

Foreign and Domestic Influence of the First Half of the Twentieth-Century American Furniture

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the twentieth century, American furniture was subject to a number of influences—both domestic and foreign. Especially, in the first half of the twentieth century, there were strong foreign influences compare to the later half of the century. Therefore, this study aimed for discussing foreign influences and for addressing issues such as attitudes toward materials, ornamentation, and technology. As a result, this study suggests how American furniture becomes instinctive moving away from strong foreign influences from the second half of the century.

The twentieth century was a period of rapid and dynamic change for American furniture design. In many ways, the designs throughout the century were reflective of the social, political, and economic culture of the time. With the birth of the modern movement in Europe and a strong influx of foreign immigrants, American design in the first half of the century was characterized by a reliance on European and foreign influences. However, after the two world wars, strong domestic influences came into play. The two world wars provided the essential catalysts for change: new materials, developing technology, and changes in life style and consumer values. A historical examination of design trends and individual designers illustrates how American furniture design evolved during this period.

Key words: American furniture, Foreign influence, Domestic characteristics.

INTRODUCTION

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BEFORE WORLD WAR I

Historical revival and traditional style dominated design during the first decade of the twentieth century. There was also a modern movement inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement of Britain. Like the British movement, American Arts and Crafts exemplified rigidity, simplicity, honest attitude towards materials, restraint in ornamentation, and the preference for a handmade look. However, unlike in British movement, American designers tended to accept the use of machines in the furniture industry.

The American Arts and Crafts designers were greatly influenced by the ideology of William Morris (1834-1896). Morris, the most significant figure against industrialism, advocated a return to the medieval guild system. Since his company produced fine products by hand, they were much too expensive for the general public. His ideal of reforming middle class taste, which he felt was occupied by shoddy industrial products, was never realized. However, in America his ideals of higher quality and the handcrafted look were adapted in the mass-production of furniture that was affordable for the wider public. For example, Gustav Stickley, who was greatly influenced by British furniture design from his trips to Britain in the 1890s, founded his furniture business in New York State with the democratic motto of “for common need for common people.”² His statement was parallel to the ideal of William Morris, which was “art of the people, by the people, and for the people.”³

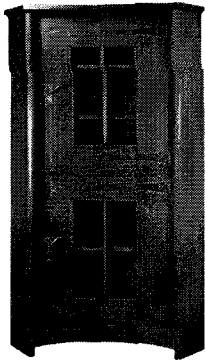


Fig.1. Gustav Stickley.
Corner cupboard. c.1902.

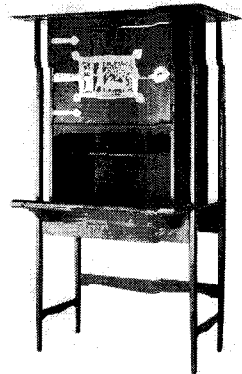


Fig.2. C.F. Voysey. *Desk.* 1896.

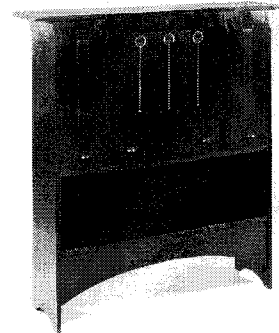


Fig.3. Harvey Ellis.
Front-front Desk c.
1903-1904.

Stickley produced furniture by machines but pursued the handcrafted look. He produced furniture with natural material representing the honesty of joints. His work was machine-made, but hammer marks on metal gave the furniture a handmade look, much like the designs of Charles Voysey (Fig. 1 and 2). The metal hinges indeed became decorative as well as functional elements. The craftsmanship also became a marketing tool for consumers in the United States.⁴ The inlaid decoration of Harvey Ellis's furniture (Fig. 3), an architect who designed furniture for Stickley, is reminiscent of an Art Nouveau design pattern used by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

² Edward S. Cooke Jr., "Arts and Crafts Furniture: Process of Product." in Kardon et al., 1993. 69.

