardship by postwar democratic politics and economics, not to mention new technologies and appliances. Never mind that she and her children were still living under the shadow of a nuclear attack.

Shiseido systematically reintroduced a panoply of prewar products, which were integral to the long-standing promotion of the New Shiseido Style Facial

7.1 Yamana Ayao, newspaper advertisement for Shiseido perfume, 1960. Shiseido Corporate Museum



あなたの 優雅な
コマーシャル

香水は「これが私です」と語ります。
人柄や趣味を、代弁します。強烈にではなく
やさしく、静かに訴えます。しかし
印象的です。資生堂香水は、いつまでも
美しいイメージを残します。

資生堂香水

ロゼット	スノウローズ	白梅
ヘリキトローブ	ホワイトローズ	リンド
ゾクザイト	ムスク	マチナード
ジャズミン	オリガニ	フリマックス
シブレー	モンジェラ	ホワイトローズ
ヒヤシンス	アムステル	

1 本 80円〜1 本、1,000円

花椿金でひらく あなたの美しさ

資生堂化粧品と愛用者の会です。年一回すて
きな記念品も贈りしています。ご入会は、
資生堂チェーンストアか有各デパートで。
(各都道府県)



Treatment (originally launched in 1937), which sold cosmetics suited to the purportedly specific skin types of Japanese women as determined by the company's proprietary dermatology-based "skin type beauty method." This marketing strategy centered on a holistic approach to skin health that went well beyond cosmetics, providing information on diet and exercise. Now known as the Shiseido Style Beauty Method, this is still the backbone of the company's marketing and offers a host of specialty products for everything from whitening skin and improving texture to treating inflammation and acne.

All Shiseido's images of carefree women sublimated a sustained inculcation of anxiety about proper skin care. The overarching continuities in marketing, however, masked profound changes in women's social status in the postwar period as the new 1947 Constitution drafted by the Occupation forces granted them equal rights. Equal rights afforded women new white-collar work opportunities that produced new consumer categories. Historians also often dub 1955 the year that marked the "birth of the housewife" in postwar Japanese popular print media, although manufacturers and magazines before and during the war certainly cultivated Japanese housewives as consumer-subjects.¹⁹ Regardless, Shiseido's underlying message remained consistent, whether its female customers

were housewives or office workers, married or single: proper skin care was essential for success in the world.

Along with Shiseido, Kao and Lion resumed their production. With most of its factories severely damaged by bombing, Kao publicly reported its losses as a direct consequence of working under state orders during wartime mobilization and being unable to pursue private commercial business. It applied for reparations (special loans), which the government granted along with coupons allocating resources to manufacturers. Contending with a critical lack of raw materials and GHQ resistance to businesses that had served the wartime military regime, the company survived by forming a range of cross-shareholding *keiretsu* affiliates. With wartime price controls abolished, Kao benefited from the vigorous demand for soap after the war, including black market sales, but production of soap and fatty oils did not return to prewar levels until after 1950.²⁰

In terms of continuity of advertising personnel, it was, paradoxically, the well-known anarchist poet and proletarian literary figure Ueno Takeo (also known as Ueno Sōfu; 1905–79)—who had joined Kao in December 1943 and worked as the company’s factory manager in Mukden, Manchuria—who served as an important bridge to the postwar era. Despite being arrested multiple times for his leftist sympathies, Ueno was a successful corporate manager and returned to Japan from the continent only at the end of the war, when the company’s factories were turned over to the Chinese. He became general manager of Kao’s advertising department and then creative director in charge of advertising copy for Kao soap in 1952. He worked with long-standing design employees Okuda Masanori, Nakao Akira, and Ikeda Masayuki, as well as photographer Ishikawa Shinichi. Ueno was responsible for a catchphrase that became a popular slogan and early postwar anthem for the dispirited Japanese: “clean national citizens will prosper” (*seiketsuna kokumin wa sakaeru*), which both promoted the company and offered the war-devastated population psychological and physical relief from its plight. This subsequently became Kao soap’s corporate philosophy. Recipient of the prime minister’s award for industrial design promotion and the prestigious Mainichi Advertising Award in 1956, Ueno was also a pioneer in marketing Kao’s new Feather shampoo product, which used a new, gentler formulation, unlike the earlier soap-based shampoos.²¹ His copy for Feather shampoo included phrases that became household standards: “hair and youth,” “even men should use it,” and, most famously, “no way, washing your precious hair with soap . . .” The catchphrase *no way* (*muchadesu*) alone then became iconic. Advertising historians credit him with firmly implanting the shampooing ritual of cleanliness in postwar Japan.

50円の洗濯機!?

電気洗濯機がほしいとおっしゃる奥さま方、その前にこれぞ、お試しになってみて下さい。

ワンダフルを洗濯機に代えて、洗濯物に十分触れさせておきますと、ふんわりと泡が湧き出、きちはじり、繊維にワンダフルがしみこみ、あらゆる汚れを洗い落とすことができます。

● 洗濯機は毎日使っているが、手がワンダフルには慣れない、お洗濯は面倒、力を入れすぎて手が痛くなる、すすぎも回数多く、すすぎもよくすすぎきれない、魔法の洗剤ワンダフルこそ50円の洗濯機と素晴らしい評判、早速、一袋お求めの上、お試しください。

手のかからぬ魔法のせんたく剤

ワンダフル

花王石鹼株式会社

200円
50円

「ワンダフル」の便利利用法、ビジュアルに示されています。口や入れず、手に触れず、洗いやすいので、洗濯物もきれいに仕上がります。

7.2 “A 50-yen washing machine!?” Newspaper advertisement for Kao Wonderful laundry detergent, *Yomiuri shinbun*, June 28, 1954, a.m. ed., 4. Kao Corporation

Once again, in Kao soap advertising, children frolicked with bubbles, continuing the rituals of cleanliness that had earlier established soap as a staple good. In addition to its soap, shampoo, and other personal hygiene products, Kao launched a synthetic laundry detergent in 1951 that it renamed and branded Wonderful in 1953 (figure 7.2). It was, according to ad copy, “a detergent so good it was like having a washing machine in your pocket.” And since washing machines were still a luxury item in the early 1950s, not common in average households until the 1970s, efficient washing by hand was still a priority. According to Kao advertisements, it was “a 50-yen washing machine.” Wonderful’s tremendous success, which increased as prosperity returned and more people acquired washing machines, catapulted Kao into the postwar market. The launch of Wonderful established new tie-ups with electronics manufacturers producing such machines in 1953, first Toshiba and then Matsushita, leveraging the public’s growing aspiration to own new “labor-saving” appliances.²² Advertising for Wonderful curiously used two distinctly different facial types in its moon logo, revealing the instability of Kao’s corporate identity in this new slippery landscape (see figure 3.3).

In the postwar period, the company subtly—but importantly—permanently shifted its corporate logo to face the opposite direction and transformed the

moon face physiognomy to be more feminine. For a while, it used two different facial types concurrently, one masculine and one feminine, the latter perhaps seen as symbolically less aggressive as Kao tried to mitigate any connections to wartime collaboration.²³ Art director Ōta Hideshige, who returned to Kao in 1951, wrote about the transformation of the company's moon logo in *Advertising Art* in 1953.²⁴ The folk crafts movement textile artist Serizawa Keisuke created the first feminized design in 1948, and then the company shifted to a more gender-neutral physiognomy designed by renowned puppeteer Kawajiri Taiji (1904–1994) in 1953, which became the postwar standard.²⁵ It also frequently placed Kao's moon face on the body of the female customer, conflating the logo and the company's target consumer. Along with this, Kao decided to update its soap packaging in 1958 to better fit the new age, employing the English slogan "so mild so gentle and so pure." Art director Okuda Masanori described all the problems with identifying the most appropriate package aesthetics, followed by over two years of extensive experimentation with new manufacturing technologies in printed aluminum foil to produce Amano Hideo's new streamlined, two-toned design based on a concept by Katayama Toshihiro (1928–2013) that displayed KAO in all capital sans serif roman letters above the squared-off gothic Chinese characters for Kaō sekken (Kao soap). The redesign also marked a decisive shift from Hara's hand lettering to true typographic design.²⁶

Paradoxically, despite the Occupation focus on the wartime lack of public opinion polls, Kao maintained a long-standing reliance on consumer feedback as a marketing strategy, represented by the launch of its Housework Science Laboratory in 1934 (renamed the Nagase Housework Science Laboratory in 1937). As the company currently states, it created this laboratory

with the idea of learning more about customers and offering quality lifestyle suggestions. The laboratory turned a scientific eye to the subject of housework and communicated its findings in press conferences, workshops, symposiums, and movie clubs. These venues provided excellent opportunities to interact directly with consumers. The laboratory also made new lifestyle suggestions for Japanese consumers through its Science of Housework Magazine [*Kaji no kagaku*] (1937).

The consumer feedback obtained through the direct interactions and meetings were incorporated into company activities. Kao's approach of placing first priority on consumers and connecting their feedback to product development and improvements is still used today.²⁷

In 1954 Kao restarted these consumer consultations, launching a new system for utilizing feedback in marketing and product development. In 1971 it estab-

lished the Kao Life Science Laboratory (Seikatsu Kagaku Kenkyūjo), which specializes in consumer needs, enhancing the company's ability to respond to changes in household work. For Kao, public opinion was always central to the corporate enterprise.

While it is not possible to detail every aspect of the postwar reemergence of all prewar industries, every company that has been the focus of a previous chapter did reemerge and thrive. Many have gone global, building on imperial networks to expand further into Asia as well as extending into Euro-American markets. How did they achieve this despite the hardships of wartime and defeat? While there is no single answer to this question, the postwar success of these companies clearly involved a combination of development of preexisting markets and networks, sustained investment in advertising and design, and heavy reliance on consumer-oriented marketing informed by broad-based lifestyle research.

Morinaga quickly regenerated sales in caramels and chocolate after the war while continuing to innovate new products, such as a new kind of flavored chewlet developed in 1956 that dissolved in your mouth (unlike chewing gum, which needed to be thrown away). This flavored chewlet was a predecessor of the enormously popular current product Hi-Chew, sold worldwide. According to company publicity, at present, “22 pieces of HI-CHEW™ are being eaten every second. That's 1,320 pieces per minute, 79,200 pieces per hour, 1,900,800 per day and almost 700M pieces per year!”²⁸

After celebrating its hundredth anniversary, Morinaga established Morinaga America in 2008, unexpectedly bringing this history to my doorstep when it opened a major manufacturing facility in Mebane, North Carolina, just fifteen minutes from where I teach at Duke University. The same innovation and marketing savvy that drove the company for its first hundred years continues to propel it across the globe today. In the early postwar period, it continued to invest heavily in advertising, and its marketing was still keyed to spectacular national events like the equestrian processions of Imperial Prince Akihito, Akihito's storybook marriage to commoner Shōda Michiko in 1959, and the 1964 Olympics, when the company produced a “candy fit for an emperor,” or so the tagline went for Morinaga's Hi-Crown chocolates, which became all the rage across Japan.

Already widely recognized in the profession as “the most accomplished” group of corporate designers representing the confectionery market, “The People Who Create Morinaga Advertising” were featured in *Advertising Art* in early 1953, which noted key members of the veteran design team, with familiar names like Mitsui Yoshinosuke topping the list. The article described the team as producing the distinctive “Morinaga look,” which was illustrated in accompanying

photographs displaying the exuberant facades and striped awnings of newly reopened Morinaga Candy Stores alongside lively advertising work overflowing with cute, cartoon-style figures of frolicking children and happy families. The new tagline “overflowing fun!” (*tanoshisa ga morimori*) played on the homonym for *mori*, the first part of the company name. And a Morinaga-branded helicopter became the newest technological form of mobile promotion.²⁹ Morinaga’s business department director Inoo Heihachi (1905–1989) underscored fun as the bedrock of caramel publicity design. Every advertising design, he argued, began with the idea of offering children a fun life.³⁰ And Morisaki Zenichi, author of numerous books on advertising and American marketing, reminded corporate advertisers that these fun connotations extended to adults, who had fond memories of eating caramel as children.³¹

Inoo had just returned from a trip to the United States where he attended a conference on advertising and surveyed state-of-the-art candy manufacturing facilities. He concluded that more than the candy itself, the packaging was the key to marketing success. As a promotional space, the box (*sakku*) was what drew young consumers to buy the product because it offered the added value of game cards that could be strategically amassed, matched, and redeemed for additional rewards. The box package designs actively engaged consumers as gaming participants by appealing to their competitive spirits.³² The next year, in 1954, Morinaga’s product planning division hired now-renowned packaging designer Hirohashi Keiko (b. 1931), who had just graduated from the design department at the Tokyo University of the Arts. She spearheaded the company’s innovative designs and led a new generation of women into the field.³³

Electronics and various lighting industries as well as cameras and optical equipment, beer, soft drinks, and textiles were also important connectors for design across the war. Historian Simon Partner has devoted an entire book to the postwar electronics industry, so it will not be a major focus here, but as he concluded, market creation based on the American model was key to postwar prosperity. Matsushita relied heavily on the social science of marketing as a linchpin for success.³⁴ To continue its public promotion of electrical technology for selling company products and to celebrate the company’s thirty-fifth anniversary, Matsushita sponsored the National Electrification Exhibition (Nashonaru Denkaten) in 1953 at the Hankyū department store in Osaka. The show featured new technology, an array of new products, and a model “electrified home” with live demonstrations. It was followed by a “mobile exhibition” that took these promotions around the country in the National Television Car, a caravan-style van packed with products. The mobile team partnered with local agents and dealers, exhibiting at public halls in each region. It also included exhibitions of electrical

appliances at schools and other venues. The company credits this broad outreach with promoting increased national awareness of home electrification throughout Japan in the early postwar period, which helped these new products gain popularity.³⁵ This became part of a larger concerted effort among manufacturers and government officials to promote “the bright life” (*akarui seikatsu*), a slogan signifying a life that Partner describes as replete with leisure time, travel, and recreation, thanks to a host of new labor-saving appliances. Seizing on this concept of brightness, which accorded with the luminous nature of their wares, these companies again sold it as both a system of values and products. The housewife-mother was portrayed as “the sun of the family,” harking back to prewar discourses that connected electric light and natural solar illumination.³⁶ Here the housewife-consumer provided energy to the modern home through her rationalized labor and skillful domestic engineering as well as serving as an illuminating moral beacon of postwar civilization. It was a successful strategy, as Matsushita’s sales quadrupled between 1955 and 1959, undergirded by its extraordinary expenditures on advertising, which increased from just 4 percent of sales in the early 1950s to 8.7 percent in 1959, far exceeding spending on research and development. In fact, total national expenditures on advertising in Japan grew from ¥9 billion in 1953 to ¥14.6 billion in 1959, totaling 1.5 percent of the gross domestic product that year.³⁷ Matsushita Kōnosuke, who first visited the United States in 1951, envisioned his company’s advertising as enriching, not exploitative. It was, he noted in a later public lecture in 1967, not limited to products and sales but more about helping people in society live their best lives. His confidence was rooted in a steadfast patriotic belief in the quality and benefits of his products to enhance Japanese daily lives.³⁸ Panasonic promoted the quality of its products as deriving distinctly from Japan’s unique native culture and artisanal traditions, thus projecting a form of techno-nationalism around the world.³⁹

The important transwar advertising veteran Takeoka Ryōichi led Matsushita’s advertising efforts from the late 1930s through the 1980s.⁴⁰ In 1956 he established his own independent firm, the National Advertising Research Institute (Nashonaru Senden Kenkyūjo), later renamed Creators Group MaC, which still claims Panasonic as its main client.⁴¹ He was also founding president of the National Institute of Promotion and the chairman of the Japan Sign Design Association, as well as chairman of the Japan Advertising Production Association. His name appeared frequently over the decades as an invited commentator in design journals.

As for Calpis, the company has continued to champion its soft drinks unabated, innovating with new products and shifting the colors of its signature polka dots; it continued to use Otto Dünkelsbühler’s blackface logo until 1987.

In 2001 Calpis signed a contract with Asahi Soft Drinks Company to sell each other's products in the same vending machines. In 2007 the companies merged to allow the amalgamation of their vending machine operations, and the new joint company is now known as the Asahi Soft Drink Sales Company Ltd. When the Calpis brand celebrated its ninetieth anniversary in 2009, it had a host of new sub-brands like Calpis soda and Calpis water that were selling briskly at home and around the globe.

Nippon Design Center

As modern design supported major companies, the companies were equally committed to supporting design. In fact, they were primary patrons. In 1959 Kamekura, Hara, Yamashiro Ryūichi, Isobe Kazumitsu, Abe Akihiro, Abe Tatsugorō, Katō Shigeyuki, Tanaka Shirō, Kimura Magohachirō, Shirahama Hiroshi, and Suzuki Matsuo established the Nippon Design Center (Nippon Dezaian Sentā, or NDC) with the investment of eight prominent Japanese companies: Asahi Breweries, Asahi Kasei, Nippon Steel, Toshiba, Toyota Motors, Nikon, NKK Switches, and Nomura Securities.

It was through the NDC office that Kamekura and his colleagues served their postwar clients. The editor of the Swiss design journal *Graphis*, Walter Herdeg, described the NDC as “an organization of designers backed up by a variety of other specialists, such as photographers, copywriters, etc.; in all it has a staff of ninety-one. . . . The Centre was not thought of as just a commercial venture, but as a place where a particular design philosophy—the creation of a group personality which would raise standards in general—would be worked out.”⁴² Also writing about the center's founding in *Graphis*, critic Ogawa Masataka noted the monumental increase in Japanese spending on advertising, which continued to swell, reaching upward of ¥174 billion in 1960. And Japan's small veteran workforce and many young designers, who, while talented, still lacked organizational ability, could not meet the growing demands of industry. The NDC was formed to address this need for scaling up excellent design to keep pace with industry. Otherwise, Ogawa predicted, mediocrity would prevail. Visitors, he remarked, were consistently startled by the “miracle” of modern Tokyo, its rapid development, and its capacity for “swallowing up and blending, in its vast maw, elements of all kinds from the new and the old, from the East and the West. No one who encounters the bewildering confusion of the metropolis can help being astonished at the extraordinary energy it displays.” The basic idea behind the formation of the NDC, he concluded, “was that more effective advantage could be taken of designers' abilities if, instead of

working in isolation, a number of them got together to form an organization within which they could pool their ideas and utilize them in the most efficient way for producing their work.”⁴³ The NDC did just that and is still a thriving practice, now led by famed designer Hara Kenya (b. 1958), who designed the opening and closing ceremonies for the 1998 Nagano Winter Olympics and who has been the chief designer for the popular Japanese retailer Muji (Muji-rushi Ryōhin) since 2001.⁴⁴ The firm deserves its own history.

As one of the principals at the NDC, Kamekura made stark and dramatic use of elemental light and dark forms, which epitomized his increasing move to geometric abstraction in the early postwar period. Concerned with the universal necessity of nonlogocentric global visual communication, he became particularly immersed in the world of trademark design. Drawing from the long tradition of family and company crests, Kamekura wrote a major study of world trademarks and company symbols, first published in 1955 with a preface by Paul Rand, translated by Katsumi Masaru; the book illustrated over seven hundred examples and was then reissued in several different variations.⁴⁵ Kamekura went on to design hundreds of now-famous trademarks.

Kamekura’s burgeoning client list was teeming with major transwar manufacturers in a range of industries, including silk and cotton textile manufacturer Kanebo, a main sponsor of *Nippon*, and wool and rayon manufacturers like Daido Worsted Mills (now Daidoh) and Tōyō Rayon (now Toray, the world’s largest producer of carbon fiber and Japan’s largest producer of synthetic fiber), both prominent players in imperial economic markets that were featured in *Commerce Japan* (figure 7.3). They continued their work unabated.⁴⁶ Likewise, Kamekura continued his design work for these industries, producing extensive advertisements in the 1950s, particularly for Daido’s Milliontex brand, helping to solidify that company’s stylish image and sizable market share. Other clients included major domestic manufacturers like Nikon, which began entering the international market. Known for its Nikkor brand camera lenses launched in 1932, the Tokyo-based Nippon Kōgaku Kabushiki Kaisha (Japan Optical Company), an optical equipment company established in 1917, adopted the new brand name Nikon for its small cameras in 1946, quickly becoming a global powerhouse in the early postwar period. Consumers around the world soon recognized both Nikkor lenses and Nikon cameras for their superior quality (figure 7.4). Nippon Kōbō photographer Domon Ken first introduced Kamekura to the company in 1944, and he began working for Nikon in 1953, designing an array of posters, brochures, manuals, product packaging, calendars, and neon signs that were disseminated worldwide. He imaged Nikon’s brand identity in a new visual vocabulary of highly technical abstraction, graphically

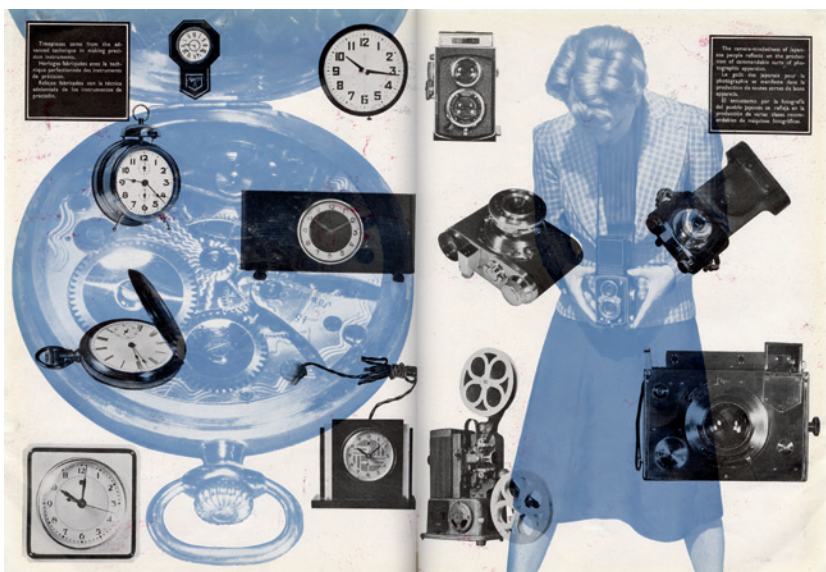
7.3 Nippon Kōbō, cover of *Commerce Japan* 8 (December 1939); this issue focuses on Japanese textiles. Cornell University Library



transforming the precision camera lens into a mechanical surrogate for the human eye (figure 7.5). And his use of high-tech photography in his designs reinforced the products themselves, particularly spotlighted in the groundbreaking use of photographs for designs in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics posters.⁴⁷

The Japan Advertising Artists Club (JAAC)

Any discussion of transwar design must include the formation in 1951 of the Japan Advertising Artists Club (JAAC, or the Nihon Senden Bijutsukai, abbreviated as Nissenbi in Japanese), which evolved into a major national design organization. While the JAAC may not have constituted the mythical origin point of professional Japanese graphic design that some have claimed, it was an important and powerful organization in postwar design, precisely because its founding members were already so influential in the field. Among its fifty founding members were Yamana (as first chairman), Kōno, Kamekura, Arai, Ōhashi, Takahashi, and Hayakawa Yoshio. Formed largely in opposition



7.4 (above) Nippon Kōbō, cameras and timepieces, *Commerce Japan* 11 (December 1940): 18–19. Cornell University Library

7.5 (left) Kamekura Yūsaku, poster for Nippon Kogaku Kabushiki Kaisha (Nikon), 1954. National Crafts Museum/DNPartcom. Courtesy of Japan Graphic Design Association, Inc.

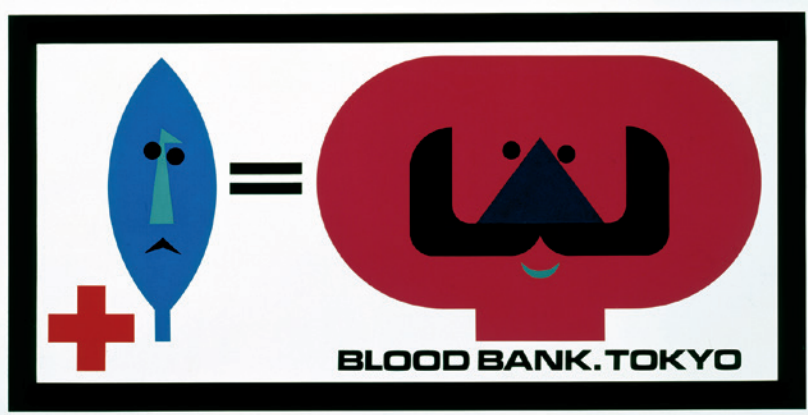
to Sugiura Hisui's Japanese Advertising Association, the JAAC was active for over twenty years, becoming the collective national face of Japanese design in interactions with the global design community and representing the country in the international arena, specifically at the World Design Conference in 1960. It should be noted that there was not a single woman among the JAAC founding members, perpetuating a long-standing practice of gender discrimination in the field even though many important women artists were struggling to come to the fore in postwar Japanese artistic movements. More women entered the ranks within the first five years, and by the early 1960s, the first generation of leading women designers were being recognized, such as Hirohashi Keiko, working for Morinaga, and Ishioka Eiko (1938–2012), first at Shiseido from 1961 and then later at the trendsetting department store Parco in the early 1970s. With its own fair share of internal controversies and criticisms over these two decades, specifically tensions that emerged between the more business-oriented and more artistically oriented sides of the field, the JAAC eventually disbanded in 1970, succumbing to pressure from the politicized student movement, particularly younger designers who mobilized into the Anti-JAAC Joint Struggle Committee. By that time, the younger generation saw it as a symbol of authority and no longer a source of innovation.⁴⁸ The group's dissolution is also linked to the complicated postwar legacy of Bauhausian modernism in Japan. A beacon of international modernist design, the Bauhaus went from avant-garde to *derrière-garde* through the 1960s as new trends infused the field with youthful rebellion and countercultural proclivities that tended more toward individualism and experimental psychedelia than universalism and abstract geometry. This trend coalesced in the *PERSONA* exhibition of graphic design, held at Matsuya department store in 1965. All eleven artists featured in the *PERSONA* exhibition were, however, JAAC members.

According to Nakai's reminiscences, which document in somewhat excruciating detail the fraught internal politics and multiple migrations among postwar design groups, when the JAAC came together, some members of Hisui's Japanese Advertising Association transferred to the Tokyo Commercial Artists Association, or TCAA (Tōkyō Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai, today known as the Tokyo Graphic Designers Club [Tōkyō Gurafikkū Dezaināzu Kurabu]), while others followed the powerful artist-designer Tōgō Seiji to his newly established Nika Association Commercial Art Section (Nikakai Shōgyō Bijutsubu), also still active today. The three main professional design groups from 1951 until 1970 were the JAAC, the TCAA, and Nika. By 1964, however, Nika, while zealously maintaining its connection to "pure art," was, according to the design critic and Nihon University professor Uemura Takachiyo (1911–1998),

in fact very close to the JAAC, with a significant overlap in exhibition applicants, and was basically serving as a feeder organization, infusing avant-garde aesthetics into the Japanese design field and mainstream commercial art.⁴⁹ The ADC also saw a great deal of internal jockeying for power between art directors and designers, especially when the JAAC disbanded, sending a flood of designers into the ranks of the art directors. This prompted many of the art directors to decamp and form the Japan Academy of Advertising (Nihon Kōkoku Gakkai) in 1969.⁵⁰ Given the earlier rivalries among Hamada, Murota, and Tada, or between Natori and Hara, along with a host of others who have competed for a seat at the table, power politics is nothing new to the design field.

