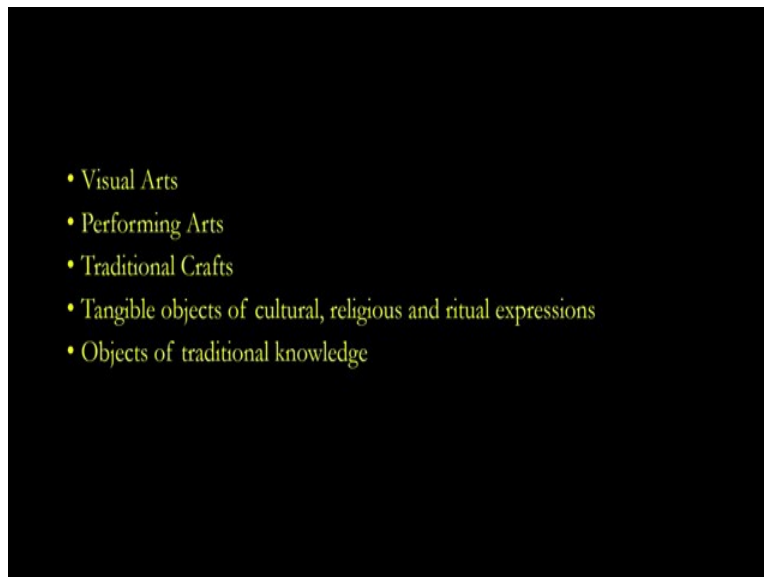


Artistic Exploration in Scientific Research And Technology
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Lecture – 06
Folk Art around the World

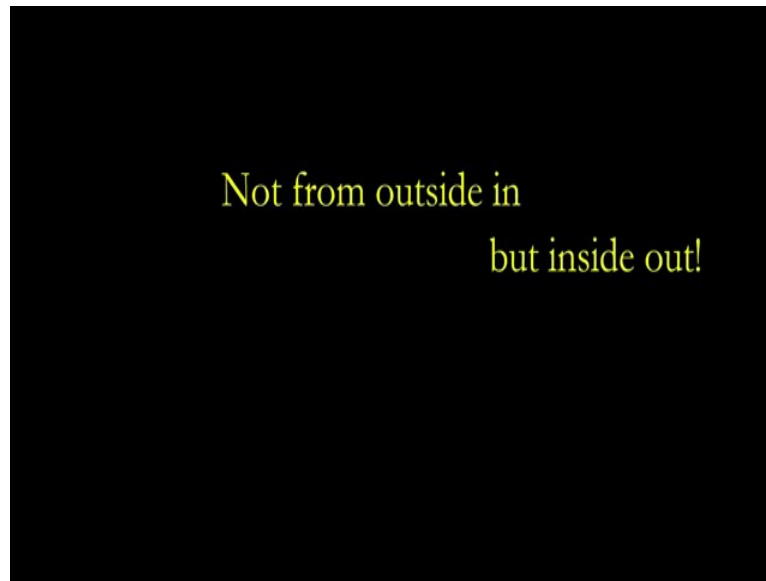
Hello friends, in last class we have seen the features and purpose of folk art. Today, let us see some of the Folk Art around the World.

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Just to recapitulate, the things that can be considered as folk art can be any form of visual art, performing art, traditional craft, like pottery, basketry, etcetera, tangible objects of cultural, religious and ritual expressions, objects of traditional knowledge such as recipe or the methods of weaving etcetera.

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So, in this course what we are trying to do is not to understand the folk arts from outside in, but to understand then understand that inside out. This is one of the basic criteria of folklorist is that you do not understand things that you do not see the folkloric items from outside, but you try to understand what it entails for the society as a whole. So, we try to understand them from inside out.

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“Folk art is not, as some authors have suggested, merely an unsophisticated reflection of the culture of the cities, but an indigenous creation of the ordinary people of small towns and villages, especially, those who are cut off from the main stream of urban civilization. This does not mean that they are wholly isolated for the dominant culture no doubt influences and modifies their work but folk art has a tradition which has remained unchanged over generations, sometimes even centuries, so that it is impossible to date it with accuracy”.

