



Designing the Night: Ishikawa Hideaki and Shopping Districts in Nagoya, Japan, 1920–1933

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From the 1920s onwards, nights in Japanese industrial cities became increasingly resplendent and bright. This was attributed not only to an expanding urban economy, but also to the emergence of shopping districts, called *shōtengai*, within which small independent stores united and organised according to neighbourhood. These stores collectively participated in the installation of novel architectural elements: display windows, glass cases, and electric billboards, popularised by the concurrent, nationwide movement of commercial art – *shōgyō bijutsu*. The case of Nagoya indicated that formation of *shōtengai* and the *shōgyō bijutsu* movement affected each other, both promoted by calls for the modernisation of retailing and retail design. This article explicates the logic behind city planner Ishikawa Hideaki's endeavours to create peoples' spaces for ease and relaxation in Nagoya amid the ongoing rationalisation of small independent stores' businesses – in *shōtengai* and by *shōgyō bijutsu*. These led him to conceptualise his notable methodology, which he called 'City Planning for the Night'. This was a strategy to create the formula by which the essential brilliance and liveliness of recreational nightlife in *shōtengai* were systematically created through integration of the design and management of small independent stores and the *shōtengai* themselves. Ishikawa's City Planning for the Night methodology encapsulated his commitment to enhancing the emerging cultural role of *shōtengai*. While urban quarters, called *sakariba* – referring to entertainment districts – historically comprised theatres and teahouses surrounding temples and shrines, Ishikawa's work served to define and design *shōtengai* as the modern iteration of *sakariba*.

Keywords: retail design; shopping district (*shōtengai*); commercial art (*shōgyō bijutsu*); Japanese city planning; Ishikawa Hideaki; entertainment district (*sakariba*)



Introduction

Japanese city centres generally encompass shopping districts, known as *shōtengai*. These *shōtengai* are spatially defined by street gates and communal streetlights of uniform design, which visually accentuate their relatively narrow streets. Many *shōtengai* are characterised by the post-war invention of distinctively Japanese arcades; in contrast to their Western counterparts, these arcades are covered routes structurally independent of flanking buildings (Shelton 1999: 109–116). Such unique *shōtengai* had their origins in the fundamental shift of the retail industry in the early 20th century. From the 1910s onwards, a variety of small independent stores involved in different types of business in the same districts were increasingly organised into merchant associations (Tanaka 1995: 25). Thus, novel architectural elements, such as glittering display windows and electric billboards, as well as communal streetlights, were collectively installed by the shop managers of participating associations (Kato 2002: 193–198; Hashizume 2003: 8–17; Hanes 1998). One major factor spurring their solidarity was the commercial threat posed by a burgeoning but relatively new type of business: department stores (Hirano 1999: 100–104).

Of significance in this discussion is the sociocultural climate of the interwar years, where *shōtengai* were recognised as *sakariba*, which referred to entertainment districts (Arata 2011: 67–70). In fact, when they originated within shopping districts, these *sakariba* were distinct from the historically understood *sakariba*. Historic *sakariba* were built around temples, shrines, and post stations, located within dense areas of theatres, playhouses, teahouses, storytellers' halls, and often red-light districts (Unno 1995; Yoshimi 2018: 200–228). Therefore, the emergence of *shōtengai* as a completely new type of *sakariba* was the result of developing modern consumerism. Meanwhile, an increasing number of shops belonging to old, pre-modern *sakariba* also began to function as *shōtengai*. The rise of *shōtengai* as representative of a modern type of *sakariba* had much to do with the popularisation of window-shopping and promenading in *sakariba* at night (Tipton 2007; 2013). Regardless of their origins, all types of *sakariba* began to compete in brightness and resplendence, accelerating the commercialisation of urban spaces and the night.

This article illustrates the ways in which *shōtengai* were formed, perceived, and designed as modern *sakariba* in interwar Nagoya. In particular, it explicates the ideas and logic behind city planner Ishikawa Hideaki's endeavours to atmospherically and architecturally promote *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* and his methodology, called 'City Planning for the Night'.¹ Ishikawa spent his early career as a young city planner in Nagoya, from 1920 to 1933, the same period when the city's landscape was dramatically transformed by urban centralisation, capitalist economic development,

and widespread planning. This metropolis of central Japan burgeoned in 1921 when 16 adjacent towns and villages were absorbed in response to continued urbanisation (City of Nagoya Urban Planning Bureau 1999: 10–13). The population — 734,057 in 1924 — surpassed one million over the next five years (City of Nagoya 1935: 165–166). Much like other industrial cities around the country, Nagoya saw an increase in shopping and entertainment districts — including Hirokoji and Osu — in response to growing consumer demand.

Born in 1893, Ishikawa is one of the most prominent figures in Japanese city planning (Nakajima et al. 2009). Trained at Tokyo Imperial University (now the University of Tokyo), he took charge of Nagoya’s city planning administration as an official of the Home Ministry City Planning Commission, one year after the promulgation of the 1919 City Planning Act. His influence on city planning until his death in 1955 ranged from the promotion throughout his career of *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* to wartime and post-war regional planning, including the 1946 Reconstruction Plan for Tokyo (Hein 2008). The variety of his work was underpinned by his constant preoccupation with the spatial distribution and function of social hubs of which a city was composed, such as neighbourhoods, villages, and small towns. As Carola Hein (2017) argues, Ishikawa’s awareness of these hubs of a city evoked the European deconcentration approach to planning, demonstrating an ideological parallelism with the post-war modernist concept of the urban core, the main theme of CIAM 8 in 1951 (see also Hein 2018: 250–252).

Nagoya can thus be regarded as historically significant for Japanese city planning, an urban testing ground where Ishikawa explored and defined the conception of modern *sakariba*, akin to the post-war modernist planning ideology of the urban core and a fundamental unit of a city in a Japanese context. His attention to *sakariba per se* was an exception to the general assumption in the interwar period that city planning should be devoted to building modern infrastructure, such as wider roads and larger ports (Nakajima 2009: 332–342). His sensitivity to the commercial dynamics that encouraged the commercialisation of urban spaces and the night may have led him to develop his unique methodology, which he called ‘City Planning for the Night’ (‘Yoru no Toshikeikaku’), for systematically making *shōtengai* commercially and environmentally brisk and lively. Rather than a prescriptive set of planning measures, this concept was a framework for constructing integrated design and management strategies by analysing the locations, functions, and structures of shopping and entertainment quarters to invigorate *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba*. The first appearance of this conceptualisation came in a series of articles published from 1925 to 1926, parts of Ishikawa’s regular feature in the monthly magazine *Toshi sōsaku* [Urban Creation],

edited by planners and stakeholders involved in Nagoya's city planning (Ishikawa 1925a; 1925b; 1926). He continued to actively expand upon his original concept to formulate an enhanced version of City Planning for the Night in various publications, including the nationally distributed periodical *Toshi kōron* [Opinions for City] (e.g., Ishikawa 1932).

Tomoko Yamada (2003) and Mitsuhsa Hama (2006) suggest that Ishikawa's personal mission to promote *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* led to the creation of the Nagoya Civic Art League (Nagoya Toshihi Kenkyūkai) in 1927, founded by 13 people, including a display designer, electrical engineers, and some members of the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce.² They were motivated by the desire to work with shop managers to make the total environments of *shōtengai* more attractive in both business and design (Nakajima et al. 2009: 61–113). One of the principal aims of this article is to illustrate the full breadth of the group's activities, as yet unexplored in published scholarship.

Research on Japanese retail architecture of the interwar period focuses on two particular types of buildings. One is the high-rise department store, the design of which was largely influenced by Western historicism in architecture (Hatsuda 1993; Hashizume 1999). Another is signboard architecture, or *kanban kenchiku*: the low-rise buildings of roadside shops characterised by their signboard-like façades, which emerged after the Great Kanto Earthquake that hit the capital in 1923 (Fujimori 1988). Yet some fundamental questions regarding the process of the remodelling of ordinary shops remain undiscussed. In addition to the external threat of department stores, what were the underlying theories and actual mechanisms that justified the collective renovations of small shops, characterised by newly introduced display windows, glass cases, and electric billboards, as well as propelled these independent stores to organise and enhance *shōtengai* in the 1920s? How did the commercialisation of urban spaces and the night affect Ishikawa's views on the built environments of *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* and influence his seminal idea, City Planning for the Night?

