

## Beauty as Social Morality: Self, Others and Community According to Muneyoshi Yanagi

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This paper focuses on the concept of “beauty” proposed by Muneyoshi Yanagi (1889-1961). He is also known as Soetsu Yanagi, the leader of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese Folk Craft Movement commonly referred to as the *Mingei-Movement*<sup>1</sup>. Yanagi not only founded the crafts movement as his practical activity, but also produced a number of philosophical works in which he arranged the conceptual theory for the *Mingei*, also same as necessary, for religion and beauty all his life. In these works, he presented beauty as a form of morality (or, perhaps, as a form of providence) for each individual and for the larger community. Thus, for Yanagi, the beauty was solidly connected with the moral values. He described the nature of beauty as a kind of "oneness" (having a non-dualistic character), being based on medieval mysticism, Buddhism (especially the *Mahayana*) and so on. Related in this way, he aimed to establish the ultimate value for life through beauty, emphasizing the role of “experiencing”. Yanagi believed that discipline (修養/"*Shuyo*") was necessary in order to experience beauty as providence, thus he proposed that there were two paths for the individual to reach this conception of beauty, which Yanagi regarded as the summit of the mountain: one was the path of "seeing"; the other, the path of "creating". Both paths were mediated by individual objects (もの/"*Mono*"), particularly (and not surprisingly) the *Mingei*. The two paths corresponded to *Jirikido* (自力道/"the self-help way") and *Tarikido* (他力道/"the others-help way"). In this context, people could take either path to achieve beauty, and needed to form themselves by some exercises so as to achieve beauty, or more accurately, beauty as the moral value that should be the common sense of the community. This paper discusses the "beauty" of Yanagi, along with the concept of self, others and community. For Yanagi as theorist, the *Jirikido* is seen as his way (self). On the other hand, the *Tarikido* is the way of the craftsmen (others), especially those who produce unsigned, ordinary-use objects. Further, Yanagi planned a society consisted of those two kinds of people (community). The paper is divided into three chapters: the first chapter explains "Self on Yanagi"; the second describes the beauty of Yanagi; the final chapter focuses on the two paths to beauty and community.

## 1. The Self on Yanagi

In this chapter, we examine Yanagi's fundamental mode of thinking, offering a model that came to be applied to his idea of "self," which was ultimately succeeded by his concept of beauty.

### A letter for Leach

In a letter that Yanagi wrote to Bernard Howell Leach<sup>2</sup> (an English potter, 1887-1979), the theoretical framework that formed the basis for Yanagi's subsequent idea of beauty is revealed.

Obviously, here are the two points that we have to think about. One is, the summit that we are aiming for is the universal "one." The other is, there are "many" ways to get to the top<sup>3</sup>. [XXI, i-204]<sup>4</sup> (1915)

Here, Yanagi speaks of the universal aim of both the West and the East, and, for Yanagi, this means that self (the East), others (the West) and community (the international society). There were also two paths (Western and Eastern) to the one summit (the ultimate common value). This way of thinking, wherein Yanagi uses a mountain as an apt metaphor, appeared relatively early in his philosophical development. In fact, allowing many to gather at the top or allowing them to reach the one was a tendency of Yanagi from the earliest stages. Why did Yanagi use this style of thinking? In his first book "*Kagaku to Jinsei*" (『科学と人生』 / "*Science and Life*", 1911), he showed great interest in "value." Indeed, his interest was in the most significant value in life. Moreover, it was strongly needed for Yanagi that all anyone could be given the opportunity to touch such value<sup>5</sup>. Yanagi viewed reaching the summit as a mystic experience akin to the experience of union. This notion of value was partly merged with "intuition". Such early thought, wherein Yanagi thought his experience merged with intuition, can be seen in his concept of "self."