Dr. Soetsu Yanagi
Founder and Director
Japanese Folk Art Museum

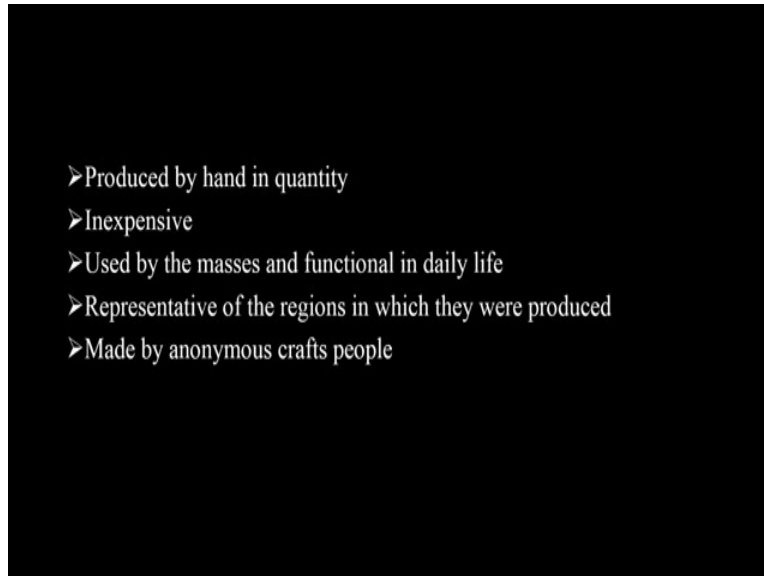
Let us see some of the folk arts from Japan. Doctor Soetsu Yanagi is one of the very prominent members of the Japanese, folklore movement. He was the founder and director of Japanese folk-art museum. I have put a phrase from him, which he according to him folk art means. Folk art is not, as some authors have suggested, merely an unsophisticated reflection of the culture of the cities, but an indigenous creation of the ordinary people of small towns and villages, especially, those who are cut off from the mainstream of urban civilization. This does not mean that they are wholly isolated from the dominant culture, no doubt influences and modifies their work, but folk art as a tradition which has remained unchanged over generations, sometimes even centuries, so that is impossible to date it with accuracy.

In 1916 Yanagi made his first trip to Korea out of curiosity for Korean craft. This led to the establishment of the Korean folk craft museum in 1924 and the coining of the term Mingei by Yanagi. In 1926, the folk-art movement was formally declared by him. Yanagi collective pots used by common people in the Edo and Meiji period, that were disappearing in rapidly urbanizing Japan. In 1936 the Japanese folk-art craft museum was established.

The Mingei Movement challenged society's narrow (Refer Time: 03:22) definition of art. Traditionally many people think of art as something produced only by artisans separate from functional items, produced by craftsmen. Mingei instead focuses on everyday objects produced by average people as opposed to highly refined works of art produced by professional artist. Mingei can also be seen as a response to Japans rapid industrialization as it places importance to things made with hand rather than commercial factory.

It is also seen as a method of preserving culture and heritage. The philosophical pillar of Mingei is handcrafted art of ordinary people. According to Yanagi utilitarian objects made by common people are beyond beauty and ugliness.

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Yanagi pointed out that there has to be certain criteria for an object to be considered as a Mingei art. These are the objects should be produced made and produced by hand. Mingei art should be produced in large quantity, mostly by hand. The handmade nature of this art is at the core of the Mingei movement, and the fact that it is produced in large quantities related to the utilitarian aspect of Mingei. So, the object not only has to be produced by hand, but it also should have utilitarian purpose. So, therefore, it has to be made in large quantity for many people to be able to use it.

So, these are the two first of first criteria that it has to be made with hand and it has to be available to a lot of people, so it has to be produced in a bigger quantity. Second criteria is inexpensive. Mingei art should be inexpensive, simple and practically designed. Unlike decorated luxury item, simplicity and in expansiveness is the charm of Mingei. An inexpensive complex item would not be easily accessible to the masses, betraying the fundamental idea behind a movement. The design should also have arising naturally over time to best suit the need of those using it. So, it should be inexpensive and it should be available to the masses easily. If it is expensive and it is not available to everyone, then it would not qualify as a Mingei item.

Third criteria is used by the masses and functional in daily life. Mingei art should not be only functional, but also actually used by the masses. So, it should have utilitarian value. Mingei Yanagi argued that beauty of these objects come from the actual usage not simply being admired. Their use also gives them the cultural and regional authenticity. So, it should not be only objects of gratification, they should not be only pleasing to the eyes, but they should be utilitarian. They should be, they should be able to use them in everyday life.