To answer these questions, this article examines the connection between the remodelling of Nagoya's small independent stores in the formation of *shōtengai* and the nationwide commercial art movement. The rise of this movement, encouraged by progressive graphic designers' rationalisation of programmatic design for trade, was bound up with an increasing demand for commercial art objects, such as posters, flyers, trademarks, fonts, display windows, signboards, and electric billboards (Kitada 2000: 97–113; Weisenfeld 2000). This was evinced by the simultaneity of two actions taken by graphic designer Hamada Masuji and Ishikawa in the mid-1920s. On the one hand, Hamada's attempts to professionalise the involvement of artists and designers in these new types of art and design led to the establishment of the Institute of Commercial

Artists (Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai), a commercial artists' association, in 1926, along with the necessary coining of a term to describe these new mediums: *shōgyō bijutsu* (commercial art) (Tajima 1998). On the other hand, the Nagoya Civic Art League was founded the following year. Its name subtly evoked Ishikawa's use of display windows, glass cases, and electric billboards to compose the streets of *shōtengai* as a civic art. This article begins with the exploration of the roles played by the Nagoya Advertising Association (Nagoya Kōkoku Kyōkai) as a local initiator of *shōgyō bijutsu* in Nagoya, elucidating its attitudes towards display windows, glass cases, and electric billboards, as well as its strategies to transform shopping districts into *shōtengai*. Then Ishikawa's commitment to this *shōgyō bijutsu* movement in Nagoya will be addressed, revealing that his quest to value and design *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* was a creative and intellectual process which helped him systematically develop his City Planning for the Night ideas.³

Dawn of Shopping Districts and Commercial Art

One of the decisive factors impelling store managers to organise local merchant associations in Nagoya, as in other industrial cities, was the threat of department stores' increasing market dominance. The earliest case of the formation of *shōtengai* in Nagoya occurred in 1920 in the Sakaemachi district of Hirokoji Street, a west–east axis running from Nagoya Station (MCITPB 1936: 7–12; Yamada 1994: 36). The actions in Sakaemachi were followed in other parts of Nagoya, where more and more merchant associations, called *hattenkai* and *han'eikai*, were created to unite small independent stores according to neighbourhood. In 1926, this impetus for organising *shōtengai* eventually led to the establishment of a union representing the interests of all *hattenkai* and *han'eikai*, namely the Nagoya Confederation of Merchant Associations (Nagoya Rengō Hattenkai), which covered approximately 4,000 shops and 35 associations (Yamada 1994: 40).

The birth of the Nagoya Advertising Association in 1923 was firmly linked to this emergence of local merchant associations and *shōtengai*, part of the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce's tactical gambit to support and modernise small independent businesses. The mission of the Nagoya Advertising Association was to advise shop managers on systematic managerial techniques in advertising and sales promotion. The ultimate goal was thus to enable independent retailers to successfully practice what had given department stores their competitive edge: management science (Yamada 1994: 39). In fact, the widening gulf between small independent stores and department stores became increasingly noticeable in both sales methods and use of shop space. Historically, a retail store was a place to sell relatively expensive items, such as textiles and cloths, called *kimono* (also used to make *kimono*), while foods and daily necessities

were typically hawked by street vendors and peddlers. In a conventional store, a shop manager and a regular customer would meet and talk in a plain *tatami* room, while goods were procured from a back-of-house warehouse, only displayed once the transaction had occurred, such as is depicted in a woodcut print by Utagawa Hiroshige (Hatsuda 1993: 66–69) (**Figure 1**). Coinciding with the diversification of products being sold by the early 1920s, the shift of the sales methods of small independent stores from the conventional ways of conducting transactions to selling by display was driven by both the growing urban population and the impact of rising department store commerce (Kato 2002: 194). Yet, in the eyes of the Nagoya Advertising Association, empty frontage and openings were spaces where goods were simply laid out, evoking the architectural typology of a shop in preindustrial times (Suzuki 1980: 179–180). In other words, the visual conditions and qualities of retail design and architecture were viewed as the indicators of progressiveness in advertising and sales methods practiced by store managers.



Figure 1: Fabric stores in the conventional style, depicted in Utagawa Hiroshige's woodcut print illustrating the landscape of Narumi, now part of Nagoya, around 1833. National Diet Library, Japan.

Implicit in this incorporation of retail architecture in the design of *shōtengai* was the understanding that department stores served as role models for small independent stores. While the department store method of retail was a relatively new Western

invention, Japanese department stores formulated their own unique approach. As Elise Tipton (2012) argues, the transformation from *kimono* wholesalers to department stores that some retail giants, including Tokyo-based Mitsukoshi and Nagoya-based Matsuzakaya, underwent shaped modern retail and consumer practices in response to mass production. They took the initiative in erasing any remnants of conventionality that lingered not only in retail design but also in the ways consumers interacted with commodities (Figure 2). Display windows and glass cases increasingly dominated their façades and floors, enabling ever larger crowds of anonymous customers to freely see, touch, and judge items evocatively displayed under artificial illumination (Hatsuda 1993: 66–69) (Figure 3). Print media — newspapers and magazines — showcased their advertisements, and seasonal sales became part of their business strategy to create trends and fashions (Nishizawa 1999). In the view of the Nagoya Advertising Association, the grandeur of Matsuzakaya’s new six-storey reinforced concrete building, erected in 1925, was not only a symbol of commercial success, but also of the adherence of department stores to the scientific methods of advertising, sales promotion, and retail design (Figure 4).



Figure 2: Sales floor of Ito Kimono Fabric Store (now Matsuzakaya) around 1900, occupied by *tatami*-mat spaces where sales people and customers sat, talked, and negotiated. J. Front Retailing Archives.

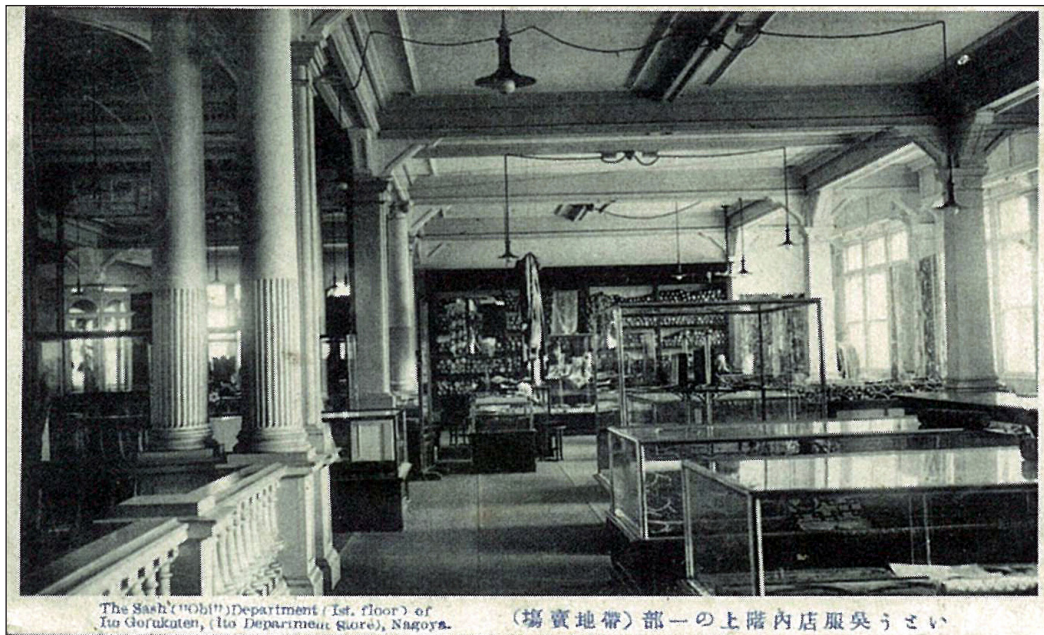


Figure 3: Interior of Matsuzakaya in 1920, shown in a picture postcard, consisting of newly introduced glass display cases, intended to be illuminated by the orderly placement of pendant lights. J. Front Retailing Archives.



Figure 4: The Matsuzakaya building, erected in 1925, shown in a picture postcard released in the 1930s. Small independent stores of conventional building types line the same street in the foreground. Nagoya City Museum.