### Yanagi's self in early thought

In 1910, Yanagi took part in publishing the magazine "*Shirakaba*" (『白樺』), or "White Birch" which introduced many elements of Western cultures, including literature, fine arts, philosophy, Christianity and also mysticism. Yanagi enthusiastically assimilated such Western ideas and on that basis, formed his concept of self as it related to the Western concept. In his article "*Kakumei no Gaka*" (『革命の画家』 / "*Painters of the Revolution*", 1912), he referred to Western painters from Impressionism to Fauvism and showed his admiration for the concept of self that emanated from the modern Western images of the artist/genius. He especially embraced R. W. Emerson's essay,

"*Self-Reliance*" (1841)<sup>6</sup>, which he quoted in the introduction to this article. However, as mentioned above, he found the most important value in the mystical experience as it related to "self." This self cannot be said to be derived entirely from the modern Western influences. The following texts correctly show Yanagi's view of self at that time.

When all phenomenon and events live actively, you find yourself in all those, and your personality flows with all the existence along with rhythm, what is left is the life of yourself being affirmed eternally<sup>7</sup>. [I-545] (1912)

So, what kind of a case should be indicated when letting all the existence of one's personality feel total fulfillment? The existential experience is that phenomenon and events live on me, then one feels me behind those, that is the state of consciousness that is the unification among "intellect," "emotion," and "concept" without the distinction between both subject and object<sup>8</sup>. [I-546] (1912)

From the above, self for Yanagi was living in all things also phenomena and vice versa, so that he could find the common everywhere. In addition, Otabe [2007] indicates that the final sentence cited above brings to mind the book "*Zen no Kenkyu*" (『善の研究』/"*An Inquiry into the Good*", 1911) by Nishida Kitaro (1870-1945)<sup>9</sup>. Indeed, Yanagi read this book and recommended to his wife Kaneko (1892-1984)<sup>10</sup>. Here, as it turned out, Yanagi's self certainly reflected "*Pure-Experience*" (純粹經驗 / "*Junsui Keiken*") from Nishida. Following the first sentence cited above, he regarded it as the most valuable experience. However, this strong focus on self would be fade. Because Yanagi came to realize the assimilation or self-nothingness through mystic experience, the experience of union overlapped the intuition. This came from his study of William Blake (1757-1827) and medieval mysticism, especially that of Meister Eckhart (c.1260-c.1328), Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita (5-6c) and so on<sup>11</sup>. Primarily from the works of William Blake, Yanagi came to emphasize intuition<sup>12</sup> and the unity experience merged with intuition.

'*Self-Annihilation*'<sup>13</sup> (自己寂滅/"*Jiko Jyakumetsu*") does not mean the denial of self, but the total fulfillment of the self, the infinite expression of individuality and the unification between self and the cosmos<sup>14</sup>. [IV-306] (1914)

The intuition means the experience of value, in which the distinction of subject-object is

exterminated [...] the oneness between the self and the outside, the expansion of annihilation-individuality, that is, the state of the religious exaltation and the ecstasy indicate the climax of this pure experience<sup>15</sup>. [IV-322] (1914)

Here, the experience of oneness much merged with intuition is clearly recognized. Moreover, the feature of "selflessness" representing "self-fulfillment" came to compose the mystic experience. Yanagi also found this kind of experience with respect beauty, identifying its two elements as intuition and "things" (もの/"*Mono*"). Furthermore, he considered that beauty embodied this experience most effectively. In addition, beauty for Yanagi came to mean not just the experience, but also the character, of principle.

## 2. The Beauty of Yanagi

In this chapter, the notion of the beauty as presented by Yanagi is discussed. Critically, it is shown that Yanagi gave the character of oneness to beauty.

### Beauty as a kind of oneness

Here the text that Yanagi discovered the monistic experience, which was continued to explain above, on beauty by means of seeing an object, in here, especially a ceramic of the Song (宋) period.

I think that is because beauty always shows the world as "One" (about the beauty of a song ceramic) . "One", as Plotinus who was a warm philosopher, appreciated, is the aspect of beauty. I do not have a case to see the split dualistic confrontation on a Song kiln<sup>16</sup>. [XII-17] (1921)

Yanagi attributed the non-dualistic experience to beauty through the object, and thus, through being based on beauty, he deepened the philosophy of monistic experience for the value of life. Why was he attracted intensely to beauty? There may be two answers to this question. One is offered below:

Although "intuition" (直観/"*Chokkan*"), as each Chinese character suggests, means "to see at once" (直ちに観る/"*Tadachi ni Miru*"), it must be necessary for this intuition to understand beauty. Only with knowledge, we cannot touch the core of beauty [...] "観る/Miru" is not merely a sense; if dare to say, it might be "内覧/*Nairan*" (to see inside) [...] so, "観/"*Kan*" needs not only the function of the eyes but also the mind [...] Now

why this intuition is so important is understood, because it will be possible to define the nature of beauty itself through clarifying this intuition.<sup>17</sup> [X-613] (1963)

This passage, from late in his life, demonstrates the thought of Yanagi regarding the connection between beauty and intuition. He considered that intuition showed property best in beauty. Beauty always needs to be seen; the act of intuition accompanies it at all the times. Moreover, not only beautiful works as the object of intuition, the base of intuition, but also beauty, come to have the monistic feature. That appears in Yanagi's later texts, especially Buddhism Aesthetics series<sup>18</sup>.

I think beauty and ugliness are just what humans have fixed. "分別"<sup>19</sup> ("*Hunbetsu*" / thinking based on dualism) has created the confrontation between the two. As much as people do "分別", beauty and ugliness are opposed and logical thought teaches that beauty is not ugliness, that they are inevitably the two contradictory things. So, we cannot say that beauty equals ugliness or that beauty consists of only beauty without ugliness or what is not both ugliness and beauty, [...] if there were the place which was the world of oneness<sup>20</sup>. [XVIII-10] (1949)

In short, the truly beautiful, the highest beautiful is what is free from the dualistic<sup>21</sup>. [XVIII-12] (1949)

Here apparently, beauty, as intended by Yanagi, was very similar to his "self" as intuition or the monistic experience itself, which allowed no opportunity for dualism. Thus, there was no conflict between beauty and ugliness (in the case of "self," between subject and object); beauty was expected to overcome the dualistic opposition in order to work as the ultimate value of life. Yanagi crowded all the things that he thought could constitute the greatest value experience into beauty. Moreover, Yanagi insisted that that value must have a connection to all people and their ordinary lives:

"工藝" (*Folk-craft*) is the union of beauty and everyday life [...] Until now, people described the beautiful as only being in the ideal world separated from the real one, that is to say, the sort of use that was regarded as the vulgar and of low-class. However, concerning the meaning of beauty being connected to "using" and the value of beauty conforming to living, I want to demand the warmer and thoroughness idea<sup>22</sup>. [VIII-542] (1933/1942)

Thus, on this point, the object, which he insisted as the essence of beauty, is that beauty could give us the experience of oneness through intuition based on things. Moreover, such experience occurred in our ordinary life (and, for Yanagi, especially with the *Mingei*); thus, a high price—one that the public could not afford—is unnecessary. In Yanagi conception, the most essential value in life is open for everyone.

### **Towards the beautiful as morality**

As discussed above, Yanagi's beauty was far different from the autonomic beauty that is the characteristic of modern Western society, especially from the 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>23</sup>. It can also be said to have a loosely-defined tendency toward pantheism<sup>24</sup>. Yanagi saw the non-dualistic beauty in many things—not only in the Songs ceramics or the *Mingei* but also many plain, ordinary objects, such as a simple tea bowl made by an unknown craftsman, kitchen utensils, baskets or ordinary clothes. Nevertheless, Yanagi never dismissed or diminished the fine arts. Yanagi simply believed that ordinary things were suited to and helpful in the everyday lives of the people, and that they led people to live healthier lives<sup>25</sup>. Moreover, particular to Yanagi, he considered establishing a way to achieve this non-dualistic beauty (for Yanagi, "不二美"/"*Funi Bi*", "無対辞の美"/"*Mutaiji no Bi*", and so on) for people and their way of living. This is reflected in the following passage, wherein Yanagi describes the approach by which people can reach beauty:

So that is because, hopefully, we will go beyond the "分別" of beauty and ugliness. It is needed to restore us to the previous state that those two are not divided into two. Go back to the given "nature" as it is. Leave the artificiality of "beauty versus ugliness". Restore the ordinary (平常/"*Heijo*"). Since the distinction between beauty and ugliness is the disease, it is necessary to come back to quietness. Firstly, throw the smaller self away. If the persistence in this remain, the hesitation never goes away. Secondly, never stay at "分別". If we depend only on this judgment, finally, it will be impossible to escape the dualistic world [...] So, we want to be obedient and innocent<sup>26</sup>. [XIII-14] (1949)

