



# Folk Art Potters of Japan: Beyond an Anthropology of Aesthetics (Anthropology of Asia)

*Brian Moeran*

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This is a study of a group of potters living in a small community in the south of Japan, and about the problems they face in the production, marketing and aesthetic appraisal of a kind of stoneware pottery generally referred to as *mingei*, or folk art. It shows how different people in an art world bring to bear different sets of values as they negotiate the meaning of *mingei* and try to decide whether a pot is 'art', 'folk art', or mere 'craft'.

At the same time, this book is an unusual monograph in that it reaches beyond the mere study of an isolated community to trace the origins and history of 'folk art' in general. By showing how a set of aesthetic ideals originating in Britain was taken to Japan, and thence back to Europe and the United States - as a result of the activities of people like William Morris, Yanagi So etsu, Bernard Leach and Hamada Sho ji - this book rewrites the history of contemporary western ceramics.

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