One of Nagoya Advertising Association's strategies to modernise the businesses of small independent stores was thus direct involvement in the refinement of their façade designs, which kickstarted the commercial art movement in Nagoya. Its principal means was the Façade Design Competition (Tentō Sōshoku Kyōgikai), an interactive mechanism whereby shop managers competed to install the most compelling display windows and showcases in their stores. The number of entries for the first competition, in April 1924, was approximately 200, and the judges visited all the display windows and showcases embellished by the contestants (Yamada 1994: 39). The store managers who won received commendations from the Nagoya Advertising Association, and pictures of their stores were published in local newspapers (**Figure 5**). The appearance of these attractive examples in their neighbourhoods as well as the liveliness of the first competition spurred other shop managers to also renovate their store façades. In fact, the number of contestants in the second competition, in June 1925, more than doubled, reaching 404 ('Nagoya-shi ni okeru kouri shōten', 1925).

The Façade Design Competition, held annually until about 1928, altered shop managers' attitudes towards their façades. If façades were initially viewed as novel and purposeless accessories imported from the West merely for show (Nishikawa 2008), the Façade Design Competition served as evidence of the positive economic impact of transforming a display window and showcase into a more functional instrument for communicating the values of displayed items to an audience. Prior to every competition, the Nagoya Advertising Association hosted a training session in which contestants learned how to rationally express commercial messages through display and illumination, including the design for the background of a display window. The lecturers included a local display designer, Tanabe Seichu, as well as electrical engineers, Hikita Teizo and Sugai Takeaki, from Tokyo Dento (now Tokyo Electric Power Company) and Toho Electric Power Nagoya Branch (called Toho Nagoya, now Chubu Electric Power) ('Tentō sōshoku no kōenkai', 1925; 'Uindō kyōgikai to kōshūkai', 1926). They joined the competitions' panel of judges, along with experts in retail design and management science, such as Katori Goro from Nagoya City Industrial Art School and Koga Yoshiyuki, a professor at Nagoya College of Commerce ('Tentō sōshoku kyōgi, 1924; 'Tentō sōshoku kyōgikai to kenshō tōhyō boshū', 1924; 'Tentō sōshoku kanban kyōgikai shōjō juyoshiki', 1926). These experts engaged in the competition and training session and provided systematic criteria for examination: how the characteristics of a store were expressed; how a new twist was added; how textual information, colour, and lighting were employed; and so on (Yoshikawa 1926). The specialists' critiques and their lectures on programmatic design for advertising were gradually and collectively internalised within Nagoya's shopping districts, cognitively turning any element of a façade into what the progressive graphic designers began to refer to as *shōgyō bijutsu*.



Figure 5: 'Meiyo kimpai juryō, Raion kissaten' [Gold-titled Café Lion]. This article appeared in the 19 April 1924 issue of a local newspaper, *Nagoya Shimbun*, celebrating a façade design that was awarded a gold medal in the first Façade Design Competition.

Obviously, the driving force behind shop managers' enthusiasm for *shōgyō bijutsu* was the rising expectation of prosperous business. Momentum for the third Façade Design Competition, held in early summer 1926, was spurred by the first Signboard Design Competition (Kanban Kyōgikai) being held concurrently. The fact that in this year the Nagoya Confederation of Merchant Associations became a joint organiser of the two competitions implied that the purpose of these events went beyond a simple design competition. To this representative of all merchant associations in Nagoya, the total entry of 630 display windows and 310 signboards was an effective advertisement for their joint midyear sales being held simultaneously across the city (Yoshikawa 1926: 18). This was a *shōtengai*-lobby countermeasure against the substantial impact of ritualised seasonal sales of department stores, embodying the solidarity of all *shōtengai* through the synchronisation of their individual sales.

The Nagoya Advertising Association and Nagoya Confederation of Merchant Associations followed this pragmatic approach to the operational synergy between the exhibition of neatly dressed façades in *shōtengai* and the merchant associations' joint midyear sales the following year. The initial entries for the 1927 Façade and Signboard Design Competitions outnumbered the contestants for the year prior, reaching over 700 and 450, respectively, on 8 June ('Tentō sōshoku kanban', 1927). These developments invigorated *shōtengai*'s early summer sales, in which about 4,000 independent stores throughout the city participated. The evening edition of a local newspaper, *Nagoya Shimbun*, dated 21 June 1927, reported the pageantry of these spectacular sales, claiming that 'it looked as if it were the seasonal sales of a department store chain' ('Kyōkara chūgen uridashi', 1927) (Figure 6). Arguably, this commentary was a favourable reaction to the Nagoya Advertising Association, proving that the competitions served their intended purpose. If the verticality of Matsuzakaya's new high-rise building was a hallmark of department store architecture, *shōtengai* were expected to be a counterpoint, with retail display horizontally and spatially extended.

Among other techniques examined in the Façade Design Competition, lighting was recognised as a key element in retail design due to its ability to illuminate and therefore commercialise nights that had been previously too dark for shopping. The training session held prior to every contest thus functioned as an opportunity for store managers to familiarise themselves with the installation of electric lights in a glass window and case. The enthusiasm of the power company, Toho Nagoya, for sponsoring and giving technical support for training sessions and competitions stemmed from the belief that light attracts people and brings prosperity to businesses. The Toho Nagoya's contribution to increasing the visual quality of small independent stores' façades

through lighting was thus associated with the promotion and revitalisation of their businesses, a goal not inconsistent with the power company's hope for the growth of electricity consumption throughout the entire retail industry (Yoshikawa 1926: 18).

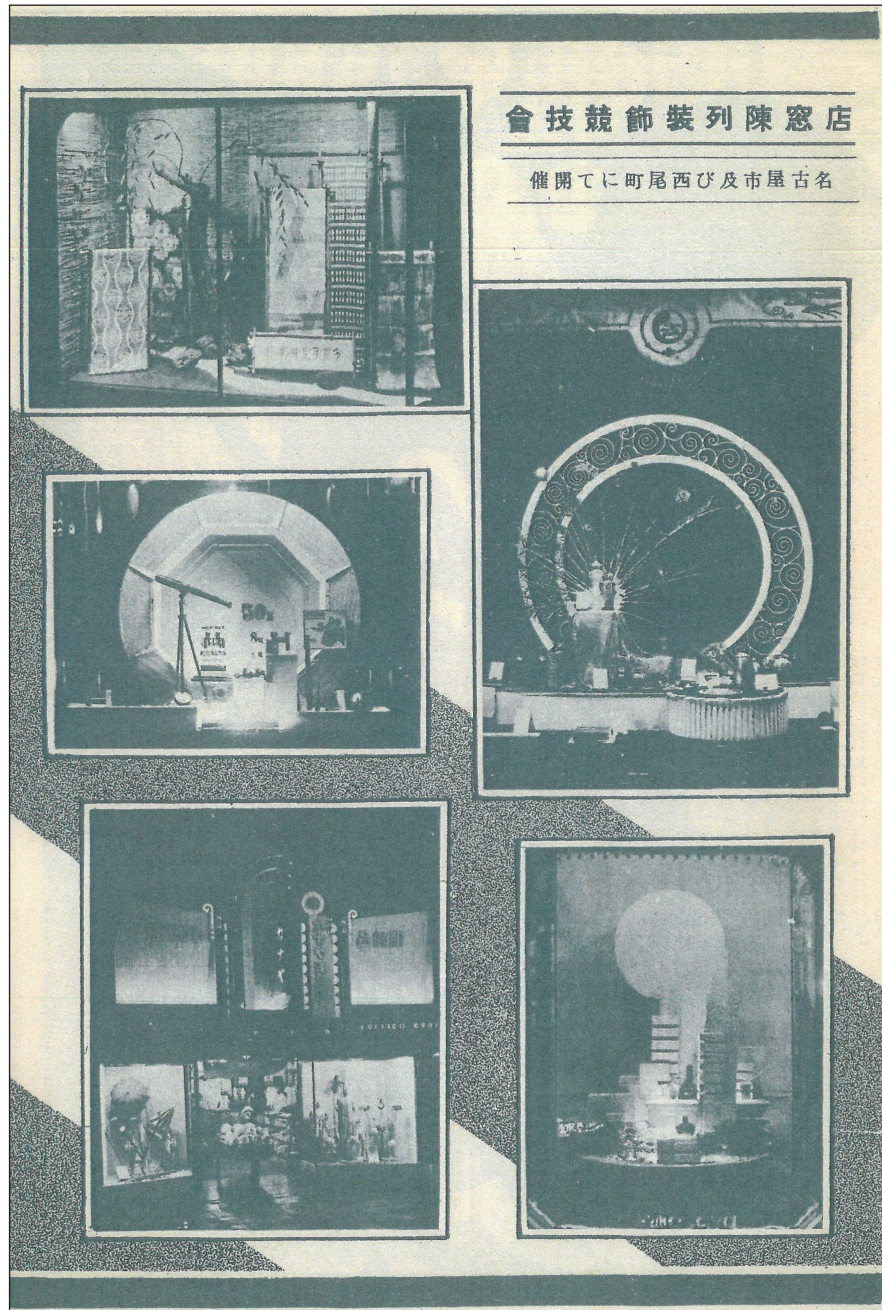


Figure 6: Display windows exhibited in the fourth Façade Design Competition, introduced in *Kōkokukai* [The Publicity World], 1 September 1927.

