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# AESTHETIC IN THE JAPANESE MIND (PROGRESS)

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## INTRODUCTION

- ▶ That which is considered beautiful and tasteful
- ▶ Four Characteristics:
  - ▶ Suggestion, irregularity, simplicity, perishability
- ▶ Shinto-buddhism
  - ▶ Emphasizes wholeness of nature and character ethics
- ▶ Seen in everyday life; traditional and modern concept

# WABI-SABI

- ▶ Wabi - rustic simplicity and freshness or quietness, understated elegance
  - ▶ Can be applied to natural or handmade objects
- ▶ Sabi - beauty that comes with age, or when object is in visible need of repair
- ▶ Understanding an object's "story"
- ▶ Impermanence, asymmetry, humility, imperfection



## MODERN WABI-SABI

- ▶ Minimalistic vs. Utilitarian - simplicity
- ▶ Ironically very expensive
  - ▶ Loses "humility" aspect
- ▶ Still found even in urban Tokyo
  - ▶ Appreciation for nature and traditional practices still remains



# GEIDO

- ▶ Japanese arts disciplines:
  - ▶ Flower arrangement, calligraphy, pottery, etc.
- ▶ Ethical and aesthetic connotation
- ▶ Teaches an appreciation of creation
- ▶ Looking deeply for meaning - suggestion
- ▶ Found in everyday life
  - ▶ Relationship with mentor, proper etiquette, being kind, etc



# KAWAII

- ▶ Began 1970's and now prominent modern aesthetic
- ▶ Meaning close to "cute" or "lovable"
  - ▶ No direct translation
- ▶ Used to emphasize helplessness and innocence of girls
- ▶ "Cute" and "neat" over "beautiful" and "refined"
- ▶ Encompasses everything from objects to behavior



# KAWAII MIND

- ▶ Koshinto - everything has a soul
- ▶ Retains harmony
- ▶ Found in imperfection - irregularity
  - ▶ Perfection is unsettling
- ▶ Contrast to Japanese's harsh work life
  - ▶ Used to improve work productivity
  - ▶ Offers alleviation





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## CONCLUSION

- ▶ Japanese mind always relates to four basic characteristics:
  - ▶ Suggestion, irregularity, simplicity, perishability
- ▶ Aesthetic - not just appearance but also way of thinking
- ▶ Found in all aspects of daily life - personal to business
- ▶ A variety of ideals - both traditional and modern