

1. 'Oriental Art', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XVII, No. LXXXV, April 1910.
2. *Description of Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*, being a translation of the *T'ao Shiao* with an introduction, notes and bibliography, Stephen Bushall, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Raphael Petrucci, 'Corcan Pottery', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XXII, No. CXXVI, Nov. 1912.
5. 'The Pottery Figures of Mr Charles Vyse', *The Studio*, Vol. 81, May 1921.
6. Bernard Rackham, 'The Literature of Chinese Pottery: A Brief Survey and Review', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XXX, No. CLXVII, Feb. 1917.
7. Roger Fry, 'Modern Paintings in a Collection of Ancient Art', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XXXVII, No. CCXIII, Dec. 1920.
8. 'Two Exhibitions of Chinese Art', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. LVII, No. CLXXXVIII, July 1930.
9. R. L. Hobson, 'Early Chinese Art at Paterson's Gallery', *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. XXXVII, No. CCXIV, Aug. 1920.
10. 'An Art Pottery in Cornwall' (Specially Contributed), *The Pottery Gazette and Glass Trade Review*, p. 1661, 1 December 1920.
11. W. McCance, 'The Pottery of Mr. Shōji Hamada', *The Spectator*, 26 May 1923.
12. W. A. Thorpe, 'English Stoneware Pottery by Miss K. Pleydell Bourverie and Miss D. K. N. Braden', *Artwork*, Vol. 6, No. 24, Winter 1930.
13. McCance, *op. cit.*
14. Charles Marriot, 'Two Potters', *The Times*, 10 November 1931.
15. Anon, 'Some Modern Pottery', *Artwork*, Vol. 5, No. 19, Autumn 1929.
16. Marriot, *op. cit.*
17. McCance, *op. cit.*
18. Charles Marriot, 'A Japanese Potter', *The Times*, 24 May 1929.
19. Anon, *op. cit.*
20. Charles Marriot, 'Two Potters', *The Times*, 10 November 1931.
21. 'Mr Shōji Hamada's Exhibition of Stoneware Pottery at Mr W. M. Paterson's Gallery', *Apollo*, Vol. IX, No. 54, June 1929.
22. Charles Marriot, 'A Japanese Potter', *The Times*, 24 May 1929.
23. McCance, *op. cit.*
24. Shōji Hamada, *Bernard Leach*, exhibition catalogue, Paterson's Gallery, May to June 1929.
25. M. Yanagi, 'The Pottery of Shōji Hamada', exhibition catalogue, Paterson's Gallery, Oct. to Nov. 1931.
26. Bernard Leach, 'A Review, 1909-1914', Tokyo, 1914.

HAMADA AND THE MINGEI MOVEMENT

SHOJI HAMADA was one of the pioneer artist-potters in modern Japan and one of the most important core members of the *Mingei* (Japanese Folkcrafts) movement. In co-operation with Kenkichi Tomimoto, Bernard Leach, Kanjiro Kawai and Soetsu Yanagi, Hamada created a 'hybrid' *Mingei* theory which appropriated modern aesthetic ideas such as 'art of the people', 'primitive', 'medieval', 'Oriental art' and 'national art' from Europe, particularly England, into the Japanese context, eventually formulating the 'criterion of beauty' through Japanese folkcrafts.¹ Reflecting Japanese society in search of Japanese-style 'modernisation', the *Mingei* movement successfully demonstrated 'modernity' interwoven with the discourse of national cultural identity.