To the Toho Nagoya, the idea that light was a magnet for attracting people was not merely wishful thinking but a provable fact. Its confidence in this concept stemmed from the result of a survey it conducted in 1924 across 10 main streets in the centre of Nagoya, from 8 to 9 pm over a five-day period from late June to early July. Investigating all electric lights used in the stores and signboards along the streets by type, total candlepower (a unit that indicates the level of light intensity), and the volume of pedestrian flow, the company concluded that the number of people walking in front of a shop was 22 per candlepower, on average (Sugai 1924). This conclusion was the evidence for the Toho Nagoya's teleological argument that the more electric lights installed in a store, the more pedestrians walked past it and looked at its display window.

The Toho Nagoya's preoccupation with promoting the use of illuminated billboards that contained eye-catching flashing lights was also part of its campaign to popularise its idea that well-illuminated architecture, and cities, entice consumers to visit them. The Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition (Dentō Tenmetsu Sōshoku Kyōgikai), which the Toho Nagoya initiated in July 1924, was aimed at softening the resistance of electrical contractors and billboard makers to the technological complexity of the mechanism which controlled the flashing of the signs. This contest also became an annual summer event, held approximately a month after the Façade Design Competition ('Toho Nagoya sōshoku dentō kan'yū', 1924). While the contestants in the Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition were given grants for refining their craftsmanship, the Toho Nagoya encouraged leading store managers to buy the contestants' high-quality products that were designed not merely for trial but as practical items for actual use (Ito 1924: 15). During the period of the competition, all billboards were placed in a line in Tsurumai Park, each connected to two makeshift utility poles, one on either side (Adachi 1924: 4). The submissions for the second Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition, in late July 1925, were examined by a jury of the competition's stakeholders, including local newspapers and the Nagoya Advertising Association (Figure 7). It was a nocturnal fête with an array of 24 signs produced by 19 local artisans, the spectacle of flashing lights and colour fascinating about 10,000 visitors every night (Ito 1925) (Figure 8).

To Nagoya's shop managers, these series of design competitions demonstrated the magical and magnetic power of well-lit display windows, signboards, and flashing signs in creating spaces to which people naturally gravitated at night. The appearance of crowds apparently lured by the brilliance of display windows and electric billboards was sufficient to persuade shop managers that these architectural tools for advertising were a viable way to revitalise small independent store businesses and reinforce *shōtengai*. Meanwhile, the rational and public views of the judges for the competitions,

along with an increasing number of fickle shoppers visiting *shōtengai*, constructed a recursive relationship between the design of display windows, showcases, and other architectural features as advertisements and the attention of consumers attracted by them. In other words, the transformation of these architectural objects from fussy accessories to the modern media of exchange was conditioned and accelerated by the formation of *shōtengai* as well as the rationalisation of the retail industry based upon department store-driven management science. This process necessitated the rational art of signifying commercial messages: *shōgyō bijutsu*.

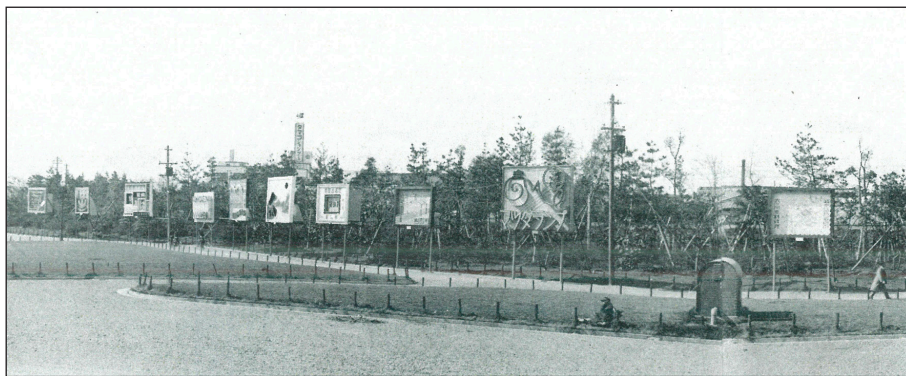


Figure 7: Illuminated billboards created by local craftsmen, exhibited in Tsurumai Park, the venue for the Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition, shown in *Nagoya-shi chōsha shunkō kinen shashinchō* [Commemorative Photo Book of the New Building of the City of Nagoya], published in 1933.



Figure 8: Illuminated billboards with flashing lights in the Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition, shown in *Nagoya-shi chōsha shunkō kinen shashinchō*, 1933.

Ishikawa Hideaki and City Planning for the Night

While Nagoya's small independent stores were organised into *shōtengai* according to neighbourhood, new attempts to apply the City Planning Act of 1919 took place in all industrial cities, including Nagoya. Since zoning became a fundamental planning principle stipulated by the Act, the urban areas of Nagoya and the other industrial cities were uniformly divided into residential, business, and industrial zones, which defined certain types of infrastructure developments. The endeavours of Ishikawa, while working as a city planner for the Home Ministry City Planning Commission, to conceptualise modern *sakariba* began with his awareness of the assumptions implicit in how Japanese planners implemented zoning. The event that challenged his learned perspective of zoning was his attendance at the 1924 International Federation for Town and Country Planning and Garden Cities in Amsterdam, where he met Raymond Unwin — the influential British architect and town- and regional-planner — to receive advice on the master plan of Nagoya. Unwin's comments subsequently defied Ishikawa's preconceptions. Unwin criticised encroachments on seafront areas by business and industrial zones for 'the lack of human life' (Ishikawa 1925a: 17). In Unwin's view, industry was not the purpose of urban life, but rather a means to make it possible. Hence, he averred that the seafront areas with lovely breezes and beautiful scenery should be occupied not by ports for industrial purposes but by parks for relaxation and leisure (Ishikawa 1925a: 17–18). Such criticism from Unwin made Ishikawa deeply reconsider what brought true happiness to urban life and how leisure qualities could be encouraged by planning.

Ishikawa's speculation on the essence of urban life was presumably further inspired by the evolution of small independent stores in Nagoya, which had rapidly organised into *shōtengai* and become much livelier and more brilliant with illuminated display windows, glass cases, and electric billboards — the objects of commercial art. In 1925, he came up with and published the initial idea of City Planning for the Night in the local planning-related magazine *Toshi sōsaku* [Urban Creation], in which he conceptualises a new type of amusement for the night, where people were liberated from their increasingly hectic vocational lives and able to enjoy personal freedom. He regarded his earliest vision of City Planning for the Night as a framework for social education as well as a plan for illumination at night (Ishikawa 1925a: 19–26). While the essence of social education remained, his eagerness to create people-centric spaces for leisure and relaxation after the day was over led him to explore general laws that determined where and how *shōtengai* that were socially recognised as *sakariba* emerged.

Ishikawa's independent research on *sakariba* began with the examination of the locations, morphological structures, and characteristics of those shopping and entertainment districts that could be classified as *sakariba*. His key finding was that

they consisted of main streets approximately 760 meters long, distributed at 760-meter intervals (Ishikawa 1926: 26–29).⁴ His typology of *sakariba* expanded the scope of study to other cities in Japan and then all around the world, including London, Paris, and Berlin, in search of the universal nature of locations and structures of recreational built environments that successfully attracted people (Ishikawa 1929b; see also Ishikawa 1930d) (Figure 9).

