

The Japanese *Mingei* Movement and Catalan Artists⁽¹⁾

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The *mingei* movement began to take form in 1926, when Yanagi Sōetsu, together with Hamada Shōji and Kawai Kanjirō, established the foundations of the *Nihon Mingei Kyōkai*, the Japanese Folk Crafts Association, aimed at collecting, studying and disseminating appreciation and knowledge of *mingeihin*, Japanese folk arts and crafts. Five years later, the association created the *Kōgei* monthly magazine, while in 1936 Yanagi founded a specific museum in Tokyo, the *Nihon Mingeikan*. Thus, in ten years, the *mingei* movement took shape around a series of people who believed in the aesthetic and spiritual beauty of many functional and everyday pieces that, until that moment, had been excluded from the great museums, from history and from public recognition. Many studies have been published on the *mingei* movement, most of them stressing the reasons for and the context of its appearance and the impact that it has had on Japanese aesthetics and consciousness. However, the impact that this movement had on foreigners has probably not been completely studied; there were numerous Europeans and Americans who, living in or passing through Japan, were deeply attracted by Yanagi's aesthetics, philosophy and ideas. Indeed, it was precisely at that time, during the thirties and forties, that two Catalans, Eudald Serra and Cels Gomis, travelled separately to Japan, and just a few years later they were leading the spread of the Japanese *mingei* movement's theories and aesthetics in Catalonia.

Eudald Serra, born in Barcelona in 1911, studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts, and, while still very young, became one of the first introducers of surrealism into Catalan sculpture. Serra presented his surrealist works, mainly sculptures and drawings, in 1935, the year when he decided to join a university student trip to Japan to explore a different culture. Unlike the rest of the Spanish travellers, Serra arrived in Kōbe in summer 1935 with the aim of staying there for several months, although at that time he could never have guessed that months would turn into years due to the start of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and, later, the outbreak of World War II. The war forced him to remain in Japan for 13 years, until 1948, but at the end of his life he still described his time in Japan as the best experience in his life: there, he worked as an artist, he travelled, he made new friends, he married and he saw the birth of his daughter.

In Japan, Serra worked as a sculptor and exhibited in individual and collective shows, such as the *Nika-ten* and the Art sections of the *Hankyū* and *Daimaru* Department Stores. Fortunately, memories, notes, descriptions, photographs, sculptures and drawings have been preserved as a testimony of his life. During the first years, he had to live without money with Korean immigrants in a small cottage on a beach at Kōbe but, as he found his first clients and patrons, his life began to change, especially after he married Edmonde Iba, daughter of a French woman and a Japanese diplomat who was the son of the president of Sumitomo, Iba Teigō. Serra was gradually introduced to the world of Japanese art and culture and discovered artistic traditions such as ceramics, which became one of his passions. At the beginning of the forties, Serra decided to start exploring other artistic techniques, not only ceramics but also Japanese woodblock printing, engraving and even lacquerwork. Both this technical diversification and the aesthetic forms that dominate the works of those years confirm that he quickly discovered and embraced the *mingei* movement, its aesthetics and its philosophy, visiting artists, artisans, ceramists, collections and museums such as the *Tōyō minzoku habutsukan* in Nara and, very probably, the *Nihon Mingeikan* in Tokyo.

Serra also became interested in some of the themes explored by members of *mingei* movement, particularly Yanagi Sōetsu, such as *Ōtsu-e* paintings and ainu culture. *Ōtsu-e* was one of the subjects that most attracted Yanagi, to the point that they were included in most *mingei* discourses. Naive and anonymous paintings, the *Ōtsu-e* of the Edo period were seen as a clear example of the aesthetic purity of the Japanese common people and, as such, began to be collected during the Taishō and Shōwa periods. During the forties, Serra, together with Jean-Pierre Hauchecorne (the son of the French consul), were the only Europeans studying *Ōtsu-e* in Japan. As a result, Serra built up an extensive collection that allowed him, even, to organize an *Ōtsu-e* exhibition in Ōsaka in 1946. The coincidence of interests with Yanagi is further illustrated by the fact that, in the summer of 1947, Serra visited the Shiraoui and Asahikawa ainu villages, those same ainu villages visited some weeks later by Yanagi. Serra went to Hokkaidō to meet, he said, a forgotten people that were about to disappear, and a culture that the *mingei* movement tried to re-evaluate. He travelled there also to reproduce several portraits of some of the last ainu tribal chiefs, such as Miyamoto *ekashimatok*.

