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Tracing Shumi: politics and aesthetics in modern Japanese literary discourse and fiction

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Stellingen / Propositions

1. *Shumi* is not just a neologism, but a foundational marker of the ideology of modernity in 20th century Japan.
2. The ideological language of *shumi* simultaneously constructs and deconstructs social relations in the context of a burgeoning Japanese middle class.
3. *Shumi* is the most flexibly used neologism in the discursive spaces of the Meiji and Taishō periods.
4. Echigoya/Mitsukoshi is one of the most effective modern marketing machines of pre-WWII Japan.
5. In a world of shifting borders and boundaries, the future of literary studies should be sought in zones of contact between linguistic and cultural horizons rather than within the confinement of the nation-state.
6. In the Humanities, more attention should be given to the agency of objects, both physical and abstract, in the structuring of power relations.
7. The discipline of aesthetics cannot exist separately from the field of politics in a meaningful way.
8. The author is not dead, but shifts from a site of meaning to one of ethical significance in the intersection of aesthetics and politics.
9. Poetic language is the only means for direct access to the world around us.
10. Humanities faculties should take better care of young scholars, providing better guidance for those who opt for alternative lines of employment.