In this phase, beauty conceived by Yanagi was not limited to mere value or experience through intuition, but something of a guideline or principle to which we should adhere, offering the possibility that this way of beauty will lead the people. Actually, Yanagi viewed beauty as law or

providence for people and society<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, he believed that "heading toward that beauty" formed the people, and that "the pursuing things showing beauty" formed craftsmen and the environment (precisely, the life of the people), and going further, society. In addition, through this progress, the beauty that Yanagi sought to establish required acceptance as the ultimate common social value. In other words, the achievement of beauty required that people accept this notion of beauty as the common value that binds a society. Indeed, in Yanagi's vision, both individuals and society as a whole are formed by setting beauty at the center. Thus, he envisaged a mutual relationship. Yanagi believed that beauty could lead people (in their everyday life) and society to a better and healthier state<sup>28</sup>, and that beauty played the critical role of daily morality. In this context, "nature" (本分/"*Honbun*"), "ordinary" (平常/"*Heijo*") and "quietness" (無事/"*Buji*") meaning normal (or nothing special) states were extremely important elements in Yanagi's conception of beauty. From this, we can see that he regarded beauty as that which contributed to people's ordinary lives. This also allows us to understand why he founded the *Mingei*. For him, the objects of fine art seemed unsuitable to ordinary life; in fact, he sometimes referred to fine arts as an "illness." He considered simple, natural and unpretentious objects to better fit in people's daily lives, believing that if everyday life were composed of such things, life (and the living environment) would be healthier. For example, in his article "*Shin to Bi no Icchi*" (「信と美の一致」/"*Coincidence between Belief and Beauty*", 1942), he explained that beauty that emerged from things reflected the state of both the people and society as well. Yanagi's belief is clearly expressed here, reinforcing the position that he adopted intuition and objects for the formation of people and society at-large through his conception of beauty.

### 3. The Two Paths to Beauty and Community

In this third chapter, the two paths leading to beauty are explained, and the community formed through these three elements (the two paths and beauty) is discussed.

#### The path of seeing

As previously discussed, Yanagi identified two paths leading to beauty. The first is the path of self-help (*Jirikido*) by which people actively set out toward the summit alone, using only their individual power. The second path is the path of other-help (*Tarikido*) by which people passively head to the summit aided by the power of others (for example, a transcendent power such as Buddha's). Thus, *Jirikido* is closely connected to intuition, while *Tarikido* is concerned with things, or more precisely, "creation". Of course, both paths related to the *Mingei*<sup>29</sup>. *Jirikido* can be discussed

as the path of seeing as indicated in the passage below<sup>30</sup>.

With regards to the problem of beauty, I feel strongly that education is important as for beauty. So as to let this world be beautiful, at any cost, it is necessary to cultivate the public culture of beauty [...] From youth, it is indispensable to improve the proper way of seeing<sup>31</sup>. [X-481] (c.1942)

Yanagi believed that to judge beauty it was necessary to be cultivated or trained by oneself. Thus, for Yanagi, the judgement of beauty was not something innate, but rather it was acquired. To this point, in fact, the *Mingeikan* (民藝館/"the Museum of Japanese Folk Arts), which Yanagi had been established with his fellows in 1936, served, in part, as a kind of *Dojo* (道場) for practicing one's power of insight. Yanagi considered that seeing required discipline by self, along with the public need. Moreover, Yanagi believed himself to be on the side of seeing; as a theorist, he repeated his reflections on seeing in many articles (especially 『見ることと知ること』/"*seeing and knowing*" 1940, 『直観について』/"*About the intuition*" 1960, and many more). Indeed, Yanagi disciplined himself by thinking and practicing according to *Jirikido*. In addition, Yanagi compared the path to Zen Buddhism and Pure Land Buddhism and believed that *Zen* very much involved "seeing." For example, one could learn to see through the *Sado* (茶道) wherein the ability to see was well-trained by the appreciation of tea bowls, *Kakejiku* (掛け軸/"the hanging scroll"), which involves beauty. One might ask at this point, what way of seeing did Yanagi believe could truly lead to reaching beauty?