Hamada's 'modernity' began with his early ambition to be a Western-style painter. He was among many young artists who recognised 'modernity' in the ideas of 'individual originality' and 'freedom of expression' common to the Post-Impressionists and Fauvists. These ideas were eagerly translated and interpreted in the influential *Shirakaba*.² Hamada was also an enthusiastic watercolourist.³ This so-called Japanese 'watercolour' movement was initially triggered by British artists who visited Japan. Watercolour was an accessible and popular amateur medium in which to discover the native Japanese landscape through open-air painting, with a modern discourse about 'national art' similar to *Nihonga* (Japanese-style painting).⁴

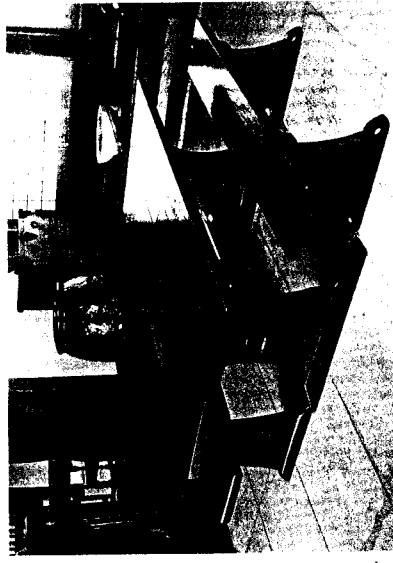
A crucial turning-point which diverted Hamada's interest from painting to pottery was his encounter with works by Bernard Leach and Kenkichi Tomimoto in the Mikasa Gallery, Ginza, in 1912. As they had done in the Bijutsu Shinpō exhibition at Corakuden in Tokyo, in 1911, Leach and Tomimoto at that time were experimenting with pottery as part of their broad interest in work that included interior design – a project inspired by Morris and English Arts & Crafts aesthetics. Such experiments demonstrated modern concepts of 'art of the people' in a Japanese context. Captivated by the 'modernity' of these works, with their 'hybrid' Oriental and Occidental style evident in form and design,⁵ Hamada called them 'grand champions' who 'opened many windows' with new ideas and served as 'perfect measures' by which to evaluate himself as an artist-potter.

The 'modernity' Hamada sought in the notion of a hybrid of Occident and Orient was also vividly described in his detailed observations concerning lifestyle. He was extremely impressed by Tomimoto's whole 'hybrid' lifestyle with 'an air of sophistication' in the remote Japanese countryside.⁶ When Hamada visited Leach in Abiko in 1919, he was even more impressed by Yanagi's 'hybrid' lifestyle,⁸ with Leach's Chinese-style studio, and notably a quilted rug in the studio inspired by *jūdo* wear and by the garden furniture in Japanese cedar, all designed by Leach himself. He found in Leach's lifestyle 'the truest way to live out this particular period, this time of history'.⁹ Moreover, it was the time when the social and domestic reform movement was gaining ground under the slogan *buraku saikatsu* (culture life), signifying a rational, modern, Occidental lifestyle for the urban masses. Through interior and furniture design, co-operative housing projects and garden city planning, designers were adopting a Japanese version of Western 'modernity' to create an original 'hybrid' style.

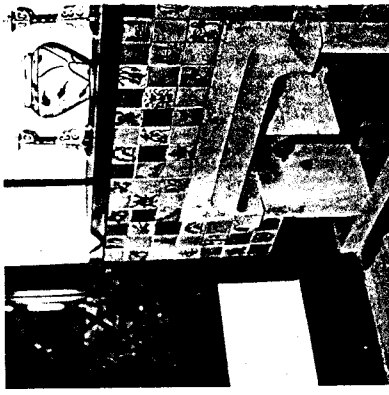
By the late 1920s, at the moment of the full flowering of the social and domestic reform movement, the *Mingei* theory, with its core ideas of 'criterion of beauty', was created by Yanagi and demonstrated to the public an example of total lifestyle through

their modern, ad-hoc, ethical hybrid style. In 1928, a medievalistic craft guild called *Kumigamo Mingei Kyōdan* (Kumigamo Crafts Communion) was established, with Yanagi's encouragement, by four craftsmen. They and other artist-craftsmen associated with the *Mingei* movement designed the interior and exterior of the Folkcrafts Pavilion, later called *Mikunisō*, and exhibited at the Imperial Exposition. Hamada contributed pots, the design of a fireplace and surrounding tiles and lampshades, emphasising his experience in England of the English ethical ideal of modern rural living, absorbed through the lifestyles of Eric Gill and Ethel Mairet.¹⁰