³ Hiesinger, Kathryn B and George H. Marcus. *Landmarks of Twentieth-Century Design.* New York, 1993. 12.

⁴ Cooke 1993. 75.

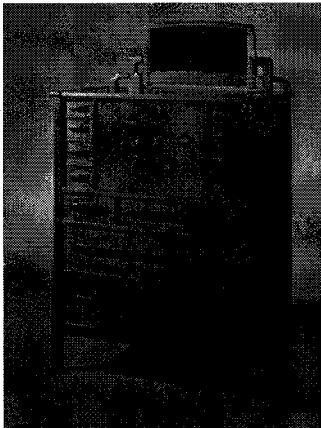


Fig.4. Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene, *Chiffonier*. C. 1909.

Some American Arts and Crafts designers were inspired by Japanese and Asian styles. Japanese influence in the United States at the turn of the century began with the display of the Japanese pavilion at the 1893 Chicago World Columbian Exposition. Stylistically, the Japanese influence can be found in the works of the Greene brothers. The master-bedroom chiffonier designed by Charles Greene and Henry Greene for Gamble house in Pasadena, California in 1908, represents an asymmetrical composition with structural details inspired by Japanese and Chinese furniture (Fig. 4). Exposed joints were one of the ways to decorate furniture without unnecessary ornamentation to Arts and Crafts designers.

Furniture by Frank Lloyd Wright at the first decade of the century was evidently inspired by European modern design, especially Viennese designer Joseph Hoffman and Glasgow designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The dining room chair designed by Wright for Susan Lawrence Dana House in 1903 is an apparent example of European influence on Wright's design that represented geometric modern of Hoffman and Mackintosh (Fig. 5). Also, his chair is reminiscent of tall back chairs designed by Mackintosh for Ms. Cranton's Tearooms. The ideal of Wright's furniture as part of an organic whole is clearly an example of the European modern ideal of *Gesamtkunstwerk* at the turn of the century.

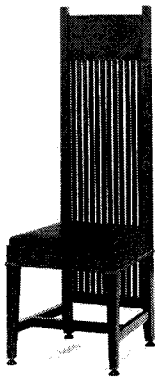


Fig.5. Frank Lloyd Wright, *Dining Room Chair* from Susan Lawrence Dana House, Springfield, Illinois, 1903-1904.

INTER WAR PERIOD

1915-1925

During the First World War, the Arts and Crafts Movement had faded and pastiches of historical furniture regained its dominance. In Europe, modern movements continued through such organizations as Deutsche Werkbund and Wiener Werkstätte. Even though there were some chances for American designers to gain knowledge of the current vogue in Europe, Americans were too conservative to change their style to the modern design. One of the earliest shops was the Austrian Workshop, by Rena Rosenthal, the sister of an architect Ely Jacques Kahn which opened in New York about 1919.⁵ Rosenthal exclusively purchased European objects, which was an essential connection between American and European designers and clients.⁶ Joseph Urban, an Austrian emigrant theatrical and furniture designer, was manager of the American branch of Wiener Werkstätte that opened in 581 Fifth Avenue, New York in 1922.

⁵ Rudolph Rosenthal and Helena Ratzaka. *Story of Modern Applied Art*, (New York 1948), 169.

⁶ Ibid 1948, 173.

1925-1929

Gradually, during the inter-war period in the United States, with the increase of European emigrant designers, the influence of European modern design became significant. Especially, the 1925 *Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Moderne* in Paris became an essential turning point in American modern design. When the French government limited the 1925 Paris Exposition exclusively to modern design, Herbert Hoover, the United States Secretary of Commerce, had to reject the invitation to the exposition because he did not feel that the U. S. had enough examples of modern design to display. Even though there were European emigrant designers such as Paul Frankl, Kem Weber, and Joseph Urban as well as American Frank Lloyd Wright, they were not enough to represent America. Yet, the preference of period revival styles was dominant in this period.