The JAAC manifesto proclaimed the birth of the association in the interest of “clarifying our profession, solidifying the recognition of advertising art, protecting all rights to work, and connecting to each other in our common interests and for our common well-being to improve and enable work.” The group declared, “To join the world, we beautifully and happily join the new art movements around the world. This is how the Japanese Advertising Artists Club was born. We sincerely expect enthusiastic support from various fields as well as from advertising writers.”⁵¹ And with its announcement, the association immediately began publicly exhibiting design to demonstrate its important social role, something design advocates like Hisui, Hamada, and Morinaga’s Kōzusha had started back in the 1920s and 1930s. Again, their main partners were department stores, whose power as art venues only continued to increase. The first JAAC exhibition, held in 1951 at Ginza Matsuzakaya department store, re-launched this powerful partnership.⁵² Similarly, all the new design magazines zealously reported on the JAAC exhibitions with copious photographic coverage, spotlighting individual artists, particularly the veteran cartel.

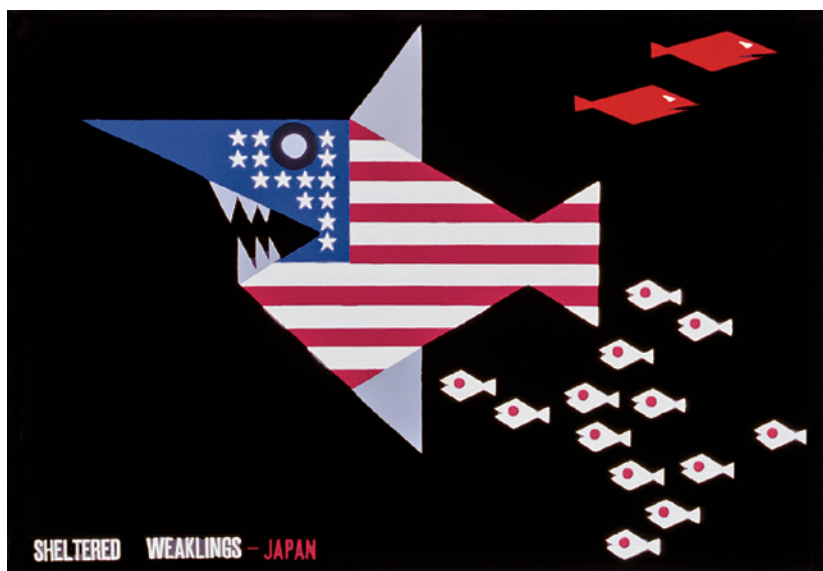
The group was also dedicated to exhibiting original design works rather than just commissioned or published projects. This encouraged free-form creativity rather than being beholden to corporate patronage. With this, the group sought to champion design as an influential social force independent of sponsors. Right out of the gate, JAAC designers were tackling weighty social problems and public themes. After the traumatic nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, defeat, and the Occupation, many former Nippon Kōbō designers in the JAAC turned their patriotic sentiments toward anti-American political movements, including supporting the burgeoning antinuclear movement, thus reframing their nationalism as anti-Cold War efforts for political autonomy and renormalization of Japan in the world theater of nations. Uemura, writing about the JAAC in *Idea* magazine in 1961, noted this shift from commercial works to those for public service or welfare, and a growing aversion to



7.6 Kōno Takashi, “Blood Bank, Tokyo,” poster, 1951 (reproduced in 1983). Kōno Takashi Archive

the term *commercial design* in favor of *visual design* and *visual communication*.⁵³ Scholars acknowledge that one of the JAAC’s greatest contributions to the field in the early postwar period was continuous introspection about the fundamental nature and imperatives of design in modern Japan.⁵⁴

At the first JAAC exhibition, Kōno showed his highly acclaimed and now-famous poster “Blood Bank, Tokyo,” a simple image of a depleted cell and a flush one full of red blood (figure 7.6). This poster became a beacon for a new kind of simple, abstracted design that was whimsical, even childlike in its simplicity, but sophisticated in its visual communication. In addition, the poster reveals how the postwar period unleashed the designer’s enormous creativity into political activism, exemplified by his famous poster exhibited at the third JAAC exhibition in 1953, “Sheltered Weaklings—Japan” (1953), which displayed an oversize shark with fiercely sharp teeth, in the colors of the American flag, followed by a school of diminutive Japanese guppies, colored white, with a red eye to represent the national flag. Two red Soviet (or Chinese) fish were shown swimming in the opposite direction above (figure 7.7).⁵⁵ Kōno also took aim at the power dynamics of the design world using a similar aquatic motif in his cover design for the third issue of *Advertising Art* magazine in 1960 to criticize the ever-increasing power of corporations in dictating the direction of creative design. The cover showed two fish, a large one labeled “sponsors” that was about to consume a smaller fish labeled “designers” (figure 7.8).



7.7 (above) Kōno Takashi, “Sheltered Weaklings—Japan,” poster, 1953 (reproduced in 1983). Kōno Takashi Archive

7.8 (left) Kōno Takashi, cover of *Advertising Art 3* (1960). Kōno Takashi Archive

The relationship between designers and sponsors was a constant tension in the business of global design and a topic Herbert Bayer repeatedly addressed in his copious writings and his keynote presentation at the WoDeCo the same year. Katsumi translated and adapted portions of an essay Bayer originally published in a *Gebrauchsgraphik* special issue on the designer's work for the Container Corporation of America (CCA). The essay, titled "Design as an Expression of Industry," visualized these concepts in a complicated flowchart in Japanese, topped by manufacturing, with arrows leading to sales, advertising art, and management. Bayer argued for a more expansive and inclusive understanding of design to allow visionary, socially conscious businessmen to express the culture and identity of their organizations, with design serving as the integral nexus of this complex process, mediating among industry, public relations, and the external world. This would, he claimed, enable large corporations to express their "personalities" as well as favorably influence their employees. Design's every step needed to follow an organized plan to express a characteristic style or element of corporate identity. Like human beings, who were judged by their stature, physique, coloring, features, expressions, and taste in dress, which all worked together to create an impression of an individual, large businesses, which Bayer reminded his readers were deemed corporate persons under American law, could create a similar personal impression through corporate design.⁵⁶ He advocated for a total design policy that included all visual elements, extending from stationery to workers' facilities, and would mediate the company's dealings, both internal and external. The challenge was how to project a distinctive internal personality externally.

For Bayer, "the enlightened company" made important cultural contributions to society as a carrier of education and modern culture. Art needed to avail itself of this new role, not merely as "a beautifying attachment to other important creative forces of life, such as production and trade, but as an essential collaborator with industry on an equal footing."⁵⁷ He presented his work for the CCA as an example of what an enlightened designer could do working for an enlightened company. As the CCA president and chair of the board of directors, Walter Paepcke, stated, "There is nothing romantic or artistic about paperboard containers," and the company's customers were "hardheaded businessmen" only interested in buying paperboard packaging for practical efficiency at the lowest price.⁵⁸ It was even more remarkable that such a company had led the way in encouraging good taste through design while continuing to yield enormous profits. Bayer established a consistent house style with a new trademark, uniform typography on all company printed matter that exhibited clear organization and legibility, and a basic color scheme mirroring the tan

hue of the cardboard boxes, which extended to the fleet of mobile delivery vans and trucks. He followed Paepcke's charge to limit copy by expressing the company's identity pictorially.

Design was a form of "human relations" that needed to shape the corporate working environment where men and women were increasingly spending a disproportionate part of their lives. Good design provided for "hygiene, morale, companionship, relaxation." Bayer explained, "It is said that a great man is measured by the impress he makes upon his time. The saying applies equally to corporate persons which, if they are well managed, unite the efforts of thousands of individuals. It would seem most unlikely that a company manufacturing short-lived paperboard boxes could make the slightest cultural impress upon its time. But the facts show plainly that if even the humblest product is designed, manufactured and advertised with a clear sense of human values and with a taste for quality, the world will recognize the presence of a creative force."⁵⁹ Katsumi and his veteran colleagues in the JAAC became Japan's frontline advocates for this coordinated or total approach to design policy that empowered the designer as a leader in crafting integrated corporate visual communications for the betterment of society.

The JAAC soon became a key gateway for newcomers hoping to become established in the field. From its third exhibition in 1953 (figure 7.9), the organization issued an open public call for participants that competitively yielded work by a range of young designers who would go on to become the stars of the next generation: Awazu Kiyoshi, Sugiura Kōhei, Yokoo Tadanori, Fukuda Shigeo, and Katsui Mitsuo.⁶⁰ Also serving as a national portal for international inquiries, the JAAC brokered Japanese design contributions to overseas projects like the Swiss *Graphis Annual* design almanac in 1952 and beyond.⁶¹ By 1960 over twenty-five thousand designers had applied for the 4,623 total spots available at the JAAC exhibitions. A fully recognized power broker in the field, the group and its large public exhibitions continued to elevate the status of graphic design in Japan through the next decade.

But perhaps more than any other show that JAAC members mounted, the Graphic '55 exhibition held in 1955 at Takashimaya department store in Nihonbashi is heralded in the field as a landmark event in Japanese design history for displaying the variety, versatility, and originality of modern Japanese designers.⁶² It is no coincidence that 1955 was the year people widely started proclaiming, "It is no longer the postwar" (*mohaya sengo dewa nai*).⁶³ Thus, this exhibition had the added significance of marking the start of a new era of Japan's normalization in the world. The jagged katakana calligraphy for Graphic '55 below the overlapping spirograph-style rings in Kamekura's exhibition poster,



7.9 Third exhibition of the Japan Advertising Artists Club (JAAC), or Nihon Senden Bijutsukai (Nissenbi), at Mitsukoshi department store, 1953. Segi and Nissenbi, *JAAC 1951–1970*, 34

which carried over into Hara Hiromu's sleek pamphlet, announced "an exhibition of commercial design for today." The show featured a wide range of graphic design works (not just posters) by a select group of seven veteran JAAC designers (Hara, Kamekura, Kōno, Ōhashi, Hayakawa, Itō, and Yamashiro) along with the American guest artist Paul Rand. Rand was already a leader in corporate identity design; he had created iconic logos for IBM and Westinghouse. Kamekura had met him the previous year during a trip to the United States, and Rand's inclusion signaled an important shift in the Japanese design community mindset to one of parity rather than followership, where the Japanese saw themselves as viable competitors on the global stage. Thus, from the Graphic '55 exhibition a widespread call emerged for original Japanese design that was no longer beholden to any Western models (and would not be subject to criticism of imitation). Yet how to achieve this was a question that would continue to be debated, coming front and center five years later at the WoDeCo.

The 1960 WoDeCo (Sekai Dezain Kaigi)— Expanding the World Map of Design

“Now we realize how precious was the opportunity we had, to meet personally, in the common ground of Design, with people who throughout the world are fighting for the happiness of mankind, and to discuss common problems with them as fellow human beings living in our present age. To those of us who are here in Japan, this opportunity has proved as never before the extreme importance of the social function of Design and the necessity of working together.”⁶⁴ So wrote Sakakura Junzō, renowned architect, first-prize recipient at the 1937 Paris world’s fair, and chairman of the 1960 World Design Conference (WoDeCo), in the preface to the published proceedings of the conference. Fujiyama Aiichirō, the minister of foreign affairs, joined the opening speakers, welcoming the participants with a message familiar from the touristic cultural vision of *Nippon*: “I also hope that the foreign delegates will observe Japan just as it is and complete their understanding on things Japanese.” The minister of international trade and industry, Ikeda Hayato, reinforced this message, stating that he, too, hoped that the foreign participants would “adjust their knowledge of Japan by studying modern industrial Japan as well as traditional Japan with the keen eyes of a specialist.”⁶⁵

Making postwar Japan understandable to this powerful cadre of influencers was a central purpose of this gathering. Only the president of the Japan Architects Association (Nihon Kenchikuka Kyōkai), Maekawa Kunio, broached the cultural divide of war and indicated that the world had again reached “a fatal moment” when it was on the brink of a new conflict, a war in space. Referring to the Cold War brinkmanship between the United States and the Soviet Union that Japan was experiencing as a strategic outpost for US forces in the Pacific, he expressed sincere hope for leisure tourism and travel to space rather than a war there. Atomic-age concerns continued to cast a long shadow across the world, exacerbated by the problems and prospects of technology.

To address the future of design in this landscape, Japan hosted the WoDeCo for five days, from May 11 to 16, at the Ōtemachi Sankei Kaikan auditorium in Tokyo under the thematic banner “Our Century: The Total Image of Our Age and the Role of Design.” Kōno designed the conference logo based on the character for “sun,” *hi* (also the *ni* in *Nippon*), with the Western letters *C* and *D* (from *Conference* and *Design* from the event’s name) embedded within and highlighted in contrasting colors in print publicity (figure 7.10).⁶⁶ This was the country’s first international design conference, and it was dedicated to confraternity, the happiness of humankind across national borders, and the important

7.10 Kōno Takashi, logo design for the World Design Conference, 1960. Kōno Takashi Archive



social function of design. Two hundred and twenty-seven designers and architects from twenty-four countries participated. This international group of designers had decided at its conference in Aspen, Colorado, four years earlier, in 1956, to hold a major conference in Tokyo. The WoDeCo executive committee included Katsumi, Hara, architects Sakakura Junzō and Tange Kenzō (the future designer of the two Olympic stadiums in 1964), and designer Yanagi Sōri (son of the famous folk crafts theorist Yanagi Sōetsu), with other major figures in the architecture and design world assisting, including Kamekura as the conference graphic design director.⁶⁷ Graphic and industrial designers and architects gathered, with well-known figures such as Bayer, Bruno Munari, and Louis Kahn coming from abroad. It was during this conference that Kawazoe Noboru, Kikutake Kiyonori, and Kurokawa Kisho formed the now-famous Metabolism (Metaborizumu) group of architects. Despite a host of linguistic challenges and limited time, the conference served to establish the Japanese design world as a player on the international stage and for many effectively closed the book on the war.

Many of the presentations and conversations highlighted the influential role of designers in society. Bayer gave the guest keynote lecture, titled “Design Reviewed,” which opened with a haunting gambit tinged by the shadow of social Darwinism, so recently epitomized by Nazi Germany:

The succession of life is marked with more species which have died out than have remained alive. Against odds, man has evolved as a dominant animal. Only he has acquired the unique powers to turn nature to his own use and advantage. He has made it his task here on earth to change his environment rather than to adjust to it.

Design has become one of the essentials in the shaping of our visual environment.⁶⁸

A product of merging economics and human existence, design emphasized the importance of inventing useful things, Bayer said. The designer was a conflicted “intermediary” caught between the sponsor and the market, leaving him simultaneously faced with a “fait accompli on the one hand and an uncertain goal on the other.” Engulfed in the “pressures of a gigantic chain reaction” that produced an endless and expanding cycle of production and consumption, the creative designer could still emerge, however, like the free artist, able to assert his own intuition and creativity. Rejecting the notion that the designer was of lower standing than the free artist, Bayer asserted that in fact the moral strength and effort necessary to produce good design in the face of the forces of production, sale, and profit were commendable. And unlike art for art’s sake, design required devotion to the concrete visual problems of the time. For him, the designer accepted his position in service to society, embracing this important responsibility. His success was determined by the strength of his spirit, since “good design, like art, is essentially a conquest of matter by spirit.”⁶⁹

Bayer portrayed the graphic designer as a warrior with formidable opponents, some within the advertising field itself: the copywriter, who suppressed the visual image in favor of written-word communication; and the researcher, who had established an influential position in the age of market surveys and impressive statistics, which were taken as *de facto* proof of the consumer’s needs or wants. Forced to work based on these “facts,” the designer was placed in a subordinate role. Even more conspiratorially, he continued, “psychiatry and social sciences are employed to probe our subconscious. The ‘motivation analysts’ as they are called, use mass psychoanalysis to influence purchasing decisions, to conduct campaigns of persuasion, to channel our thought processes. To have our subconscious undermined and our inner unawareness manipulated to serve unknown motives is a frightening thought.” But the multibillion-dollar communication industry could not afford the trials and errors of the designer’s individual intuition. “The designer,” he asserted, “must be established in the framework of industrial production as an equal to scientist and businessman.” He hoped that artisans, like the enduring crafts traditions that Japan rep-

resented so iconically, would always be valued, even in a world dominated by mechanical mass production. Despite his identity as a modernist trendsetter, Bayer asserted that contemporary design could thrive only when it understood the aesthetic values of tradition and history—and when it channeled the individual's energy for the collective good. This, he assured the audience, would not deter the increasingly international and border-crossing teamwork in the design sphere.⁷⁰

Looking to the future, he presciently pointed to the challenges of world population increases that would put immense stresses on cities and were exhausting natural resources. Such resources needed to be conserved until alternatives could be found. The increase in standards of living would fuel consumption “ad absurdum,” in his words, if economic systems could not keep pace with population growth. “Atomic energy still means terror, and atomic technology is still only a promise. The future use of nearly costless power will transform man's environment in ways hard to imagine”—both good and unknown. He already foresaw the explosion of information and all its concomitant cultural implications, particularly for communication. Considering where we stand in terms of information overload two decades into the new millennium, it is stunning to hear Bayer back in 1960 talk of a state of “over-communication” caused by an “exploding quantity of information.” He imagined a world of computing machines replacing printed matter and storing knowledge, both facilitating instant recall and replacing human memory.⁷¹

Kamekura gave his own speech, laying down the gauntlet for the future of design in Japan by reaching back into history and seizing on the term *katachi*, or “form,” as a guiding principle.⁷² *Katachi*, he explained, also broadly encompassed the spatial. *Kata*, or formal conventions that governed aesthetic production of *katachi*, were dedicated to function and discarded any unnecessary decorativeness. They exemplified simplicity. While the onslaught of Western culture in Japan rapidly suppressed such *kata* forms, they still, in Kamekura's estimation, remained deeply rooted in Japan, alive in the sphere of daily life.

Guided by his own predilection for abstraction, Kamekura interpreted these forms as entirely absent of romanticism and emotion, transcendental in quality. It was their simple and utilitarian character that allowed them to persist. And while the Japanese had periodically rebelled against the strictures of these forms, particularly those with modern sensibilities, who felt them constraining, those rebels were in his estimation only slaves to “fashion” buoyed by waves of shallow commercialism. It was in fact the deep structures, devoid of

emotion or trendy romanticism, that were able to persist, expanding into the spatial realm. This core tendency or *katachi* that endured from the early modern period would offer something meaningful for the future of design.

Both Bayer and Kamekura were advocating for a new fundamental internationalism that derived from history and tradition but was abstract and purportedly had a universal appeal. *Katachi* was strict, deliberately trimmed to remove extraneous elements. Every time a creative form strayed from the strictures of *katachi* to become more lyrical, particularly in popular spheres, it lost its compelling elemental nature. *Katachi* existed not only in the world of objects but also in movement. A prime example was Noh drama, which, somewhat whimsically according to Kamekura, was “simple to the point of boredom.”⁷³ Evoking a term that architect Isozaki Arata later made famous, Kamekura discussed the special relationship between Japanese dance and music as indicative of the concept of *ma*, translated as “space.” *Ma*, Kamekura noted, fulfilled the role of the base for the next movement when the music comes to a standstill. *Ma* was a manifestation of *katachi*.

Again, reaching back to well-worn traditional spiritual tropes of Shinto and Buddhism, Kamekura explained the tension between the two in terms of the former’s sparsity and the latter’s human lyricism. *Katachi*, he mused, was born from “the form of Shinto and the decorum of Zen,” with Zen representing the sparsest aesthetics of the various Buddhist sects. Whether the unpainted natural wood columns of a shrine, the tea ceremony, or ceramic pots, this amalgamation was codified in *katachi*. One of the most enduring and striking examples of this *katachi* still extant in modern life for Kamekura was the family crest, or *monshō*, which started as a symbol of social standing but was then popularized among the lower classes and came to be a visual signifier of each family unit. “How strong is the life-power of these deep-rooted forms!” he exclaimed. “This is why they still exist in our lives today as a healthy tradition.” This was a healthy tradition that contemporary Japanese designers had inherited and must embrace: “In the design world of Japan, . . . it was thought that, for good or for bad, the acceptance of the forms and the spirit of the West was the new movement which should be followed. However, this was definitely not a loss to us. If it had not been for this spirit of rebellion, we would never have known the balance of the world, we would never have realized the importance of rationality and function, but would have merely gone on carrying on with our old traditions, holding on to our stiff-necked artisanship and our festering technique-consciousness.” He concluded that while tradition could be a burden for Japanese designers, it was one they could not

reject but were obligated to take apart and put back together in a new way.⁷⁴ Overcoming tradition while respecting it, Kamekura's approach to *katachi* was by his own admission intuitive, not theoretical or academic. And the confrontation between *katachi* and individuality would, he hoped, ultimately inspire the design field.

The Tokyo ADC later praised Kamekura's inspired stylistic integration as a "synthesis between the rational, logical and functional design systems of the west and the classical grace of traditional Japanese design." This assessment, one might argue, also described his earlier work. They noted that while he was "most known for his use of uncluttered, solid shapes in an elementally sparse plane, one can also find unexpected lyricism behind these solid forms."⁷⁵ And in the wider international sphere, the powerful postwar American design community began to interpret this creative graphic design synthesis as a distinct Japanese national style—one that came to full fruition at the 1964 Olympics.

The 1964 Tokyo Olympics as Palimpsest of Transwar Continuity

It is impossible for mere numbers to give the reader an adequate impression of the friendly reception and gracious hospitality given to all contestants, officials and spectators alike, by our Japanese hosts and that means all Japanese, and not only those connected with the event, since the entire nation from newsboy to industrial tycoon adopted the Games as his own project and went out of his way to please the visitors. The Olympic flame on its way from ancient Olympia was carried through every province in Japan and no country has ever been so thoroughly converted to the Olympic movement. . . . Every operation had been rehearsed repeatedly until it moved smoothly, effortlessly and with precision. Every difficulty had been anticipated and the result was as near perfection as possible. Even the most callous journalists were impressed, to the extent that one veteran reporter named them the "Happy" Games.

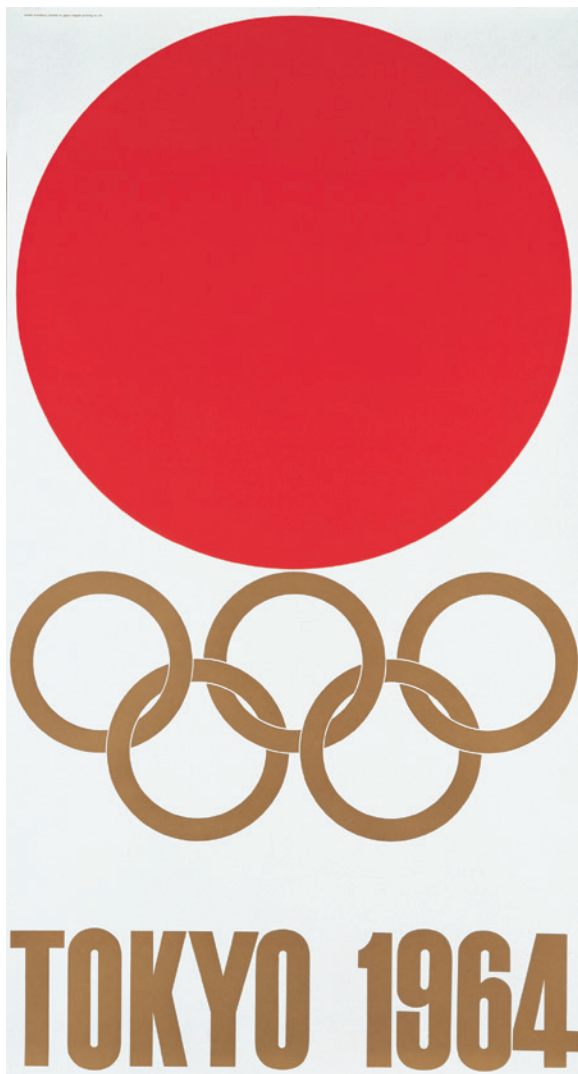
This common interest served to submerge political, economic and social differences and to provide an objective shared by all the people of Japan. In Tokyo everyone united to clean, brighten and improve the city and a vast program of public works involving hundreds of millions of dollars was adopted. . . . Japan has demonstrated its capacity to all the world through bringing this greatest of all international spectacles to Asia for the first time and staging it with such unsurpassed precision and

distinction. It is certainly the Number One Olympic Nation today. The International Olympic Committee is indebted to it for this important contribution to the Olympic Movement.

—Avery Brundage, president of the International Olympic Committee,
*Games of the XVIII Olympiad Tokyo 1964: Official Report of the
Organizing Committee* (1966)

The enduring thread of the Olympics speaks to the sustained vision of Japanese design's entangled service to the state and commerce from the 1930s up to 1964.⁷⁶ On April 28, 1952, the Allied Occupation of Japan officially ended. Less than a month later, in May, Japan declared its intention to host the Olympics. Its second bid eventually succeeded, and Tokyo hosted the XVIII Olympics in 1964, becoming the first Asian nation to do so. Chosen from six competing submissions, Kamekura's design for the official logo mark emblem and poster of the red sun and five interlocking rings visually defined the event around the world.⁷⁷ He had originally proposed using the five colors of the Olympic rings in accordance with International Olympic Committee (IOC) guidelines, but the creative director, Katsumi, opted for gold, reminiscent of Japanese family crests and more redolent of Japanese traditional aesthetics, not to mention the color's sublimated associations with imperial and shogunal grandeur. This seemingly simple conversion transformed the internationalism implicit in the multicolored rings into a bold statement of national identity while retaining the Olympic framework of international fraternity (figure 7.11). Throughout its program the Japanese design team strategically deployed this Olympic paradox of nationalist internationalism to assert Japaneseness and Japan's triumphant reintegration into the world theater of nations, legitimating national policies and normalizing diplomatic relations, effectively ending Japan's post-war period.⁷⁸ The country's valor even in defeat was explicitly articulated in the words of the late Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, ventriloquized through the sound system and on the electronic billboard at the opening ceremony, pictured in the illustrated report of the Games: "The important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win, but to take part; the important thing in Life is not triumph, but the struggle; the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well." The signboard image omitted, however, a significant final sentence in de Coubertin's famous statement, which continued, "To spread these principles is to build up a strong and more valiant and, above all, more scrupulous and more generous humanity."⁷⁹ This simple editorial abridgement implicitly shifted a global directive for humanity as a whole back to the resurgent nation-state.

