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History of the Singer Sewing Machine Women's Academy, and Dressmaking Education Using the Sewing Machine

— According to the Media Document —

IKEDA, Hitomi

The Singer Sewing Machine Women's Academy was founded in Tokyo in 1906. Dressmaking education was performed in the academy. However, the contents of the training are not clear. In this study, I investigated the training contents using the media documents of Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun, and Fujyo Shimbun. From an article advertising a sale on sewing machines and the recruitment of students placed in each paper, I can suppose the history and instruction contents of the academy.

In the early academy, there was an elementary course, a higher course, and a study course. The class taught sewing and embroidery using the sewing machine. Courses on handicrafts and housekeeping were also opened. However, the academy became an educational institution of the Singer Sewing Machine Company after 1915 and an organization for training instructors. Any class not incorporating the sewing machine was abolished. The teaching materials of the class changed according to the generation, but a man's shirt was always the teaching material for beginners.

Graduates of the academy taught how to use sewing machines all over Japan, and the contents of the academy were spread all over the country. Therefore, it may be said that a source of the dressmaking education of Japan was the Singer Sewing Machine Women's Academy.

What is the “Utility”?

— on the Structure of the “Beauty based on Utility” in YANAGI Muneyoshi’s *Mingei* Aesthetics —

IRIE, Shigeki

In the 1920~30’s, Japanese aesthetician YANAGI Muneyoshi (1889–1961) asserted that the beauty of traditional folk-crafts (*Mingei*) is based on their utility. But, in those days, the *Mingei* crafts were no longer apposite to the style of modern life. For this reason, contemporary craft-artists criticized YANAGI’s theory as a mere anachronism.

But, we should focus on the fact that YANAGI’s purpose was not only mere usability. According to him, *Mingei* makers strive for making useful crafts, eventually cultivate their personality. The reasons for their efforts are the respects for users and for the nature. And, by this making process, *Mingei* makers can shake off their narrow egoism imperceptibly, and in consequence, this unselfish mind yields the innocent beauty (*mush-in-no-bi*). Namely, for YANAGI, the utility was a chance to cultivate the innocent beauty, and was not necessarily the final goal.

According to YANAGI’s theory, the beauty of crafts should be based on high personality, and the latter is cultivated by striving for utility. YANAGI’s theory of the function of utility was extraordinary, because no others shared his view in the same period.

Czechoslovakian Matchbox Labels

— Communication in the Small Graphic —

NAKAGAWA, Kanako

8,000 kinds or more of matchbox labels had been launched in Czechoslovakia between after the Second World War and 1989. The matchbox labels had been controlled by the national publisher, and they include national policy, public health, advertising of national enterprises, and cultural themes like nature, art, craftwork, architecture, and so on. These labels have a feature of high quality designs as a whole.

In Czechoslovakia under control of the Soviet Union, matchbox labels were used as small posters to promote slogans of socialism. However, they don't show negative image like posters for socialist realism but are designed with friendly illustrations and as a happy socialist country.

Many of matchbox labels had been released as a series. Various kinds of colorful labels were printed efficiently by arranging multiple designs on one sheet. Moreover, there were some of the series in which the messages are understandable by collecting all of the matchbox labels in that series. In this way, such series of matchbox labels had been released with many variations, and many people had enjoyed collecting such series of matchbox labels.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how matchbox labels had made an impact on communication among the people of Czechoslovakia, by analyzing the theme, message, printing technique, color, and design of matchbox labels.

Spatial Composition of Tatami Room Designed by Seiiti Sirai

— Focusing on the Ceiling Forms —

HATO, Kosuke

This paper addresses the spatial composition of Tatami rooms designed by Seiiti Sirai (1905–1983), focusing on the ceiling forms. Sirai has been regarded as one of representative architects in Japanese-style and the unique example of them.

Almost all pre-existing types of room-sections appeared during his early period, but the combinations of section-types tended to become more complicated year by year.

Additionally, in many examples the ceiling plan and the floor plan had different spatial systems, and they could be classified mainly in terms of the function of the 'divided space', which was formed by different ceiling levels in the room. And we could recognize a tendency that the features of each type were integrated gradually into one prototype. Specifically, 'Divided space' was set around Tokonoma and entrance of the room, high ceiling was connected to the main opening, and in some cases, the order of the next room came into the room. These features were seen in especially Saku-Setsu-Ken (1968) and Un-Pan-Kyo (1984), and we could regard them as the most developed composition in the Tatami rooms designed by Sirai.

Ideological Turning Point of Kanjiro Kawai during War-time — Its Background and Development —

MIYAGAWA, Tomomi

This paper follows the thought of a world-known modern potter Kanjiro Kawai (1890–1966) during war-time and clarifies the relationship between its thought and his activities after the war.

Kawai said that he had an ideological turning point of his own at the end of the World War II. At that time he was forced to stop making pottery because the war was getting intensified. What supported his life instead was to keep a detailed diary and to write essays based on his hometown and these materials show how Kawai deepened his thoughts.

First, he began to think that machine was a part of human body by seeing military aircrafts. This way of thinking comes from his interest in biology and he also referred to the theory of revolution. Moreover, he compared the international affairs to the law of the jungle and came to think that what he killed by himself and took in as food would become his sources of creativity.

This means that his interest in biology organized the difficulties of his actual life during war-time as his scientific way of thinking. This was also applied when he discussed about concept or origin of objects. Through thinking this way, he searched for sources of his creation in his idealized hometown, which was beyond time and space, after the war.

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