John Szostak

**pan no kai (active 1908-1912)**

Pan no Kai, or Pan Society, was a group of writers, poets, artists, and actors active in Tokyo from 1908 to around 1912. It was founded by Kinoshita Mokutarô (1885-1945), a medical doctor who by avocation was also active as a poet, playwright, and publisher of several periodicals, including *Subaru*. Kinoshita was an admirer of European culture, and named the Pan Society after the German cultural periodical *Pan* established in 1894 by Julius Meier-Graefe (1867-1935). Kinoshita held Pan Society gatherings at European-style restaurants situated near the Ryôkoku Bridge overlooking the Sumida River, Tokyo's answer to Paris’ river Seine. Meetings were informal affairs given over to discussing strategies for the reform and revitalisation of Japanese art, literature and theatre, and to socialising over European food, wine, coffee and music. In addition to Kinoshita, founding members included writers Nagata Hideo (1885–1949), Tanizaki Junichirô (1886-1965), and Nagai Kafû (1879-1959), oil painters Ishii Hakutei (1882–1958), Yamamoto Kanae (1882–1946), and sculptor and poet Takamura Kôtarô (1883–1956); at its height of influence it included over forty members. Although the Pan Society sponsored no exhibitions and espoused no particular movement or style, it played an important role by fomenting wider interest in and knowledge of Western-style artistic modernism at a crucial time in Japan’s art and literary history.

**References and Further Reading:**

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