The artist's interest in *mingei* is further emphasized in an interview of Serra published in the *Nihon bijutsu kōgei* magazine just after the end of the World War II, in 1945. In it, the artist spoke of his special interest not only in *furoshiki*, such as those made by Serizawa Keisuke, but also in handmade crafts such as *kokeshi* dolls, traditional *tansu* furniture, *koinobori* carp-shaped streamers and *yatate* writing sets. Serra also

mentioned ceramics as his great hobby, with particular reference to Kawai Kanjirō's works. As we can see, then, during his long stay in Japan, Serra travelled all over the country, becoming interested in folk arts and starting new relationship with collectors, sellers, artists and scholars, something that enabled him to build up a private *mingei* collection of more than a thousand pieces. We are talking about an interesting collection that demonstrates how Serra followed the selection criteria and aesthetic models defended by Yanagi and the *Nihon Mingeikan*. Serra collected, for instance, all kinds of ceramics, from *haniwa* to representative pieces of the Six Ancient Kilns, along with anonymous ceramics from the Edo period and modern pieces made by future Living National Treasures, as well as by leading *mingei* ceramists such as Hamada and Kawai. Serra also bought a significant number of *ema*, *Ōtsu-e*, *takuhon*, signboards, furniture, weaving and dyeing textiles, sculptures, reliefs in stone and wood, popular folk toys, lacquerware, straw goods, masks, ainu pieces, old and new Japanese and Korean crafts, and all kinds of pieces linked to the tea ceremony, which was another of Serra's hobbies. We can affirm that, apart from ceramics, Serra collected most of those types of pieces highlighted by the *mingei* movement.

For a complete understanding of Serra's wide interest in Japanese folk arts, it is important to take into consideration not only his professional contacts but also his private life. In this regard, friends such as Yamanouchi Shinpu and Cels Gomis followed similar paths. Gomis, born in Barcelona in 1912, arrived in Japan in September 1939 and a few days after his arrival met Serra in Tokyo. Even so, Gomis' interest in popular folk crafts apparently began separately and in parallel: Serra began his approach to *mingei* aesthetics mainly through ceramics and Gomis did so through traditional folk toys. From the very first moment, Gomis became deeply attracted by the Japanese folk toys (*kokeshi*, *ejiko*, *Yawata-uma*, *aka-beko*...), to the point that, in only three months after arriving Japan, he was already visiting specialized shops and meeting collectors. Due to his enthusiasm, he quickly entered into the circle of *kyōdo gangu* collectors from Kantō and Kansai, such as Komenami Shōichi, Watanabe Kō, Fukazawa Kaname, Yamanouchi Shinpu and Kumoi Seizan (Fig. 1).

In Japan, Cels Gomis also became a great admirer of Serra's work and bought several of his sculptures, drawings and ceramics. Serra and Gomis soon struck up a



Fig. 1. Cels Gomis visiting the *kokeshi* collection owned by Kumoi Seizan, 1940. Gomis private archive.

close friendship, and began to share tastes and hobbies. Thus, although from the very beginning Gomis and Serra met different circles of collectors, artisans, amateurs and scholars, it is important to highlight that, over the years, some of those people ended up sharing friendships. Not surprisingly, Gomis built up his own *mingei* collection, including Edo period and modern ceramics, crafts produced for everyday use and an extraordinary selection of folk toys including more than 400 *dentō kokeshi* produced by most of the manufacturers that lived in Northern Japan during the first half of the 20th century. Apart from those collections, Serra and Gomis also formed an extensive library on Japanese folk arts, including Japanese magazines and books published by *Nihon Mingei Kyōkai*. In short, over the years that Serra and Gomis lived in Japan, from 1935 to 1948, they became intimately attached to the *mingei* movement, to the point that they studied, learned and took delight in those attractive new aesthetic theories based on unself-consciousness, spontaneity, vitality, ruggedness and harmony of anonymous crafts for everyday use produced by ordinary people. Only from this point of view can we understand that their passion for folk arts did not end in Japan. On the contrary, back to Barcelona, they tried to spread the *mingei* movement in Catalonia.