7.11 Kamekura Yūsaku, logo design for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, 1961. Japan Graphic Design Association Inc. Courtesy of the International Olympic Committee



Design cemented this return of the never completely repressed. Commenting on his thought process, Kamekura noted, “Making a simple design that would have the feel of Japan and of the Olympics was not an easy task, but I created this emblem design without too much complicated thinking or worrying. I wanted to express the idea of Japan cleanly and clearly, and at the same time incorporate the sense of movement and sportiness connected with the Olympics.” And while Japanese viewers—not to mention the rest of the world—clearly associated it with the Japanese flag, Kamekura oddly dissembled, stating, “One

might perceive in it the 'Japanese flag,' but for me the idea of the 'sun' was really stronger."⁸⁰ The interchangeability of the sun and Japan in this long-standing nationalist symbolism constituted a bizarre and suspicious blind spot for him.

As Olympic design historian Jilly Traganou has compellingly argued, moreover, "The choice of the 'Olympic red' in the overall Olympic representation of the flag in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics was more than simply a consideration of design and printing techniques: it hinted at a deeper political debate."⁸¹ This ongoing debate was about the appropriateness of keeping the *hinomaru* as the national flag after the war when there was no law that defined it as such. Again, strategically using polls to construct public opinion, conservative politicians involved in the organization of the Games were able to naturalize the use of the *hinomaru* by presenting it as the people's choice. This choice was framed around preferences for the specific shade of red to be used, which was gauged in a poll where Japanese citizens were sent color scales to rank. This enabled the organizers, according to anthropologist Christian Tagsold, "to make the use of the flag natural again" by "democratizing its design," which was then further normalized in its use alongside other national flags and the Olympic flag.⁸² In democratizing one aspect of the flag (its color), the actual use of the flag itself was taken for granted and became a nonissue. As Traganou rightly concludes, despite Kamekura's disclaimer, "these dubious nationalist aspirations were unquestionably assisted, if not directly supported, by the prominent inclusion of the red circle in the graphics of the Olympics."⁸³ Watching the Japanese national team march in lockstep into the stadium for the opening ceremony wearing red jackets and white hats, which they tipped to the emperor, the designated "patron of the games," sitting in the stands, transformed them into an army of inverted suns and once again mass choreographed for national collective symbolism.

In Munich in 1959, the IOC selected Tokyo as the site for the summer Olympic Games, which was publicly confirmed in the spring of 1960. Katsumi then formed the eleven-person design team as a nonofficial advisory panel with himself as head and including Arai, Imaizumi, Hara, Kōno, Kamekura, Ogawa Masataka (*Asahi shinbun*), Itō Kenji, Hamaguchi Ryūichi (architecture critic), Matsue Chizu (Kyōdō News), and Mukai Hideo. With the Japan Olympic Organizing Committee (JOOC) mandate to keep the design program simple, the panel quickly established the need for a consistent use of official symbols, strict application of the five colors of the Olympic rings (somewhat ironic since this was not followed), and uniform typography, although the panel was not officially called to meet for another three years and had no authorized budget or office.⁸⁴ The panel selected Kamekura's design, with red sun and gold rings, for the official Olympic emblem from among proposals in a restricted competition, and

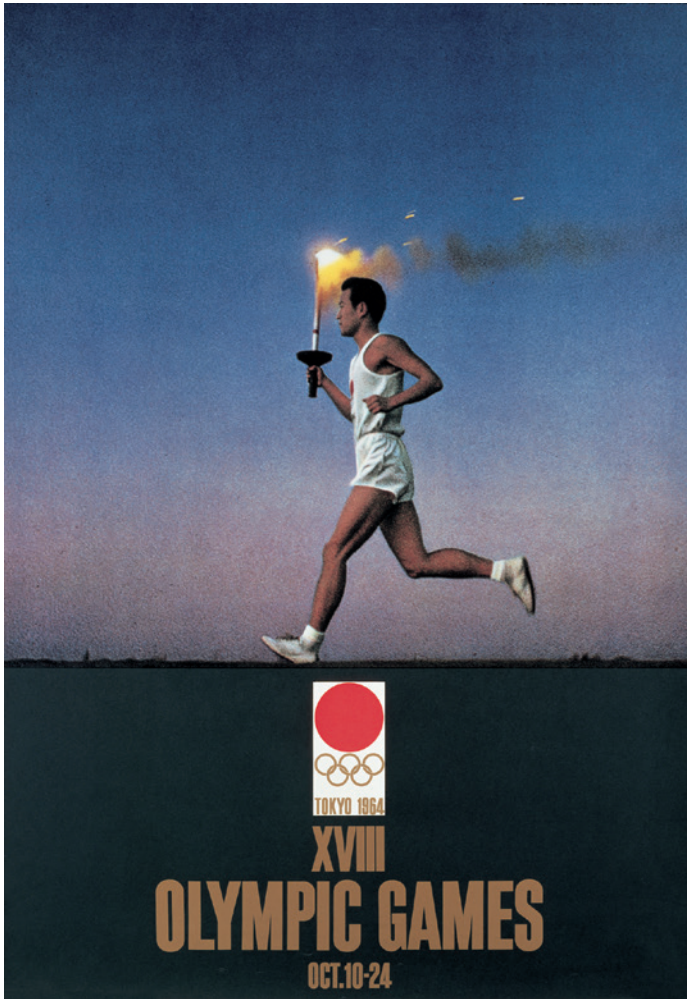
the emblem poster was designed in 1961. It was subsequently used for all official printed materials, not to mention on all official uniforms for athletes and volunteers. His second official poster design, showing a dynamic photograph of the sprinter's dash at the start line above the emblem (figure 7.12), was issued the next year; the third, of a swimmer surging out of the water doing the butterfly stroke, appeared in 1963; and the final poster design was issued at the beginning of 1964, showing an Olympic torchbearer running with the sacred flame, his body illuminated against the dramatic sunset-hued sky in the background (figure 7.13); the Olympic emblem was clearly emblazoned on the ground below his stride.

Finally, in November 1963, the government officially commissioned the Tokyo Olympic Organizing Committee, with Katsumi leading the design work, even though by necessity this work had been going on for several years (with very little remuneration and a great deal of frustration among the designers). With only a small space in which to work, the team subdivided the tasks into area planning, symbols, and mass-produced signage. Their "design guide sheet" ensured a unified approach to symbols, pictograms, and typography. They selected the Swiss sans serif gothic typeface Neue Haas Grotesk, later renamed Helvetica, which would come to dominate modern global editorial design.⁸⁵ Under Katsumi's guiding vision, Kamekura, Hara, Kōno, and the team of designers developed a revolutionary total design approach for the Games based on this guide sheet, the first time Olympic design had been systematized in such a way.⁸⁶ Like Bayer, Kamekura was an early champion of totalizing corporate identity design, and he brought this to the Olympic stage.

Referred to as a "co-ordinated design style" by critic and industrial designer Ohchi Hiroshi in *Idea* in August 1964, total design comprised an integrated program that was effective, appropriate, and direct, displaying coherence and order. It meant coordinating all visual activities from production to sales, undergirded by this coherent policy. It was a form of "visual administration" that Ohchi imagined as "forming the shape of the enterprise's face," with the design style serving as its most effective makeup technique to showcase this corporate face impressively and beautifully.⁸⁷ A coordinated design style metaphorically "outlined the face, eyes, and nose of an enterprise," providing a coherent visual order for all design activities in all media, from merchandise, buildings, showrooms, store construction, signboards, neon signs, and advertising towers to the trademark, point-of-purchase materials, packages, displays, trucks, delivery cars, sales promotion materials, posters, direct mailers, television ads, and so on.⁸⁸ It also included stationery, business forms, tags, employee badges, and uniforms, basically anything integral to public relations activities that cultivated a connection with consumers and society. Recently termed *house style*



7.12 Kamekura Yūsaku (designer), Hayasaki Osamu (photographer), and Murakoshi Jō (photographer), poster for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, 1962. Japan Graphic Design Association Inc. Courtesy of the International Olympic Committee

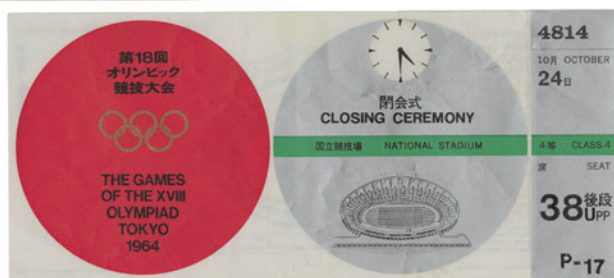


7.13 Kamekura Yūsaku
(designer), Hayasaki Osamu
(photographer), and Murakoshi
Jō (photographer), poster for
the 1964 Tokyo Olympics,
1964. Japan Graphic Design
Association Inc. Courtesy of
the International Olympic
Committee

in Europe, or *corporate identity* in the United States, this design program, according to Ohchi, would become the company's visual base of operations to distinguish it and its products from competitors. It was, to use a sporting analogy, the starting line of design policy. In a market landscape of intense competition, such visual coherence conveyed a positive and distinct media image that communicated authority and reliability, which continued to accrue to the company. Its originality would directly contribute to the company's success, as well as supplying consumers with new lifestyle ideas that would increase the pleasure of consumption. He offered Westinghouse Electric Company, a client of Paul Rand, as a prime example of such successful coordinated design.⁸⁹ There was long-standing concern in Japan from the early 1950s through the Olympics about establishing a consistent design policy to standardize communication and quality, a topic Katsumi wrote on often, offering Bayer's work for the CCA as another leading example.⁹⁰

This coordinated total design approach is evident throughout the 1964 Olympic design program, covered in the same issue of *Idea*, as seen in Kamekura's posters, event uniforms, and badges and Hara's designs for the envelopes, invitations, booklets, diplomas, and event tickets (figure 7.14).⁹¹ For example, the ticket for the opening ceremony picked up on the red circle "sun" motif (also familiar from Nippon Kōbō's work) and created a matching one in gold. This powerful, ever-present motif literally circumscribed the games within the rising sun. And the resplendence of gold and silver (for the opening and closing ceremonies respectively) harked back to imperial majesty, but denuded of wartime connotations, very much like the Japanese emperor himself, who was also reinvented in the public imagination at the Olympics as a kind and gentle elderly monarch and dedicated marine biologist.⁹² The use of different-colored "sun" circles coded each Olympic event. The design overlaid the international and the national. Katsumi wrote that the visual language for festivals tended toward decoration, resulting in design that was simultaneously unnecessary and inadequate. Avoiding this decorative impulse was imperative.⁹³

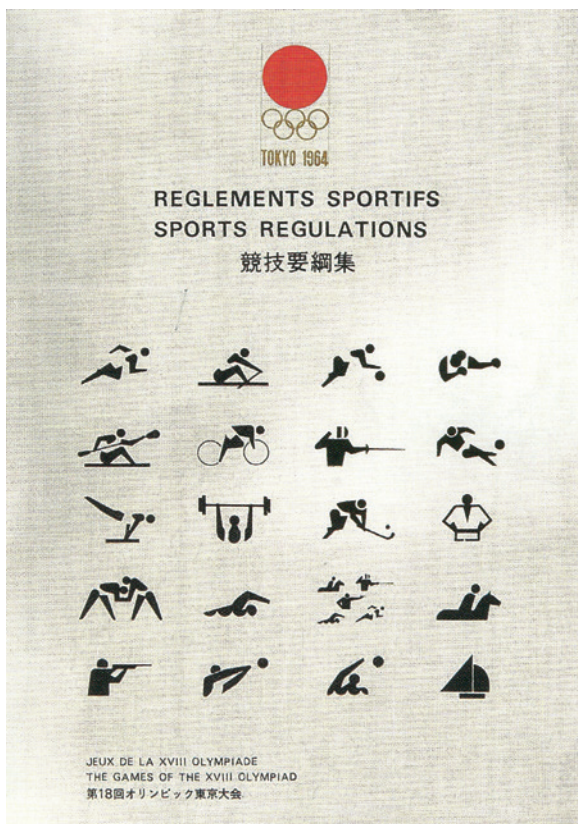
Yamashita Yoshiro's original pictogram designs for each sporting event along with nonverbal signage also universalized and internationalized the event—something that became standard in subsequent games (figure 7.15). The pictograms bypassed issues of language translation for universal legibility. And with close to 5,500 athletes and 2,000 administrative staff from ninety-three countries, this nonverbal visual communication system was critical. The high-level coordination and precision implementation of Japan's total design concept reflected positively on the Japanese national character, projecting an image of efficiency



7.14 Hara Hiromu, closing ceremony ticket and envelope, 1964 Tokyo Olympics, 1964. Collection of the author. Courtesy of Tokushu Paper Mfg. and the International Olympic Committee

and productivity. Emerging from the long shadow of war and occupation, Japan's Olympic Organizing Committee sought to showcase the country as innovative and high-tech yet urbane and cultured.

Kamekura was also the creative force behind the first-ever use of photography for Olympic posters, using images taken by staff photographers Haya-saki Osamu and Murakoshi Jō. It is not an overstatement to say that he was instrumental in redefining Olympic design around the world from that point forward, and Traganou states unequivocally that the 1964 Olympic design program is now considered “paradigmatic” in the canon of design history.⁹⁴ At a more fundamental level, however, this not only asserted Japan's mastery of technological innovation but also reinforced the nation's important economic position in the camera and photography market—not surprisingly, Nikon was one of Kamekura's major clients.⁹⁵



7.15 Yamashita Yoshiro, pictograms, Tokyo Olympics, 1964. Cover of *Reglements Sportifs* (Sports Regulations). Courtesy of the International Olympic Committee

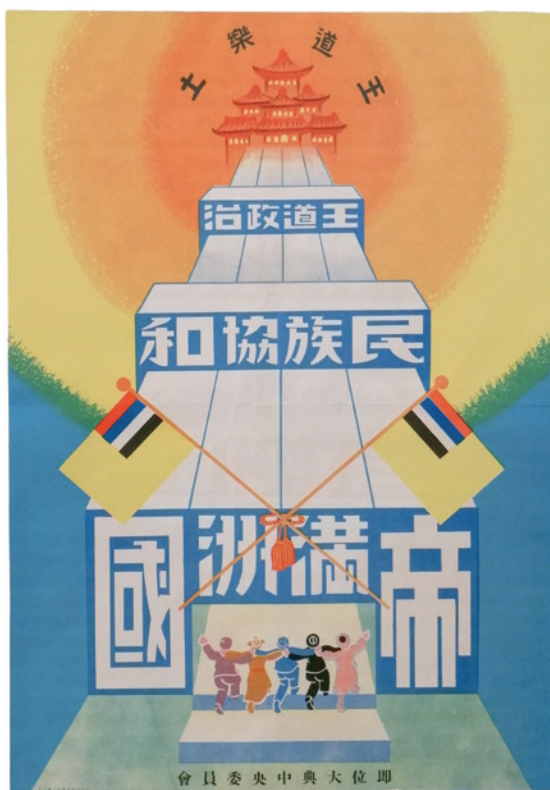
The Phantom Olympics of 1940

But how does this Olympic story relate to the prewar and wartime decades? What many people may not know is that the IOC had chosen Japan, specifically Tokyo, in 1936 to host the 1940 Olympics, and the country had begun extensive planning for the event before having to forfeit its bid due to wartime exigencies in July 1938—hence it is often called the Phantom Olympics.⁹⁶ As several scholars have recently shown, the 1964 Olympics was the realization of plans conceived in the 1930s for the 1940 event, which was planned to coincide with the celebration of the 2,600th Foundation Day festival. The secular and the sacred, the international and the national, were already commingled in the event planned thirty years earlier. Engineers and architects even used plans like those from 1940 to construct the postwar stadiums and pavilions. The total design program developed for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics was a palimpsest of hidden transwar continuity.

Nation and empire were similarly commingled, as they had been in *Nippon* in the “mixed nation theory” of the multiethnic origin of the Japanese nation, which as Oguma Eiji has argued, “lent itself to the claim that the Japanese nation embodied the unification of Asia, and that the peoples of neighboring regions could be assimilated into the Japanese nation and their lands annexed by the Great Japanese Empire.”⁹⁷ The multicolored Olympic rings could easily be read in the 1930s as Japan’s interlinked *quinque* racial population, promoted in the imperial slogans in Manchukuo, *gozoku kyōwa* / *gozoku kyōei* (the harmony or mutual prosperity of the five races) or *minzoku kyōwa* (the harmony of the [five] races), which were frequently pictured in posters of all five races happily interlocking arms (figure 7.16).⁹⁸ Hara Hiromu’s poster on the back cover of *Travel in Japan* in 1936 displays the text “XII OLYMPIAD” in sans serif capital type emblazoned over the abstracted peak of Mount Fuji, with the five interlocking multicolored Olympic rings and “TOKYO 1940” below (figure 7.17). A simple design with *bokashi*-style (printing with gradated ink) blue borders on the top and bottom, akin to Hokusai’s and Hiroshige’s famous woodblock prints, Hara’s poster was national, international, and imperial.

Moreover, the prewar Olympics merged national identity politics and commerce. Following the 1930 citywide celebrations of the multiyear campaign to rebuild the capital after the devastation of the Great Kantō Earthquake, Tokyo mayor Nagata Hidejirō proposed celebrating the 1940 Foundation Day in the capital while hosting the Olympic Games. He saw it as a way of encouraging international tourism at a particularly challenging political juncture when there was increased international criticism toward Japan due to the Manchurian Incident. Nagata devised the concept of “people’s diplomacy” (*kokumin gaikō*) to assuage international tensions. With universality and a harmonious blending of cultures as core goals in Japan’s national bid materials submitted to the IOC, the 1940 Olympics were billed as an international forum for promoting world peace.

Nagata also proposed postponing until 1940 the world’s fair originally planned for 1935 to coincide with the combined Foundation Day and Olympics to create a triple megaevent. The railway minister at the time, who oversaw the Board of Tourist Industry, endorsed the plans, seeing great potential for economic profit from tourism to Japan.⁹⁹ In 1935 *Tourist* magazine illustrated the colossal design proposal for the “Grand International Exposition of Tokyo to Be Held in 1940,” noting that this large-scale celebration was estimated to cost over ¥20,000,000, with a site over 826 acres, and would in all probability coincide with Japan hosting the XII Olympic Games.¹⁰⁰ Even the original plans for the bullet train (first called *dangan ressha*) were conceived as part of the early Olympic planning. In an unprecedented feat of transportation technol-

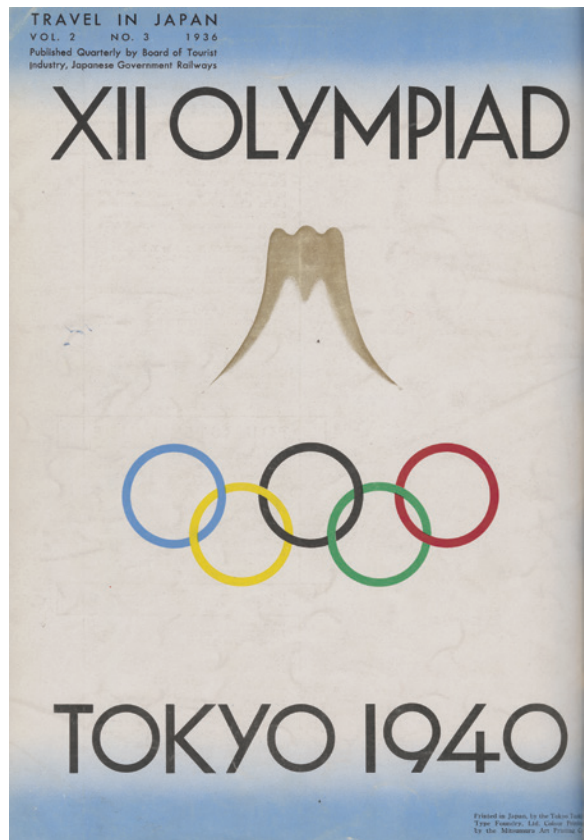


7.16 “The harmony of the [five] races” (*minzoku kyōwa*). Teikoku Manshū, poster, ca. late 1930s. Yusei Museum

ogy, the high-speed train was proposed to travel under the Tsushima Strait to Korea, linking Japan proper to the rest of its continental empire, extending all the way to Manchuria to connect with the Trans-Siberian Railway. Considering the already advanced technology touted by the South Manchurian Railway and its high-speed trains, this was not futuristic fantasy.

But from a design perspective, we would be missing a large part of the story if we did not look back a little further, to 1936, an Olympics that will certainly live on in infamy—the Berlin Olympics hosted by Adolf Hitler and the Nazis. Forming a crucial marker for Japan’s planning, this was one of the most spectacular Olympics to date and set a new bar for scale and the use of aesthetics to produce a national and international spectacle.¹⁰¹ This spectacle, which many in the IOC and the international community openly disdained, is amply conveyed in Leni Riefenstahl’s renowned documentary *Olympia*. Not coincidentally, *Olympia* was screened in Japan in September 1940 in lieu of the Games.¹⁰² The Nazi cultural spin doctors under Joseph Goebbels even invented the Olympic torch relay from Olympia to the host country for the Berlin Games.¹⁰³

7.17 Hara Hiromu, advertisement for XII Olympiad, Tokyo, 1940. Back cover of *Travel in Japan* 2, no. 3 (1936). Collection of the author. Courtesy of Tokushu Paper Mfg. and the International Olympic Committee



Before the 1940 events were canceled, Japanese organizers were already heatedly debating the immensely complicated possible routes of the torch relay from Greece to Japan, which involved traveling the Silk Road and a ritual dedication at the imperial Ise shrine before culminating in Tokyo. Transplanting the international Olympics to nationalist Japan required internal as well as external diplomacy, and not everyone in the government supported the endeavor. Proponents of the plan argued that by linking ancient Greece and Japan, the relay would suggest that Japan was “the Greece of Asia,” heir to a Hellenistic tradition that scholars of Buddhist sculpture were already claiming. This reaffirmed Japan’s role as a civilizational as well as economic leader in Asia. Although a reconnaissance team eventually determined that the land route was too perilous, the interest prompted a popular “Silk Route boom” in Japan.¹⁰⁴

When Japan announced Tokyo’s successful bid for the Olympics in August 1936, a veritable “Olympic fever” broke out throughout the country for

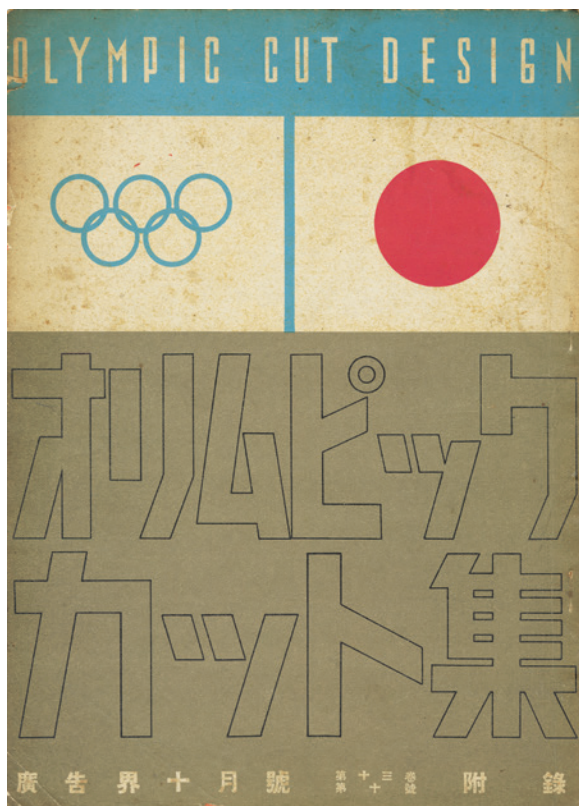
several months.¹⁰⁵ The official report submitted by Prince Tokugawa Iesato, the president of Japan's organizing committee, explaining its "whole-hearted devotion to the preparation for the Games" and wistfully reporting its eventual cancellation, described the initial collective emotion: "So complete a satisfaction, such a great joy is seldom felt by a nation as was experienced by Japan when her fervent and energetic wish was finally granted at the Berlin Session of the International Olympic Committee held in August, 1936."¹⁰⁶ Cities and companies quickly jumped on this bandwagon with Olympic imagery in their publicity. Previously, during the Los Angeles Games in 1932, Morinaga had sponsored Olympic-themed show window displays festooned with the five multicolored interlocking rings next to a series of red circles representing the national flag to promote its newly launched Yell brand "round-shaped" drops (Enkan doropopusu), a hard candy that itself mirrored the Olympic rings and was described as evoking the heartfelt screams of support for Japan's competing athletes.¹⁰⁷ In 1936, with every ¥0.10 purchase of Morinaga caramels, the company offered an elementary school student ticket to the Tokyo Olympic Commemorative Event Exposition (Tōkyō Kaisai Kinen Orimupukku Hakurankai), sponsored by the *Jiji shinpō* newspaper and held in Ueno Park in October. The brightly colored red poster for the event showed a Japanese athlete pole-vaulting through the air with the Japanese, American, and British flags waving in the background. A box of Morinaga caramels floated in the lower right-hand corner, symbolizing the energy that propelled the sportsman. Between two pillars at the back hung the five Olympic rings. This event was supported by the National Athletic Association (Dai Nippon Taiiku Kyōkai) and a host of government entities, including the Ministry of Education, the Foreign Ministry, and the Board of Tourist Industry.¹⁰⁸

Advertising World published a Berlin Olympics special issue in October 1936 with a cover design by Sun Studio and Tada Hokuu featuring the abstracted two-dimensional figure of a runner, whose body was made from string laced in patterns across a frame (figure 7.18). He ran holding a burning Olympic torch of flowing bright red fabric. On the inside cover, taken from *Gebrauchsgraphik*, a map outlined the route of the inaugural torch relay from Olympia to Athens, Delphi, and Saloniki, then up to eastern Europe via Sofia and Belgrade, to Budapest and Vienna, then finally to Berlin. It also showed the international illustration that was circulated for the event, which exclaimed "I call the youth of the world!" under the Olympic bell with the German eagle and the Olympic rings. Below this sat another set of rings above the title "Olympia 1936 Berlin" heralding the Brandenburg Gate in the center and other well-known monuments in the capital, all above a plan for the new sports stadiums. In recognition

7.18 Tada Hokuu, cover of Olympics special issue, *Advertising World* 13, no. 10 (October 1936). Sankō Library



of the Nazis' effective branding of the event, the issue was dedicated to all the Olympic publicity materials.¹⁰⁹ Supremely enthusiastic about this opportunity, editor Miyayama Shun published a supplemental special issue of the journal with work by designers in the Practical Prints Art Association (Jitsuyō Hanga Bijutsu Kyōkai), specifically Tada Hokuu, titled *Olympic Illustration Designs* (*Orimupikku Kattoshū*) (figure 7.19). Writing in the prologue, Miyayama explained that the illustrations were in anticipation of the XII Olympics, which was not simply a local job but required the chaotic fusion (*konzen yūgō*) of the nation and its people. Beautiful and brilliant, the Japanese people, he explained, needed to uplift the meaningful culture of Japan as a whole. Painting and art were one way to do that, and the collection of illustrations was offered in that spirit. The magazine cover displayed the Japanese flag and the five Olympic rings in a single blue color. Each designer did a double-page spread for a specific sport, with Tada producing a series of abstracted figures for fencing (figure 7.20). These nonverbal illustrations that conveyed the unique poses and



7.19 Practical Prints Art Association, cover of *Olympic Illustration Designs*, special Olympics issue of *Advertising World* 13, no. 10 (October 1936). Collection of the author

physicality of each sport were clearly a predecessor of the sports and signage pictograms that the postwar design team developed for the 1964 Olympics.