Fourth criteria were representative of the region, in which they are produced. This reflects Japanese culture's appreciation for regional variation and indeed Mingei art often has distinguishing characteristics unique to specific regions of Japan. Each object represents a small cultural legacy that gives it a value beyond its aesthetic. So, it should talk about a region that it comes from. It should have specific features, the essence should be communicated, the regional essence should be communicated through its objects, so this was one of the criteria.

The last word is made by an anonymous craftsman. Traditionally, Mingei art is anonymous and individual artists should not expect recognition; however, in modern times many people agreed that society should embrace and celebrate the artisans and craftspeople who helped keep tradition and culture alive, and that they should be reflected in how the government designates certain people as living national treasures.

So, Yanagi has said that the craftsman should not look for recognition. They should be anonymous and it should only talk about the community that it belongs to, but later on people felt that artisans should be recognized, they should be appreciated, so that they get encouragement and the government also takes adequate measures for the preservation and gives them recognition in the national seal also. So, these are the five criteria that Yanagi had pointed out for any object of art to be considered as a Mingei art.

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Now, let us see some of the Japanese art; this is a Japanese embroidery. It is called Nihon Shishu in Japan, Japanese this is a collection of embroidery techniques that originated more than 1600 years ago. Over time, as Shishu developed its own unique Japanese qualities and characteristics, it took on a more artistic purpose. According to historians, from the early Heian period Japanese embroidery was primarily used for decorating the costume of the ladies of the imperial court. During this early stages Shishu was only available to a select group. Only the highest rank of society could efforts such costly work.

However, after a 1000 years leap this cultural heritage is now available to a wider audience and continues to develop a more spiritual purpose. So, it has gone through a few changes over the time. Earlier it is to be expensive and it was only made for a certain section of the population, but now it is been available for a larger section of audience.

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So, this is a Japanese wood, mosaic technique and it is called Yosegi. These are Japanese wooden box and the art of making such boxes with traditional wood mosaic is called Yosegi. The timbers of different colors are cut in rods, that glued together to form a geometrical pattern. The surface of the pattern is then sliced into these plates of wood which are then used to decorate all sort of things like poster, vase, tray etcetera. So, this is another folk art of Japan, which is a mosaic, making a mosaic out of different colored timbers.

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This is a porcelain pottery of Japan, it is called Yakimono. Yakimono is one of the oldest Japanese craft; they think to the Neolithic period. Japan has an exceptionally long successful history of ceramic production. Japan is distinguished by the unusual esteem that ceramic holds within its artistic traditions, owing to the enduring popularity of the tea ceremony. Since the fourth century Japan, Japanese ceramic have been influenced by Chinese and Korean pottery.

Japanese pottery is distinguished by two polarized aesthetic tradition. On the one hand there is a tradition of very simple and roughly finished pottery; mostly in earthenware and using a muted palette of earthen colors. This relates to Jain, Buddhism. The other tradition is of a highly finished and brightly colored factory where, mostly in porcelain with complex imbalance decoration which develops Chinese porcelain styles in a distinct way. A third tradition of simple, but perfectly formed and glazed stone ways also relates more closely to both Chinese and Korean tradition.

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So, these are the three folk art form I wanted to show you from Japan. Now from there let us move on to United States of America. United States of America have 50 states which has its own distinct flavor. This is a folk-art form it is called from America; it is called Arpilleras, these, Arpilleras are brightly colored patchwork, pictures originally made by group of women also known as Arpillera in Chile during the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet during 1973 to 1990. Constructed from simple material such as crop of clothes, they initially depicted scenes of hardship and violence that many women experienced during the dictatorship. Arpilleras were made in workshop organized by a committee of the Chilean Catholic Church and then secretly distributed abroad to the church human rights group.

Arpilleras have many common elements. Piece of fabrics are cut in the shapes of house trees or objects and are stitch to the backing. figures of people are almost always three dimensional with little roll arm heads and bodies coming out of flat background stick beats of foil plastic or paper dried beads and other commonly found material, (Refer Time:12:44) are glued into the tapestry simple décor decorative top stitching fields in the details. Each Arpillera is bordered by colorful fabric by nick blanket stitch or corseted will edging over time people. In other Latin American countries adopt Arpilleras as an art form. Among them were Peru, where some believe that three-dimensional doll like figures are set to have originated. These Arpilleras almost always depict an innocent happy world. So, if you look closely into any folk art you will see a host of meaning into it; you will see a, you will get to know about it has to tell you a story about its history, its origin, about the region it comes from. So,; this is one such example.