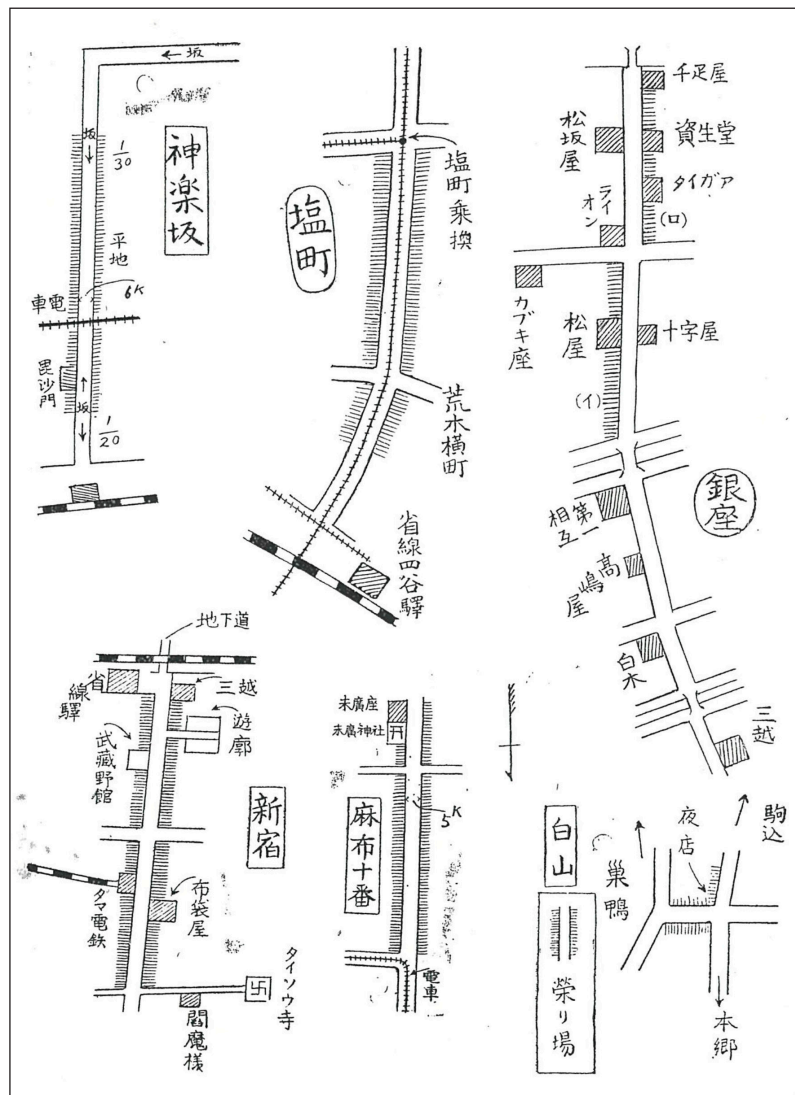


Figure 9: Spatial distribution of *sakariba* in six areas of Tokyo. Clockwise from top left: Kagurazaka, Yotsuya, Ginza, Hakusan, Azabu-jūban, and Shinjuku. In these diagrams, Ishikawa indicates *sakariba* with hatching perpendicular to the street to demonstrate geographical relationships with department stores, train stations, shrines, temples, and so on. From Ishikawa (1930d: 107).

The categorisation of *sakariba*, according to their qualities, locations, and histories, was also a part of the main body of Ishikawa's *sakariba* studies. For example, according to his definition of *sakariba*, the area around Hirokoji Street is classified as a 'luxury shopping district', which tended to be adjacent to or embedded in a business quarter (Ishikawa 1930c: 64) (Figure 10). The Osu area, one of the neighbourhoods with a history as one of Nagoya's pre-modern *sakariba*, was the archetype of a 'popular entertainment centre' in his typology (Ishikawa 1930c: 65–66) (Figure 11). This old type of *sakariba* was typically formed around an object of worship, such as a shrine or temple (Ishikawa 1930d: 105–106). At the heart of Osu was a temple called Hosho-in, commonly known as Osu Kannon, surrounded by multiple blocks densely populated with movie theatres, playhouses, storytellers' halls, restaurants, cafés, and various small retail stores (Yamada 2003: 440–441). To Ishikawa, his precepts of *sakariba* distribution as well as his categorisation of them served as a formula that enabled him to judge whether a certain place had the potential to become a lively modern *sakariba*. His City Planning for the Night scheme accordingly targeted sluggish *shōtengai*, albeit only those with the favourable conditions for blossoming into more attractive gathering spots at night.



Figure 10: The Hirokoji area around 1925, depicted in a picture postcard from Nagoya City Museum. The townscape of this 'luxury shopping district', as defined by Ishikawa, was characterised by the spaciousness of Hirokoji Street as well as an increasing number of Western-style office buildings.



Figure 11: Osu around 1925, depicted in a picture postcard from Nagoya City Museum. In contrast to Hirokoji, narrow streets run throughout this dense neighbourhood, which Ishikawa categorised as ‘popular entertainment centre’, consisting of movie theatres, restaurants, and cafés, as well as various retail stores.

The Nagoya Advertising Association’s success in revitalising small independent stores exemplified the power of *shōgyō bijutsu* to Ishikawa, as evidenced by the fact that the central agents in his City Planning for the Night scheme were retail store designers, lighting engineers, and shop managers — not city planners. The commendation ceremony of the fourth Façade Design Competition and second Signboard Design Competition on 2 July 1927 was the setting for the founding of Ishikawa’s autonomous group, Nagoya Toshiba Kenkyūkai, or the Nagoya Civic Art League, whose provisional name was ‘The team to make Nagoya a bit better’ (‘Nagoya womo sukoshi kino kiita mono ni suru no kai’) (‘Tentō sōshoku kyōgikai juyoshiki’, 1927).⁵ The membership of Ishikawa’s new group grew mostly from the participants, jury members, and organisers of the Nagoya Advertising Association’s popular contests. It included a display designer, Tanabe Seichu; two electrical engineers, Hikita Teizo and Sugai Takeaki; an industrial art teacher, Katori Goro; a professor of commerce, Koga Yoshiyuki; and some members of the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce (‘Jissaika undō’, 1927).⁶

Ishikawa was also an active contributor to the local trade magazine *Shōgyōkai* [The Commercial World], initially launched by the Nagoya Advertising Association.⁷ In fact, he was a prolific writer throughout his career, contributing to various publications not only on city planning but also on electrical engineering, modern merchandising, and

publicity. The early issues of *Shōgyōkai* embody the Nagoya Advertising Association's mission to modernise small independent stores, consisting of commercially informative articles on how to organise the sale events of merchant associations, how to advertise effectively in newspapers and magazines, how to obtain a trademark registration, and so on (e.g., Aoki 1927). Certainly, Ishikawa's involvement in this Nagoya-based trade magazine influenced his internalisation of the concept of *shōgyō bijutsu*. In fact, its composition, components, and choice of topics showed a noticeable resemblance to the nationally distributed magazine *Kōkokukai* [The Publicity World] led by Murota Kurazo, a graphic designer and exponent of *shōgyō bijutsu* (e.g., Ishikawa 1929a). For example, an editorial technique used in *Shōgyōkai* around 1928 and arguably influenced by *Kōkokukai* was the inclusion, as pages following the front cover, of full-colour drawings of the display window backdrops (Figure 12). These monthly inserts allowed shop managers, for whom few catalogues of backdrop design were available, to learn from the illustrations, colourations, and motifs of professional designers (Takeuchi 2011: 108). Furthermore, Murota and Ishikawa acted as guest critics and frequent contributors to both *Shōgyōkai* and *Kōkokukai*, where they shared their thoughts and expertise on merchandise displays, retail design, and the structures of *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* (Murota 1927; Ishikawa 1928b).