A range of artists began designing poster imagery for the upcoming 1940 world event.¹¹⁰ Western-style oil painter Wada Sanzō, who had worked for Morinaga in designing a pastoral image for the company's first box of marshmallows, designed an intense poster for the 1940 Olympics showing a modern Caucasian athlete with the muscular figure of one of the two guardians of the Buddha in the Great South Gate of Tōdaiji temple in the ancient imperial capital of Nara, commonly known as the Niō, or Two Kings (figure 7.21). The Niō were not only an example of Buddhism's fiercest guardian deities but were also considered a national treasure due to their realistic Kamakura sculptural style of Unkei and Kaikei in the late twelfth century. With his hand on the athlete's shoulder, the deity mirrors his fierce open-mouthed cry of fidelity as both raise their right hands in an Olympic, and suspiciously Nazi-style, salute. Like the dynamic sculpture itself, wind blows the deity's robes and hair to animate the



7.20 Tada Hokuu, double-page spread for fencing, in *Olympic Illustration Designs*, special Olympics issue, *Advertising World* 13, no. 10 (October 1936). Collection of the author

scene. Mount Fuji is visible off in the distance. Below, the shadowed text identifies “Tokyo 1940 XII Olympiad.” Similarly excavating Japan’s traditional cultural symbols combining martial and spiritual power, another publicity design featured an ancient Japanese warrior *haniwa* ceramic funerary figurine associated with the monumental imperial tombs (*kofun*) in western Japan, which was recoded in this context as a modern Japanese soldier, with the Olympic text and rings overlaid on his body and the Japanese flag set within the zero of 1940.

Nippon Kōbō also began designing for the Olympics in 1936 when it produced a sleek brochure whose cover design featured an aerial photograph of the Olympic grounds in Berlin with the superimposed outline of an airplane—the red circle sun insignia visible on both wings (figure 7.22). Inside the brochure were articles on all the Japanese athletes who competed at the Berlin Games. Japan sent an unprecedented delegation of over 240 athletes to Berlin to prove its ability to compete on the international level in multiple events, and its de-



7.21 Center right, Wada Sanzō, Tokyo 1940 XII Olympiad, poster, ca. 1936. Reproduced along with other 1940 Olympiad posters (*upper left*, example with *haniwa* figure) in Organizing Committee of the XIIth Olympiad, *Report of the Organizing Committee*, 114. Courtesy of the International Olympic Committee

7.22 Nippon Kōbō, *Nippon Olympische Spiele* (Nippon Olympic Games), pamphlet, 1936. Shiseido Corporate Museum



sire to serve as an enthusiastic future host country.¹¹¹ It was in fact the country's athletic successes at the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles that elevated this international forum in the Japanese imagination. With eighteen Olympic medals, Japan's athletes stunned the world with their physical prowess, just as they were stunning the world with their military might, seemingly usurping a position reserved for "white" nations—so much so that one Western observer even described the body of one Japanese athlete as "tall, powerful and seemingly white," implying that his abilities must indicate the Caucasianizing power of civilization.¹¹² Empire complicated the heralding of Japanese athleticism at the 1936 Games, however, as two of Japan's medalists in the marathon event were ethnic Koreans who competed as Japanese colonial subjects. They are, in fact, still listed as Japanese medalists on the Japanese Olympic Committee rosters, but Korea also claims them.¹¹³

Kōno Takashi's 1936 *Nippon* cover themed on the Olympics (no. 7, 1936) featured sprinter Yoshioka Takayoshi, two-time Olympian and the only Asian among the 1935 joint world record holders in the 100 meters, poised to leap forward (a photograph by Natori Yōnosuke), superimposed on the expressive, hand-rendered profile of a woman with flowing hair (figure 7.23). Already depicting a politically complex subject undergirded by imperialist subjugation, the 1964 design team under Kamekura updated and internationalized the



7.23 Kōno Takashi, cover of *Nippon*, no. 7 (1936). Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images

image by multiplying the single Japanese runner into an international community of athletes who were multiethnic and multiracial, thus integrating the new postwar myth of “monoethnic” Japan into the world while circumscribing the event within a national rubric.¹¹⁴

The central importance of the Olympics in prewar cultural promotion and national diplomacy is abundantly evident in its repeated representation in other visual publications, such as Nippon Kōbō’s book *Nippon: The Nation in Panorama*.¹¹⁵ The volume featured two prominent photomontages of the 1936 Olympics showing athletes in action: (1) track and field and baseball; and (2) diving, judo, archery, and kendo (figure 7.24)—all sporting events in which Japanese athletes were competitive. Judo was of particular significance for the national narrative of Japanese sports history; not only was its originator, Kanō Jigorō, the first Asian member of the IOC, inducted in 1909, but judo itself was the first Asia-originated sport admitted into the Western-dominated realm of the Olympics, introduced as an official sport at the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.¹¹⁶



7.24 Kumada Gorō, montage composition of diving, judo, archery, and kendo, in *Society for International Cultural Relations, Nippon: The Nation in Panorama* (1938). Duke University Library

As historian Sandra Collins has noted, after the invasion of Manchuria in 1931 the Japanese state discourse on sports and physical education for the nation changed radically. It made the practice of *budō* (traditional martial arts) and the teaching of *bushidō* (the philosophy of traditional martial arts) compulsory in the school system, transforming the latter into a “form of state propaganda to inculcate patriotic spirit.”¹¹⁷

Prominent design historian Kida Takuya has argued that the 1964 Olympic design program formed a kind of cultural “media memory” that contributed to the formation of a collective consciousness of this pivotal event, passed down for generations.¹¹⁸ The integrated vision of aesthetics, politics, and industry that vividly bridged the pre- and postwar periods empowered the Olympics to establish Japan’s international position in the world theater of nations, its modernity, and its strength (or national masculinity) through sporting prowess. This included widespread Japanese corporate support. Lion was a prominent sponsor, as the company hoped to foster the ideological connection between its products and health and sports. A diverse array of companies also donated goods to the Games, such as 320 cases of Calpis beverages for international athletes, Shiseido’s cleaning detergent and cosmetics sets for women and men, and an assortment of electrical appliances, from television sets and radios to electric

shavers and irons from Matsushita, Hitachi, and others. Most Japanese corporations contributed.¹¹⁹

Olympic designs were also instrumental in inculcating public support for the 1964 event and were critical for basic fundraising. Stylish commemorative postage stamps with Kamekura's emblem design that carried an Olympic surcharge were just one of many marketing campaigns that facilitated this financial effort. Sometimes referred to as "the trillion yen Olympics"—most of the spending was on transportation infrastructure, including the bullet train (*shinkansen*), inaugurated on October 1, 1964—the 1964 Olympics had operating costs originally estimated at ¥3.6 billion but eventually amounting to ¥6.1 billion, at least a third of which was funded by the general public. So the design team's goal of inspiring widespread enthusiasm for the event was not merely a matter of stoking patriotism but was directly linked to stimulating economic recovery. And by all accounts it achieved just that, as the 1964 Olympics are widely regarded as a major economic milestone in encouraging domestic consumption among the reluctant Japanese populace, still traumatized by wartime privation and more inclined to save than to buy.

As Kida and the organizers of the important exhibition *Design Project for the Tokyo 1964 Olympic Games* (*Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 Dezain Purojekuto*) at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (Tōkyō Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan) have compellingly demonstrated, even those who did not witness the Games retained a "memory" of it due to the extensive graphic memorabilia produced as cultural media that constituted a form of collective consciousness. Kida notes that the 1964 Olympics symbolized Japan's "miraculous economic recovery," a "rite of passage" from wartime to postwar, and its "readiness to rejoin the theater of nations." The Olympic plans transformed Tokyo with new subway lines and metropolitan highways. Commercial promotion created a "festival atmosphere" that was specifically designed to make people forget about the deprivation of the wartime and Occupation periods. As in 1936, Olympic emblems festooned the city.¹²⁰

The 1964 torch relay started with mythical Greek priestesses dressed in ancient costumes lighting the sacred flame, which then traveled from Olympia by airplane all over Asia (including many of Japan's former colonies).¹²¹ From Taipei, it flew to Japan to visit every current and former prefecture, first stopping in Okinawa, implicitly claiming this territory for the nation-state even though it was still under American occupation and the *hinomaru* flag was not regularly allowed to be flown. It visited Miyazaki city's renamed "Peace Tower" (Heiwa no Tō), formerly a wartime monument; it was originally built in 1940 for the National Foundation Day celebration and previously known by the inscribed

imperial slogan “All of the Eight Corners of the World under One Roof” (*hakkō itchū*). The torch relay path dramatically arrived in Hiroshima to carry the sacred flame through the epicenter of the atomic bomb zone, simultaneously reinforcing the universalizing discourse of the antinuclear peace movement as well as one of domestic victimhood without the wartime context of cause and effect.¹²² Doubling down on the Hiroshima symbolism, the Japan Olympic Organizing Committee selected the runner Sakai Yoshinori as the final torchbearer to carry the sacred flame into the Olympic Stadium and ignite the cauldron. Sakai was known as the Hiroshima baby because he was born in the city on the day the bomb was dropped, two hours after his father witnessed the atomic flash. As the *New York Times* reported, Sakai was selected “to dramatize pacifist Japan’s special horror of nuclear weapons before sports-lovers of the world.” Described as a handsome young athlete, Sakai is quoted as saying, “Happily, I know nothing about war. . . . Nineteen years have passed since that time, and I have grown up free from care in the atmosphere of freedom of a peace-loving Japan.”¹²³ Yet the war was present and absent everywhere. By design, the 1964 Olympics unequivocally fulfilled the wartime aims of 1940 but in the service of postwar Japanese reconstruction narratives of national identity, now characterized by peace, democracy, and economic prosperity.¹²⁴

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Holbrook Jackson, “Design and the Display of Merchandise: The Influence of Modernist Painting and Architecture,” *Commercial Art*, no. 4 (January–June 1928): 204.

1. The first neon sign was erected in Ginza in 1918. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 142.

2. Newspaper reviewers referred to the work of the Commercial Artists Association (Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai) as an “art of the streets” (*gaitō bijutsu*). Hamada Masuji, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū* (hereafter *GSBZ*), 24:10–11.

3. The first domestic telegraph was set up between Yokohama and Tokyo in 1870, and another was established between Tokyo and Kyoto two years later, in 1872. By 1871 the British Foreign Ministry had already set up a telegraph between London and Nagasaki connecting Japan to the rest of the world in real time. The first railroad was built between Yokohama and Tokyo in 1872. The first lithographic poster was printed in Japan in the early 1880s, while offset printing was introduced in 1914 and the HB printing process in 1922. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 129, 145. For more on the development of mass media publications in Japan, see Marshall, *Magazines and the Making of Mass Culture in Japan*.

4. For the rich literature on Japanese department stores, see Hatsuda, *Hyakkaten no tanjō*; and, more recently, Tipton, “Department Store”; Aso, “Consuming Publics”; and Hong, “Transcultural Politics.”

5. Although not the focus here, recent scholarship has begun to explore the modern East Asian design network. While still primarily concentrating on national and regional developments, such scholarship also illuminates transnational connections, particularly Japan’s central role as an imperialist hub of colonial modernity in this system connecting

East Asia to Euro-America, specifically for design education. See Fujita and Guth, *East Asian Design*. And for East Asian design historiographies in Japan, China (the People's Republic of China), Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea, see the *Journal of Design History* 24, no. 3 (2011); and the brief introductory overview by Kikuchi, "Design Histories."

6. Baker, "Re-reading *The Corporate Personality*," 289.

7. Rubinfien, "Commodity to National Brand," 3.

8. Jackson, "Design and the Display," 203.

9. Raion Kabushishiki Kaisha, *Raion Hamigaki 80-nenshi*, 92.

10. Teasley, Riello, and Adamson, "Towards Global Design History," 2.

11. Lees-Maffei and Fallan, "Real Imagined Communities," 5, 17. See also Lees-Maffei and Fallan, "National Design Histories."

12. Adriasola, Teasley, and Traganou, "Design and Society," 4–5.

13. For example, Tōkyō Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan Kōgeikan, *Zuan no henbō*; Tōkyōto Bijutsukan and Asahi Shinbun, 1920 *Nendai Nihon-ten*; Sezon Bijutsukan, Hyōgo Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, and Asahi Shinbun, *Geijutsu to kōkoku*; Wakayama Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, *Nihon no grafikku dezain*; and Okazaki-shi Bijutsu Hakubutsukan, *Ara, sentanteki ne*.

14. In his general survey, D. J. Huppertz addresses the importance of empire in modern Asian design history with a specific focus on architectural and industrial design. Huppertz, *Modern Asian Design*.

15. For a discussion of different aspects of modern consumerism in Japan and post-war consumption trends in a global context, see Garon and MacLachlan, *Ambivalent Consumer*.

16. Kaneva, "Nation Branding."

17. Benjamin, quoted and discussed in Koepnick, *Walter Benjamin*, 195.

18. Kenneth Ruoff has made a similar argument about Japan's wartime tourism culture and industry. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan*.

19. Dower, "Useful War."

20. It is important to note here that the design historian and curator Mori Hitoshi has long been a vocal proponent of thinking transwar, and his extensive research supports this argument by carefully charting a range of important personal connections that extended from the war years, specifically advertising design specialists involved with the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA), through the Occupation, and into the 1950s. He often describes the 1950s as a "rebirth" (*saisei*) for Japanese design. See, for example, Mori, "Nihon saisai no 1950 nendai." For historical surveys of Japanese design that also argue for connections across the war, see Nagata, Hida, and Mori, *Nihon kindai dezain-shi*; and with a particular focus on industrial design, see Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*.

21. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 26.

22. See Ōbushi, *Shiryō ga kataru*; and Tinios, "Fragrance of Female Immortals."

23. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 3, 19–23.

24. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 106. For a discussion of the history of *chindonya*, see Abe, *Resonances of Chindon-ya*. For the corporate history of Kirin beer, see Kirin Bīru Kabushiki Kaisha Kōhōshitsu and Kirin Bīru Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hen-san Iinkai, *Kirin Bīru no rekishi*.

25. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 111–12.

26. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō, present-day Tokyo University of the Arts [Tōkyō Geijutsu Daigaku]) established a design section in 1896, one of the first art schools to do so. Later, in May 1923, the section was subdivided into a division for design (*zuwan*) and a division for architecture (*kenchiku*). Larger governmental initiatives, however, had established independent design schools prior to this in the mid-Meiji period to promote product design and national industry for the benefit of the Japanese economy. Tokyo Higher Industrial School (Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō) was the first official school, originally founded in 1881 as the Tokyo Worker's School (Tōkyō Shokkō Gakkō), renamed Tokyo Industrial School (Tōkyō Kōgyō Gakkō) in 1890, and then renamed as a higher school of industrial arts in 1901 when the industrial design department (*kōgyō zuanka*) was added. In 1914 the school's industrial design division was merged with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and abolished. Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō, *Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō nijūgo nenshi*. When the Tokyo Higher Industrial School abolished its design division in 1914, the division director, the prominent Western-style artist Matsuoka Hisashi, began discussions with the Ministry of Education about establishing a new school dedicated to industrial art and design education. This new institution, the Tokyo Higher School of Industrial Arts (Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō), was officially opened in 1922 with Matsuoka as school director. For a detailed discussion of the influential school curriculum, see Mori, "Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō," 23.

A parallel institution, the Kyoto Higher School of Industrial Arts (Kyōto Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō), was established in the western Kansai area in 1902. It is now called the Kyoto Institute of Technology (Kyōto Kōgei Seni Daigaku). Sarah Teasley provides an excellent historical survey of design education in Japan with a primary focus on industrial design. Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 86–101. On early design educators, see also Fujita, "Nōtomi Kaijirō"; and Amagai, "Japanese Industrial Design Concepts."

27. Cheng, *Ornamentalism*.

28. For Murayama's important role in communicating the avant-garde graphic styles of international constructivism, see Weisenfeld, *Mavo*, 165–215.

29. Suga, "Modernism, Commercialism."

30. Aynsley, "Pressa Cologne, 1928." See also the "Pressa Exhibition in Cologne / Internationale Presse-Ausstellung in Köln," The Fostinum: A Photographic Collection, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.fostinum.org/pressa-exhibition-in-cologne.html>.

31. Nakada Sadanosuke, "Kokuritsu Bauhausu (I)," *Mizue*, no. 244 (June 1925): 2–7; Nakada, "Kokuritsu Bauhausu (II)," *Mizue*, no. 245 (July 1925): 8–12; Nakada, "Bauhausu Goki," *Mizue*, no. 248 (October 1925): 37–38; Nakada, "Wārutā Guropiusu Susan," *Kenchiku shinchō* 6, no. 10 (October 1925): 1–5; and Nakada, "Bauhausu o kataru," *Kōgei jidai* 2, no. 1 (January 1927): 113–22. Murayama Tomoyoshi was also instrumental in introducing the design theories of artists associated with the Bauhaus, particularly László Moholy-Nagy. See Murayama, *Kōseiha kenkyū*.

32. Čapková, "Transnational Networkers"; and Čapková, "Bauhaus."

33. Yamano, *Dezain to Bauhausu*.

34. Jan Tschichold, "The Composite Photograph and Its Place in Advertising," *Commercial Art*, no. 9 (July–December 1930): 238, 244, 248.

35. Phillips, introduction, 28.

36. Roberts, *Art of Interruption*, 35.

37. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 145–46, 159.
38. Lees-Maffei, “Production—Consumption—Mediation Paradigm.”
39. The extant copies of these journals in private Japanese collections and institutional archives are evidence of their availability in the Japanese design community.
40. For a detailed history of the modern Japanese poster and advertising in a national and international media context, see Takeuchi, *Kindai kōkoku no tanjō*.
41. Tada Hokuu, “Posutā no kōka to gikō,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 2:38. For more on Tada, see Weisenfeld, “Tada Hokuu.”
42. Kawahata, “Kokusaku senden,” 143.
43. The history and status of Japanese business archives and company histories are discussed in Matsuzaki, “Business Archives in Japan.” I am grateful to the Japan Business Archives Association for its invaluable assistance. The 1922 launching of the New York Art Directors Club indicates that recognition of the new professional role of art directors was an international trend.
44. For a discussion of the construction of the term *bijutsu*, see Kitazawa, *Me no shinden*, 105–55. It was not until 1927 that the Buntten, renamed in 1918 the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition (Teikoku Bijutsuin Tenrankai, abbreviated as Teiten), inaugurated an “industrial arts” (*bijutsu kōgei*) section in which design and decorative arts were exhibited.
45. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:15.
46. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising*, 7.
47. Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 59. For an overview of Japan’s early exhibitionary history and subsequent participation in world’s fairs and domestic expositions, see Edo Tōkyō Hakubutsukan and Edo Tōkyō Rekishi Zaidan, *Hakuran toshi Edo Tōkyō*. And for information about the arts and crafts exhibited at Meiji expositions, see Tōkyō Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Bijutsubu, *Meijioki bankoku hakurankai*. Also, Yoshimi Shunya’s landmark study explores the political implications of modernity’s expository gaze; see Yoshimi, *Hakurankai no seijigaku*.
48. The first exhibition was titled the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce Exhibition of Design and Applied Works (Nōshōmushō Zuan Oyobi Ōyō Sakuhin Tenrankai), commonly abbreviated as the Nōten.
49. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry was later split again in 1949 to produce the highly influential Ministry of International Trade and Industry, or MITI, which was responsible for crafting Japan’s postwar industrial policy.
50. For a comprehensive historical consideration of the term *kōgei* and its relationship to design discourse, see the excellent study by Mori, *Nihon “kōgei” no kindai*. The brainchild of the ministry bureaucrats Kishi Nobusuke and Yoshino Shinji, the IARI has been in operation under various names and leadership since its founding. Many cities throughout Japan replicated its research model. The center published its journal from 1932 until 1974, with a brief hiatus during the late war years and early Occupation from October 1944 until May 1946. *Kōgei, Kōgei nyūsu*. For a discussion of the important history of the IARI, see Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 98–101, 124, 137–38, 178, 184, 190, 193.
51. Kayano, *Kindai Nihon no dezain bunkashi*, 56–58; Gossot, “L’affiche publicitaire,” 82; and Kashiwagi, “Nihon no kindai dezain,” 169. For the influence of Asai Chū in the transformation of the conception of design in Japan, see Marquet, “Asai Chū to ‘zuan,’” 178–79, 182.

52. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 185.
53. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:15.
54. Saga Kenritsu Bijutsukan, *Nihon kindai yōga no eiga*.
55. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:11–13.
56. Harada, “Japanese Looks at His Country’s Advertising,” 266, 268.
57. Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 12.
58. Quoted in Namba, *Uchiteshi yaman*, 21.
59. Fujita, *Gendai dezain ron*, 182–86.
60. “Sanbyakuman no Tōkyō shimin nekkkyō seshimetaru kōkokusai no gyōretsu,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 4.
61. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita: Sanka kōkokunushi no mita kōkokusai,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 51.
62. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita,” 51.
63. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita,” 51.
64. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita,” 52.
65. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita,” 54.
66. “Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita,” 57.
67. “Sanbyakuman no Tōkyō shimin nekkkyō,” 4–9; and Nagaoka Itsurō, “Rittai kōkoku jidai kuru,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 23–24.
68. Murota Kurazō, “Henshū goki,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 92.

CHAPTER 1. PROMOTING THE PROFESSION

Epigraph: Hamada Masuji, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara Yoshio, ed., *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū* (Tokyo: Ars, 1930), 24:13.

1. Regina Blaszczyk coined the term *fashion intermediaries* to describe magazine editors and retail buyers. See Blaszczyk, *Producing Fashion*; and Jones, *Beauty Imagined*, 7.
2. Published by the company Uindo Gahōsha. The American Window Manufacturers Association began publishing the US trade journal *The Show Window* in 1898.
3. Photography was introduced to Japan in the mid-nineteenth century and was largely employed for commercial purposes: portraits and tourist postcards. It began to appear in print advertising from the late 1890s and came to prominence only in the late 1920s. The advent of cost-effective technologies of photomechanical reproduction such as the halftone process and offset printing popularized photography in advertising. Mitsukoshi, always a pioneer in advertising and promotion, first set up an in-house photography division in 1907. Nakai, *Komāsharu foto*, 5. The advertising planning division of Oriental Shashin Kōgyō published *Photo Times* from March 1924 to 1941. Kimura Senichi edited the journal, later joined in 1931 by Watanabe Yoshio. Tamura Sakae took over editorship in 1933, and in January 1941, due to wartime exigencies, the journal was merged with *Photjournalism* (*Hōdō shashin*). *Kōga* (1932–33; eighteen issues), published by Shūrakusha, was a short-lived but important coterie magazine of an influential group of modernist photographers who were also engaged in commercial photography, including Nojima Yasuzō, Nakayama Iwata, Kimura Ihee, and critic Ina Nobuo. Iizawa, *Kōga*.
4. Marcel Emile, “Les Galeries Lafayette: The Art of Window Display,” *Commercial Art* 2, no. 9 (March 1927): 118.

5. Benjamin, *Arcades Project*.
6. Quoted in Emile, “Les Galeries Lafayette,” 121–22.
7. Hirasawa Shun, “Shōindō no kindaiteki keikō to sono shōrai,” *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 12 (December 1928): 50–51.
8. Weisenfeld, “Japanese Modernism and Consumerism”; and Weisenfeld, *Complete Commercial Artist*.
9. The Editor, *Commercial Art* 1, no. 1 (July 1926): 1.
10. Miyashita Takao, “Saikin Doitsu no kōkokuga to kōkoku no shinhyōgen,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 1 (January 1929): 71–72.
11. The magazine was resuscitated after the war, in 1950, under the new title *Novum Gebrauchsgraphik*.
12. Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 129.
13. See, for example, “Advertising from All Quarters,” *Commercial Art* 9, no. 51 (September 1930): 130; and “Modern Advertising in Japan,” *Commercial Art* 11, no. 66 (December 1931): 252–55.
14. Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 107.
15. “Joseph Bottlik: A Hungarian Poster Artist,” *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5, no. 4 (1928): 45.
16. “Satomi Associates Science and Art,” *Art and Industry* 27 (July–December 1939): 190–91; and see also Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 165–70.
17. Dr. Eduard Wildhagen, “Reklame in Japan: Advertisements in Japan,” *Gebrauchsgraphik* 4, no. 5 (1927): 46, 48–49.
18. Harada, “Japanese Looks at His Country’s Advertising,” 271.
19. Copies of the journal survive in Hisui’s private library collection, now held at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Craft Pavilion. Other important publications in Hisui’s collection include Day, *Nature and Ornament*; and Day, *Kunstgewerbe*. My deep appreciation to Kida Takuya for showing me this collection.
20. In 1910 Mitsukoshi separated its graphic design division (*zuan-bu*) from its textile design division (*ishō-bu*), with Hisui heading the former.
21. Illustrated in Sugiura Hisui, “Chikatetsu posutā,” *Affiches* 3, no. 3 (March 1930): 68–70.
22. Sugiura Hisui.
23. See Sugiura, *Hisui kachō zuanshū* (Complete collection of Hisui’s bird and flower designs); Sugiura, *Hisui ippan ōyō zuanshū* (Hisui’s general collection of applied design); and Sugiura, *Hisui hyakkafu* (Hisui’s songs of a hundred flowers).
24. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 145.
25. In just two years between 1912 and 1914, ten separate companies sponsored design competitions. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 157.
26. One of East Asia’s most influential drug companies in the early twentieth century and a wide purveyor of patent medicines and medicinal alkaloids such as morphine and quinine, Hoshi pharmaceutical worked to facilitate Japan’s national industrial development and imperial expansion. See Yang, *Medicated Empire*.
27. Watanabe authored a popular book on modern Japanese industrial arts and crafts titled *Gendai Nihon no kōgei bijutsu*. He also collaborated with Sugiura Hisui on several publications, including *Zuan no bigaku*.
28. While most scholarship dates the founding of the group to 1924, Tajima Natsuko dates it to May 1925. Tajima, “‘Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū’ fukkoku ni yosete,” 20. The

Group of Seven had its tenth and final exhibition in 1936 at Mitsukoshi's Shinjuku store, which coincided with the thirty-year celebration of Hisui's career in design; the group was essentially dormant thereafter, even though it did not formally announce its disbandment until June 1940. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 112–13.

29. Sugiura, "Kantō no ji," originally published April 15, 1926, reproduced in *Afissbu bessatsu*, *Afissbu*, 4.

30. Other members who soon joined included Maejima Seiichi, Mōri Shigeru, Noguchi Kenkichi, Kurita Jirō, and Nankai Eiji. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 84.

31. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 87.

32. *Affiches* published fourteen issues total with print runs of five hundred per issue: volume 1 (nos. 1–4), July–October 1927; volume 2 (nos. 1–3), October–December 1929; volume 3 (nos. 1–7), January–March, May–June, August, and October 1930.

33. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 165.