In 1948, Serra returned from Kōbe to Barcelona. Gomis arrived in the summer of 1946 but a few months later left for England and later to Argentina. The two friends didn't meet again in Barcelona until 1952. However, once back in the city, they decided to undertake common artistic projects to disseminate the *mingei* movement through a network of common friends that, previous to 1936, had begun to collaborate to promote modern and avant-garde art in Catalonia. Among them, there were the photographer Joaquim Gomis, brother of Cels Gomis, the reputed ceramists Josep Llorens Artigas and his son Joan Gardy Artigas, and Joan Miró, who was a close friend of the Gomis, Artigas and Serra families. As an example of this friendship, over the years Joaquim Gomis became the first president of the Miró Foundation, while Josep Llorens Artigas and Joan Gardy Artigas became the authors of the vast majority of the ceramics painted by Joan Miró from forties onwards. In this context, in 1950, just after the end of World War II, having recently returned from Japan, both Eudald Serra and Cels Gomis (from the distance in Argentina) organized the first Japanese folk arts exhibition (*Exposición de arte popular japonés*, April 1950) in downtown Barcelona.

Many of the documentary materials from the first *mingei* exhibition have been preserved, including numerous photographs taken by Joaquim Gomis and the catalogue published for the occasion, which enables us to reconstruct the show with the original pieces from the Serra and Gomis collections. The catalogue listed 190 pieces, including ten *Ōtsu-e*, eighteen textiles (*furoshiki*, *yukata*, *koi-nobori*, *happy...*), and ancient and modern ceramics from anonymous kilns and by modern ceramists such as Kawai

Kanjirō, together with folk toys, illustrated books, lacquerware and other small objects (fans, combs, votive paintings, children's drawings...). The exhibition was reported by the press which noted that one of the aspects that most surprised visitors was the popular character of those everyday pieces: humble goods with inherent beauty, the beautiful truthfulness of domestic handmade crafts championed by Yanagi. In fact, this intuitive beauty naturally born of common people was one of the elements that most attracted Joan Miró, to the point where several newspapers observed that the aesthetics of some of the exhibited pieces were similar to Miró's creations (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Eudald Serra and Joan Miró at the entrance to the first *mingei* exhibition in Barcelona. Both artists appear in front of the poster reproducing a modern *Ōtsu-e* by Nichinen, owned by Serra and Gomis. 1950. Gomis private archive, Barcelona.

Miró visited the exhibition on the day of the opening, together with Eudald Serra and Joaquim Gomis. There, he was struck by the ceramics and *kokeshi*, and we can assume that, as a painter, he was particularly interested in *Ōtsu-e*, those anonymous paintings made with just a few brushstrokes and primary colours, like Miró's own paintings. Although it is obvious that the aesthetics of Miró and *Ōtsu-e* are completely different, we can nevertheless note several common features from the universal language of popular culture. Significantly, the only close-up shots of Miró at the exhibition show him next to old *Ōtsu-e* paintings and, coinciding with the opening of the exhibition, Serra published an essay devoted to those popular paintings, one of the very few texts he ever published.⁽²⁾