As Leach and Tomimoto had done earlier, Hamada at this time also displayed interest in the design of furniture and interiors, and, indeed, in the entire living environment. A dining table and benches in zelkova wood, designed by him in 1923, exemplify a hybrid of English medieval form with Japanese wood and finish. Chairs were also of particular interest to those involved in the *Mingei* movement. Tomimoto wrote *Isu no Hanashi* ('The Story of Chairs') and himself designed many chairs, while Yanagi was an avid collector of Windsor chairs. Hamada was impressed by Leach's three-legged chair of Japanese cedar in his own peculiar 'hybrid' style,¹¹ and another chair upholstered with material inspired by the Japanese fireman's quilted coat, which he described as 'very close to life, to living, and



A dining table and benches, designed by Hamada, c.1923
Zelkova wood.
Table 222 cm long, benches 177 and 181 cm long.
Mashiko Reference Collection



A fireplace designed by Hamada

very exotic and unusual'.¹² During his stay in England, Hamada collected Windsor and rush-bottomed chairs, and experimented in designing chairs with Leach.¹³ In Japan, chairs were by now important objects for *bunka seikatsu*, symbolising Western culture, 'rational' living and modernity, and many designers created them as an expression of the 'hybrid' style, as an integral part of Japanese modern living.

Hamada found another important form of 'modernity' in the crafts of Okinawa, acknowledging, 'my work began in England, learned much in Okinawa, and matured in Mashiko'.¹⁴ Okinawa, a group of islands lying to the south of Japan, was annexed to Japan in 1879. Modern Okinawan studies were then initiated by European and Japanese anthropologists, and in the twentieth century were absorbed into the broader spectrum of Japanese cultural studies. Among the people who were involved in the *Mingei* movement, Hamada and Kawai were the first to 'discover' Okinawan culture on their visit in 1918. Hamada also spent several winters in Okinawa after his marriage in 1924. For an élite college graduate urban potter like Hamada, the culture of Okinawa was a real revelation. He was impressed by the 'healthy', 'correct' work exemplified by the *namban jar*¹⁵ produced from the 'real true life' in Tsuboya pottery,¹⁶ which he felt trivialised the superiorities of his technical knowledge.

Hamada's 'discovery' of Okinawa must have nourished Yanagi during the process of formulating *Mingei* theory. Twenty years later, Yanagi himself visited Okinawa and wrote numerous articles on its crafts and culture during the late 1930s to 1940s which made a significant contribution to the later development of the *Mingei* movement. Yanagi eloquently articulated the 'supreme beauty' of Okinawan crafts by applying to them his 'criterion of beauty', and further enlarged upon his political discourse of 'innate and original Japaneseness' in the view he adopted of Okinawan crafts as a Japanese cultural archive.¹⁷

Hamada greatly contributed to the *Mingei* movement throughout the period from its formation to its completion. Unlike Tomimoto and Kawai,¹⁸ he remained its most devoted member and was a loyal colleague to Yanagi. After the Second World War, when Yanagi developed his *Mingei* theory into his so-called 'Buddhist aesthetics', Hamada played an important role as a practical maker, demonstrating the creative process controlled naturally by the 'unconscious', 'no-mindedness' and 'other power' (*tariki*) which Yanagi stressed in his writing.¹⁹ Together with Yanagi and Leach, Hamada's work made a strong visual impact on people both at home and abroad. The co-operative activities of the *Mingei* movement found expression as an 'esoteric', 'authentic' and 'traditional' form of Oriental aesthetics. Hamada became the model potter, his objects the epitome of *Mingei*, fulfilling its criteria in being described variously as 'simple', 'healthy', 'round', 'robust', 'secure' and 'peaceful'. Yanagi also praised Hamada's works as 'honest and healthy' functional ware created in a natural country environment; furthermore, he admired his unsigned works as a sign of 'relying on *tariki*'.²⁰