34. Sugiura Hisui, "Sōkan no kotoba," *Affiches* 1, no. 1 (July 1927): 1.

35. Jean Carlu, "Should a Poster Be a Work of Art?" (lecture), *Commercial Art* 10 (January 1931): 92, 95, 102.

36. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 158. *Desegno* published only ten issues between May 1936 and December 1939. For the anniversary commemoration, see *Desegno* 1 (May 1936): 2–24. Several of the early issues addressed the question of defining "commercial art." Both Yamana Ayao and Kanamaru contributed essays to *Desegno* 3 (April 1937). Hara Hiromu wrote about the American Bauhaus in *Desegno* 7 (June 1938): 43–45.

37. Kon Wajirō, "Fukushokushi," *Desegno* 4 (July 1937): 2–7; and Kon Wajirō, "Seiyō Fukushokushi 2," *Desegno* 5 (November 1937): 2–6. For more on Kon, see Weisenfeld, "Designing after Disaster."

38. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 19–20.

39. Suzuki Toyoharu, "Gaijō no jiguzakku, No. 1," *Affiches* 1, no. 1 (July 1927): 10–13.

40. Tadajewski, "Correspondence Sales Education."

41. Quoted in Suzuki, "Gaijō no jiguzakku, No. 1," 13.

42. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 94, 104–8. From the beginning, the magazine featured articles by business specialists like Meiji University commerce professor Izeki Jūjirō, chief editor of the journal *Business World* (*Jitsugyōkai*). Izeki Jūjirō, "Advertising Pictures as Advertising Assistance," *Affiches* 1, no. 1 (July 1927): 2–5. See Kishi Hideo, "Café dezain," *Affiches* 2, no. 2 (November 1929): 18–22; and Kubo Yoshirō, "Kazarimado kokan" and "Kokusai zuan gurafu Pari no uindō," *Affiches* 2, no. 3 (December 1929): 14–15.

43. Nine members founded the group, two from Shiseido (Yamana and commercial photographer Ibuka Akira), two from Maruzen Books, and two from Sankyo pharmaceutical. The group held their exhibitions at the Sankyo gallery in the Ginza district. Okuyama Gihachirō, "Wārera no sensen o miyo," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 3 (March 1932): 53. The third exhibition, also held at Sankyo Gallery in the Ginza, was covered in "Dainikai Daimai Shōgyō Bijutsuten," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 6 (June 1932): 31. *Advertising World* published a roundtable discussion with the group moderated by Murota and Hirabayashi Katsura, held in April at the Shiseido Salon: "Kimu zuanka no kaikaku zadankai," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 6 (June 1932): 76–80. Other groups included the Japanese Advertising League (Nihon Kōkoku Renmei), Japan Advertising Club (Nihon Kōkoku Kurabu), and Japan Printing Study Association (Nihon Insatsu Gakkai).

44. The Editor, *Commercial Art* 1, no. 1 (July 1926): 1.
45. Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch."
46. For example, Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*; Sparke, *As Long as It's Pink*; and de Grazia, introduction.
47. Frank H. Young, "Modern Advertising Art," *Kōkokukai* 11, no. 7 (July 1934): 76.
48. Potvin, *Deco Dandy*, 8–9.
49. Kanamaru closely followed developments in European and Soviet photography through a host of international design periodicals, which he had access to through Japanese foreign book importers like Meiji Shōbō. His extensive personal collection of international design publications, most notably including *Gebrauchsgraphik*, is now housed in an archive named for him at Nihon University. Kanamaru and Suzuki, *Shōgyō shashin jutsu*; and Kanamaru, *Shinkō shashin no tsukurikata*. I would like to express my profound appreciation to the late Kaneko Ryūichi for introducing me to this archive and to Professors Hara Naohisa and Takahashi Norihide, and the entire staff and faculty of the photography division of Nihon University, who generously allowed me to study the Kanamaru materials.
50. Kanamaru Shigene, "Zuanka ni hitsuyōna shashin no joshiki 1," *Affiches* 2, no. 1 (October 1929): 25–26; Kanamaru, "Zuan posutā kōga," *Affiches* 2, no. 2 (November 1929): 23–24; and Kanamaru, "Zuanka ni hitsuyōna shashin no joshiki 2," *Affiches* 2, no. 3 (December 1929): 24–25.
51. Nihon Daigaku Geijutsu Gakubu Shashin Gakka, *Kanamaru Shigene Sensei koki kinen*.
52. Earlier, in 1925, Kanamaru founded the Kanamaru Photography Research Center (Kanamaru Shashin Kenkyūjo). Kinreisha employed Shihashi Isamu, Fujimoto Shihachi, and Hasegawa Minchō, among others. Nakai, "Komāsharu foto," in *Komāsharu foto*, 131.
53. Santen Corporation still sells Daigaku brand eye drops. "Santen's History," accessed January 15, 2023, <https://www.santen.com/en/stories/20220704.jsp>.
54. This example comes from Kanamaru's personal scrapbook in the Kanamaru Shigene Archive, Nihon University. Original source unknown.
55. The association's original eleven members were Hamada Masuji, Ikegami Shigeo, Tomita Morizō, Hara Mansuke, Yoshida Shōichi, Tada Hokuu, Nakajima Shunkichi, Murota Kurazō, Yoshikawa Shōichi, Sugisaka Chinkichi, and Suyama Hiroshi. It also published the *Commercial Art Newspaper* (*Shōgyō bijutsu shinbun*) in 1931. The journal *Craft Age* (*Kōgei jidai*), published by Atelier from December 1926 until October 1927, ran a photograph of the association members, including Mavo artist and designer Toda Tatsuo. *Kōgei jidai* 2, no. 7 (June 1927): n.p.
56. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 91.
57. The first exhibition of a hundred works was held on September 12–18, 1926, at the Marubishi clothing store in the Marunouchi Building, popularly known as the Maru Biru. The second exhibition was held at the Tōkyōfu Bijutsukan on May 7–18, 1927, and included 138 works. It was followed by the publication of a fifty-two-page exhibition catalog in August. The group charged entrance fees for these exhibitions, which was unusual. Many Group of Seven members exhibited with the association. Tajima, "Senzenki Nihon no zuankai," 91–92.
58. The Group of Seven's second exhibition traveled to the Osaka Mitsukoshi department store on August 24–29, 1927, eliciting great excitement among the Kansai design

community. Hamada dates the founding of the Osaka chapter to October 1927. Tajima dates it to January 1928. Tajima, “Senzenki Nihon no zuankai,” 92–93; and Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:12. By April 1932 a public exhibition of commercial art sponsored by the powerful *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun* attracted over 1,900 submissions and accepted 169 for display, first in Osaka (Daimaru department store) and then in Tokyo (Mitsukoshi) a month later. Competition judges, including Sugiura Hisui, selected Lion Dentifrice designer Kawamura Unpei’s poster to receive the coveted first prize, worth ¥500. *Advertising World* coverage mentions that Kawamura’s work represented a new kind of “Osaka style.” “Dainikai Daimai Shōgyō Bijutsuten,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 6 (June 1932): 30–31.

59. The first Association of Practical Print Arts exhibition was held in December 1929 at the Ueno Matsuzakaya department store. Fujisawa Tatsuo, “Zuan to jitsuyō bijutsu,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 8 (August 1932): 26–27. Murota reviewed the third exhibition: “Jitsuyō Hanga Bijutsuten o miru,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 12 (December 1932): 41–43.

60. A. D. M., “Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai wa doko e iku,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 10 (October 1929): 66.

61. Harada, “Japanese Looks at His Country’s Advertising,” 266–67, 271.

62. Sponsors: Japan Commercial Art Association (Nihon Shōgyō Bijutsu Kyōkai); Ministry of Education (Monbushō); Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shōkōshō); judges: Hata Shōkichi and Miyashita Takao.

63. “Hamada Masuji,” *Kōkokukai* 13, no. 9 (September 1936): 41.

64. Kitahara, *GSBZ*. Yumani Shobō published a facsimile of the compendium in 2001. Price information is from Tajima, “Senzenki Nihon no zuankai,” 94.

65. If you include the supplementary gazettes, 110 individuals contributed written works to the project and the work of 172 individual designers was illustrated. Many contributors had connections to major department stores.

66. All these supplements are reproduced in *Bekkan: Kaisetsu, geppō, sōmokuji hoka*, 31–128.

67. The volumes were published in the following order: vol. 2 (June 1928), vol. 5 (July 1928), vol. 14 (August 1928), vol. 7 (September 1928), vol. 18 (November 1928), vol. 10 (December 1928), vol. 4 (January 1929), vol. 1 (February 1929), vol. 12 (April 1929), vol. 9 (May 1929), vol. 16 (June 1929), vol. 13 (August 1929), vol. 19 (September 1929), vol. 21 (November 1929), vol. 11 (December 1929), vol. 17 (February 1930), vol. 8 (March 1930), vol. 15 (April 1930), vol. 20 (May 1930), vol. 22 (June 1930), vol. 3 (June 1930), vol. 6 (July 1930), vol. 23 (August 1930), and vol. 24 (September 1930).

68. For Tatsuke’s work, see Tatsuke, *Ōbei shōgyō posutā*.

69. Tajima Natsuko has collated a full list of authors broken down by total number of contributions and volumes in *Bekkan: Kaisetsu, geppō, sōmokuji hoka*, 131–33.

70. At least thirty design compendiums were published between 1912 and 1937. I am grateful to Professor Takahashi Tsugio of the Kyoto Institute of Technology (Kyōto Kōgei Seni Daigaku) for sharing his compiled list.

71. Magdalena Kolodziej has recently translated the conclusion of Hamada’s final essay into English. See Hamada, “Conclusion to Introduction to Commercial Art.” In addition to producing the *Ars* compendium, Hamada wrote a two-volume set of textbooks, *Shōgyō bijutsu kyōhon* (Commercial art textbook), for would-be designers and published

numerous texts explaining the conceptual elements of design in the early 1930s. His publications include *Shōgyō bijutsu kōsei genri* (Principles of commercial art composition) and *Shōgyō bijutsu kōza* (Lectures on commercial art). Hamada also wrote regularly for the journal *Craft Age*.

72. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:62.

73. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:14.

74. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:13, 22.

75. Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*; Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:85.

76. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:16.

77. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:9, 32, 34.

78. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:3, 15.

79. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:27–29, 32, 50.

80. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:57–58.

81. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:70–71.

82. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:66.

83. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:74.

84. Hamada illustrated this poster design in *Affiches* as well. Hamada Masuji, “Sangyō geijutsu no seitō naru hatten no tame ni,” *Affiches* 3, no. 2 (February 1930): 39–41. Hamada’s hypothetical compositions for storefronts, his display design for Lion Dentifrice, and this beer poster were all illustrated in Harada, “Japanese Looks at His Country’s Advertising,” 266–67, 271.

85. Hamada Masuji, “Uridashi gaitō sōshoku,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 10:4–5.

86. Half of *GSBZ*’s volume 14 was dedicated to explicating the vast range of effective uses of photography in commercial art. See also Hamada’s essay “Shashin oyobi manga ōyō kōkoku no gainen,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:3–8.

87. Nakada Sadanosuke, “Shashin no shinkeikō to sono ōyō kōkoku,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:9–14. See also Nakai, *Komāsharu foto*; and Iizawa, “Bauhaus and Shinkō Shashin.”

88. Kanamaru Shigene, “Kōkokuyō shashin no seisakuhō,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:14–21.

89. Namba, *Uchiteshi yaman*, 18–19.

90. The magazine was subtitled in English as *The Advertising World*, *The Publicity World*, *Advertising and Commercial Art*, and later, in August 1940, *Industrial Art and Propaganda*.

91. Another company (Tabuse Shōkai) originally published the magazine’s precursor under the title *Advertising and Display* (*Kōkoku to chinretsu*) from April 1924. *Advertising World* ran for 194 issues from March 1926 until the end of 1941 (through volume 18, no. 12). In the journal’s annual, published in 1942, it indicates that publication ceased in October 1941, so the exact end date is still in dispute, but actual publication seems to have continued until December. Fraser, Heller, and Chwast, *Japanese Modern*, 88, 97.

92. Murota wrote his first name Kurazō in two different ways: 庫造 and 久良三.

93. Murota published a volume dedicated to introducing some of the best Japanese show window background designs from all over the country. It was advertised in *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 5 (May 1931): 81. His other publications include Murota and Nagaoka, *Kōkoku jiten*; Murota, *Shin kōkoku kōsakuron*; and assorted commentaries in other journals such as *Photo Times*, July 1936, 53.

94. Namba, "Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai," 26.
95. Magazine reviews of newspaper advertising always included the number of lines occupied by the ad to convey the size and scale of the work.
96. "Shippai kōkoku yonjūkai," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 9 (September 1929): 25.
97. G sei, "Umekusa," *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 9 (September 1928): 73.
98. Murota Kurazō, "Shōkōkokubutsu ippyakushū," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 5 (May 1929): 32–48.
99. Murota, "Shōkōkokubutsu ippyakushū," 33.
100. Murota, "Shōkōkokubutsu ippyakushū."
101. Jordan and Weston, *Copying the Master*.
102. A special issue of *Advertising World* dedicated to the accession ceremony for the Showa emperor (Go-Taiten) appeared on November 10, 1928. *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 10 (October 1928). Christmas and New Year's special issues appeared every year. For early examples, see the Japan Archives Association, "Japan Ākaibuzu 1850–2100," accessed June 13, 2022, https://jaa2100.org/sp/entry/genr/cat_14_5/.
103. "Zenkoku kōkoku zuanka meikan," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 1 (January 1929): 100–109.
104. For example, "Esuemu-sha no posutā sutanpu to Macjima-shi no shikisai," *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 9 (September 1928): 74; and Murota Kurazō, "Kawaii Kan-kun to sakuhiin," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 7 (July 1929): 77. A two-part article also ran on veteran Kataoka Toshirō, who worked at the alcoholic beverage company Kotobukiya, predecessor of Suntory, and Morinaga. Kubota Taka, "Kataoka Toshirō," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 11 (November 1932): 77–81; and Kubota Taka, "Kataoka Toshirō (II)," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 12 (December 1932): 104–7.
105. For example, Yabu Kōji [Spearflower or *Ardisia japonica*, pseud.], "Kansai kōkokukai hijō," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 7 (July 1929): 60–62.
106. "Kōkokukai goshippu," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 5 (May 1929): 69.
107. Murota Kurazō, "Senkyūhyakusanjūnen no kōkokukai wa dō ugoku?," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 1 (January 1930): 25–28.
108. "Shichigatsu Eikoku de kaisai no kōkoku hanbaihaku," *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 5 (May 1933): 36.
109. Komukai Jirō, "Bauhausu no kōkoku," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 5 (May 1929): 59.
110. Special issue on neon lights, *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 6 (June 1929): 29, 44–47.
111. Tōzaiko [pseud.], "Geppyō: Tsehakugō to shinbun kōkoku," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 10 (October 1929): 62–65.
112. "Pari no hakurankai ni shuppin sareta 1932 nengata no manekin," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 2 (February 1932): 2; Egawa Akemi, "Manekin sōgyō jidai no kiroku," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 2 (February 1930): 70–71; and Takashima Kyoko, "Modan tenpo manekin," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 3 (March 1930): 70–71. The mannequin club was photographed in an "advertising revue" publicizing Nikke woolen clothes at the Sea and Sky Exposition (Umi to Sora Hakurankai) in 1930. "Kongetsu no kōkokukai rekōdo," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 7 (July 1930): 10.
113. Nagaoka Itsurō, "Hyakunengo no kōkokukai," *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 1 (January 1931): 18–19. See also Namba, "Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai," 28.
114. Quoted in Namba, "Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai," 28.
115. Namba, "Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai," 27.
116. "'Truth in Advertising': Kōkoku jitsumu kōza," *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 1 (January 1931): 78.
117. "'Truth in Advertising,'" 80.

118. “Truth in Advertising,” 81.
119. Miyashita Takao, “Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kiso chishiki 7,” *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 9 (September 1928): 70.
120. Miyashita, “Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kiso chishiki 7,” 70.
121. Miyashita, “Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kiso chishiki 7,” 70–73.
122. Okuyama’s woodcut poster design for the Nikke showroom was included in “Advertising from All Quarters,” *Commercial Art* 9, no. 51 (September 1930): 130.
123. Okuyama was the subject of two major retrospectives: Asahi, *Okuyama Gihachirō-ten*; and Matsudoshi Kyōiku Inkai, *Okuyama Gihachirō-ten*.
124. Nagaoka Itsurō, “Hokatana kara umarederu sōi,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 6 (June 1930): 70–71.
125. A dynamic Nikke show window design with this ad character strolling in the display is illustrated in *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 8 (August 1931): 37.
126. Mizuta Toshio, “Fukeyiki gyakō, sekkyoku senden,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 9 (September 1930): 74–75.
127. This work is reminiscent of Herbert Bayer’s covers for the German journal *Die Neue Linie* (The New Line). “Nikke posutā,” *Kōkokukai* 15, no. 8 (August 1938): (graphic section).
128. Okuyama Gihachirō, “Kōkoku mokuhangaron,” *Kōkokukai* 16, no. 9 (September 1939): 55–60.
129. Okuyama, “Kōkoku mokuhangaron,” 55–60. Okuyama wrote about prints and commercial design for several magazines, including *Desegno*. Okuyama Gihachirō, “Nihon hanga oyobi hanga posutā,” *Desegno* 5 (November 1937): 10–17.
130. Miyashita, “Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kiso chishiki 7,” 70–73.
131. “Shōhyō, tanahyō engi,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 1 (January 1929): 91.
132. “Shōhyō, tanahyō engi,” 91–92.
133. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:77.
134. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:75–76.

CHAPTER 2. VISIBLE LANGUAGE + THE ART OF LETTERFORMS

Epigraph: Takeda Goichi, quoted in Fraser, Heller, and Chwast, *Japanese Modern*, 123.

1. For a survey of modern Japanese typographic design, see Matsuoka, Tanaka, and Asaba, *Nihon no taipogurafikku dezain*.
2. Quoted in Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 14.
3. Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 12.
4. Seeley, “Japanese Script since 1900,” 269–70.
5. Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 12.
6. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 99–101.
7. The militarist shift in national policy in the 1930s buoyed preservationist efforts and claims that kanji were integral to the character of the Japanese national polity (*kokutai*). Some defenders even argued that the proposed language reforms would require amending the imperial rescripts, which not only would be an insult to the emperor but would sap the Japanese spirit. Seeley, “Japanese Script since 1900,” 270–71. Kanji and kana usage

reform and standardization took place only after World War II. See Seeley and Unger, *Literacy and Script Reform*.

8. Several Japanese typefaces based on *minchō* retain vestigial elements of handwriting and calligraphy to reproduce familiar traces of the brush. The standard Japanese typeface for school textbooks developed in the Meiji period, known as *kyōkashotai*, for example, is a variation of *minchō* based on the model of regular script handwriting that was taught to children in school.

9. This is mentioned in the preface discussion among Kawahata, Hirano Koga, and guest Komiyama Hiroshi in Kawahata and Hirano, *Kakimoji kō*, 6. The Nazis later abandoned Fraktur for a more legible international type style, labeling Fraktur a spurious “Jewish type” in a stunning reversal of policy.

10. In the prewar period, a range of terms were used to denote design lettering: *sōshoku moji* (decorative letters), *ishō moji* (design letters), *hentai moji* (anomalous cursive letters), and *kōkoku moji* (advertising letters). Kawahata and Hirano, *Kakimoji kō*, 10.

11. Kawahata and Hirano, *Kakimoji kō*, 28.

12. Quoted in Matsuoka, Tanaka, and Asaba, *Nihon no taipogurafikku dezain*, 17.

13. Takeda, quoted in Fraser, Heller, and Chwast, *Japanese Modern*, 123. See also Yajima, *Zuan moji taikan*.

14. Tani, *Nihon retaringu-shi*.

15. Lettering compendiums appeared as early as 1912 and boomed in the 1920s, with twelve separate volumes published between 1925 and 1928. Kawahata and Hirano, *Kakimoji kō*, 16, 24.

16. Yajima, *Zuan moji taikan*, 282–83; and Kawahata and Hirano, *Kakimoji kō*, 30–33.

17. This volume was reissued thirteen times, with the thirteenth printing in 1931. Fujiwara, *Zuanka seru jitsuyō moji*.

18. Ono, Nishimura, and Akeo, *Modanizumu shuppansha no kōbō*, 133–39; and Hideaki, “Movie Advertisements.”

19. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, vols. 15 and 17.

20. Dr. Eduard Wildhagen, “Reklame in Japan: Advertisements in Japan,” *Gebrauchs-graphik* 4, no. 5 (1927): 47.

21. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 15:7.

22. The department stores Matsuzakaya (Matsuzakaya Itō Gofukuten, 1610) and Shirokeiya (Shirokeiya Gofukuten, 1661, now Tōkyū) were also founded in the seventeenth century.

23. Jinno, *Shumi no tanjō*, 123–29.

24. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, vol. 22.

25. Weisenfeld, “From Baby’s First Bath.”

26. Ariga, “Playful Gloss.” I thank John Carpenter for bringing this essay to my attention.

27. Ariga, “Playful Gloss,” 318–20.

28. Fujisawa Eihiko, “Goshikku moji no rekishi,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 15:7–12.

29. Tanaka I., “Nihon no taipogurafikku dezain,” 6. Word spacing and punctuation were also important contested areas of reform. Twine, “Adoption of Punctuation.”

30. The Portuguese first introduced horizontal lettering to Japan in the late sixteenth century. See Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 14, 16.

31. Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 12.

32. Kim, “Mapping a Graphic Genome.”

33. Stirton, *Jan Tschichold*.
34. El Lissitzky, “Yōso to hakken,” translated by Murayama Tomoyoshi, *Mavo* 7 (August 1925): 23; and Murayama, *Kōseiha kenkyū*. See Weisenfeld, *Mavo*, chap. 5.
35. Kawahata, *Hara Hiromu to “Bokutachi no shin kappanjutsu,”* 32.
36. Moholy-Nagy, “New Typography,” 21. For Murayama’s Japanese translation of this quote, see Murayama, *Kōseiha kenkyū*, 69. Moholy-Nagy’s translated essay appears in *Looking Closer* 3. Hamada Masuji discusses similar statements by Moholy-Nagy in “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:87.
37. For more on Hara’s career, see Hara Hiromu, *Hara Hiromu*.
38. The date of the translation is somewhat unclear because some versions of the pamphlet are imprinted July 1931 (Showa 6), and others have the date corrected to July 1932 (Showa 7). Hara himself dates it to 1932, but some scholars, like Kawahata, use 1931. Hara’s mentor Miyashita Takao headed the school printing program, founded in 1907, which was designed to train people for professional work in the printing industry and included courses on typesetting and lithography. Typography and lettering design were generally called *mojihō*.
39. Discussed in Kawahata, *Hara Hiromu to “Bokutachi no shin kappanjutsu,”* 63–80.
40. One such article that Hara notes having read was N. J. Werner, “A Lesson in Typography,” *Inland Printer* 70, no. 1 (October 1926): 68–70.
41. Nagaoka Itsurō, “Katsujigumi honi no insatsu chishiki: Taipugurafi no kenkyū,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 10 (October 1930): 80–81. See Takeuchi, “Zasshi ‘Kōkokukai’ ni okeru taipogurafi e no chūmoku.”
42. Tschichold, “Principles,” 125. See also Tschichold, *New Typography*.
43. Quoted in Kawahata, *Hara Hiromu to “Bokutachi no shin kappanjutsu,”* 50.
44. Kawahata, *Hara Hiromu to “Bokutachi no shin kappanjutsu,”* 66.
45. Nakanishi, “Minchōtai no hito.”
46. Hara Hiromu, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto,” *Kōga* 2, no. 2 (February 1933): 8–9; Hara, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto 2,” *Kōga* 2, no. 3 (March 1933): 29–36; Hara, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto 3,” *Kōga* 2, no. 4 (April 1933): 49–52; and Hara, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto 4,” *Kōga* 2, no. 5 (May 1933): 85–94.
47. Moholy-Nagy, “New Typography,” 21.
48. Hara, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto 2,” 33–34; and Tupitsyn, *Soviet Photograph*.
49. Hara, “E-shashin, moji-katsuji, soshite typofoto 2,” 35.
50. Salen, “Surrogate Multiplicities.”
51. Quoted in Tschichold, “Principles,” 118. See also Long, “Adolf Loos’s ‘Ornament and Crime.’”
52. Tschichold, “Principles,” 118.
53. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 15:6.
54. Nishimura, “1920-nendai Nihon no eiga posutā 1920”; Matsuo and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no henshen,” 31; and Murota Kurazō, “Eiga, senden, bijutsu,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 3 (March 1930): 70–71.
55. Kawahata, “Modan taipogurafii to dezain no yōran 1920 dai-1954,” 55; and Kawahata, *Seishun zue*.
56. Kawahata, *Seishun zue*, introduction.

57. Literary Terms, accessed May 25, 2021, <https://literaryterms.net/>.
58. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:55.
59. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 194.
60. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 99–101.
61. Projit Bihari Mukharji, “Fanning an Eastern Breeze,” *Calcutta by Gaslight* (blog), June 8, 2020, <https://web.sas.upenn.edu/mukharji/2020/06/08/fanning-an-eastern-breeze/>.
62. Morinaga Seika Kabushiki Kaisha, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 78.
63. Namba, “Shōwa zenki no Kōkokukai,” 25.
64. Tōzaiko [pseud.], “Shinbun kōkoku: Ikkanen kirinukichō kaiko,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 2 (February 1930): 75.
65. Pictured in Tōzaiko, “Shinbun kōkoku,” 76.
66. “Shin Kasukēdo to kōkoku,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 9 (September 1929): 40–41. Kubota Takashi wrote a two-part series in 1932 on Kataoka’s successful career. Kubota Takashi, “Adoman seikō monogatari kōkokujin to naru mae no Kataoka Toshirō,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 11 (November 1932): 77–81; and Kubota, “Adoman seikō monogatari kōkokujin to natte kara no Kataoka Toshirō,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 12 (December 1932): 104–7.
67. Kataoka, *Kataoka Toshirō Sumoka kōkoku zenshū*, 3.
68. Kataoka, *Kataoka Toshirō Sumoka kōkoku zenshū*, 366.
69. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:24.
70. Later advertisements for toothpaste capitalized on the physiological shape of the actual tooth with its root structure, moving away from the character pictogram for tooth. This enabled marketing for use against root decay and gum disease.
71. Kataoka, *Kataoka Toshirō Sumoka kōkoku zenshū*, 431.
72. Kataoka, *Kataoka Toshirō Sumoka kōkoku zenshū*, 287; and Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:59.
73. Kataoka, *Kataoka Toshirō Sumoka kōkoku zenshū*, 480.
74. Quoted in Matsuoka and Koga, “Nihon no modan taipogurafi no hensen,” 31.

CHAPTER 3. HEALTH + BEAUTY

Epigraph: Komai Reiko, *Rittai bishōhō zukai* (Tokyo: Shiseido, ca. 1934), n.p.

1. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, 6.
2. Juliann Sivulka discusses American “rituals of personal cleanliness.” Sivulka, *Stronger than Dirt*, 14.
3. For more detail, see Weisenfeld, “From Baby’s First Bath.” Also, see my 2009 essay “Selling Shiseido” on the MIT Website *Visualizing Cultures*, https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/shiseido_01/index.html.
4. The Japanese Infectious Diseases Prevention Law (Densenbyō Yobōhō), promulgated in 1897, was an important milestone in establishing a government policy on public sanitation and hygiene. Subsequent laws and hygiene campaigns sought to inculcate official hygiene regimes directly into the domestic sphere.
5. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 103–5.
6. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 72–74.
7. Shiseido brand managers still quote Fukuhara’s dictums about letting the product speak for itself. See the recent interview with Okabe Yoshiaki, leader of Shiseido’s research

and development and previously Shiseido brand manager. “Exquisitely Fusing Two Seemingly Opposite Values into a ‘Dynamic Harmony’: The New Growth Strategy in Shiseido’s R&D,” Shiseido, January 7, 2022, <https://corp.shiseido.com/en/company/talk/20211224.html>.

8. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 6; and Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 30.

9. The per-unit price went up steadily over time, reaching ¥0.15 in 1931. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 25–26.

10. Salaries went down precipitously across the board during the Great Depression. Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai, *Nihon chōki tōkei sōran* 4, 4:474–77.

11. Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai, *Nihon chōki tōkei sōran* 4:474–77.

12. From 1892 Kao enlisted the new advertising firm Mannensha to purchase Kansai-area advertising space, although Nagase continued to write all the copy and designed all the layouts for promotional material. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 30–31, 57.

13. Aramata, *Kōkoku zuzō no densetsu*, 111.

14. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 24.

15. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 31.

16. In Buddhist imagery the moon has connotations of purification, and moon viewing is associated with spiritual visualization. I would like to thank an anonymous reader for bringing these connections to my attention.

17. Aramata Hiroshi has noted two additional hypothetical explanations for Nagase’s choice of the crescent moon image. The first is that he was inspired by the combination crescent moon and star logo used on one of the early pencil products Nagase Shōten imported to Japan. Second, skin care has a semantic connection with moon imagery, as the radical for the character for “skin” (肌) is the moon (月) radical. Aramata, *Kōkoku zuzō no densetsu*, 108–17.

18. Nihon Tōkei Kyōkai, *Nihon chōki tōkei sōran* 4:80–81; and Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 136.

19. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 108.

20. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 54.

21. Narita argues that at this time in Japan the normative notion of the human body was based on the male model, and the female body was assessed in terms of its deviations from this norm. Narita, “Mobilized from Within,” 260. See also Narita, “Eisei ishiki no teichaku to ‘bi no kusari’”; and Narita, “Women.”

22. The segmentation of the female consumer market from the 1920s is a complex matter discussed at length in Sato, *New Japanese Woman*.

23. Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*.

24. Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 104.

25. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 48; and Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 238.

26. Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 103. A large reduction in imports of cosmetic items to Japan and the rest of Asia during World War I and a further reduction

after 1930 also greatly benefited domestic producers. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 46.

27. Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, May 11, 1932, p.m. edition, 3.

28. Ochiai, *Kaō kōkoku shi*, 60.

29. Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu, *Shinbun kōkoku zasshi kōkoku*, 108–9, 112, 114, 130–31, 206, 208–11.

30. Tagawa, *Front*, 22.

31. Tōzaiko [pseud.], “Shinbun kōkoku uraomote,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 8 (August 1929): 61.

32. Aobun Doshi? [pseud.], “Kōkoku sunbyō,” *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 3 (March 1933): 29.

33. As part of the company’s structural reorganization, in November 1929 Kao’s advertising section split off from the company’s central administrative division, and two months later Okada Hanzō, a well-known advertising theorist, joined the company to head up general planning in the section. Ōta and Okada worked closely together. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 95.

34. Asuka, *Nihon dezain shōshi*, 19; and Tagawa, *Kōkoku wa waga shōgai no shigoto ni arazu*, 10–36, 50–54.

35. Tagawa, *Kōkoku wa waga shōgai no shigoto ni arazu*, 38–47.

36. After joining Kao in 1930, Asuka remained with the company until 1951.

37. Tōzaiko [pseud.], “Shinbun kōkoku baraete,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 10 (October 1930): 74.

38. Tagawa, *Front*, 24.

39. Tagawa, *Shimi moku moku*, 28.

40. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 96.

41. The company’s earliest advertising efforts concentrated on newspapers, allocating over 70 percent of its total annual advertising budget to this area of the media. Only later did it broaden to include general-interest magazines. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 30, 119. In the early years of the company, around 1890–91, Nagase had spent close to 44 percent of the company’s annual profits on newspaper advertising. Ochiai, *Kaō Kōkokushi*, 66.

42. Rubinfen, “Commodity to National Brand,” 21.

43. Advertisements ran in seventeen newspapers around the country. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 30–31.

44. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 102.

45. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 95.

46. Kanamaru owned numerous issues of *USSR in Construction*: nos. 1–2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, and 12 (1931), 8 and 10 (1932), 7 (1933).

47. Quoted in Smith, *Making the Modern*, 4. For more on the Taylor system and its theory of scientific management to analyze work flow, see also Maier, “Between Taylorism and Technocracy.”

48. Dickerman, “Propagandizing of Things,” 66.

49. The catchphrase “close friend” appeared in a 1929 Kao newspaper advertisement featuring smiling male workers arm in arm.

50. Smith, *Making the Modern*, 9.

51. I would like to thank Hae-Young Kim for her invaluable assistance in translating this text.
52. Both McClintock and Sivulka have convincingly argued that in the Euro-American context, soap and the discourse of cleanliness were fundamentally implicated in the ideologies of imperialism and white supremacy. See McClintock, "Soft-Soaping Empire," in *Imperial Leather*, 207–31.
53. Tamanoi, "Japanese Nationalism," 276, 282–83.
54. Japanese trade journals discussed the expressive use of hands in foreign and domestic advertising. See, for example, an article by Kao advertising division employee Shinbō Tamihachi, "Kōkoku ni arawareta te no hyōgen," *Kōkokukai* 11, no. 6 (June 1934): 69–73.
55. Department stores listed as part of this campaign were Ginza Matsuzakaya, Nihonbashi Shirokiya, Ueno Matsuzakaya, Gotanda Shirokiya, and Yokohama Sogōya.
56. Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity*, 42.
57. Gronberg, *Designs on Modernity*, 44.
58. Surviving photographs in the Kao company archives document the promotional parades of the marching bands. Dynamic Kao show window designs are illustrated in *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 8 (August 1931): 37.
59. Quoted in Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 341.
60. Tōkyōto Shashin Bijutsukan, *Kimura Ihee no sekai*.
61. Kimura Ihee, "Kōkoku shashin sakuseihō," *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 9 (September 1933): 52–55.
62. Tagawa, *Front*, 24.
63. Naruse Hiroshi, "Shinbun kōkoku no kaibō: Kaō Sekken," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 7 (1932): 74–76.
64. There was also a famous British image of a young child by Sir John Everett Millais entitled "Bubbles" that was used for a Pears soap advertisement in 1888 and soon became a classic. Sivulka, *Stronger than Dirt*, 88–96.
65. Asuka Tetsuo, "Shō uindō (show-window) o kataru," *Hanbai undō*, no. 5 (May 1931): 14–15, quoted and translated in Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 338n189. Another variation on the Kao show window design described by Asuka is pictured in *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 3 (March 1931): 37.
66. Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 4.
67. Aka Enpitsu ko [pseud.], "Kōkoku sunbyō," *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 6 (June 1933): 28.
68. In one of his few signed statements in *Nagaseman*, Ōta wrote a humble and heart-rending farewell address directly to the employees, indicating his deep remorse for failing to succeed with the campaign as he had hoped. Tagawa, *Shimi moku moku*, 36–37. Ōta returned to doing work for Kao in the postwar period in the 1950s.
69. Japan Soap and Detergent Association, "Shanpū no rekishi wa hikakuteki atarashii," accessed December 16, 2021, https://jsda.org/w/03_shiki/shintaimemo_01.html.
70. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 30.
71. Buchloh, "From Faktura to Factography."
72. I am grateful to Joel Smith for providing me with information on the *Deutsche Lichtbild* image.

73. Stein, "Composite Photographic Image."
74. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 105.
75. Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 374.
76. Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 378.
77. Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 347n209.
78. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*.
79. For more on Shiseido's Ginza context, see Shiseido Gallery, *Ginza modan to toshi ishō*.
80. M. Davis, *Classic Chic*; and Setagaya, *Fukuhara Shinzō to bijutsu to Shiseidō-ten*.
81. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 58.
82. Potvin, *Deco Dandy*.
83. Takagi Chōyō, "Fujin o kokyaku to shite no kōkoku," *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 7 (July 1928): 49.
84. "Ōru bakku no musubikata," *Shiseido geppō*, November 1924, 3.
85. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 21.
86. J. Davis, *Utamaro*, 125.
87. Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*, 129–45. I wish to thank Natasha Staller for bringing this fascinating material to my attention.
88. Many of Lepape's figures have dramatically slanted eyes and dark hair that evoke Oriental exoticism. M. Davis, *Classic Chic*, 54.
89. Sato, *New Japanese Woman*; and Modern Girl around the World Research Group, *Modern Girl*.
90. Silverberg, "Modern Girl as Militant."
91. Kery, *Art Deco Graphics*.
92. An array of Yamana's stunning package designs are pictured in Shiseido, *Bi to chi no mimu*, *Shiseido-ten*, 49.
93. Inoue, "Kiyokata's Asasuzu."
94. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 21.
95. Peiss, *Hope in a Jar*, 16–17.
96. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 44.
97. Unilever, "Pond's," accessed August 27, 2024, <https://www.unilever.com/brands/beauty-wellbeing/ponds/>.
98. To see an extensive collection of Pond's advertisements and other cosmetics advertisements from the period, see the John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History at Duke University. Thousands of the collection's objects are available for view on the center's digital database: Ad*Access, Duke Digital Repository, accessed June 29, 2021, <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess>.
99. Skin whitening is still a multimillion-dollar business in Japan. See Ashikari, "Cultivating Japanese Whiteness."
100. Culver, "Shiseidō's 'Empire of Beauty,'" 8.
101. Ashikari, "Cultivating Japanese Whiteness."
102. Tōzaiko [pseud.], "Shinbun kōkoku: Ikkanen kirinukichō kaiko," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 2 (February 1930): 75.
103. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 20, 24.

104. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 153; and Yanai, “Yamana Ayao.”
105. “Yamana Ayao-shi no shōkai,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 5 (May 1929): 63; “Yamana Ayao keshōhin kōkoku to sono bijin-e,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 1 (January 1930): 70–71; and “Katto zuan Yamana Ayao an,” *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 9 (September 1931): 56. Yamana himself wrote prolifically on advertising design throughout his career, publicizing his ideas and name, starting with *Affiches*, moving to *Advertising World*, and then eventually publishing his own monographs. See Yamana Ayao, “Katto dansō,” *Affiches* 3, no. 1 (January 1930): 8–9; and Yamana, “Kinmu zuanka mo ichi jimuin ka,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 10 (October 1932): 24–25.
106. Yamana not only created posters, newspaper advertisements, and packaging design for Shiseido but also worked as a book designer for two major publishing houses, Shinchōsha and Chūō Kōronsha.
107. Murota Kurazō, “Yamana Ayao-shi no shōkai,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 5 (May 1929): 63.
108. Yanai, “Yamana Ayao,” 6.
109. Shiseido company archives.
110. Quoted in Yanai, “Yamana Ayao,” 9. See also Shiseido, *Yamana Ayao no gurafikku dezzain*, 224–36.
111. Quoted in Yanai, “Yamana Ayao,” 7; and Yamana, *Yamana Ayao seitan hyakunen kinen sakuhinshū*.
112. Shiseido Company archives.
113. Ibuka Akira, “Kōkoku shashinka to naru ni wa,” *Kōkokukai* 12, no. 3 (March 1935): 81; Ibuka, “Shōgyō shashin”; and Ibuka Akira, *Chainstore Research*, February 8, 1936.
114. Kracauer, *Mass Ornament*.
115. Garon, “Luxury Is the Enemy.”
116. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 134, 156–57.
117. The research center also helped launch a national advertising campaign established to contribute to the wartime “assistance movement.” Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 156.
118. Shiseido opened sales branches across the empire and sold its products at Mitsukoshi department stores across Asia. Culver, “Shiseidō’s ‘Empire of Beauty,’” 12–13.
119. The rationing of publishing materials started on September 1, 1938, with the newspaper publishing order that restricted paper rations to companies. Two days later magazine paper rationing was added. In May 1940 the Cabinet created the Newspaper Paper Control Committee (Shinbun Yōshi Tōsei Iinkai), and in June 1941 publishing paper rationing rules went into full effect for books. By March 1942 it was amended to impact magazines more extensively. After 1943 there was an across-the-board shortage of paper, and the number of pages in all publications went down dramatically. From November 1944, all publications, except those with exemptions, were published in only one color, and those that were permitted more were allowed only two colors. March 1945 marked the cessation of multicolor printing for magazine covers, and only two colors (red and green) were allowed. Use of higher-quality paper for covers was also suspended. Wakabayashi, *Tatakau kōkoku*, 6.
120. *Chainstore Research* 28 (October 1937), cover.
121. *Chainstore Research* 30 (December 1937), cover.
122. One example of montage is on the cover of *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* 2, no. 11 (November 1940), cover.

123. Shiseido, *Shiseido sendenshi*, 167.

124. *Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater* 2, no. 9 (August 1940), back cover.

125. See Weisenfeld, “Luxury and Thrift.”

126. Kao soap advertisement, *Hinode* 2, no. 2 (April 1933), back cover. American soap manufacturers like B. T. Babbitt connected the notions of cleanliness through soap use and civilization in advertising copy as early as the 1890s. Babbitt’s promotion for Best Soap on a direct-marketing trade card ran, “Soap for All Nations” and “Cleanliness is the scale of civilization.” Sivulka, *Stronger than Dirt*, 103.

127. A related newspaper advertisement from the same year that similarly employs bar charts to show Japan’s low standing in terms of soap use reveals the economic rather than moral subtext of this hygiene discourse. “This is the truth!” it exclaims. “Sickness is the most uneconomical!” This advertisement is pictured in Aka Enpitsu ko [pseud.], “Kōkoku sunbyō,” *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 6 (June 1933): 28.

128. Discussed in Rubinfiel, “Commodity to National Brand,” 358.

CHAPTER 4. FOOD + BEVERAGE

Epigraph: Minemura Kōzō, “Shōhin hōsō no ritsuan,” 57.

1. Mercer and Gaunt, introduction, 7.

2. Isenstadt, “Visions of Plenty,” 311.

3. Kushima, *Za okashi*, 6–7. Morinaga maintains a virtual museum with selected advertising as well as a general chronology of the company history. Morinaga and Company, “Morinaga Digital Museum,” accessed May 17, 2024, <https://www.morinaga.co.jp/museum>.

4. Kushima, *Za okashi*, 6–7.

5. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 72.

6. This product history is recounted in Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga gojūgonenshi*, 228–29.

7. The company’s factory is still in this location. Full-page Morinaga caramel advertisement, *Tōkyō nichinichi shinbun*, January 5, 1930, a.m. ed., 6.

8. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 104.

9. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 41.

10. In 1931 a wizened Morinaga reminisced about his personal journey to success, including how his Christian beliefs intersected with his patriotism. In addition to personal dedication, he emphasized the importance of advertising. See Morinaga Taichirō, “Sono koro o kataru,” *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 3 (March 1931): 10–12.

11. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 98–99, 138. The children’s package art contests started in 1932, receiving over 6,500 submissions the first year. Promoted as an educational venture, the contests were aggressively marketed to elementary schoolchildren. Winning and noteworthy submissions were exhibited at Mitsukoshi department store in Tokyo and then traveled around the country.

12. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 106; and *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 23.

13. These include *Girl’s Friend* (*Shōjo no tomo*), *Youth’s Friend* (*Shōnen no tomo*), *Girl’s Pictorial* (*Shōjo gabō*), *Serpent* (*Serupan*), *Sunday* (*Sandē*), *Weekly Asahi* (*Shūkan asahi*), *Ladies World* (*Fujōkai*), *New Youth* (*Shin seinen*), *Girl’s Club* (*Shōjo kurabu*),

Baseball World (Yakyūkai), *Children's Science* (Kodomo no kagaku), and *New Youth* (Shin shōnen).

14. I am grateful to the staff at Morinaga for bringing this “fake chocolate” phenomenon to my attention.

15. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 78.

16. There was a long Edo history of creative copywriting in commercial marketing. See, for example, Minowa, “Hiraga Gennai.”

17. *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 12, 1918, a.m. ed., 6.

18. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 137. Another version ran with the copy “The nutrition for complete victory!” in the *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 26, 1937, a.m. ed., 6.

19. *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 25.

20. Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iryōhin, zakka*, 152.

21. *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 24.

22. *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 6 (June 1931): 6.

23. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 106.

24. In Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 13:47.

25. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 86.

26. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 86.

27. Art Gallery of New South Wales, *MOBO MOGA/Modern Boy, Modern Girl*. Published in Japanese as Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura, *Mobo Moga-ten 1910–1935*. See also Chan, “Modern Boy,” 210.

28. Scrapbook, Morinaga corporate archives, 1935.

29. *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 95–102. An illustration of the Camp Store with flying pennant flag is pictured on the cover of *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 7 (July 1931). The uniformed salesman with white cap was illustrated on the covers of *Morinaga Beltline* 4, no. 1 (January 1932); and *Morinaga Beltline* 4, no. 3 (March 1932). Photographs of a Camp Store, busy beach, and women in bathing suits under tents appeared on the cover of *Morinaga Beltline* 7, no. 8 (August 1935).

30. Morinaga provided support only within the scope of educational guidance such as product knowledge, accounting affairs, and cooking and hygiene work, as well as covering costs for exterior design, operations, procurement, advertising, and sales management. The students took responsibility for implementing the operation. The Camp Stores remained in operation until 1966.

31. Examples can be found in the Morinaga corporate archives.

32. Morinaga's section chiefs were powerful artistic forces who encouraged dynamic working environments. They included Hiranuma Fukusaburō, Koyama Masaya, Yamasaki Muneharu, and Inoo Heihachi.

33. *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 7 (October 1929): 8.

34. Other designers who worked for the company were Saitō Yoshirō, Ujihara Tadao, Kurita Jirō, Ōhashi Jūgorō, Toya Tadayoshi, Shimada Daijirō, Okada Tominosuke, Suganuma Kinroku, Mitsui Yoshinosuke, Mizukoshi Masanori, Takahashi Masuo, Konishi Hidemoto, Nansai Teiji, Babami Ryōichi, Murakami Masao, and Saitō Masao. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 17–19.

35. Statistics are from Maekawa, “Chokorēto no tatōe toshite no ‘shōjo,’” 51.

36. Imaizumi wrote about the art of editorial layout in Imaizumi Takeji, "E to moji no narabekata reiauto," *Morinaga Beltline* 10, no. 6 (June 1938): 133.
37. Kōzusha held their first poster exhibition at the Bunpōdō bookstore in Kanda on March 5–10, 1932, and their third group show was held at Sankyo Pharmaceuticals' gallery in the Ginza district in 1935. "Kōzusha kōkokugaten," *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 4 (April 1932): 64; Namba, *Uchiteshi yaman*, 26–30; and Imaizumi, *Kiki kaki dezainshi*, 17–28.
38. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 18.
39. The Hara Setsuko poster is discussed in *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 6 (1937): 150. Well-known commercial photographer Ibuka Akira, who worked for Shiseido, also worked for Morinaga.
40. Horino, *Josei-bi no utsushikata*. See also S. Ogawa, "Rerouting the Modernist Visions."
41. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga gojūgonenshi*, 308.
42. Maekawa, "Chokorēto no tatōe toshite no 'shōjo,'" 53–56.
43. *Morinaga Beltline* 6, no. 10 (October 1934): 4–5.
44. Nakai, *Komāsharu foto*, 32.
45. It appeared in the fifth competition announcement in the *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, February 26, 1934, 4–5.
46. The company also launched a national star identification competition called All Japan Stars on Parade that yielded eight times the expected number of customer guess submissions. Photographs of the popular film actress Irie Takako, the correct answer, and an announcement of seventy other prizewinners were published in "All Japan Stars on Parade," *Morinaga Beltline* 4, no. 1 (January 1932): 10.
47. Archival photographs survive in the Morinaga corporate archives.
48. Minemura, "Shōhin hōsō no ritsuan," 57.
49. Minemura, "Shōhin hōsō no ritsuan," 57.
50. Minemura, "Shōhin hōsō no ritsuan," 56–57.
51. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 16–17.
52. *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 111–13; and Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 100–101.
53. "Tai appu no kōkoku no ryūkō," *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 8 (August 1931): 80.
54. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 32; and Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga gojūgonenshi*, 298–99.
55. See Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 96–97; and Hashizume, *Hikōki to sōzōryoku*, 84–94. A cover illustration shows the Morinaga airplane dropping a sea of pamphlets from the air: *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 4 (no. 25) (April 1931); and "Kantan ni dekiru hikōki sēru uindō chinretsu," *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 9 (September 1931): 10.
56. For a discussion of the popularity of aviation in Japan in a global context, see Weisenfeld, *Gas Mask Nation*, chap. 2.
57. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 7–9, 22, 24–27, 29.
58. Fujimoto and Shiihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 30; and *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 77–79. For a detailed discussion of the Caramel General campaign, see Sakai, "Morinaga Seika no jidō bunka kanren jigyō (ni)."
59. *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 6 (June 1937): 150.
60. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 29–42.
61. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 38.

62. *Beltline Graph* was a monthly public relations magazine launched in 1932 and given for free to any customer who spent more than ¥0.10. “Chūgen ni gurafu no riyō,” *Morinaga Beltline* 4, no. 7 (July 1932): 10.
63. Matsuzaki Hanzaburō, “Morinaga berutorain no seiritsu ni tsuite,” *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 1 (January 1929).
64. “Aki no uindō no tsukurikata,” *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 7 (October 1929): 8.
65. *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 3 (March 1936): 41–44.
66. *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 22 (February 1931): 9.
67. *Noshi* are featured on the cover and inside for *Ochūgen* in *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 6 (June 1931): 10.
68. *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 10 (January 1930): 9; *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 6 (June 1930): 10; *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 12 (December 1930): cover; and *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 3 (March 1936): 54.
69. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 3 (March 1930): cover, 10.
70. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 6 (June 1930): 7.
71. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 6 (June 1930): 7; and *Morinaga Beltline* 7, no. 4 (April 1935): 74.
72. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 9 (September 1930): 10.
73. See cover and entire issue, *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 9 (December 1929).
74. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 87. A photograph of the Morinaga Beltline Day balloon midair above Ueno appeared in *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 5 (May 1931): 3.
75. Matsuzaki Hanzaburō, “Senden no kōka to ruijihin tekkyō,” *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 11 (November 1930): 3.
76. *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 2 (May 1929): 4, 6.
77. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 5 (May 1930): cover.
78. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 5 (May 1930): back cover.
79. As part of the annual Yokohama Bazaar festivities, local enterprises sponsored an advertising parade. Morinaga won the Yokohama Bazaar prize. *Morinaga Beltline* 2, no. 6 (June 1930): 7.
80. The lively First Day Service (Tsuitachi Hōshi Dē) event at the Dalian (Dairen) store is mentioned in *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 5 (May 1931): 9.
81. The advertisement is in the Morinaga corporate archives, Book #14–2 (S.10–12): 36–37.
82. The issues include photographs of the Pierrot gang. *Morinaga Beltline*, no. 22 (February 1931): 8; and *Morinaga Beltline* 3, no. 5 (May 1931): 8.
83. “Ōbei shōgyō bijutsukai,” *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 6 (June 1930): 17.
84. *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 1 (January 1936): cover.
85. *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 6 (June 1936): 119, 122–23.
86. *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 11 (November 1937): 263–64.
87. *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 12 (December 1937): cover, 290.
88. *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 9 (September 1937): cover, 212–13.
89. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 137; and *Morinaga Beltline* 10, no. 3 (March 1938): 66–67.
90. This competition was advertised on a full page of the *Japan Times and Mail*, February 11, 1938, 5. Also advertised in the *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, February 13, 1938, a.m. ed., 9.

91. *Japan Times and Mail*, September 19, 1938, 10.
92. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 118–19.
93. “History of Mother’s Day,” History.com, accessed July 17, 2020, <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/mothers-day>.
94. Kushner, *Thought War*, 79.
95. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 108.
96. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 109; and *Morinaga Beltline* 9, no. 9 (September 1937): cover.
97. Baba, *Sensō to kōkoku*, 62–67.
98. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 109.
99. I have written about these sales within the broader context of Japan’s visual culture of civil air defense. See Weisenfeld, *Gas Mask Nation*, chap. 1.
100. Morinaga’s Mizette was sold with a bonus giveaway in each box. In 1934 a *sug-oroku* board game was the prize, and it featured a dream-filled adventure wonderland of Morinaga products.
101. David Sato (blog), 2001, accessed June 15, 2021, <http://tokyowanyosai.com/soft/shakai/pr-mori.html>. I wish to extend my great appreciation to David Sato for sharing his research on wartime advertising with me.
102. Kushima, *Za okashi*, 7–15. During the war many Morinaga designers scattered, and the ones who stayed did not have much design work. Arai moved to Dentsu after the war.
103. Kuramoto Chōji, “Shōhin kōkoku sakari uraki? 3: Yunyū bunka no senku bīru,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 9 (September 1929): 70.
104. Mishima arrived in Beijing in 1902 and then moved to Hubei Province, where he met Dokura Gorō (whose brother, Ryūjirō, would later help Mishima found Lacto Company Ltd.). Mishima and Dokura Gorō went into business together, establishing a store in Beijing in 1903 aimed at trading general goods, called Nikka Yōkō. Dokura later handed the business over to Mishima and returned to Japan. The shop’s aim was to familiarize Chinese consumers with Japan via Japanese products, but when the Russo-Japanese War broke out in 1904, Mishima went to Mongolia alongside members of the Japanese Armed Forces’ War Horse Purchasing Committee, which began his long-standing entrepreneurial interactions there. When the war ended, he became involved with the business of importing cows from Mongolia, then switched to sheep when that did not thrive, hoping to cater to the expanding Japanese market for wool to make military uniforms that would be cheaper than imports from Australia. By 1910 Mishima was well established as an entrepreneur in China, and it was during these business dealings that he learned the recipe for the sour milk that would become the basis for Calpis. Karupisu Shokuhin Kōgyō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensan Inkai (hereafter Karupisu), *70-nen no ayumi*, 21–24. The Calpis brand is now owned by Asahi Soft Drinks Company.
105. Lacto initially manufactured lacto caramels (*rakutō kyarameru*), advertised as a nutritious product for gut health, but after a notorious “melting incident” that stopped production, the company shifted its efforts to beverages. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 51.
106. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 19–21.
107. “Shōhyō, tanahyō engi,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 1 (January 1929): 91.
108. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 25–26.
109. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 28–29.