There has not yet been the distinction made between subject-object in intuition, so it is possible to see directly. Intuition means receiving things as it is<sup>32</sup>. [VIII-547] (1933/1942)

Intuition, Yanagi thought, meant the practice of "acceptance" without discrimination. The act itself was beauty. Furthermore, he indicated a most important aspect of "seeing" in the following passage.

Well, when such a marvel is acted on as a fact, that is, when beauty as Buddha nature (美仏性/"Bi Bussho"), which is originally gifted to humans, it works without injured<sup>33</sup>. [XIII-152] (1958)



People formed a non-dualistic view and the attitude of acceptance as something—as in "自在心" ("Jizai Shin"/"the Mind as It is"). Along with this, people came to know how people should live, and that understanding arises in the process of aiming for beauty. At that point, beauty works as morality in the lives of the people.

### **To reach beauty from "creating"**

For Yanagi, the path of seeing (*Jirikido*)—the way of "self"—was his way. Of course, many people who did not produce the *Mingei* or arts or anything similar followed this path as well. What should be applied in approaching beauty in this way was intuition, that is to say, non-dualistic view, and receiving all things as they are. This attitude (Yanagi also mentioned it as "mind") had to be formed by aiming at beauty as the first principle—the summit. Why beauty was chosen and given such importance has not been clearly revealed here, but Yanagi wished it to be the first value in the empirical world, seeing it as the experience of oneness<sup>34</sup>, which fascinated him. As for the path of creating, one can see that both paths lead to the same summit. Then, what is needed for the craftsmen? For those who produce *Mingei*, it is "creating". For *Jirikido*, the state of a non-dualistic "mind" and engagement in nature as oneness are demanded. In other words, on the way to beauty, craftsmen attain the state of oneness through practicing—the act of creating.

Not because of the illiteracy, ignorance or non-originality of the craftsmen, they have the ability to generate beauty. However, as they are simply obeying nature, it assures them beauty. The beauty of the *Mingei* is the beauty of reliance. Natural materials, the natural process and the obedience mind, these will be the essential power to generate beauty. That is because the beauty of the *Mingei* is "salvation-beauty"<sup>35</sup>. [VIII-214] (1928)

As implied by the word "reliance", craftsmen depend on that which gives them the ability to create. Below is an example.

Throw away the smaller self (小我/"Shoga"), and live in the greater self (大我/"Taiga")<sup>36</sup>. [VIII-86] (1928)

Yanagi mentions what might be considered transcendental power such as "One", "Nature", "Taiga",

and “Bussho”. Clearly, "nature" was the important concept for Yanagi. It repeatedly appears here and in many other of his papers. His conceptualization of nature also occupied the valuable position on the path of seeing, offering a possible clue to the meaning of the state of oneness on Yanagi.<sup>37</sup> In this passage, the obedience to nature gives to the craftsmen the state of non-dualism, or oneness, based on which they can create beauty. In *Tarikido*, the craftsmen are able to create beautiful things and to reach beauty through *Tariki* (the power of other's). These creations had ordinary and healthy features, and were given the role to filling society and influencing social conditions and the condition of people's lives.

### **The community having beauty as providence**

From the discussions above, beauty works as providence for people, allowing them to form their way of seeing, their attitudes or minds. It concerned not only with beauty itself, but also serves a moral guidance for the people's way of living<sup>38</sup>. That has the important meaning for not only for the individuals, but for the greater society, thus, community as well.