Although America could not be represented at the fair, U.S. Government sent delegates to report on the Exposition. In this respect, the 1925 Exposition placed an essential influence on American design in general. One of the delegates, Richard F. Bach organized the 1926 traveling exhibition to eight cities with four hundred items from the 1925 exposition.⁷

At first, American design exclusively copied the luxurious French modern style from the 1925 Paris Exposition. This radical change in American modern design was made possible partly due to the efforts of organizations, department stores and museums promoting modern design. Displaying modern design furniture in department stores, especially in R. H. Macy & Company and Lord & Taylor in New York, was apparently to stimulate sales by introducing new design styles to the public. The leadership of the department stores in the United States was similar to the Ateliers of French department stores at the Exposition: Primavera from Au Printemps, La Maîtrise from Galeries Lafayette and Bon Marché.

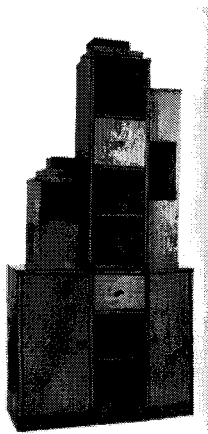


Fig.6. Paul Theodore Frankl. *Skyscraper* bookcase, c. 1928.

R. H. Macy & Company, for example, organized “Exposition of Art in Trade” in 1927. The exhibition represented some of the copies of French examples that were targeted for high-class clients but less expensive compared to French originals.⁸ With the success of the 1927 exhibition, Macy’s went on to display “An International Exposition of Art in Industry” in 1928. The Macy exhibition of 1928 not only represented modern design of countries from the 1925 exposition but also represented the German and American modern design. Its significance lay in the fact that it presented modern design from the continent that drew huge public attention in America.

Again, the European design greatly influenced the American design in this period. Leading furniture designers such as Donald Deskey, Eugene Schoen, Paul Frankl, and Kem Weber, that promoted modern design in this period were either European emigrants or studied in Europe. Moving away from the French examples, American Art Deco developed with the growing influences of a number of German and Austrian immigrants such as Paul Frankl, Wolfgang Hoffmann, a son of Josef Hoffmann, Eliel Saarinen, and Kem Weber. Paul Frankl, in particular, displayed skyscraper furniture through many department exhibitions and published books on his notion for modern design (Fig. 6).

American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen (AUDAC) was one of organizations

⁷ Alastair Duncan, *America Art Deco* (New York 1986), 22.

⁸ “Modern Art in a Department Store.” *Good Furniture Magazine* (January 1928), 30.

formed based on European organizations such as the Wiener Werkstätte, the Deutsche Werkbund, and Société des Artistes Décorateurs in France.⁹ AUDAC, founded in 1928, worked through American Designer's Gallery in New York. AUDAC was an organization of designers and architects who strived for "the elevation of standards in contemporary design, and for the development of a distinctive, practical and beautiful style rather than many conflicting vogues."¹⁰ The members of AUDAC, Donald Deskey, Wolfgang Hoffmann, Ely J, Kahn, Lee Simonson, and Joseph Urban and others founded American Designer's Gallery. The first exhibition of American Designer's Gallery was shown in the Chase Bank building in New York in 1928. It is significant in the fact that it was an American modern design exhibition without European examples.

1929-1940

Towards the end of the decade, American furniture saw the gradual change to functionalist design. Furthermore, the style changed radically because of the crash in the stock market in 1929. In the Depression era, American designers began to look at German modern design. The Bauhaus ideal of designing mass-produced objects for the wider public was well suited to the depressed American market in this era. Inexpensive industrial materials representing machine aesthetic were used popularly. The economic depression caused the discontinuation of the French inspired high-end furniture and the progressive modern organization of the AUDAC.¹¹

Indeed, the role of industrial designers became essential in this period and became the new creation of this period. The design approach was focused on the stylization of objects for mass consumption. Manufacturers and industrial designers produced to the new look of clean and functional lines that stimulated sales.

In terms of style of furniture in this period, furniture represented what the machine could most readily and effectively produce. Zigzag moderne expressing skyscrapers and the jazz age was one of the ways that machines could efficiently mass-produced. Streamline design was first used on transportation design and widely simulated to the decorative art objects. One of the most important changes among this period was that for the first time American design was able to influence Europe with this new streamline design.