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Next is a weave from the Navajo tribe of America. American Indian art encompasses everything from carving to weaving each design telling a story through motifs and symbols that honor their heritage. Most surviving ancient examples are anywhere from one to two hundred years old. Many of these pieces were made from organic ephemeral material which has contributed to the wear and loss over the years. Today, contemporary Navajo art blends traditional crafts with the modern lead trends. It pays homage to indigenous art forms while pointing to the experimentation of American Indian artists across all media. Works of art that are centuries old as well as art made by living artists offer a unique glimpse of Navajo heritage.

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This is another folk art of America. These are dolls made by the Seminole tribe of Florida. The body of this dolls is made of palmetto husk. The clothing has suit traditionally, traditional women's dress, bright colors and beaded necklace and earrings. Seminoles were excellent wood carvers. Traditionally, they made many things out of wood homes, cannons etcetera. They also made dolls. They made two types of dolls; one was a little doll about two inches tall. Each doll was dressed with fabric garments such as a Seminole woman or a man would wear. The other type of doll was bigger, perhaps 10 to 18 inch and carved out of wood in an odd way. Everything was elongated as if it took a person and pulled it thin. It is a strangely attractive doll. Today, Seminole artists made both, make both types of traditional dolls. So, as I told you that each craft, each art, each folk art, tells you a story about the people it, it belongs to you really have to look closely at them.

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Now, that has come to the Federal Republic of Germany. This is a typical dress of, the women folk of Germany. It is called Dinraal. Dinraal varies from one region to another, or even a village to another. The costume has various details according to the place of origin and social status of the wearer. There is also a distinction between the typical Dinraal and rural domestic clothing made from gray and colored linen, sometimes will lead the body's and dream. Now if you look at the folk costume it will tell you about a lot about the wearer, what kind of social status it comes, he or she comes from, which region it he or she comes from, which village he or she comes from.

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This is a wooden doll of Germany. The wooden doll also has a history. Scholars have recently taken a lot of interest in studying; they wooden, wooden folk art, wooden doll folk art form of Germany. So, these are, according to them these are wooden toys from the Auerbach Mountains, Today a Auerbach Mountains are situated on both sides of German check border in the German part of that belongs to the state of Saxony; wooden toys have been produced in the 18th century. Historian cinematographers have often explained that the emergence of this whole industry in terms of the healthy roots of folk art in that area. Ethnographer Manfred Bachmann, presents its development in the late 19th century as a story of decline. He praises a variety of forms in the folk art of the second half of the 18th century and the beginning of 19th century whereas, in his view the toy production turned away from real folk art during the late 19th century. Ethnographic Conrad recently criticized this view and claimed that the folk art of wood carving in the west of the Argi Burg mountain remains separate from the commercial toy production further east.

Recent view suggests that the toy production did not simply grow of folk art, nor did the, nor did both exist separately, but the concept of folk art from the Argi Burg was invented at the beginning of the 20th century as a reaction to a deep crisis in the toy industry. Here, folk art did not give birth to the toy industry. The toy industry or rather its crisis gave birth to the folk art.

So, this is a very interesting argument that researchers have produced that this folk art was invented actually, because of a crisis in the toy industry and there have been lots of debates and arguments produced so, but it still remains a very interesting concept to understand within the folk art.

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<https://www.etsy.com/listing/609583298/blue-trinket-box-handmade-bavarian>