110. Mishima first marketed the precursors of Calpis as Daigomi in 1916 and then came out with Daigoso in 1917. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 29–31.
111. Lauren Adhav, “A History of Polka Dots, in Case You’ve Ever Wanted to Know More about Them,” *Cosmopolitan*, June 19, 2020.
112. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 88, 345–46.
113. Suzuki, “Karupisu to kindai kazoku.”
114. Quoted in Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 163.
115. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 67–69, 364.
116. Calpis advertising bureau chief Inoue Seii later wrote about this landmark competition and the initial concern about Calpis being equated with the potentially derogatory image of the *kuronbō*, referring to Black figures, but that the positive Japanese public response to Dünkelsbühler’s design was decisive in its ultimate selection. Inoue Seii, “Shōgyō bijutsu sengaku jidai o kataru,” *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 10 (October 1933): 28–29.
117. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 163. The Dünkelsbühler design was prominently featured in Hisui’s magazine *Affiches*, shown appearing in the Calpis parade floats in the 1930 advertising parade; *Affiches* 3, no. 5 (June 1930): 134. It also appeared in company advertisements on multiple back covers, for example, *Affiches* 3, no. 6 (August 1930).
118. Shimizu Takanori, “Eki [kyō] kara mita posutā no seika,” *Affiches* 2, no. 3 (December 1929): 7–11. Also see Ng, “*I Ching*.”
119. Shimizu, “Eki [kyō] kara mita posutā no seika,” 7–11.
120. For discussions of the iconography of blackface imagery in American visual culture, see Strausbaugh, *Black Like You*; and Bean, Hatch, and McNamara, *Inside the Minstrel Mask*. For a discussion of the history of blackface in Japan, see Russell, “Playing with Race.” Also see Volk, “Image of the Black.” Although she does not discuss Calpis imagery as a precursor, Erica Kanesaka’s analysis of Japanese postwar incorporation of blackface into *kawaii*, or cute, culture in selling the toy phenomenon Dakko-chan certainly points to a long-standing connection among blackface, consumption, and affection in Japanese marketing and its branded characters. Kanesaka, “Racist Attachments.”
121. See, for example, Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire*.
122. Namba, “Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai,” 28.
123. Quoted in Markwyn, “Economic Partner,” 448.
124. For the entire issue of *Gebrauchsgraphik* 5, no. 5 (May 1928), see IADDB, “International Advertising and Design Database,” accessed January 4, 2022, <https://magazines.iaddd.org/>.
125. Tower, *Envisioning America*; and Michael Kimmelman, “ART VIEW: The Lure of Fordism, Jazz and ‘Americanism,’” *New York Times*, February 11, 1990, section 2, 37.
126. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, vol. 13, color illustrations section.
127. Okamoto Shūkichi, “Kuronbō ōkō jidai,” *Kōkokukai* 8, no. 10 (October 1931): 16–18.
128. Okamoto, “Kuronbō ōkō jidai,” 16–18.
129. hooks, “Eating the Other,” 21.
130. Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga gojūgonenshi*, 303; and Morinaga Seika, *Morinaga Seika 100-nenshi*, 100.
131. “Rokugatsu no tentō sōchi,” *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 5 (May 1936): 101.
132. *Morinaga Vintage Archives*, 76.

133. For a discussion with the actress about her career, see Tanaka, Utsumi, and Onuma, "Looking Back."
134. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 364; and Ikeda Shinobu, "Imperial Desire."
135. Here I borrow and extend Shiseido's term "Empire of Beauty," discussed by Annika Culver.
136. Raine, "'You Can't Replace'"; and Coates, "Shape-Shifting Diva."
137. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 364.
138. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 322, 336–40, 342.
139. Tōzaiko [pseud.], "Shinbun kōkoku: Ikkanen kirinukichō kaiko," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 2 (February 1930): 75.
140. An example from around 1953 is illustrated in Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 365.
141. The wholesalers that Calpis commissioned as its sales agencies in the Kantō and the Kansai regions respectively were Kokubu Shōten (now Kokubu Group Corporation) in Tokyo and Saihara Shōten (later absorbed into the company that is now Mitsubishi Shokuhin) in Osaka. Kokubu Group Corporation, accessed January 3, 2022, <https://www.kokubu.co.jp>; and Mitsubishi Shokuhin, accessed January 3, 2022, <https://www.mitsubishi-shokuhin.com/index.html>. Additionally, company sales in China were run through Yanaka Shōten in Dalian and Matsushita Yōkō in Shanghai. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 56, 58, 60.
142. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 64.
143. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 65.
144. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 65.
145. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 65–66.
146. "Zenkoku kōkoku zuanka meikan," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 1 (January 1929): 109.
147. Takei also created the whimsical "Calpis Soldiers 1, 2, 3" (Karupisu heitai 1, 2, 3) in October 1927, accompanied by a poem by Saijō Yaso. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 321.
148. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 78–79.
149. Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 76–77.
150. Tōzaiko [pseud.], "Geppyō: Shinbun kōkoku uraomote," *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 7 (July 1929): 45.
151. Advertisement from 1939, in Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iryōhin, zakka*, 194.
152. Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iryōhin, zakka*, 86.
153. Calpis wartime advertisements with soldiers were evident from September 1937; see Karupisu, *70-nen no ayumi*, 83, 325. The advertisement with the bottle as a rifle was from July 1939. Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iryōhin, zakka*, 211.
154. Utsunomiya Bijutsukan, *Tada Hokuu to sono shigoto-ten*, 10.

CHAPTER 5. LIGHT, LABOR + LEISURE

1. *Sandē mainichi* 18, no. 59 (November 6, 1939): back cover.
2. *Sandē mainichi* 18, no. 41 (August 13, 1939): back cover.
3. See Nye, *Electrifying America*, ix–x.
4. General Electric, "About Us," accessed July 16, 2015, <http://www.ge.com/about-us/history/1878-1904> (site discontinued).
5. Isenstadt, Petty, and Neumann, preface, xix.
6. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 3.

7. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 17. In 1933 only 44 percent of the homes in Britain had electricity, compared to 68 percent in the United States and 85 percent in Germany.
8. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 66.
9. Minjie Chen, "Japanese Board Games at the Cotsen Children's Library," *Cotsen's Outreach Blog*, December 16, 2013, <https://blogs.princeton.edu/cotsen/2013/12/japanese-board-games>.
10. Sand, *House and Home*, 246–47.
11. The second electric house was built by Shibusawa Hideo. Twelve thousand people visited during the month of October. Sand, *House and Home*, 249.
12. Cover with photograph of Japan's National Diet Building illuminated at night, Tokyo Electric, Mazda Floodlights (Matsuda no tōkōki) product catalog, January 1934. Toshiba corporate archives.
13. *Banpaku* no. 34 (March 1939): back cover.
14. Nye, *Electrifying America*, 35. See also Schivelbusch, *Disenchanted Night*.
15. Nye, *Electrifying America*, 157.
16. Kitahara, *GSBZ*, vol. 8.
17. Isenstadt, *Electric Light*, 20.
18. Miyashita Takao, "Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kisō chishiki 6," *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 7 (July 1928): 50.
19. Miyashita, "Shiranebanaranu insatsu zuan no kisō chishiki 6," 51–52.
20. Isenstadt, Petty, and Neumann, preface, xix.
21. The pamphlet is dated January 1936.
22. "Light by Japanese Lamps," advertisement for the Association of Japanese Electric Lamp Exporters, *Commerce Japan* 7 (October 1939): 7.
23. Denton, "More Valuable Than Gold," 364–65, 378, 381–82, 391.
24. Leigh, "'Sun's Only Rival,'" 65.
25. "Lighting a Revolution: 'His Only Rival,'" Smithsonian National Museum of American History, blotter number 112, image no. LAR_B112, accessed July 1, 2021, <https://americanhistory.si.edu/lighting/history/blotters/blot112.htm>.
26. Leigh, "'Sun's Only Rival,'" 70–71. For illustrations of Parrish's lithograph designs for GE Mazda lamps from 1918 to 1934, see Ludwig, *Maxfield Parrish*, 123–30; and Gilbert-Smith, Stoner, and Trust for Museum Exhibitions, *Maxfield Parrish*, 78–86.
27. Nye, *Electrifying America*, 268.
28. Advertisement for Edison Mazda lamps, *Saturday Evening Post*, April 9, 1927, 63.
29. Nye, *Electrifying America*, 166.
30. "Light Bulbs," Fulltable, accessed April 29, 2024, <https://www.fulltable.com/vts/d/dom/bulb/11.jpg>. The original advertisement was published in February 1931, but the publication source is unknown. This advertisement was originally available on the GE .com website under its advertising archive, but the company has since been sold and all of this information has been removed from the internet.
31. Mazda brand pamphlet, dated February 1936, Toshiba corporate archives.
32. Poster for Mazda light bulbs, "Protect Their Eyes from Childhood Onward!" (Kodomo no toki kara me o mamore!), 1938, Toshiba corporate archives.
33. Vita-Lite pamphlet, 1939, Toshiba corporate archives.
34. "Ultra-Violet Rays," in "Education in Japan," *Commerce Japan* 5 (April 1939): 25.

35. The joined logo of Mazda-Shiba was used when the Toshiba merger first took place.
36. Breakthrough Communications, Old Christmas Tree Lights, “The Mazda Lamp Story,” 2001, 2008, [https://www.japanvisitor.com/japan-temples-shrines/iwashimizu-hachiman-gu-shrine](https://oldchristmastreelights.com/the_mazda_lamp_story.htm#:~:text=This%20ad%2C%20from%20the%20a,Lamps%20give%20in%20your%20home.%22;and Nye, <i>Electrifying America</i>, 241.
37. In 1892 GE was formed through the merger of Edison General Electric Company of Schenectady, New York, and Thomson-Houston Electric Company of Lynn, Massachusetts, with the support of Drexel, Morgan and Company. The relationship between GE and Toshiba was suspended during the war but resumed in 1953 with GE holding 24 percent of the company’s shares.
38. “Iwashimizu Hachiman-gu Shrine,” Japan Experience, March 28, 2013, <a href=). To celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Edison’s invention of the electric light bulb in 1929, the Japanese Illuminating Engineering Institute (Shōmei Gakkai), Tokyo Municipal Electric Bureau, and corporate manufacturers sponsored a neon sign design competition in Hibiya Park with submissions from fifteen different companies. Q. Kisha, “Edhison gojūnen neon sain kyōgi,” *Kōkokukai* 6, no. 12 (December 1929): 64–65.
39. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 70.
40. Smithsonian National Museum of American History, “Promoting Edison’s Lamp,” in “Lighting a Revolution,” accessed July 20, 2021, <https://americanhistory.si.edu/lighting/19thcent/promo19.htm>.
41. Special issue on the Great Electricity Exposition, *Matsuda shinpō* 13, no. 4 (April 1926), “Collection: Denki Daihakurankai,” Nomura, accessed July 20, 2021, https://www.nomurakougei.co.jp/expo/exposition/detail?e_code=1172. Old Tokyo vintage photographs illustrate a postcard of the exhibition fairgrounds: “Osaka Electrical Exhibition, Osaka, 1926,” Old Tokyo, accessed April 15, 2022, <https://www.oldtokyo.com/osaka-electrical-exhibition-osaka-1926/>.
42. “The Electrical Exhibition at Osaka,” *Far Eastern Review*, January 1926, quoted in “Osaka Electrical Exhibition, Osaka, 1926.”
43. For a postcard of the exposition fairgrounds with photographic portraits of the great inventors of electricity, Bell, Faraday, Franklin, Edison, Siemens, and Marconi, see “Taishō 15-nen kaisai no Denkidaihakurankai no ehagaki,” Japan Archives Association, accessed April 15, 2022, <https://jaa2100.org/sp/entry/detail/042951.html>.
44. A Shibaura Motor poster from 1938 employed photomontage with a floating motor, industrial cog, and water tower set against a white background. Shinoda was the art director, Domon the photographer, and Kamekura the designer. This company was an offshoot of Toshiba that took over motor production business when the companies merged. They went on to design a range of “machine pamphlets” for Toshiba affiliated companies. See “Kokusai Hōdō Kōgei no seisaku shita kikai panfuretto in tsuite,” *Kōkokukai* 17, no. 12 (December 1940): n.p.
45. Light Publicity Company Ltd., accessed July 16, 2021, <https://www.lightpublicity.co.jp>.
46. “Kako bunken, shiryō ichiran,” Toshiba Lighting and Technology Corporation, accessed September 15, 2024, https://www.tlt.co.jp/tlt/corporate/company/akari_story/bunken.htm#_ga=2.150500209.615212014.1726351016-1933280658.1726351016.

47. Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 174; and Stirton, *Jan Tschichold*, 128–30.
48. *Time*, February 23, 1962, cover.
49. Shunsuke Tabeta, “Panasonic Builds a Shrine to Its ‘God of Management’ in Beijing,” *Nikkei Asia*, April 13, 2018.
50. Matsushita Denki Sangyō Kabukishi Kaisha Senden Jigyōbu, *Matsushita Denki 70-nenshi*, 43; and “Panasonic Group History,” Panasonic Group, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://holdings.panasonic/global/corporate/about/history.html>; Matsushita quotes are under “Words of Wisdom,” <https://holdings.panasonic/global/corporate/about/history/words-of-wisdom.html>.
51. See “Konosuke Matsushita Museum,” Panasonic Group, accessed April 24, 2024, <https://www.panasonic.com/global/corporate/history/panasonic-museum/facility/konosuke-museum.html>. In November 1927 the company began publishing the monthly public relations magazine *Matsushita Electric Monthly*.
52. The company produced about ten thousand irons per month, which equaled the entire production of all other producers in the market at the time.
53. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 72.
54. Mendenhall, quoted in Nye, *Electrifying America*, 157.
55. The Chinese version of this poster was issued by Matsushita’s branch in Tianjin.
56. Radio transmission first took place in Japan in 1897 and was on a par with world standards by the twentieth century. Radio technology was critical to Japan’s military triumph in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5). Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 19, 27.
57. Usui, *Marketing and Consumption*, 66.
58. Advertisement, *Sandē mainichi* 16, no. 11 (February 28, 1937): back cover.
59. Allison C. Meier, “An Affordable Radio Brought Nazi Propaganda Home,” *JSTOR Daily*, August 30, 2018, <https://daily.jstor.org/an-affordable-radio-brought-nazi-propaganda-home/>.
60. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 30.
61. The Japanese government created a corps of “radio wardens” to marshal audiences for important speeches and rallies, putting up loudspeakers in public places and presiding over broadcast “national moments.” Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 29.
62. Tagline in advertisement, *Shina Jihen gahō* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Asahi Shinbunsha, 1939), back cover.
63. Print advertisements in magazines like *Weekly Asahi* (Shūkan asahi) also used the image of a radio superimposed over crowds of people in 1941.
64. Ironically, the Allied Occupation banned radio calisthenics in 1945 as a symbol of militarism but then reintroduced them in 1951.
65. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan*, 56–57.
66. For a discussion of acousmatic sound, see Yasar, *Electrified Voices*.
67. “Electric Fans,” *Commerce Japan* 6 (June 1939): 16.
68. Partner and others argue that Japan’s intentional technological isolation during the war was a major factor in its ultimate defeat, as Japanese industries crucially relied on technology exchange for innovation. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 34–35; and Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 151.
69. For a full discussion of blackouts in the context of Japanese wartime civil air defense policies, see Weisenfeld, *Gas Mask Nation*.

70. Tagline in advertisement, *Kōkū asahi*, December 1942, back cover.
71. Nye, *Electrifying America*, 20.
72. See Worden, “Powerful Women”; and Nye, *Electrifying America*, 272.
73. *Asahi gunafu*, no. 761 (June 8, 1958): 10.

CHAPTER 6. NATION + EMPIRE

Epigraph: Ōta Hideshige, “Senden jihyō,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 3 (March 1941): 38.

1. Wilson, “Enthroning Hirohito,” 295.
2. See, for example, Lockyer, “Japan at the Exhibition.”
3. *Advertising World* published a special issue dedicated to decorative designs for the emperor’s accession. *Kōkokukai* 5, no. 9 (October 1928).
4. Kushner, *Thought War*, 77, 295.
5. Mori and Matsudoshi Kyōiku Iinkai Shakai Kyōikuka Bijutsukan Junbishitsu, *Shikaku no Shōwa*, 29; see also Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu, *Nihon no kōkoku bijutsu*.
6. For a discussion of wartime newspaper advertising, see Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iriyōhin, zakka*, 3–4.
7. High, *Imperial Screen*, 35–39. See also Louise Young’s chapter “War Fever,” in *Japan’s Total Empire*, 55–114.
8. Kirin beer advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, April 22, 1932, a.m. ed., 9.
9. Morinaga Chocolate Bombs advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 5, 1932, p.m. ed., 3.
10. Kao advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 4, 1932, a.m. ed., 12.
11. Mussorini [pseud.], “Sesō no hanei kōkoku senden no fasshoka,” *Kōkokukai* 9, no. 5 (May 1932): 78–79.
12. Bytwerk, “Grassroots Propaganda.”
13. The Home Ministry originally founded the Cabinet Information Board as a committee, made it a board or department (*bu*) in 1936, and finally elevated it to a bureau (*kyoku*) in 1940.
14. Wakabayashi, *Tatakau kōkoku*, 1–2; and Baba, *Sensō to kōkoku*, 7.
15. Kushner, *Thought War*, 4.
16. Baba, *Sensō to kōkoku*, 7.
17. Kushner, *Thought War*, 4–5.
18. Kawahata, “Kokusaku senden ni okeru datsu shōgyō bijutsu nagare,” 143; and Weisenfeld, “Publicity and Propaganda in 1930s Japan.”
19. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 65–73.
20. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 50, 53, 70.
21. Oikawa, “National Rail and Tourism.”
22. The Kihinkai (Welcome Society), founded in 1893 to encourage foreign tourism to Japan, was the JTB’s predecessor. In 1945, right after the end of the war, the JTB was renamed in English Japan Travel Bureau and in Japanese *Nihon Kōtsū Kōsha*. See “Our History,” JTB, accessed June 11, 2021, <https://www.jtbcorp.jp/en/company/history/>.
23. Leheny, “By Other Means”; and Leheny, *Rules of Play*.
24. *Tourist* was published from 1913 to 1931. Griffin, “How to See Japan.”

25. By February 1914 the JTB had over thirty inquiry offices, including some temporary ones at world's fair sites.

26. Oikawa, "National Rail and Tourism," 102.

27. *Travel* was published from 1924 to 2012; it was taken over by the JTB in 1946, and then published by Shinchōsha from 2004. With the nationalization of the railways, the Japanese government was able to take control of rail lines in Korea and Manchuria as well, establishing tourist routes that connected far-flung parts of the expanding empire. Oikawa, "National Rail and Tourism," 94. For a fascinating discussion of the travel industry that developed around Manchuria, see Young, *Japan's Total Empire*, 259–68. For an equally absorbing consideration of the exoticization of Japan for promoting domestic tourism in the postwar period, see Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing*, particularly 29–65.

28. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan*, 6–8, 83; and Oikawa, "National Rail and Tourism," 103, 106–7, 111.

29. McDonald, *Placing Empire*, xv.

30. By 1941, under the auspices of the Board of Tourist Industry, the JTB had international offices in London, Berlin, Los Angeles, New York, Shanghai, Beijing, Hong Kong, Manila, and Buenos Aires.

31. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1931*, 297. In 1931 the board set up another subsidiary agency, the International Tourism Association (Kokusai Kankō Kyōkai), devoted entirely to producing publicity abroad. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1935*, 720. The total monetary expenditure in 1931–32 by foreign sightseers, crews of foreign ships, foreign students, and missionaries and for diplomatic services was ¥42,603,000. This, of course, does not include money spent in Japan's colonies, through which many tourists traveled en route to Japan. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1933*, 745–47.

32. Statistical information also indicates that there was a "remarkable upward tendency" in the number of tourists coming from Manchukuo and other East Asian countries. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1937*, 663–65. The latest readily accessible statistics for foreign tourism in the prewar period are for 1939, when 32,951 tourists visited Japan. It is interesting to note that while US and British tourists were still at the top of the list, Germans moved to third, increasing their numbers from 1,523 in 1935 to 2,447 in 1939. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1940–41*, 587–88.

33. Leheny, "By Other Means," 181.

34. Board of Tourist Industry and Japanese Government Railways, advertisement, *Nippon*, no. 17 (January 1939): inside back cover.

35. Karatani, "Japan as Museum."

36. Statement on the cover of *Nippon*, no. 5 (October 1935); and Mitchell, "Orientalism," 296, 293. Mitchell's conception of the "world-as-exhibition" is based on Martin Heidegger's notion of "the world picture."

37. Mitchell, "Orientalism," 296, 293.

38. Karp, "Culture and Representation," 15.

39. Cannizzo, quoted in Barringer and Flynn, introduction, 5.

40. Alpers, "Museum," 29.

41. Reeves, *Wanderings in Nippon*, 13–14.

42. The Japanese were particularly concerned to maintain amicable relations with the United States, as evidenced in the extensive US-Japan Friendship display that the Japanese government mounted in 1939–40 in the country's pavilion at the New York World's Fair, which visually documented the long-standing cultural amity between the two countries.

43. Hasegawa Nyozeikan, "What Do the Japanese Want?," *Nippon*, no. 5 (October 1935): 15.

44. Bennett, "Exhibitionary Complex," 79; and Urry, *Tourist Gaze*, 1–2.

45. *Nippon* was available in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Germany, Switzerland, France, Brazil, and Italy. On average, about five thousand copies were published for each issue.

46. For a basic chronology of Natori's career, see Iizawa, *Natori Yonosuke*, 68–69.

47. In 1936 Natori returned with Mecklenburg to Germany to cover the Berlin Olympics. His work was picked up by *Life* magazine, and he traveled to New York to continue shooting photographs for *Life*. After driving cross-country to the West Coast, he flew to Beijing to cover the war in China in September 1937.

48. That same year, Japan participated in the Chicago World's Fair and highlighted tourism to Japan in its exhibits. See Suganuma Kinroku, "Shikagohaku Nihon kankō senden no tobei ni saishite," *Kōkokukai* 10, no. 6 (June 1933): 73.

49. Quoted in Okatsuka Akiko, "Founding and Development," 24.

50. Ina Nobuo, "Shashin in kaere," *Kōga* 1, no. 1 (May 1932): 1–14, quoted and translated in Tōkyōto Shashin Bijutsukan, *Nihon kindai shashin no seiritsu*, 173; see also Kaneko, "Realism and Propaganda," 189.

51. In this respect, Natori and his colleagues distinguished their work from the press photography that appeared in other popular graphic magazines run by newspaper companies, such as *Asahi Graph*. See Ishikawa, *Hōdō shashin no seishun jidai*, 240.

52. Quoted in Ishikawa, *Hōdō shashin no seishun jidai*, 239–40.

53. For examples, see Ishikawa, *Hōdō shashin no seishun jidai*, 30, 34, 40–41, 60, 92–93.

54. Roberts, *Art of Interruption*, 3.

55. Shirayama and Hori, *Natori Yonosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931–45,"* 7–8.

56. After the dissolution of the first Nippon Kōbō, Hara, Kimura, and Okada founded their own group, called Chūō Kōbō (Central Studio).

57. For an in-depth illustrated study of this full roster of work, see the following important exhibition catalog: Shirayama and Hori, *Natori Yonosuke to Nippon Kōbō "1931–45."*

58. "Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai Activities," *Nippon*, no. 22 (1940): 52. From its inception, the society worked closely with the Board of Tourist Industry. See Foreign Affairs Association of Japan, *Japan Year Book 1935*, 720.

59. For a full history of Ōta's career, see Nagano-ken Shinano Bijutsukan, *Ōta Direkutā Ōta Hideshige no shigoto*.

60. Umemiya, "Kawakita Renshichirō."

61. Weisenfeld, "Touring 'Japan as Museum.'"

62. Reynolds, "Ise Shrine."

63. Huppatz, *Modern Asian Design*, 99–100.

64. Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, *Japanische Gebrauchsgegenstände*.

65. MacCannell, *Tourist*, 94.

66. Lee, *Days and Years*, 5–6.
67. Bache, *Paradox Isle*, 3–4.
68. Crew and Sims, “Locating Authenticity,” 163.
69. The photographs are credited to the German photographer Fritz Henle. Art director Yamana Ayao and the editorial staff probably created the textual commentary and layout.
70. “At the Foot of Mt. Fuji,” *Nippon*, no. 6 (February 1936): 22–23.
71. Kabayama Ayské, “What Has Japan in Store?,” *Nippon*, no. 3 (1935): 7.
72. Sugiyama Eisuke, “Chats on Manchoukuo,” *Nippon*, no. 13 (October 1937): 23.
73. Hasegawa Nyozeikan, “Life and Art,” *Nippon*, no. 11 (May 1937): 5.
74. MacCannell, *Tourist*, 102.
75. “Kanebo,” *Nippon*, no. 1 (1934): 33.
76. Advertisement over the table of contents, *Nippon*, no. 14 (February 1938); and “Nippon shōkai no shuppanbutsu,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 8 (August 1941): 2–4.
77. Natori, Kimura, Horino, Watanabe, Domon, Fujimoto, Okada, Sakamoto Man-shichi, and several others worked on this publication. For a full consideration of Okada’s career, see Kawasaki and Harada, *Okada Sōzō eizō no seiki*, 187–321.
78. Roberts, *Art of Interruption*, 30.
79. For essays on the various uses of montage, see Teitelbaum, *Montage and Modern Life*.
80. “Shrines in Shintō Life,” *Nippon*, no. 20 (1939): 19–21.
81. Yamamoto, *Senjika no banpaku to “Nihon” no hyōshō*; Yamamoto, “From *The Representation of Japan*”; and Takenaka, “Wartime National Identity.”
82. Aral, “Information as Spectacle.”
83. Nakai, *Komāsharu Foto*, 22–23.
84. “Satomi Associates Science and Art,” *Art and Industry* 27 (July–December 1939): 190–91. Also on Satomi, see Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 165–70.
85. Satomi’s romanized signature arcs gracefully at the lower left-hand corner, embracing the date 37 (1937).
86. For a firsthand discussion of the project by the designer in charge, see Yamawaki Iwao, “Nyū Yōku Banpaku / Kokusaikan: Kabādo spēsu Nihonbu Yamawaki Iwao sekkei,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 5 (1939): 201–13; Yamawaki, “Coverd [*sic*] Space Japan, N.Y. World’s Fair,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 7 (1939): 187–91; Yamawaki, “1940-nen Nyū Yōku Banpaku tenrankai Kokusaikan Nihonbu (kaisō) Yamawaki Iwao sekkei 1940,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 16, no. 8 (1940): 199–202, 237–44; and Yamawaki, “Nyū Yōku shi yori,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 16, nos. 6–7 (1940): 230–31.
87. “Hallo America! Some of Our Exhibits at the Golden Gate World Fair,” *Nippon*, no. 17 (January 1939): 48, reproduced in Kawahata, *Seishun zue*, 225–32.
88. Itagaki Takaho, “Hekimen shashin no hattatsu to Beikoku Banpaku,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 5 (1939): 193–200; Suzuki Michiji, “Nyū Yōku Kuwakō [San Furanshisuko] Banpaku no hekimen shashin,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 5 (1939): 215–17.
89. Kawahata, “Fusing Photography and Space.”
90. Mizusawa, “Sōzō no omosa,” 12–13.
91. *Advertising World* covered this new installation in depth, with Hara featured on the cover. *Kōkokukai* 17, no. 6 (June 1940).
92. Yamawaki Iwao, “Nyū Yōku Banpaku / Kokusaikan: Kabādo spēsu Nihonbu Yamawaki Iwao sekkei,” *Kokusai kenchiku* 15, no. 5 (1939): 201–13.; Yamawaki, “1940-nen Nyū

Yōku Banpaku tenrankai Kokusaikan Nihonbu (kaisō) Yamawaki Iwao sekkei 1940”; and Yamawaki, “Nyū Yōku shi yori.” The seven photographs for the “Contemporary Japanese Daily Life” photomural panels (each twelve feet by five feet) were by the following photographers respectively: farmer (Kanamaru), pilot (Okada Kōyō), mother and child (Kondō Hakuga), young woman (Kumagai Tatsuo), diver (Nakayama Iwata), businessman (Watanabe), and worker (Kanamaru).