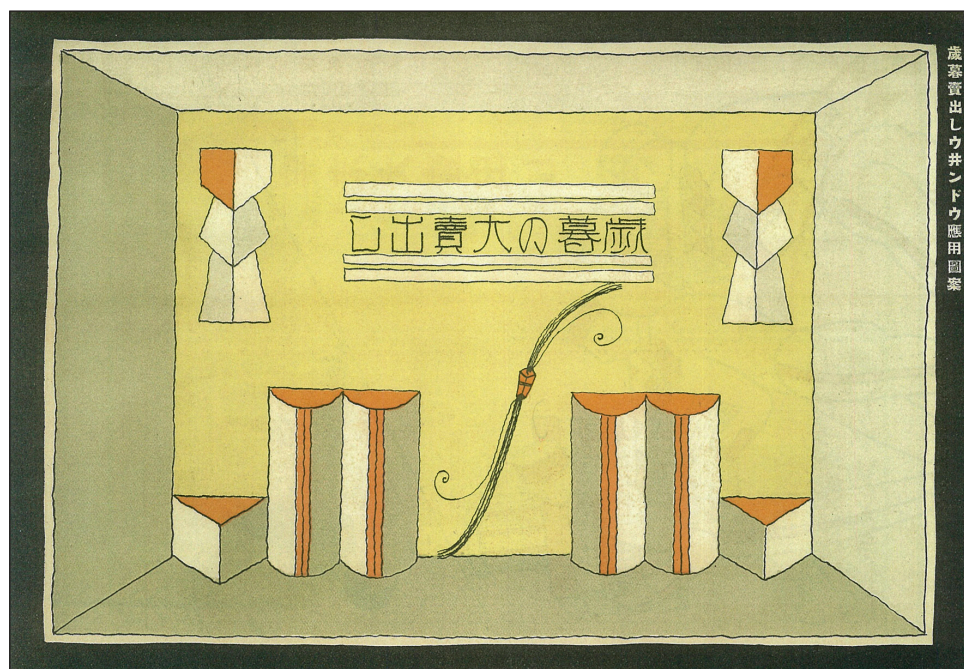


Figure 12: 'Seibo uridashi uindō ōyō zuan' [Window design applicable for a year-end sale], exemplified in *Shōgyōkai*, 10 December 1927.

The transition, around late 1928, from the Nagoya Advertising Association as the publisher of *Shōgyōkai* to the Nagoya Civic Art League indicated a shift in emphasis from the rationalisation of the management of small independent stores and *shōtengai* to their aestheticisation as *shōgyō bijutsu*. This change of editorial direction altered the magazine's quality as well as its contents, replacing technical advice on store management with various reports of activities and commentary by league members.⁸ New articles demonstrated two main approaches to ameliorating both the overall environments of *shōtengai* as well as the design of individual shops: participation in a merchant association's community meeting and the jury's in-person critiques of contestants' stores, which typically followed the Façade and Signboard Design Competitions.

In the Nagoya Civic Art League's view, a direct discussion with shop managers of a merchant association was a way to impart a progressive and panoramic understanding of the visual ambiance of *shōtengai*. For example, in the July 1929 issue of *Shōgyōkai*, extracts of the transcript of the dialogue between Ishikawa, Tanabe, Hikita, Sugai, and members of the merchant association of the Endoji area, numbering about 50, were published. The purpose of this gathering, held in mid-May, was the frank and candid exchange of views on how to ameliorate and redesign the entire area. The discussion revealed store managers' ingrained belief that only by spending a lot of money on illumination could they eliminate sombreness from their *shōtengai*. 'I mean no disrespect', Sugai argued in response to the implicit assumption that the number of lights was the only thing that mattered, 'but an idea that it is only necessary to employ a lot of electric lights excessively is an amateur's opinion'. He then explained that 'lighting effects vary according to how electric lights are installed', drawing shop managers' attention to the importance of considering economic and subjective factors: efficiency, comfort, and beauty, combined in a holistic manner ('Endoji Dōri zadankai', 1929: 41).

The Nagoya Advertising Association's programme of modernising small independent stores encouraged the notion that quality in retail design and architecture represented a degree of sophistication in scientific sales management. Embracing this logic, the Nagoya Civic Art League seems to have more clearly acknowledged that any element contributing to the total retail environment was subject to aesthetic evaluation, or *shōgyō bijutsu*. The league's shop-visit critiques regularly appeared in a feature of *Shōgyōkai* titled 'Retail Design Hospital' ('Shōten Byōin'). This was an homage to one of *Kōkokukai*'s popular columns, 'Publicity Clinic' ('Kōkoku Shinryōjo'). *Kōkokukai*'s feature was a participatory column where store managers around the country submitted their posters and leaflets to obtain technical advice about composition, pattern, typography, and so on from the editors, who were also professional graphic designers

(Takeuchi 2011: 154–160). These articles, with their witty critiques offered by editors impersonating medical practitioners, initially attracted a large number of readers and became a monthly column beginning with the May 1927 issue ('Kōkoku Shinryōjo', 1927) (Figure 13).



Figure 13: 'Kōkoku Shinryōjo' [Publicity Clinic] of the May 1927 issue of *Kōkokukai*. In this column, posters and flyers created by independent store managers were inserted not necessarily as advertisements but as objects for aesthetic criticism.

In *Shōgyōkai*'s 'Retail Design Hospital', too, jocular and waggishness served to soften acerbic and critical comments from the coterie of the Nagoya Civic Art League. Common prescriptions for the refinement of merchandise displays, light conditions, and façade designs of retail stores were made after random visits to storefronts whose managers had not solicited any counselling. The director of this 'Retail Design Hospital' column was Ishikawa, from the urban planning department. Tanabe and Katori posed as physicians of the department of display and façade design; Hikita and Sugai were specialists from the lighting department; and Koga, the professor of commerce, was a counsellor on the psychological impacts of merchandising ('Fuukeiki taiji no shōten byōin', 1929: 32).

Shōgyōkai's 'Retail Design Hospital' column revealed one issue frequently raised by the league's shop-visit criticisms: whether the exterior, interior, and display of a shop were appropriately designed to visually express its key characteristics, as determined

by its location, fabric, and wares. One of the ‘patients’ of this ‘hospital’ in the April 1930 issue was the window display of a notions store in Hirokoji. Tanabe likened the sight of combs and ornamental hairpins placed sparsely on an invisible display stand in a spacious window, encased by glass on both sides, to ‘seeing fish swimming in an aquarium’ (Tanabe 1930: 26). This metaphorical expression softened the critique, and the diagnosis made by the doctor of the department of display and façade design suggested that a hanging screen be used to bring refinement to the overall display and to flatter individual products. Ishikawa classified a Japanese sweet bean jelly shop in Osu as distinctly lacking in charm due to the ‘brash bulkiness’ of the showcase, with its thick, marbled pedestal that ‘looks triumphant over sweet bean jellies’, bleakly placed at the centre of its bare, empty interior (Ishikawa 1930b: 25). This left him with the feeling of being unable to look on in silence. ‘Bring me a scalpel, please. It needs a surgery, reform!’ He wrote a prescription with some drawings in ‘Retail Design Hospital’, urging its owner to rearrange the store layout, create an eat-in section, and match its décor, fittings, and furniture with reddish-brown sweet bean jellies in colour and texture (Ishikawa 1930b: 25) (Figure 14).

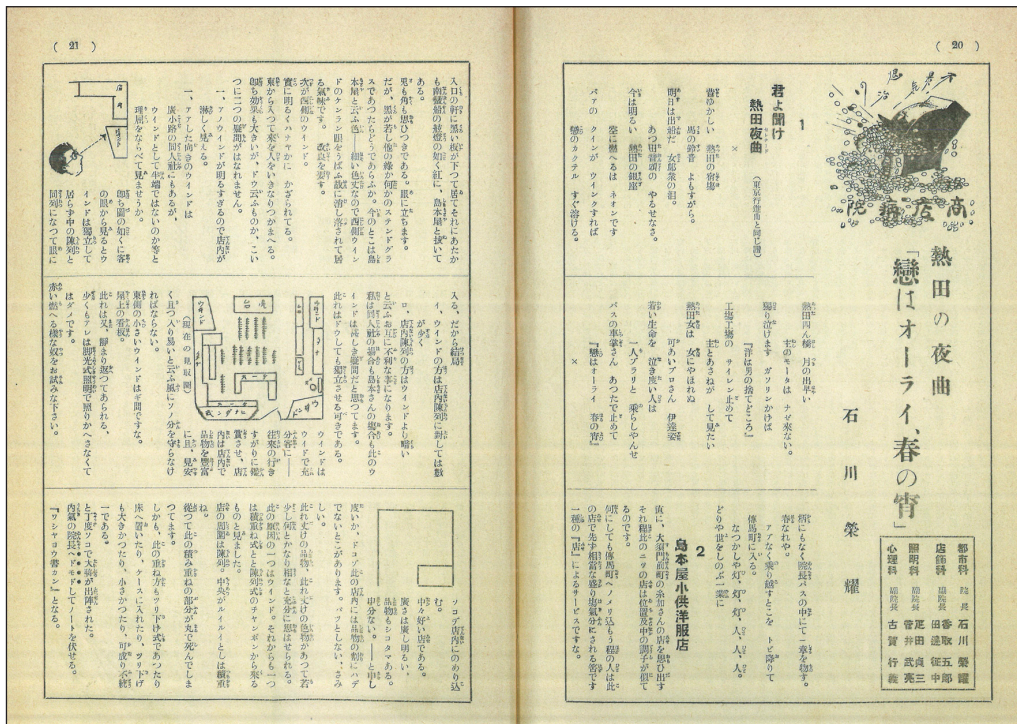


Figure 14: Ishikawa’s commentary published in ‘Shōten Byōin’ [Retail Design Hospital] of the April 1930 issue of *Shōgyōkai*. This article shows Ishikawa’s drawings of proposed floor plans, for stores he visited with some members of Nagoya Civic Art League, that demonstrate his advice for shop managers on the layout of their display stands, glass cases, and display windows.

