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Emergence of Modern Advertisement Designs in Taisho Era Seen in “Window Gaho” and “Window Times”

TAKEUCHI, Yukie

Magazines featuring the research of store windows were published in the Taisho Era. These magazines not only became retailers' bibles for creating store windows, but also became Japan's first platform for multilateral discussions about general advertising means including store windows.

Many new advertising trends were discussed there. For instance, in the discussion of the suitability of representational approaches for advertisement, “simple” and “primitive” expressions were recommended as opposed to the then mainstream. The importance of font designing was also pointed out and several insisted on the necessity of new typographical designs. In addition, the articles on a small advertisement item called poster stamp discussed the importance of store symbols and logos as a means of advertisement, and brought attention to the symbolism of designs.

Compared to modernism theories accepted by scholars, these discussions were incomplete. However, each of the perspectives contributed to the concept of modernism expressions that were to be in full swing in the next era. Those magazines are believed to have played a key role as early as the 1910s in providing information that positively affected practitioners in the fields of commerce and advertisement.

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