The right beauty is the reflection of the right society [...] Lacking understanding for the community, any progress cannot be expected. It is because the beauty of crafts shows the beauty of society. In thinking so, the matter of crafts is a matter of human morality rather than beauty<sup>39</sup>. [VIII-327] (1928)

As indicated here, Yanagi believed that beauty corresponded to the state of social, so that the right beauty could foster the right society or reflect the right state of a community. What does Yanagi mean by "right" here? According to the discussion so far, it is living in a non-dualistic state or accepting “nature”. That is, the way of seeing beauty is monistic, natural, and one might say, receiving it as it is in order to escape dualistic view. In addition, these attitudes are portrayed by Yanagi as better or healthier for our everyday life. Yanagi asserted that beauty is generated from the people's way of seeing<sup>40</sup> or, perhaps, being; conversely, in a kind of mutual formation, by aiming at beauty, people also were formed. Furthermore, based on this way of seeing beauty by the individual constituents of a society, a society can be formed. Consequently, beauty that possesses these features causes or reflects society. In this way, Yanagi sees beauty as morality:

I find this public beauty in the beautiful "*Getemono*" (下手物/"lower things" = the former name of the *Mingei*). My mind is attracted to unsigned works because there is

the much greater beauty in all living things than that of individuality. In there, the impatience of individuality takes a rest. With peaceful familiarity, we can live with them<sup>41</sup>. [VIII-328] (1928)

Yanagi called this beauty social morality "*Koyu no Bi*"(公有の美). In Yanagi's conception, beauty that was reached through "seeing" demands that people simultaneously form their way of seeing along with beauty. As a result, the person attains non-dualistic state, that is, an accepting attitude. In this mutual process, beauty and people form each other; in a similar way, craftsmen produce beautiful things reflecting social morality that suit the ordinary life, and those things form a society as a whole as well as its individual members. What is created from all of this is the self, others and community, all functioning in a non-dualistic state and practicing discipline in pursuit of beauty as oneness.

## Conclusion

In this paper, by focusing on Yanagi's conception of beauty, the theme of self (the people who see, thus, Yanagi himself), others (the people who create, craftsmen) and community was discussed, and through this discussion, the distinctive features of Yanagi's beauty—his aesthetic idea—was described. Yanagi believed that the community and the constituent members are formed by beauty in roughly the same way as a mystic experience or monistic intuition forms the ultimate value of living, or oneness. Although it was not discussed extensively here, Yanagi consider nature to be as important as beauty with respect to oneness. Yanagi focused on this conception of oneness throughout his life, exploring medieval mysticism and Buddhism. Beauty and nature seem to play an important role in his philosophy of oneness centered on the beauty of Yanagi, especially with respect to the logic of oneness (often mystic). In a future paper, this point will be more fully developed.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The *Mingei* (民藝) is an abbreviation of *Minsyu teki kougei* (民衆的工藝).

<sup>2</sup> Leach who used to live in Japan and took part in *Shirakaba-ha* (白樺派) was a lifelong friend of Yanagi.

<sup>3</sup> 「明らかに、ここには我々が考えるべき二つの点があります。一つは、我々が登ろうと目指している頂きは普遍的な「一つ」のものだということ、もう一点は、その頂きに至る道程は「多数」あるということです。」

<sup>4</sup> In this paper, unless otherwise noted, Roman numerals indicate the volume number of "*the Complete Works of Yanagi Muneyoshi*" (『柳宗悦全集』, 筑摩書房) from *Chikuma shobo*.

In addition, I personally translated Yanagi's works into English; the contents in () or [...] were added by me.

<sup>5</sup> This character of his wish that might be considered idealistic may be common to the group "*Shirakaba*" (『白樺』), which he had participated in; a magazine with the same name was published between 1910 and 1923. See Nakami [2003] also Tsurumi [1976]. Based on the relationship the people and the times, Nakami mentioned this idealistic character. This is explained by the tendency of "affirmation" for all existence, which was generally said to be the influenced by W. Whitman (1819-1892), W. Blake (1757-1827) and so on. (see, Mizuo [1992], Nakami [2003] and Sato [2017]).

<sup>6</sup> "And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity (p.14). No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature (p.4). Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string (p2). Insist on yourself; never imitate (p18). Nothing can bring you peace but yourself (p.21). To believe your thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men, — that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense (p.1)." [R. W. Emerson "*Self-Reliance*", 1841] ---Yanagi cited Emerson's lines as if making a patchwork; they appear to be arbitrarily selected from many places in this work.