Unrefined lighting was also identified as one of the major sources of visual confusion, with common offenders being the glare of electric lights without shades and globes as well as unduly conspicuous light fittings (e.g., Ishikawa 1930a: 19–21; Tanabe 1930: 27). Ishikawa's comments on ill-designed lighting contain a sort of didactic message that store managers' unfamiliarity with modern building components of glass and artificial light inadvertently prevented customers from viewing display windows and featured products. He often adopts a jocular tone that both tempers his criticism and belies his status as a government officer. In his critique of a notions store in Osu, he condemns its glass front door for how its reflected electric light dazed and blinded the eyes of passers-by, adding that 'I see the steam coming out of Mr Sugai's ears' (Ishikawa 1930b: 23–24). The ultimate goal of Nagoya Civic Art League's shop-visit criticisms was to enhance and refine efforts made by shop managers to improve an individual store in order to collectively produce the atmosphere of modern *sakariba* in their *shōtengai*. Ishikawa's City Planning for the Night was empirically influenced by both these shop-visit criticisms and his participation in the community meetings of merchant associations, both of which *Shōgyōkai* actively documented and circulated to store managers all over Nagoya.

Methodology for Designing *Sakariba* and the Night

If Ishikawa's quest for City Planning for the Night was fuelled by anything other than his commitment to the *shōgyō bijutsu* movement, it was the mounting social demand for a merry and buoyant atmosphere in the city to celebrate the enthronement of the emperor in November 1928 (Yamada 1994: 41). This demand led Ishikawa to envision and materialise a systematic series of steps to generate the brilliance of modern *sakariba* in evening *shōtengai*. In this respect, the nightscape of Hirokoji represented one big concern in the centre of Nagoya — a gloominess created by an increasing number of massive modern constructions erected on Hirokoji Street (Hama 2006: 318) (**Figure 15**). The dark silhouettes of these high-rises stood out sharply against the brilliance of the arrays of small independent stores around them. This issue was particular to what Ishikawa defined as a 'luxury shopping district'. According to his observation, in some cities, including Nagoya, office buildings, administrative offices, retail stores, restaurants, and cafés all coexisted in luxury shopping districts (Ishikawa 1925b: 27). The first task that the Nagoya Civic Art League undertook was to provide technical advice to the Nagoya Confederation of Merchant Associations, which was lobbying the City of Nagoya to solve the issue of dimness in the urban centre. The Confederation's petition of 1927 proposed that the first floors of the multistorey buildings of banks and offices facing Hirokoji Street be equipped with neatly lit windows in their façades

or composed of some bright shops ('Jūji gairo', 1927: 24). In Ishikawa's view, the first thing to do to create the desired liveliness of evening in modern *sakariba* was to eliminate shadows from the street by employing display windows, electric billboards, and glass façades, which all functioned as light sources (Figures 16, 17).



Figure 15: Tall modern buildings cast long shadows on Hirokoji around the mid-1930s, shown in a picture postcard from Nagoya City Museum.



Figure 16: Nightscape of Hirokoji in 1935, depicted in a picture postcard from Nagoya City Museum.



Figure 17: Array of stores of Shin-Yanagimachi on Hirokoji Street in December 1935, with façades composed of well-lit signboards, display windows, and stands as well as dazzling light fixtures, which were expected to cut through the darkness. Nagoya City Library.

Eliminating shadows in this way was a solution to another source of sombreness: the drab and dreary board fences encircling large, vacant construction sites where office blocks were supposed to be built. These created lumps of darkness at night. This issue was tackled by the Hirokoji Association (Hirokoji Kenkyūkai), which was a product of Nagoya Civic Art League's involvement in the meetings of the merchant associations of the Sakaemachi and Shin-Yanagimachi areas, adjacent to each other on Hirokoji Street (Hama 2006: 318). The common desire to make Hirokoji brighter and more vibrant prompted these associations to collaborate by creating a cooperative group for town management. The Hirokoji Association's vision of modern *sakariba* that was unveiled in a petition to the city in 1928 reveals Ishikawa's ingenuity. It proposes replacing dingy board fences on construction sites with ornamental, well-illuminated display windows as well as installing high-candlepower neon signs at the tops of buildings facing the streets (Yamada 2003: 442). From a viewpoint of scientific management, promoted by the Nagoya Advertising Association, illuminating a street was a visual consequence of sales promotion by shop illumination. By contrast, Ishikawa's City Planning for the Night deemed the environmental impact of display windows and every other illuminated *shōgyō bijutsu* populating the streets as a strategic means to light up and aestheticise the city.

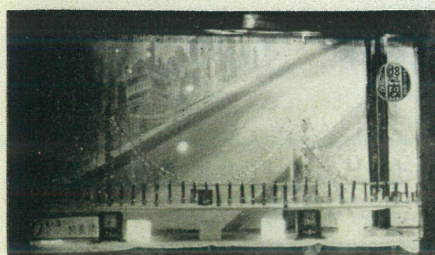
The petition of 1928 also suggested using enclosed vacant lands as sites for stalls. This proposition brought to life Ishikawa's theorisation of the essence of a city that he developed to justify his City Planning for the Night. To Ishikawa, what made an entity of the built environment a recognisable city was the ideological liveliness and vitality created by crowds of people enjoying the life of a plaza and a street (Ishikawa 1928a: 20–22). His intent appears to have been to artificially create peoples' spaces in the night, following a strategy similar to that which resulted in commercial success for the *shōtengai*, when sales occurred at the same time as the Façade and Signboard Design Competitions that had enhanced Nagoya's *shōgyō bijutsu* movement. His vision was realised the next year as a summer event, the Evening Breeze Market (Nōryō Māketto), held in a temporarily unfenced vacant construction site in Hirokoji, where people thronged around rows of resplendent open-air cafés and beer stands (Hama 2006: 319). To his eyes, the glittering and dazzlingly lit booths magnetised the crowds, creating a dense and lively swarm of customers, stalls, and pushcart vendors.

Accordingly, festivity became defined as a trigger for generating a convivial atmosphere of modern *sakariba* in Ishikawa's City Planning for the Night approach. To him, the success of merchant associations' sales and the Evening Breeze Market provided strong empirical evidence of the wider applicability of the marketing

strategies of department stores: seasonal sales to regularly lure the crowds. Thus, festivity became a recursive technique of enhancing the quality of modern *sakariba*, resulting in the Hirokoji Festival (Hirokoji Matsuri) in mid-July 1930, held under the aegis of Nagoya Mainichi Newspaper and Nagoya Civic Art League ('Hirokoji Matsuri', 1930: 1). This newly created early summer event was expected to function as both a sort of advertising balloon of its organisers, the merchant associations of Sakaemachi and Shin-Yanagimachi, as well an event to garner wider public recognition of Hirokoji as modern *sakariba*. A two-day event, it consisted of an exhibition and public lecture on the history of Hirokoji and the display design competition, culminating in a parade of seven dazzling carnival floats with 30,000 lanterns that drew about 300,000 visitors in the evening ('Hirokoji Matsuri', 1930: 2–3) (**Figure 18**). The sensation caused by the Hirokoji Festival bolstered Ishikawa's confidence in the theory that the repetition of the stimuli of light and carnival strategically combined was a universally applicable method to fabricate the gaiety and excitement that propelled an area beyond *shōtengai* to become modern *sakariba*.