The history of the impact of the *mingei* movement in Catalonia also represents a rich chapter in the art of modern ceramics, one that centres on the Artigas family, Josep Llorens Artigas and his son Joan Gardy Artigas, and their collaborative artistic projects with Serra and Miró. Josep Llorens Artigas trained with Miró at the same Art Academy, and began to stand out as a ceramist during the 1920s. His ceramics were strongly influenced by the Eastern tradition since he was keenly interested in Chinese and Japanese ceramics throughout his life. Towards the end of the forties, Llorens Artigas discovered the existence of the *mingei* movement through Eudald Serra. In 1952, he met Yanagi Sōetsu at Darlington Hall (Fig. 3), and ten years later he met Hamada Shōji in Japan. Over the years, moreover, Artigas father and son became great admirers of the pioneers and founders of the *mingei* movement. At this point, if we focus on the impact

that the *mingei* movement had on the work of Catalan artists, the first evidence of the influence of those Japanese models was initially born in a project developed together by Artigas and Serra. This was in 1953, when Eudald Serra and Josep Llorens Artigas had decided to work closely together to produce several hundred ceramics with the aim of putting into practice, as they said, the Yanagi's ideas on beauty and functional daily-life ceramics: "in this initiative, they rediscovered a lost tradition and confer new aesthetic dignity on objects of everyday use, redeeming them from the burden of mass production", wrote the art critic Jordi Benet Aurell⁽³⁾. As a result, between 1953 and 1955, Serra and Artigas organized three successful exhibitions to present their collaborative pieces, all them signed AR-SE, for Artigas and Serra. These were enamelled potteries for everyday use, made in the spirit and formal characteristics very similar to Japanese ceramic traditions (Fig. 4), presented along with *ikebana*, Japanese fabrics and Japanese *tansu* furniture from Serra's collection.

Artigas worked also with Miró. The two met in Barcelona in 1912 and later followed parallel paths, the former as a painter and the latter as a painter until 1944-1945, when both friends decided to begin their close collaboration. Their first ceramics date from the forties, but most of them were made from 1953 on, after Artigas established a pottery workshops in the outskirts of Gallifa, in an 18th-century house in the mountains not far from Barcelona. There, Miró and Artigas produced works ranging from smaller vases to large murals, such as those at Unesco headquarters in Paris and the 50 metre-long mural at Barcelona Airport.

When Miró and Artigas started collaborating, Artigas' son, Joan Gardy Artigas, began his training as a ceramist, both with his father and with Miró, and later in Paris.



Fig. 3. Josep Llorens Artigas and Yanagi Sōetsu at the International Conference of Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles held in 1952 in Darlington Hall, England. Fundació Artigas, Gallifa.



Fig. 4. AR-SE bowl (shape by Eudald Serra and enamels by Josep Llorens Artigas) produced in Gallifa in 1953. Private collection, Barcelona.

While still young, he also began to develop his own fascination for Eastern ceramics and the *mingei* aesthetic in particular, to the point that in 1961 he applied for a scholarship to study with Hamada in Japan. As a result, in 1962, Gardy Artigas travelled to Japan, to continue his training and practice at Hamada's pottery workshop, established in Mashiko in 1924. Needless to say, the Japanese experience was pivotal for Joan Gardy Artigas, not only professionally, as a ceramist, but also personally, since during his stay in Japan he married Ishikawa Masako (Mako-san). The photographs of the wedding, held in Tokyo in 1962, show clearly how the *mingei* movement had taken root in the Artigas family: Hamada Shōji and Bernard Leach acted as witnesses at the ceremony and all the ceramics at the banquet were made by Hamada himself. Reference to these more private aspects of Artiga's life is important since helps us to understand to what extent the adoption of certain practices from the *mingei* movement were quickly accepted and shared by Catalan ceramists such as Artigas and Serra. Indeed, as in the case of Serra, Artigas and Hamada also got on well in Japan, forming a close friendship to the point that both ceramists wrote essays of mutual admiration in the press. Those years were ones when Artigas was working on Miró's first large murals, such as the *Murals of the Sun and the Moon* (1957), the *Mural of the Harvard Graduate Center* (1960) and the *Mural of the Handels Hochschule of Saint Gall* (1964). In other words, we should take into consideration that, at that time, requests and commissions for new works by Miró and Artigas were increasing and, in view of this, Artigas needed a larger kiln. In some way, we can say that everything happened at the right moment, because Artigas wanted a Japanese kiln. As a result, only one year after the meeting in Tokyo, Hamada travelled to Gallifa, where a Japanese-style wood-fired climbing kiln (*noborigama*) was built using Hamada's kiln in Mashiko as the model. From then on, most of the ceramics by Miró and Artigas were produced in the so-called *Mashiko* kiln designed by Hamada and built in Gallifa.

