

Masakazu Shimada (Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Bunkyo Gakuen and Professor of Graduate School and Faculty of Business Administration) has published a co-authored book titled “*Kimono and Design -150 years for Kimono producers and sellers-*” on May 25, 2020.

Title : “*Kimono and Design -150 years for Kimono producers and sellers-*”

Edited by Masakazu Shimada

Paperback : 236 pages

Publisher : Minerva Shobo, May 25, 2020

Language : Japanese

ISBN : 9784623088744

The book 『きものとデザイン: つくり手・売り手の150年 (*Kimono and Design -150 years for Kimono producers and sellers*) 』, which Masakazu Shimada has edited and Masakazu Shimada, Akie Kawagoe (Associate Professor of Faculty of Business Administration) and other eight co-authors, have each contributed a chapter to, has been published.



This book examines the transition of the kimono market from the middle of the Meiji period (about 1890) to the present day from the perspective of producers, consumers and the distribution system. Above all, we have noticed that dyeing and weaving designs have played an important role in the kimono market, in addition to the production technologies and the price of kimono.

From the middle of the Meiji period, the kimono market expanded rapidly not only in the high-income segment but also in the middle-income segment of the population, using design power as a weapon of differentiation. However, during the 1950s and 1960s, the kimono industry faced a major challenge as adoption of western clothes for Japanese people increased. The kimono industry changed its business strategy significantly to cope with this challenge. The industry focused on the high-income segment of the market only, abandoning the expanding middle class market. This seemed to be a correct strategy shift during the period of high economic growth through the bubble boom during the 1970s to the 1990s.

However, the collapse of the bubble economy hit the kimono industry and caused the kimono market to shrink significantly. There are two possible reasons why the kimono market shrank. One is that the kimono industry could not catch up with the globalization wave that included such strategies as importing cheap fabrics from overseas and transferring production to China. The second is that the dyeing and weaving designs that once played an important role in expanding the kimono market now worked to limit the kimono market as it relied solely on sales of kimono as luxury goods like the furisode (a formal kimono with long hanging sleeves), which is worn only for special occasions or life events.

Although the kimono industry is still struggling with a shrinking market, we can see some positive signs. One is that the number of foreign tourists who enjoy wearing kimono is increasing. This leads to the possibility of expanding kimono use beyond traditional clothing into new areas. An example is a movement to expand the potential use of kimono by incorporating kimono elements into everyday wear. In addition, there is a movement to apply the kimono's dyeing and weaving designs to interior products. For example, various interior products using Nishijin brocade (woven silk produced in Kyoto) are being developed in collaboration with Louis Vuitton.

Rather than relying on a limited market, it is important to establish a framework in which many people all over the world can enjoy using kimono in various forms all year round.

This book has also been introduced on the official website of Art Research Center, Ritsumeikan University.

<http://www.arc.ritsumei.ac.jp/e/repository/pc/005903.html>