This approach for designing both modern *sakariba* and the night was thus applied to the Osu area, which was categorised as a 'popular entertainment centre' in Ishikawa's City Planning for the Night. As was the case with Hirokoji, a group of merchant associations around Hosho-in temple, namely the Osu Association (Osu Kenkyūkai), was founded to implement improvements, presumably in response to advice from the Nagoya Civic Art League (Yamada 2003: 444). The calls for a radiant and lively city to celebrate the enthronement as well as increasingly fierce market competition driven by department stores opened their eyes to the local issues of Osu, particularly how to sustain and enhance the prosperity of their shopping and entertainment districts and how to make their retail environments more refined and sophisticated (Hama 2006: 320–321). The aftermath of the Great Depression of the late 1920s became a decisive factor, impelling the Osu Association to take action against the tough business climate for the benefit of the hundreds of small independent stores in the area. The Osu Association organised a three-week festival in mid-May 1931, which consisted of fancy dress parades and early Bon Festival dances, along with the ceremony of exhibiting Hosho-in's Buddhist icon, held for the first time in decades. This strategic combination of festivities brought the merchant associations commercial success while consolidating local identity. Whereas the Hirokoji Festival ceased in the absence of Ishikawa, its moving spirit, who left Nagoya in 1933, the fancy dress parades and dance festival in Osu were already firmly ingrained and autonomous enough to be part of regular annual functions (Yamada 2003: 443–446).

報 畫 祭 路 小 廣



寫眞(上)
 入波を乗り切る、モダン
 山車と市營バスの立往生。
 (右)ウキンドウ造り物競技
 人気投票で、一等の榮冠を
 勝ち得た拍信呉服店のウキ
 ンドウ(中)二等の宅見時
 計店(下)三等のかめや陶
 器店のウキンドウ。

フ ラ グ 界 業 商

Figure 18: Carnival floats (top), and some works exhibited in the display design competition (bottom) during the Hirokoji Festival, shown in *Shōgyōkai*, 25 July 1930.

To Ishikawa, it was *shōgyō bijutsu* objects — architectural and urban instruments such as an appropriately lit display window, an electric billboard, or streetlights — that transformed the public, in their impulsive response to the lure of these festivities, from fickle and inconsistent visitors to denizens of *shōtengai* (Ishikawa 1936: 20–21). The land readjustment project for the northern extension of Osu, launched a year before Ishikawa’s transfer to Tokyo, fuelled the spark of his imagination to integrate these objects and perpetuate the vitality of night stalls and carnivals. He proposed an unprecedented plan to create glass-covered passages that evoked Parisian arcades: entire streets elegantly sheltered by arches and glass roofs (Yamada 2003: 444; Hama 2006: 321–322). The vision of this blueprint to seal the liveliness of modern *sakariba* in glass containers was never achieved, but his ideological legacy endured in the illuminated streets of Nagoya’s *shōtengai*. By the second half of the 1930s, front gates, brightly illuminated not only by increasingly popular neon lights but also by a large number of electric bulbs, were erected at the entrances of the streets of many *shōtengai* (Figure 19). This momentum was accelerated by private initiatives to construct streetlights (e.g., Ogawa 1928). The creation of the illuminated entrance gates acted as a vehicle for the merchant association to express the characteristics of their enjoyable *shōtengai* through design. These *shōgyō bijutsu* thus commercialised the night, serving as modern *sakariba* to lure people into the *shōtengai* for dinner, window shopping, and a leisurely wander.

In conclusion, one premise which underlaid Ishikawa’s City Planning for the Night was the knowledge of modern merchandising and scientific sales promotion, which the Nagoya Advertising Association disseminated to shop managers of small independent stores through the competitions for façade, signboard, and illuminated electric billboard design as well as through the formation of *shōtengai*. These local attempts to modernise small independent stores were the stimulus for the *shōgyō bijutsu* movement, elucidating to shop managers the modern role of façades as rational media for sales promotion. For the Nagoya Civic Art League, the concept of *shōgyō bijutsu* was the catalyst in defining its constituents’ roles as artistic agents in implementing Ishikawa’s ideas of City Planning for the Night. Meanwhile, the Nagoya Advertising Association’s success in luring a larger audience with *shōtengai*’s joint sales, twinkling display windows, billboards, and streetlights led Ishikawa — who continued to seek ways to construct recreational areas for people — to interpret them as attractions by which to magnetise the masses. It can be assumed that his desire to cover entire *shōtengai* with glass roofs was the manifestation of his belief that the festive and hedonistic atmosphere generated by galas, pageants, and crowds of people *per se* could be materially re-created by architectural and *shōgyō bijutsu* objects.



Figure 19: 'Dai-Osu no meishōbu' [Competitive Illuminations in Osu Area], from Osu Area Promotion Association's brochure, *Nihon no Osu: Ima to mukashi* [Osu of Japan: Its Past and Present], 1938. It features illuminated entrance gates and streetlights from various streets as Osu's evening attractions. Aichi Prefectural Library.



Figure 20: Shopping arcade in Osu, 2020. Photograph by the author.

Whatever the underlying logic, Ishikawa's approach to creating modern *sakariba* was influential in the post-war reconstruction of *shōtengai*. In fact, in the 10 years after WWII, he was active in promoting the introduction of a uniquely Japanese arcade (Tsujiyama and Fujioka 2004: 53) (Figure 20). Merchant associations across the country were eager to install such shopping arcades along with street illumination to restore vitality to their businesses and enliven the atmospheres of their *shōtengai* as modern *sakariba* (Hashizume et al. 2015: 38–40). The shopping arcades, streetlights, electric billboards, and neon signs iconic of Japanese urban landscape today are remnants of interwar endeavours, particularly in Nagoya, to modernise small independent store businesses and organise *shōtengai*. These elements that comprise the built environments of *shōtengai* — *shōgyō bijutsu* — were viewed as rational media for advertising in the process of modernisation of retailing and retail design and as architectural instruments for creating a place for people in the night.

Notes

- ¹ In this article, Japanese names are given in the order family name–first name.
- ² The Nagoya Chamber of Commerce was renamed the Nagoya Chamber of Commerce and Trade in 1928.
- ³ A variety of publications from the period, ranging from local newspapers to in-house newsletters to trade magazines, were used for this research. They include local the newspaper *Nagoya Shimbun*; Toho Electric Power's in-house newsletter *Denka* [Electric flowers], published between 1921 and 1933; *Mazda-shinpō*, a trade magazine of Tokyo Denki (now Toshiba), published between 1914 and 1944; and others.
- ⁴ More precisely, these lengths and intervals were expressed in a conventional unit of length, namely *chō*. A *chō* is approximately 109.1 meters. Therefore, 760 meters are equivalent to 7 *chō*.
- ⁵ The reason Ishikawa attended this ceremony is unknown, but it can be assumed that he was invited to the fourth Façade Design Competition and second Signboard Design Competition as a guest critic. In fact, he served as a judge for the fourth Illuminated Electric Billboard Competition in mid-August 1927 ('Hōden Nagoya tenmetu kanban kyōgikai seiseki', 1927).
- ⁶ Apart from Ishikawa, Tanabe, Hikita, Sugai, Katori, and Koga, the Nagoya Civic Art League initially included Aoyama Mitsuji, manager of Aoyama Book Store; Hara Bunjiro, director of Aichi Prefectural Commercial Museum; Miura Hajime, chief secretary of Nagoya Chamber of Commerce; Mori Usaku, sales manager of Toho Electric Power Nagoya Branch; Okaya Sosuke, member of the chamber; Takamatsu Sadakazu, member of the chamber; and Yashiro Masaru, clerk of the chamber. Mori left the league before it became active. Taking his place were Okabe Seiji, Toho Nagoya's engineer with an expertise in neon signs, and Ogawa Isamu, later serving as an editor (Okabe 1928; 'Shochū oukagai mōshiage sōrō', 1930).
- ⁷ This local trade magazine called *Shōgyōkai* should not be confused with a national trade magazine of the same name.
- ⁸ The number of back issues of *Shōgyōkai* that are extant is limited. This makes it impossible to clarify when the magazine started and when the editors changed from the Nagoya Advertising Association to Nagoya Civic Art League. Given that its March 1928 and July 1929 issues indicate differences in their editors, the league would likely have been involved in the editing of *Shōgyōkai* from April 1928 onward.

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Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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