After the addition of Mako-san to the family in 1962, the Artigas' admiration for Japanese culture became evident in the house. During the following years, they built several *noborigama* and *anagama* kilns in Gallifa near the old house visited not only by Miró and Serra, but also by Hamada and Bernard Leach. The house, with art in every corner, embraced the fusion of Catalan and the Japanese cultures quite naturally. Old doors were substituted by other old *shōji* sliding doors; in the fireplace a *katazome mingei* pottery map of Japan by Serizawa Keisuke was permanently hung, while every May the mountainous landscape was accompanied with *koinobori*. Furthermore, the family created another private, emotive *mingei* collection formed by hundreds of ceramics, furniture, folk toys, lacquerware, straw hats, scrolls, *katagami* and so on.

Many of the references already mentioned so far date back to the same period.

From this point of view, it is not easy to synthesize the process of introduction and dissemination of the *mingei* movement without taking into account the parallel activity of many of its protagonists. The clearest example of this is the fact that, parallel to the trips of Artigas to Japan and Hamada to Catalonia, Eudald Serra, who was a close friend of Artigas and Hamada, undertook other ambitious projects to promote cultural and artistic interchanges with Japan. Among them, the most outstanding was his long collaboration with the Ethnological Museum of Barcelona to create a major public collection of Japanese *mingei*.

It was in 1948 when, having recently returned from Japan, and before the opening of the Ethnological Museum in Barcelona (1949), Eudald Serra contacted its director, August Panyella. Although the initial proposal to stage a *mingei* exhibition at the Museum in 1950 did not prosper, a few years later Serra and Panyella managed to persuade the City Council to finance several expeditions to Japan with the aim of creating a Japanese folk crafts collection with equivalent categories and types of pieces to the ones in the superb *Nihon Mingeikan* collection. Eudald Serra returned to Japan many times over the years and, from 1957 to 1968, was responsible of four expeditions to Japan (1957, 1961, 1964 and 1968) thanks to which 2,462 pieces were collected. As a result, in the sixties, the Ethnological Museum was enriched by an extensive *mingei* collection including Okinawan *bingata*, *Ôtsu-e*, votive paintings, sculptures, reliefs, furniture, papers, prints, *takuhon* handscrolls, traditional folk toys and all kinds of old and modern everyday handcrafts. Equally, Serra bought modern pieces recently produced not only by anonymous people but also by National Living Treasures, including Abe Eishiro, some of them key figures in the *mingei* movement, such as his colleague Serizawa Keisuke (Fig. 5), who visited Serra in Barcelona in April 1966. Finally, Serra's passion for ceramics encouraged him to travel all over the country to build up a spectacular collection containing a vast range of pieces from all regions, styles and forms, from anonymous prehistoric and Edo period works to contemporary pieces by Hamada, Arakawa Toyozō, Fujiwara Kei, Kaneshige Tōyō, Miwa Juseitsu and many others. All these acquisitions greatly enriched the formerly rather poor Japanese public collections in Catalonia and enabled Barcelona City Council to organize three new *mingei* exhibitions from 1959 to 1969.



Fig. 5. *Katazome* stencil designs by Serizawa Keisuke at the Ethnological Museum of Barcelona. Designs on paper bought by the Museum to Eudald Serra in 1958. Ethnological Museum of Barcelona.