However, at the same time, Hamada was expressing his own opinion which revealed a different attitude. His comment on Kawai's works is ambivalent and different from Yanagi who criticised Kawai's works as 'gaudy' and 'over-decorated',²¹ straying from the true path of *Mingei*.²² He pointed to Kawai's 'mistreatment' and 'weakness' as a result of not fully relying on *tariki*, but nevertheless defended him and Tomimoto, declaring that 'people

such as Kawai and Tomimoto have trodden their true path, they have eaten folkcrafts and then have developed their own path. This is legitimate, the natural thing, for them'.²³

Hamada revealed the inner struggle between his role as a model potter in the *Mingei* movement and his other self as a progressive artist. He may well have wished to carry out more radical experiments but it became increasingly difficult when his style became established as synonymous with the *Mingei* style. In exchange for fame and security, he may have given up his chance to explore his 'originality' with broader experiments as Kawai or Tomimoto did. He compensated with a rigorous attitude to his pupil Shimaoka, who recalled Hamada's repeated criticisms of his work, pointing out the lack of 'originality' and 'adventure'.²⁴ Hamada's search for 'modernity' was confused and diverted by the establishment of the *Mingei* movement.

1. Y. Kikuchi, 'Hybridity and the Orientalism of *Mingei* Theory', *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1997, pp. 343-54.
2. *Shizakaba* was published from 1910 to 1933 by the school of writers who included Saneatsu Mushanokoji, Naoya Shiga, three Arishima brothers: Takco Arishima, Ikuma Arishima and Ton Satomi, Soetsu Yanagi, Rigen Kinoshita, Kinyuki Sonoike, Kikuo Kojima, Yoshirō Nagayo and Torahiko Kōni, who were all from Gakushūin Kōtōka. They played a pioneering role in introducing 'modern' art and literature from the West.
3. S. Hamada, *Kama ni Makasete*, p. 34.
4. See Y. Kikuchi and T. Watanabe, *Ruskin in Japan 1890-1940: Nature for Art, Art for Life*, Tokyo, 1997, pp. 287-97.
5. S. Hamada, op. cit., p. 42.
6. B. Leach, *Hamada*, Tokyo, New York, San Francisco, 1981 (1975), p. 35.
7. Hamada, op. cit., p. 71; Leach, op. cit., p. 22.
8. Leach, op. cit., p. 22.
9. Hamada, op. cit., pp. 72-3; Leach, *ibid.*, p. 26.
10. Hamada, 'Gill Homon' [A Visit to Gill], *Kōgei*, No. 31, 1933, pp. 37-43.
11. Leach, op. cit., p. 26.
12. Leach, *ibid.*, p. 24.
13. Leach, *ibid.*, pp. 119-22.
14. K. Yoshida, 'The Ceramic Art of Shōji Hamada' in *The Retrospective Exhibition of Shōji Hamada*, Tokyo, 1977, p. 15.
15. There are two types of pot produced in Tsuboya pottery, one is called *arayachi* (unglazed rough ware) and the other is *joyachi* (enamel glazed ware). *Namban jars* are in the former group.
16. S. Hamada, 'Tsuboya no Shigoto', *Kōgei*, No. 99, 1939, pp. 50-6.
17. Kikuchi, op. cit.
18. Tomimoto's relationship with Yanagi soured in the late 1920s and he left the movement. Kawai gradually distanced himself from the movement and his works were often criticised by Yanagi and Leach.
19. Leach, op. cit., pp. 136-7.
20. Soetsu Yanagi, *Collected Works of Soetsu Yanagi*, Vol. 14, Tokyo, 1981, pp. 227-8.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
22. Yanagi, op. cit., Vol. 14, p. 185.
23. Leach, op. cit., p. 124.
24. T. Shimaoka, 'Waga Shi Hamada Sensei' (My Teacher Hamada) in *Mashiko no Chichi Ninggen Kokuhō Hamada Shōji* [Father of Mashiko, Living National Treasure Shōji Hamada], Tokyo, 1976, pp. 164-7.