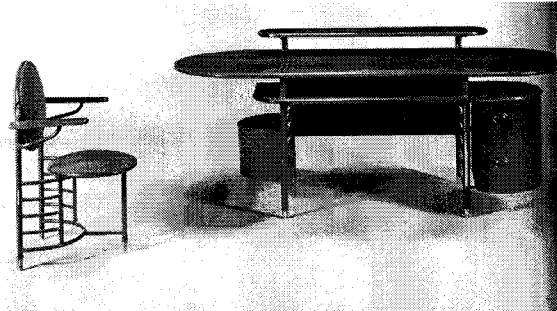


Fig.7. Frank Lloyd Wright. *Desk and Chair for Johnson Administration Building*, c.1937.

The use of aluminum, chrome and nickel-plated tubular steel dramatically increased. The use of metal was an efficient way to create machine aesthetic and streamlined design. The furniture by Frank Lloyd Wright designed for Johnson Wax Building represents the use of enameled brass steel to create streamline design (Fig. 7). Also, his furniture represents the radical change of furniture style compared to his earlier pieces.

By 1934 when the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York organized an exhibition of

⁹ Karen Davies, *At Home Manhattan: Modern Decorative Arts, 1925 to the Depression* (exh. cat., New Haven, CT: Yale University Art Gallery, 1983), 90.

¹⁰ Leonard, R.L. and C.A. Glassgold ed., *Modern American Design by the American Union of Decorative Artists and Craftsmen* (New York 1992), ix.

¹¹ Rosenthal and Ratzka 1948, 186.

“Contemporary American Industrial Art,” designers represented American modern design that was characterized by representing skyscrapers, metallic effects, and sleek surfaces (Fig. 8). The use of industrial materials with sleek streamlined form became dominant.



Fig. 8. Raymond Lowey and Lee Simonson. *Office of Industrial Designer* at the 1934 Industrial Design Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

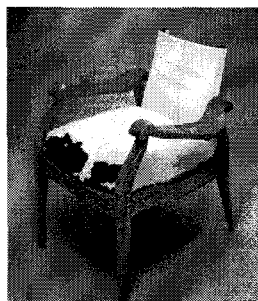


Fig. 9. Russel Wright. *Armchair*. 1934.

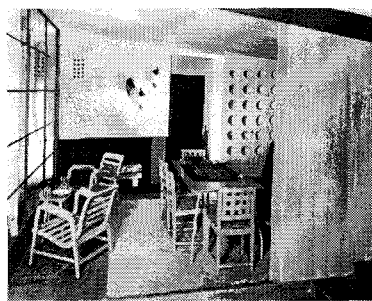


Fig. 10. Donald Deskey. *Sports Shark* at the 1940 Industrial Design Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

For domestic furniture natural materials were preferred as to metal. Therefore, as opposed to metal furniture representing sleek modernity, the interest in wooden furniture inspired by Scandinavian furniture increased. Through many international expositions, interest in Scandinavian furniture started with Swedish design and soon extended to in all of Scandinavia.¹² Especially, from the 1930s molded laminated wood furniture by Alvar Aalto drew great public attention through the Finnish Pavilion at the 1937 Paris Exposition and MoMA exhibition in 1938.



Fig. 11. Wharton Esherick. *Pennsylvania Hill House interior*, 1940.

An arm chair designed by American designer, Russel Wright in 1934 displayed the rejection of the machine aesthetic in this period (Fig. 9). Moreover, in the Industrial Design exhibition of 1940 at MMA, Donald Deskey designed the “Sports Shack” room representing the emphasis on natural materials (Fig. 10) reflecting radical change from the 1934 exhibition, which had represented sleek modern designs with industrial materials.