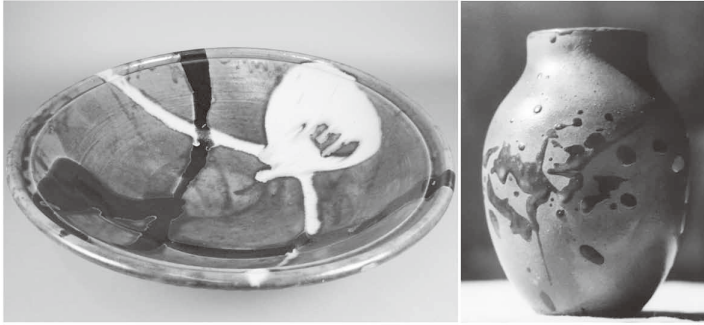


Fig. 6. On the left, Hamada Shōji's enamelled plate bought by Eudald Serra in Mashiko during the third expedition of the Ethnological Museum in Japan, in 1964. On the right, Artigas-Miró stoneware vase dated 1962. Ethnological Museum of Barcelona / Private collection, Barcelona.

Having presented all these initiatives and relationships, all these names and projects that we have seen separately can be taken together to enable us to fully understand the impact of the *mingei* movement in Catalonia. This can be illustrated by several representative examples, as is the case of numerous Miró-Artigas pieces compared to works by Hamada (Fig. 6): the vases wood-fired by Artigas and Miró in Gallifa in 1962, the year when Artigas and Hamada met in Japan, can be compared with some of the Hamada ceramics bought by Serra in Mashiko in 1964 thanks to the third *mingei* expedition promoted by the Ethnological Museum, one year after Hamada's first visit to Gallifa. In a very clear way, both the colours of the enamels by Artigas and their application to the surfaces of the vases, randomly decorated with several textures by Miró, follow the same aesthetic of Hamada's works, Mashiko pottery's and *mingei* aesthetics, just as the AR-SE ceramics did. A few years later, on the occasion of Joan Miró's first visit to Japan in 1966, the artist visited the *Nihon Mingeikan*. There, accompanied by Artigas, he admired not only ceramics but also *Ōtsu-e* folk paintings. Without going further now into the field of the great impact that Japan had on Miró, it is not surprising that, as a result of his two visits to Japan, in 1966 and 1969, and due to his friendship with Serra, Gomis, Artigas and several Japanese artists and poets, Miró also built up a small collection of Japanese folk art, including the Spanish edition of the famous book *Folk-crafts in Japan*, published by Yanagi Sōetsu in 1939, and other studies on *haniwa*, together with prints, *takuhon*, *shodō* hanging scrolls, ceramics and folk toys, some of them given to him by Serra and Gomis.

In most cases, we have been talking about works and initiatives dating back to between 1950 and 1970, half a century ago. However, we should conclude by stressing

that this story is still alive. Joan Gardy Artigas, with whom Miró worked between 1970 and 1980, continues even today to use the *noborigama* and *anagama* kilns in Gallifa to create contemporary pieces that reveal a permanent fascination for Japanese art and ceramic traditions. Gardy Artigas keeps alive a fascinating story of friendship and artistic contacts that allowed both the traditional and popular art of the Edo period as well as the work of the revitalizers of traditional and anonymous crafts during twentieth century to be admired, understood and shared in Catalonia, too. Indeed, over the decades, many of the key figures in the *mingei* movement, such as Yanagi Sōetsu, Hamada Shōji, Kawai Kanjirō, Bernard Leach, Munakata Shikō, Serizawa Keisuke and Komenami Shōichi, came in contact with their Catalan counterparts, Eudald Serra, Cels Gomis, Josep Llorens Artigas, Joan Gardy Artigas and Joan Miró. As a result of these contacts, the artistic relations between the two cultures became ever stronger during the second half of the 20th century.