<sup>7</sup> 「一切の物象が汝自身に於て活き、汝を一切の物象に於て見出し、汝の全人格が自然の全実在と一つ韻律に流るゝ時、残るものは永遠に肯定せられたる汝自身の生命である。」

8 「而して吾人の人格の全的存在が充実せらるる時とは如何なる場合を指す可きであろうか。实在経験とは物象が吾に於て活き、吾を物象の裡に感じ、兩者主客を没したる知情意合一の意識状態である。」

9 For comparisons between Yanagi and Nishida, see also Asakura [2005], Kikuchi [1994] and so on. Nishida was Yanagi's German teacher in *Gakushuin*.

10 [XXI-I, vol.1-44]

11 He was famous as philosopher of religion before *Mingei* and wrote the four major works about religion, mainly focusing on mysticism.

12 Also, see Mizuo [1992].

13 He used this expression and, in self-commentary, said that this had a deep relationship with Buddhism, but it was a synonym for self-fulfillment on Blake. [「思想家としてのブレイク」/"Blake as a philosopher", IV, 1914]

14 「自己寂滅とは自己の否定を意味するのではない、自我の完全な拡充である、個性の無辺な表現である、自己と宇宙との合一である。」

15 「直観とは主客の間隔を絶滅した自他未分の価値的経験である。自我と外界との合一、寂滅された個性の拡充、即ち法悦恍惚の心境は此純一な経験の高調を意味している。」(the expression of "純一" found in "*Zen no Kenkyu*").

16 「私は其の美がいつも『一』としての世界を示しているが故であろうと思う。『一』とはあの温かい思索者であったプロティヌスも解したように、美の相ではないか。私は宋窯に於て裂かれた二元の対峙を観る場合がない。」

17 「『直観』とは文字が示唆する通り、『直ちに観る』意味であるが、美しさへの理解にとっては、どうしてもこの直観が必要になる。知識だけでは、美しさの核に触れることができない。…『観る』はただの感覚ではなく、強ひて言へば『内覧』とでも言はうか。…それ故『観』には眼が働きはするが、共に心も亦働くことになろう。…所でこの直観のことが大切なのは、これを明かにすることによって、ひいては美しさそのものの性質をも明らかにし得るからである。」

18 After the *Mingei-movement*, in order to give it theoretical backbone, Yanagi tried to construct aesthetics based on Buddhist ideas. That *Buddhism Aesthetics* consists of "*Bi no Homon*" (『美の法門』/"the Gate of the Law to Beauty", 1949), "*Muukoshu no Gan*" (『無有好醜の願』/"the Wish for No-Conflict between Beauty and Ugliness", 1956), "*Bi no Jodo*" (『美の浄土』/"the Pure Land for Beauty", 1960), "*Ho to Bi*" (『法と美』/"the Law and Beauty", 1961).

19 In Buddhism, "分別" means thinking with the assumption affirming the conflict between subject and object.

20 「考えると美醜というのは人間の造作にすぎない。分別がこの対辞を作ったのである。分別する限り美と醜とは向かい合ってしまう。そうして美は醜でないと論理は教える。それはどうしても矛盾する二つのものだという。だから美が即ち醜であるとか、醜のない美だけの美とか、醜でもなく美でもないとかいう言い方は、許されなくなってしまう。…一元の世界はないものであろうか。」

21 「畢竟真に美しいもの、無上に美しいものは、美とか醜とかいう二元から解放されたものである。」

22 「工藝と云うのは美と生活との結合したものである。今までは美を現実から遊離した理想の世界にのみ描いていたから、用途と云うが如きは下品な低級なものとして簡単に片付けられていたのである。併し用と交わる美の意義に就て、生活に即した美の価値に就て、もっと温かい又徹した考えを私は要求したのである。」

23 In this regard, Yanagi is often criticized for as "criticizing the Modern by a modern". See Shin [2002], Kikuchi [1994].