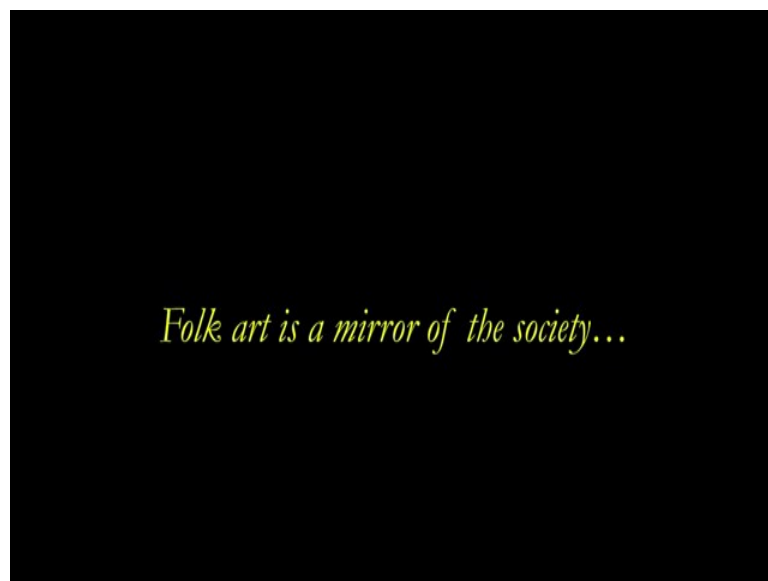
This is the (Refer Time: 18:56) of Germany. It is a folk art associated with Germany Austria and Switzerland. The term comes from two words warrant which means peasant a farmer and Maria. Malaria actually, which means painting. It originated in the Bavarian and Austrian albs endives (Refer 6ime: 19:25) and is therefore, also commonly referred to as Bavarian folk art.

Although this art began as something very simple and name, it has undergone many phases of evolution. There are many regional variations as the art spread throughout Europe from village to village. The Tolzer style originated from a town called bad tolls in South Germany. The most famous in the Tolzer rose which has become a favorite with many folk artists; their roster style was painted mainly in beds and trans by painters in village just north of Stuttgart. The style features not only flowers, but also animals, peasant, scenes, fruit basket, hurt and thrills. The painting is generally made a combination of blues and greens as background and characteristic red border. Then Wismart style was associated with Wismart which is the metal mind in as mountains of Germany. It was applied as background or small chest to imitate the silver chest of the wealthy, after which flowers were painted on them. Figures in old

costumes and beautiful border around the edges are also featured in some trunks. The hessian and style only trunks are painted in the style the backgrounds were usually medium to a very dark blue, flowers and borders on this piece are usually quite primitive.

The Franconian style is associated with Franconia, the northern region of Bavaria. The vases and flowers painted in the style are not as elaborate as those painted in lower Bavaria, but are still rather pretty. The black forest style in the southwest corner of Germany bordering Switzerland and France lies an area called black forest. The kind of painting originating from region is very different and resemble porcelain painting. Everywhere else in Germany white over strokes are used as highlights on flowers. Here the white from the background comes through the highlight, most of the time the background is painted in either of white or as almost black.

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So, looking at the folk art of these three countries; we see a whole, we understand a whole lot about the region the country to come from. So, it is rightly said that folk art is mirror to the society. It talks about the history, it talks about its origin, it talks about the people who have made it and the socio-economic condition, the cultural values, the society a norm. We can understand a lot from looking at the folk art.

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Cultural Anthropology and Folkloristics

The differences lay not in any intrinsic difference between the two in their respective subject matter but the difference is rather historical in the origin of the two disciplines. They correspond to how the Euro-American scholars have identified themselves with the peoples whose customs and cultures they study. Cultural Anthropology- because of its early concentration on peoples with hunting and horticultural economics and assumption that they were relics of a past human societal evolution- had been viewed more as the study of non-Western peoples. The disciplines of Rural Sociology and Folkloristics in the United States and discipline of Folklife in Europe, on the other hand, dealt with Western peoples. Irrespective of its disciplinary origin, Folkloristics does not view its object of study as remnants of past cultures instead it focuses on the collective knowledge of a community at the present in the midst of past and the future.

At this point, I would like to make a distinction between the two disciplines of social science and humanities. One is cultural anthropology and one is folkloristic. Often, there is a confusion between the two disciplines. So, I thought it has a good idea to understand what the two disciplines entail. The difference lay not in any intrinsic difference between the two in their respective subject matter, but the difference is rather historical in their origin of the two disciplines. They correspond to how the Euro American scholars have identified themselves with people whose customs and cultures did study.

Cultural anthropology, because of its early concentration on people with hunting and horticultural economics and exemption that they were relics of a past human society evolution had been viewed more as a study of non-western people. The discipline of rural sociology and folkloristic in the United States and disciplined a folk life in Europe; on the other hand, dealt with western people. Irrespective of its disciplinary origin folkloristic does not view its object of study as remnants of past cultures.

Instead it focuses on the collective knowledge of a community at the present in the midst of past and the future. So, friends today we have seen some of the folk art from, from around the world. From the next class we will concentrate more on India, and next class will concentrate some of the folk-art form of India and how they have been studied and what they tell us about the region they come from.

Thank you very much.