Notes

- (1) I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to the Artigas, Gomis and Serra's families, who not only shared personal and private memories but also gave me access to their private archives and collections.
- (2) Serra was fascinated by *minga* and *Ōtsu-e* in particular, as can be seen in other projects that he promoted, such as an exhibition of contemporary Japanese prints organized in Barcelona in 1959 and featuring works by Munakata Shikō, the leading *mingei* woodblock printer in Japan. Serra and Munakata met in Japan in the forties and, in Barcelona, Serra enabled Catalan audiences to discover the way in which Munakata had become a modernizer of *Ōtsu-e* imagery.
- (3) J. Benet Aurell, "J. Llorens Artigas – E. Serra Güell", *Revista. Semanario de informació, artes y letras*, n. 88, 17-13 December 1953, p. 9.
- (4) In February 2019, Gardy Artigas will visit Shigaraki kilns again to further strengthen the family's ties with the Japanese ceramic tradition.

(日本語要旨)

日本の民藝運動と カタルーニャの藝術家たち

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民藝運動とは、民藝品の観賞や理解を集積し、学び、発信することを目的にして、柳宗悦・濱田庄司・河井寛次郎が日本民藝協会を創設した1926年より始まった運動である。協会は設立の5年後には月刊誌「工藝」を刊行し、1936年には日本民藝館と呼ばれる民藝品専門の美術館を設立した。それまでは博物館に展示されることはなく、歴史的価値があるとも思われず、民衆にも特段認知されないできた、機能的でごくありふれた日用品だったものに対して、その味わいと崇高さを醸し出す美しさのとりこになった人々が、この十数年間の運動によって数多く現れるようになったのだ。これまで民藝運動についての研究は多くなされてきたが、その殆どは、運動がはじまった要因や当時の状況、運動が与えた影響に焦点を当て、日本人の美的感性や意識について研究されたものであった。しかし、この運動が外国人に与えた影響については、おそらく十分には研究されてこなかったであろう。日本に居住していた、あるいは、訪問していたうちの、大多数の欧米人や米国人が、柳宗悦の美的感覚・哲学・思考に大いに魅了されていたのである。2人のカタルーニャ人、エウダル・セラとセルス・ゴミスが1930年から1940年にかけてそれぞれ日本を旅していたのは、実にこの時代だったのである。そしてそのたった数年後には、彼らが日本の民藝運動の理論や美的感覚をカタルーニャ地方へ広めたのであった。

この研究論文では、セラとゴミスが日本に滞在していた1935年から1948年にかけて、どのように民藝運動の一面に触れることとなったのかについて焦点を当て、論証していくことにしたい。また、彼らが20世紀中期のカタルーニャ地方で民藝運動を広めるために、どのような構想を練っていたかということについても、この研究によって明らかにする。彼らの取り組みの中でも特筆されるのは民藝品の展示会であり、1950年の第1回の開催では自分達が日本で収集した品々を展示した。2回目以降の展示会では、セラが中心となって1957年から1968年にかけて日本を調査訪問した際に収集された、バルセロナ民族博物館所蔵の品々が出展された。しかし、セラとゴミスがカタルーニャへ帰国してから、ジュゼップ・リョレンス・アルティーガスやジョアン・ミロといった、いち早く民藝品の魅力に強くひきつけられていた藝術家達と親交を深めていたことなど、本論考ではこうした複雑な人物相関についても言及していく。その大

部分については、今から半世紀前の1950年から1970年における業績や取り組みから明らかにすることができるだろう。とはいえそれらは、1970年から1980年までの間、ただ一人ミロと作業を共にしたという陶藝家ジュアン・ガルディ・アルティーガスのおかげで、現在でも言い伝えられている。事実として、柳宗悦、濱田庄司、河井寛次郎、バーナード・リーチ、棟方志功、芹沢銈介、米浪庄式ら民藝運動に携わった主要な人物達は、カタルーニャのセラ、ゴミス、リョレンス・アルティーガス、ガルディ・アルティーガス、ミロ達と数十年間にわたる交流を深めていた。こうした交際を経て、両文化間における藝術の関係性が深まっていったのである。

本記事は、昨年10月2日にパリで開催された第3回明治神宮秋のセミナー（於、フランス国立東洋言語文化研究所）の講演内容を基に要約・収録したものである。同セミナーは、明治神宮の日本研究支援の一環として毎年実施するもの。