24 Nakami [2010] and Ogyu [2005] mention about pantheistic tendency of Yanagi.

25 This concept of "health" is one of the important ideas of Yanagi. (see Osawa [2018], Tsurumi [1976]). Cf. "If men set a goal of health and not of beauty, how beautiful these products will be since health is beauty more than anything else." 「若し作者が美を目標とせず、健康を目標としたら、作物は如何に美しくなるであろう。なぜなら、健康さは何よりの美だからである。」 [VIII-454]

26 「それだから希くは美醜の分別を超えることである。それ等が二に分かれる以前に自らを戻すことである。与えられたありのままの「本分」に帰ることである。美醜の作為から去ることである。「平常」に戻ることである。美醜の別は病であるから、本来の「無事」に立ち戻ることである。それには第一に小さな自我を棄てるがよい。之に執着が残ると、迷いが去らない。第二には分別に滞らないことである。この判断にのみ便ると、遂には二相の世界から脱れることが出来ない。…それ故素直であり、無垢でありたい。」

27 Osawa [2018] see the low (理法/"*Riho*") as a clue to the entire philosophy of Yanagi.

28 Osawa [2018] regards the concept of health as very important to Yanagi.

29 Generally, both paths applied to artists and craftsmen (particularly unknown craftsmen), so it is about not only

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"creation", which confirms the discussion so far. As Yanagi also placed "seeing" in *Jirirido*, he did not exclude non-creating people. Hence, in this paper, the path of self-help corresponded to the people seeing the *Mingei*. Cf. "One's direst wish" (「私の念願」/"*Watashi no Nengan*", 1933/revised1942)

<sup>30</sup> *Jirirido* is generally connected to artists or famous craftsmen, but also Yanagi connected this way to those who see the things; however, this point is not made especially clear.

<sup>31</sup> 「美の問題に携わっていますと、如何に美に関する教育が大切であるかということが、ひしひしと感ぜられます。この世を美しくするためには、どうあっても一般の人々の美の教養が高まらなければなりません。…若い時から正しい見方を養うようにすることが緊要です。」

<sup>32</sup> 「直観にはまだ主観客観の別はない。それだから直かに見得るのである。直観とはありのままに受け取れることを云うのである。」

<sup>33</sup> 「ではどういう時に、そんな不思議が事実となつて行われるか。それは人間に、本来美仏性が備わっていて、それが傷つけられずに働く時なのである。」

<sup>34</sup> To discover the value of life in the experience of oneness, Yanagi engaged in the study of Mysticism.

<sup>35</sup> 「職人たちの無学とか無知とか、無個性とかいうことに、美を生む力があるのではない。だが自然に従順であるため、自然が彼らに美を保証してくれるのである。民芸の美は他力的な美である。自然な材料、自然な工程、素直な心、これが美を生む本質的力になる。それ故民藝の美は「救われる美」である。」

<sup>36</sup> 「小さな自我を捨てる時、自然の大我に活きるのである。」

<sup>37</sup> Nakami [2010] sees this nature as a kind of providence for Yanagi.

<sup>38</sup> Yanagi sees beauty and good as the same: "善は美である。(しばしば道徳と芸術とは反目の争論を重ねている。しかし余は善と美とが矛盾するものだとは思わぬ)。" [『宗教とその真理』, 1919]

<sup>39</sup> 「正しい美は正しい社会の反映なのです。…組織への理解なくしては何等の発展も望まれないのです。工芸美は社会美を示すからです。かく考える時工芸の問題は美の問題であるより、寧ろ人間の道徳問題なのです。」

<sup>40</sup> "By common sense, there is first the beautiful, and then the way of seeing to judge it beautiful emerged, it is said. However, I believe that it is more truly that the way of seeing is first, after which (and due to which), the beautiful will appear. Then, with a bad way seeing, the beautiful things will disappear. Given that beautiful things exist, it can be said that the way of seeing creates them." [XIII-449] (c.1961) 「常識では、美しいものがあって、然る後それを美しいと見る見方が現れてくると云われる。しかし見方があって、然る後美しいものが現れるという方が、もっと真実ではあるまいか。だから見方が悪くば、美しいものはこの世から姿を消すであろう。美しいものが存在するのは、見方がそれを創作しているのだとも云える。」

<sup>41</sup> 「私は美しい『下手物』の中に、かゝる公有の美を発見します。無銘の作に心が惹かれるのは、そこに個性より更に大きな衆生の美があるからです。そこに個性の焦慮は休んでいます。私達は安らかな親しみを以て、其れ等のものと暮らす事が出来るのです。」