93. In *Advertising World* Hashimoto described another set of photographic wall murals titled “Brilliant Japan” that he created to celebrate Foundation Day and the thirtieth anniversary of the colonization of Korea at the Great Korea Commemorative Exposition in 1940. Hashimoto Tetsurō, “Kinen Chōsen Daihakurankai shutchin shashin hekiga ‘Kagayaku Nippon’ no kōsei tenmatsu,” *Kōkokukai* 17, no. 10 (October 1940): 65–72.

94. Three special issues of the magazine appeared focusing on China, Korea, and Manchukuo: *Nippon*, no. 14 (February 1938); *Nippon*, no. 18 (June 1939); and *Nippon*, no. 19 (September 1939), respectively.

95. Sugiyama, “Chats on Manchoukuo,” 23–24.

96. “Up and Coming Manchoukuo,” *Nippon*, no. 19 (September 1939): 4–6.

97. “Cooperative Government,” *Nippon*, no. 19 (September 1939): 14.

98. *Front* 5–6 (1943); see also Tagawa, *Front*.

99. At *Front*, Kimura’s photography division included well-known photographers Hamaya Hiroshi (b. 1915), Watanabe Tsutomu, and Kikuchi Shunkichi.

100. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities*.

101. Advertisement for the Board of Tourist Industry and the Japanese Government Railways, *Nippon*, no. 19 (September 1939): 75.

102. “One Month Tour of Japanese Culture,” *Nippon*, no. 17 (January 1939): 26–33.

103. Patric, *Why Japan Was Strong*, 72.

104. Nitobe et al., *Western Influences*, 1.

105. Advertisement for Tōyō Rayon Kabushiki Kaisha, *Nippon*, no. 5 (October 1935): 70.

106. Frank H. Hedges, “Japan Becomes Comfortable,” *Travel in Japan* 2, no. 1 (1936): 40–44.

107. Patric, *Why Japan Was Strong*, 26.

108. *Nippon*, no. 24 (1940): 11. Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia later joined the Axis.

109. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Japan interned and eventually repatriated all resident foreigners in Japan from non-Axis countries. Published travel accounts indicate, however, that there was still a sizable contingent of German travelers to Japan, which included official tours by the Hitler Youth organizations and other Nazi representatives. See, for example, Gronau, *In Kimono und Obi*.

110. The organization published a variety of books elaborating on its approach to propaganda and the detailed mechanics of propaganda production; see, for example, Hōdō Gijutsu Kenkyūkai, *Senden gijutsu*. The members published a retrospective history of the organization after the war. Yamana, Imaizumi, and Arai, *Sensō to senden gijutsusha*. For an overview of this organization, see Kushner, *Thought War*, 69–73; and Kawahata, “Kon-ton to shita 1937-nen,” 151–52.

111. Kushner, *Thought War*, 25–26.

112. Namba, *Uchiteshi yaman*, 42; Kushner, *Thought War*, 25–26; and Ward, “World-view of Japanese Fascism.”

113. Quoted and translated in Okatsuka, “Founding and Development,” 24.
114. In 1934 Fujiyoshi also introduced Kamekura to Takahashi Kinkichi, who began working on *Nippon*. Kamekura and Ginza, *Kamekura Yūsaku*, 25.
115. Yamana Ayao, “Tōsei keizai to shōgyō bijutsu,” *Kōkokukai* 15, no. 9 (September 1938): 89–90.
116. Hara Hiromu, “Jikkyokuka no insatsukai o nozoku,” *Kōkokukai* 15, no. 9 (September 1938): 95–96.
117. Kanamaru Shigene, “Jihenka ni okeru shōgyō shashin to ichi shiken,” *Kōkokukai* 15, no. 9 (September 1938): 93–94.
118. “Shintōa kensetsu kokka sōryokusen postā-ten,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 2 (February 1941): n.p.; Takahashi Kinkichi, “Taiheiyō Hōdōten,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 4 (April 1941): n.p.; and “Butsuin e! Waga gendai bunka o shimesu,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 5 (May 1941): 8–11.
119. Fujimoto Shihachi, “Shashin to senden,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 6 (June 1941): 52.
120. Fujimoto, “Shashin to senden,” 52.
121. Kanamaru Shigene, “Sensō to shashin senden,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 6 (June 1941): 57–58.
122. *Life*, October 21, 1940.
123. Kanamaru, “Sensō to shashin senden,” 57–58.
124. Ōta Hideshige, “Senden jihyō,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 3 (March 1941): 37.
125. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 38.
126. Katsu, quoted in Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 39.
127. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 38.
128. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 38.
129. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 37.
130. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 38.
131. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 38.
132. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 39.
133. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 39.
134. Ōta, “Senden jihyō,” 40.
135. Arai Seiichirō, “Hōdō gijutsu o meguru genjitsu,” *Kōkokukai* 18, no. 6 (June 1941): 54–56.
136. Arai, “Hōdō gijutsu o meguru genjitsu,” 55.
137. Arai, “Hōdō gijutsu o meguru genjitsu,” 55.
138. Arai, “Hōdō gijutsu o meguru genjitsu,” 56.
139. Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 2, 1940, a.m. ed., 10.
140. Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, June 5, 1940, a.m. ed., 6.
141. Excellin was a synthetic, alcohol-based powder detergent that Kao began marketing in 1938. Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, February 25, 1940, a.m. ed., 7.
142. See, for example, Akadama Port Wine advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, November 8, 1940, p.m. ed., 4.
143. Akadama Port Wine advertisement, *Yokohama bōeki shinpō*, September 5, 1940, “Akadama Pōto Wain no Kōkoku,” David Sato (blog), 2001, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://tokyowanyosai.com/soft/shakai/pr-aka.html>. I wish to extend my great appreciation to David Sato for sharing his research on Japanese wartime advertising.
144. Akadama Port Wine advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, a.m. ed., August 6, 1939, 5.

145. Hajima, *Inshoku, shikōhin, iryōhin, zakka*, 202.
146. Akadama Port Wine advertisement, *Kanagawaken shinbun*, September 21, 1941, “Akadama Pōto Wain no Kōkoku,” David Sato (blog). Advertisement reproduced in Sato blog.
147. Smile eye drops advertisement, *Yokohama bōeki shinpō*, January 9, 1939, “Iyaku hin no Kōkoku,” David Sato (blog), 2001, accessed June 15, 2021, <https://tokyowanyosai.com/soft/shakai/pr-iyaku.html>.
148. Rohto eye medicine advertisement, *Kanagawaken shinbun*, March 17, 1942, “Iyaku hin no Kōkoku,” David Sato (blog), 2001. Advertisement reproduced in Sato blog.
149. Kao soap advertisement, *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, February 11, 1940, a.m. ed., 6.

CHAPTER 7. TRANSWAR DESIGN

Epigraph: Nakai Kōichi, “Testimony from the Postwar Period,” 124.

1. Ogawa M., “Gurafikku dezain no ‘genten’ o motomete,” 17. This origin myth persists in the discursive framing of more recent museum exhibitions despite the inclusion of research that questions its premise by scholars such as Mori Hitoshi. See, for example, In-satsu, *Dezainā tanjō 1950 nendai Nihon no gurafikku*.

2. “Yusaku Kamekura,” ADC Hall of Fame, One Club for Creativity, accessed June 7, 2021, <https://www.oneclub.org/adc-hall-of-fame/-bio/yusaku-kamekura>.

3. “Kamekura Yūsaku-shi ni kiku,” *Gurafikku dezain* 88 (December 1982): 13; Kamekura, quoted in Ogawa M., “Gurafikku dezain no ‘genten’ o motomete,” 19; and “Yusaku Kamekura,” ADC Hall of Fame, One Club for Creativity, accessed June 7, 2021, <https://www.oneclub.org/adc-hall-of-fame/-bio/yusaku-kamekura>.

4. The Japanese Advertising Association was active until 1958, at which point it was reorganized and took on its current name, the Tokyo Advertising Association (Tōkyō Kōkoku Kyōkai). Nakai, “Testimony,” 118.

5. The Tokyo ADC published an authoritative three-volume history of Japanese advertising art in 1967–68 with volumes on newspaper and magazine advertising, posters, and packaging, which established a canon of great design for the early twentieth century. Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu and Oka, *Postā*; Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu and Oka, *Shinbun zasshi kōkoku*; and Tōkyō Āto Direkutāzu Kurabu and Oka, *Pakkeji 1868–1956*.

6. Nakai, “Testimony,” 124.

7. Established in 1922, Orikomi (now known as Orikom) was the first company to commission paid advertisements for the Japanese Government Railways and in 1936 launched a public relations magazine for the Tokyo metropolitan subway titled *Metro Era* (*Metoro jidai*).

8. “Hara Hiromu,” *Kōkoku bijutsu* 8 (January 1954): 24–27.

9. Kamekura Yūsaku, “Kōno Takashi no michi,” *Kōkoku bijutsu* 2 (August 1952): 34–35.

10. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 162.

11. “Katsumie Masaru’s Chronological Record,” *Gurafikku dezain* 94 (June 1984): 80. This was the Katsumie Masaru memorial issue of the magazine.

12. Itagaki Takaho, “Sōkan no kotoba,” *Kōkoku bijutsu* 1 (August 1952): n.p.

13. Murota Kurazō, quoted in Namba, “Shōwa zenki no kōkokukai,” 29.

14. The magazine was so closely associated with Katsumi that it folded soon after his death in 1983, with several of the final issues dedicated to his writings along with adoring testimonials by colleagues.
15. *Gurafikku dezain* 85 (March 1982) devoted a special section to the work of Cassandre with a dialogue commentary by Katsumi and Hara.
16. Oka was also a coeditor of the Tokyo ADC's landmark three-volume publication on Japanese design issued in 1967–68, noted above.
17. Katsumi Masaru, "Traditional Japanese Packaging," *Gurafikku dezain* 18 (January 1965): 80.
18. Uemura Takachiyo, "Dezain to poeji: Yamana Ayao 'koten' no kansō," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 7 (December 1953): 45.
19. Ochiai, *Kaō kōkokushi*, 153. For a nuanced discussion of Japanese housewives as consumers and the impact of Americanism on Japanese consumerism, see Yoshimi, "Consuming America, Producing Japan."
20. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 163–73, 175, 189, 191.
21. Okuda Masanori, "Kaō pakkeji," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 23 (February 1958): 9–14.
22. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 246.
23. Nihon Keieishi Kenkyūjo and Kaō Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensanshitsu, *Kaō-shi 100-nen*, 177.
24. Ōta Hideshige, "Hōsō sagyō imi suru mono," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 6 (August 1953): 19–20, graphic section, n.p.
25. Ōta Hideshige (art director), "Kabushiki Kaisha Kaōdō māku no henyō," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 6 (August 1953), graphic section 3, 24–28.
26. Okuda Masanori, "Kaō pakkeji," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 23 (February 1958): 9–14. The new Kao soap package design is illustrated in color in Insatsu Hakubutsukan, *Dezainā tanjō 1950 nendai Nihon no grafikku*, 39, 220.
27. "History of the Kao Group," Kao, accessed August 11, 2021, <https://www.kao.com/global/en/who-we-are/globalhistory/>.
28. "Brands," Morinaga, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://morinaga-america.com/brands/>.
29. "Morinaga kōkoku o umidasu hito," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 4 (January 1953): 18–20.
30. Inoo Heihachi, "Kyarameru kōkoku no zuisō," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 4 (January 1953): 21–22.
31. Morisaki discussed the various confectionery companies: Morinaga, Meiji, and Glico. Morisaki Zenichi, "Seika kaisha no seihin to senden kara," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 4 (January 1953): 26–27.
32. Inoo, "Kyarameru kōkoku no zuisō," 21–22.
33. In 1962 Hirohashi left Morinaga to start her own firm. In 1965 she won the Japan Package Design Association Membership Award.
34. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 129.
35. *Kōkoku bijutsu* 6 (August 1953): 49; and "Guide to the Panasonic Museum," Panasonic Group, accessed April 28, 2022, <https://holdings.panasonic.jp/corporate/about/history/panasonic-museum/konosuke/archives/20190826.html>.
36. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 137, 149, 154.

37. Partner, *Assembled in Japan*, 153.
38. "Special Exhibition Archives," Panasonic Group, accessed April 26, 2024, <https://holdings.panasonic/global/corporate/about/history/panasonic-museum/konosuke/archives.html>; and chronology of Matsushita Kōnosuke at "Konosuke Matsushita Museum," Panasonic Group, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.panasonic.com/global/corporate/history/panasonic-museum/facility/konosuke-museum.html>.
39. Yoshimi, "Consuming America, Producing Japan," 80–81.
40. For a full history of Matsushita advertising with extensive illustrations, see Matsushita Denki Sangyō Kabukishi Kaisha Senden Jigyōbu, *Matsushita Denki 70-nenshi*. Huppertz has written briefly on postwar Matsushita advertising design. Huppertz, *Modern Asian Design*, 151–55.
41. Creators Group MaC, accessed December 17, 2021, <http://www.cgm.co.jp>.
42. Editor [Walter Herdeg], "Nippon Design Centre," *Graphis* 18, no. 99 (January–February 1962): 34.
43. Ogawa Masataka, "Nippon Design Centre," *Graphis* 18, no. 99 (January–February 1962): 34–35.
44. Yamamoto Tamesaburō served as chairman until Hara Hiromu took over in 1969. Later, Hara Kenya became director in 1992. For a brief company history, see "History: History of NDC from the Beginning," Nippon Design Center, accessed July 22, 2021, <https://www.ndc.co.jp/en/about/history/>.
45. Kamekura, *Trademarks of the World*. Expanded editions were published in 1956, 1958, and 1960. He then wrote a second book in 1965 with more recent examples from the previous decade and their practical applications: Kamekura, *Trademarks and Symbols*; see also Shirakura Yoshihiko, "Kamekura Yūsaku's Graphic Works," *Gurafikku dezain* 88 (December 1982): 11–22.
46. Interestingly, Kanebo's experimentation with silk production also led it to enter the cosmetics industry with a silk-derived soap. After the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the company transitioned entirely to cosmetics, for which it is well known today. Insatsu Hakubutsukan, *Dezainā tanjō 1950 nendai Nihon no gurafikku*, 134–35.
47. "History," Nikon, accessed April 26, 2024, <https://www.nikon.com/company/corporate/history/>.
48. The group published a retrospective history summarizing its activities over two decades. See Segi and Nissenbi Kaisan Iinkai, *JAAC 1951–1970*. For another history of the organization, see Segi, Tanaka, and Sano, *Nissenbi no jidai*.
49. Uemura Takachiyo, "My Expectation and Wish for the Commercial Art Department of the Nika Artists Association," *Idea* 11, no. 68 (December 1964): 88–100.
50. Nakai, "Testimony," 121–22, 125.
51. Segi and Nissenbi Kaisan Iinkai, *JAAC 1951–1970*, 2. Originally published in *JAAC* 1 (1951).
52. Segi and Nissenbi Kaisan Iinkai, *JAAC 1951–1970*, 19.
53. Traganou, "Tokyo's 1964 Olympic Design," 470–71.
54. Sakanakura Mutsuko, "Nissenbi no 1950 nendai to Gurafikku '55-ten," 125, 295.
55. "Nissenbi dai sankaiten e no shōten (focus)," *Kōkoku bijutsu* 6 ([July?] 1953): 12–15.
56. Herbert Bayer, "Keiei no yōsō to shite no dezain" [Design as a Function of Management], trans. Katsumi Masaru, *Kōkoku bijutsu* 7 (December 1953): 1–20; originally

published as Herbert Bayer, "Design as an Expression of Industry," *Gebrauchsgraphik* 23, no. 9 (September 1952): 57–60.

57. Bayer, "Design," 60.

58. Walter Paepcke, quoted in Bayer, "Design," 60.

59. Bayer, "Design," 60.

60. *Idea*, no. 3 (November 1953): 56–58; and "Design History: Japan Advertising Artist Club 1953 Exhibition," *Idea Magazine*, July 6, 2016, http://www.idea-mag.com/column/1953_jaac_exhibition/.

61. The next year, in 1953, Japan sent fifty-one works to an important exhibition of world posters held in Switzerland. Morinaga acted as liaison for this project, selecting and sending the representative works, with the company's Inoo Heihachi then organizing a domestic exhibition of the Japanese design works.

62. Extended coverage and illustrations of the Graphic '55 exhibition ran in *Kōkoku bijutsu* 14 (1955): 28–32. See Kashiwagi, "Dikku to Jēn o sagashite."

63. Kabayama, "1955 nen no shikii o mataide."

64. Sakakura, preface, 8.

65. World Design Conference Organization, *World Design Conference 1960*, 13–14.

66. WoDeCo promotional materials are archived at the Takashi Asada Archive in the Tohoku University Archives in the Tohoku University of Art and Design Library, https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/en/about/facilities/museums/31_tohoku_university_archives.html.

67. For the year prior to the conference in 1959, Kamekura assembled a monthly gathering of thought leaders in design and culture broadly (including architects, philosophers, and film directors) to discuss critical issues in anticipation of the international event. This group was called the 21 Association (21 no Kai) because it met on the twenty-first day of every month. Teramoto, "1950 nendai no Nihon no gurafikku dezain-kai gaikyō / Tōkyō o chūshin ni," 75, 288. Iguchi Toshino has written about Kamekura's correspondence with Bayer at this time. Iguchi, "'Tōyōjin no idainaru shisō' Kamekura Yūsaku—Heruberto Baiyā ōfuku shokan."

68. Bayer, "Design Reviewed," 18.

69. Bayer, "Design Reviewed," 19.

70. Bayer, "Design Reviewed," 19–20.

71. Bayer, "Design Reviewed," 20–21.

72. Kamekura, "Katachi," 29–33.

73. Kamekura, "Katachi," 32.

74. Kamekura, "Katachi," 31–33.

75. Kamekura, quoted in "Yusaku Kamekura: 1993 ADC Hall of Fame Inductee," One Club, accessed June 7, 2021, <https://creativehalloffame.org/inductees/yusaku-kamekura/>.

76. Epigraph source: Avery Brundage, opening statement, in Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIII Olympiad, *Games of the XVIII Olympiad Tokyo 1964*, n.p.

77. The other competitors were Inagaki Kōichirō (1960 JAAC award recipient), Kōno, Sugiura Kōhei, Tanaka Ikkō, and Nagai Kazumasa.

78. Niehaus and Seinsch, *Olympic Japan*.

79. Pierre de Coubertin, quoted in Dixon, *Olympian*, 210.

80. Kamekura quoted in Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono,’” 122.
81. Traganou, “Tokyo’s 1964 Olympic Design,” 470–71; and Traganou, *Designing the Olympics*.
82. Tagsold, “Tōkyō Olympics”; and Tagsold, “Modernity, Space.”
83. Traganou, “Tokyo’s 1964 Olympic Design,” 477.
84. Tōkyō Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, *Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 dezain purojekuto*, 117.
85. Hustwit, *Helvetica*.
86. For Katsumi’s discussion of the Olympic style guide sheet, see *Gurafikku dezain* 17 (October 1964) and *Gurafikku dezain* 18 (January 1965).
87. Ohchi Hiroshi, “Co-ordinated Design Styles,” *Idea* 11, no. 66 (August 1964): 37.
88. Ohchi, “Co-ordinated Design Styles,” 37.
89. Ohchi, “Co-ordinated Design Styles,” 37.
90. Katsumi wrote on Bayer and the CAA in “Special Issue on Design Policy,” *Gurafikku dezain* 7 (December 1953).
91. Designers identified in *Idea* as working on the coordinated design policy for the Olympics are Katsumi, Kamekura, Sugiura Kōhei, Anzai Atsuko, Yamashita Yoshiro, Tanaka Ikkō, Awazu Kiyoshi, Katsui Mitsuo, Michiyoshi Go, Sasaki Keikichi, and Nakajima Tadaie. “Graphic Design for the XVIII Olympiad (Tokyo Orinpikku no gurafikku Dezain),” *Idea* 11, no. 66 (August 1964): 74–85.
92. Ruoff, *People’s Emperor*.
93. Katsumi Masaru, “Design Policy of the Tokyo Olympics,” *Gurafikku dezain* 17 (October 1964): 82.
94. Traganou, “Foreword,” 246.
95. Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono,’” 126n4. The still-lacking state appreciation for the importance of this national design project was indicated by the lack of compensation. Kamekura received ¥250,000 for his four posters; ¥200,000 of that was distributed to cameramen Hayasaki Osamu and Murakoshi Jō. Younger designers on the team worked for nothing and were compensated only in tickets (they also had to surrender copyright to all their designs). At the time of the Olympics, Kamekura also designed Japan’s pavilion for the 1964–65 New York World’s Fair, and Japanese design magazines looked back to survey and relate Nippon Kōbō’s pavilion designs from the 1930s and 1940s, including the plans for the 1940 world exposition that was canceled due to the war. Kamekura Yūsaku, “Japanese Pavilion at the New York World’s Fair,” *Gurafikku dezain* 17 (October 1964): 49–56.
96. Japan started its bid for the Games in 1932. Collins, “Spectacle of Olympic Tokyo”; Collins, “1940 Olympics”; and Collins, *1940 Tokyo Games*.
97. Oguma, quoted in Niehaus and Seinsch, introduction, 10.
98. Center for Integrated Area Studies, Resource Sharing Database for Area Studies, Kyoto University, Manchukuo poster database, accessed May 1, 2024, <https://app.cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp/GlobalFinder/cgi/Start.exe?LANG=jpn>.
99. Collins, *1940 Tokyo Games*, 24–27, 32, 35.
100. “Grand International Exposition of Tokyo to Be Held in 1940,” *Tourist* 23, no. 9 (September 1935): 30.

101. Takeuchi Yukie discusses the Japanese designs for the 1936 Berlin Olympics and the 1940 Phantom Olympics along with connections to German design. Takeuchi, *Kindai kōkoku no tanjō*, 318–334.
102. An advertisement for Riefenstahl's film *Olympia*, billed as a “national celebration” (*minzoku no saiten*) and screened at three venues in the Tokyo area, appeared in *Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, September 15, 1940, p.m. ed., 4.
103. This included the development of a host of Olympic rituals in the modern era (entrance procession, raising of the Olympic flag, torch relay, awarding of medals, singing of national anthems, and hoisting of national flags).
104. Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono,’” 124.
105. Kushner, *Thought War*, 49.
106. Tokugawa Isato, opening statement, in Organizing Committee of the XII Olympiad, *Report of the Organizing Committee*, 1940, n.p.
107. *Morinaga Beltline* 4, no. 7 (July 1932): 11; and advertisement on back cover for round-shaped Yell Drops evoking the Olympic rings.
108. Olympic themed cover, *Morinaga Beltline* 8, no. 11 (November 1936).
109. Special Olympics issue, *Kōkokukai* 13, no. 10 (October 1936). See also Utsunomiya Bijutsukan, *Tada Hokuu to sono shigoto-ten*, 36.
110. Artists also offered pennant designs with various combinations of the Olympic rings and local symbols like Mount Fuji or a Shinto torii gate, or set the rings within a cherry blossom.
111. Niehaus and Seinsch, introduction, 10.
112. Collins, *1940 Tokyo Games*, 37.
113. Niehaus and Seinsch, introduction, 10.
114. Oguma, *Genealogy of “Japanese” Self-Images*.
115. Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, *Japan*.
116. Incidentally, Kanō was so closely associated with the Olympic movement that when he died suddenly aboard a ship en route back to Japan from an IOC meeting in Cairo in 1938, his coffin was draped with the Olympic flag.
117. Collins, *1940 Tokyo Games*, 12.
118. Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono.’”
119. Listed in the “Items Made Available for Use of the Organizing Committee and Donations in Kind,” in Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIII Olympiad, *Games of the XVIII Olympiad Tokyo 1964*, 67–72.
120. Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono.’”
121. “The Olympic Torch Relay,” in Organizing Committee for the Games of the XVIII Olympiad, *Games of the XVIII Olympiad Tokyo 1964*, 245–68.
122. Yoneyama, *Hiroshima Traces*.
123. “Boy Born on Day A-Bomb Fell Chosen to Light Olympic Flame,” *New York Times*, August 23, 1964, 8.
124. Kida, “Tōkyō Orinpikku 1964 sono dezain wāku ni okeru ‘Nihontekina mono,’” 124.

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PERIODICALS + NEWSPAPERS

Too numerous to include here, articles from daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals and newspapers have not been listed in the bibliography but are indicated in the endnotes of each chapter.

Aidea (*Idea*)

Affiches (Posters)

Art and Industry

Asahi guraifu (*Asahi Graph*)

Cheinstoa kenkyū (*Chainstore Research*)

Commerce Japan

Commercial Art

Desegno

Far Eastern Review

Front

Gebrauchsgraphik (Commercial graphics)

Graphis

Gurafikku dezain (*Graphic Design*)

Hanbai undo (*Sales Movement*)

Japan Times and Mail

Kaō buretin (*Kao Bulletin*)

Kenchiku shinchō (New architecture)

Kōga

Kōgei jidai (*Industrial Art News*)

Kōkoku bijutsu (*Japan Advertising Art*)

Kōkokukai (Advertising World)
Kōkū asahi (Aviation Asahi)
Kokusai kenchiku (International architecture)
Life
Matsuda shinpō (Mazda News)
Matsushita Denki geppō (Matsushita Electric Monthly)
Mavo
Mitsukoshi (Mitsukoshi taimusu) (Mitsukoshi Times)
Mizue (Watercolor painting)
Modern Publicity
Morinaga berutorain (Morinaga Beltline)
Nagase man (Nagase man)
New York Times
Nippon
Offset- und Werbekunst (Offset, book, and advertising)
Ōsaka asahi shinbun
Ōsaka mainichi shinbun
Sandē mainichi (Sunday Mainichi)
Shiseidō cheinstoa (Shiseido Chainstore)
Shiseido cheinstoa alma mater (Shiseido Chainstore Alma Mater)
Shiseido geppō (Shiseido Monthly)
Shiseido gurafu (Shiseido Graph)
Suitorando (Sweetland)
Tōkyō asahi shinbun
Tsūrisuto (Tourist)
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Umi to sora (Sea and Sky)
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