Moreover, Wharton Esherick who worked in this period took a different approach to creating furniture using natural materials. Esherick who had trained as a painter and sculptor, began to make handcrafted furniture in his studio at Paoli, Pennsylvania. He enjoyed handwork with respect

¹² Peter Anker, “Mid-Century: Years of International Triumph,” in David Revere McFadden, et. al., *Scandinavian Modern Design. 1880-1980*. (exh. cat., New York: CHM), 1982, 142.

for natural materials. Esherick created a totally integrated and sculpted space. Esherick treated every aspect of an interior as an organic whole, including sculpture, furniture and doors (Fig. 11). Esherick was the most important figure connecting the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement to the studio furniture movement after the Second World War.

The founding of Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan in 1932 came to play significant role developing modern design in the United States. Eliel Saarinen, a prominent Finnish architect and furniture designer at the period who immigrated to the United States, became the first director at Cranbrook. Connecting Arts and Crafts ideals, Cranbrook played an important role in promoting modern design and spreading Bauhaus ideals and Scandinavian design influences. Cranbrook followed the Bauhaus tradition of rejecting ornamentation and emphasizing instead form and function by focusing on workshop activities.¹³ Cranbrook students—Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Ralph Rapson, Harry Bertoia, Florence Schust Knoll—began to play significant roles in the mid-century American design along with furniture manufactures.

There came the second influx of European emigrant designers with the close of Bauhaus by the Nazis in 1933. Walter Gropius came to Harvard in 1937: Albers came to Black Mountain College in North Carolina in 1933: Mies van der Rohe came to Chicago and taught at Illinois Institute of Technology from 1938: Lázsló Mooly-Nagy founded the New Bauhaus in Chicago—later School of Design in 1937. The International style that began to known through the 1922 MoMA exhibition of *The International Style: Architecture since 1922*, was continuously promoted and taught by such Bauhaus teachers and designers as Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe throughout the forties and fifties. The recently emigrant Bauhaus teachers and designers continued to teach the International style, which is in the idiom of functional design of Bauhaus, in the United States throughout the forties and fifties.

AFTER WORLD WAR II

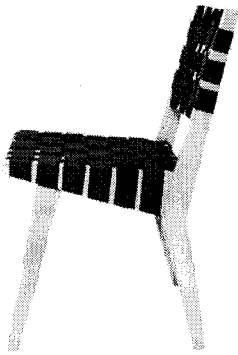


Fig. 12. Jens Risom, *Chair*, 1941-2 Knoll International.

Florence Schust Knoll was an important designer connecting the Bauhaus ideal of standardization in the United States. She worked for two Bauhaus designers, Marcel Breuer and Walter Gropius in Cambridge in 1940 and studied under Mies van der Rohe at Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago in 1941.¹⁴ She also studied under Eliel Saarinen at Cranbrook, learning the totality of design from him. In 1946, after her marriage to Hans Knoll, they formed Knoll Associates, Inc. which had been founded Hans Knoll Associates in 1938. Hans Knoll's father produced furniture in Germany hence Knoll had a long history of connections to the Bauhaus design. Florence Knoll was responsible for design and production while Hans was involved in sales and marketing.

The Bauhaus inspired furniture replaced the Danish style of wooden furniture since Florence Knoll had worked for Knoll.¹⁵ For example, the company produced Scandinavian inspired furniture designed by Danish-American designer, Jens Risom in 1941-2 (Fig. 12). The webbing seat and back on natural finished wood was

¹³ Paul J. Smith, *Craft Today: Poetry of Physical* (exh. cat., New York: American Craft Museum, 1986), 282.

¹⁴ Larrabee and Vignelli 1981, 133.

¹⁵ George H. Marcus, *Design in the Fifties* (Munich and New York: Prestel, 1998), 134-135.

reminiscent of Swedish modern furniture by Bruno Mathsson. The webbing seat was a wartime material that was used for army.¹⁶ However, Knoll Associates began to produce functionalist design of Bauhaus designers: for example Knoll began to produce Mies's "Barcelona" chair in 1948.¹⁷ Florence Knoll's rational design in *Custom Credenza* in the 1950s represented clearly in International style aesthetic (Fig. 13).

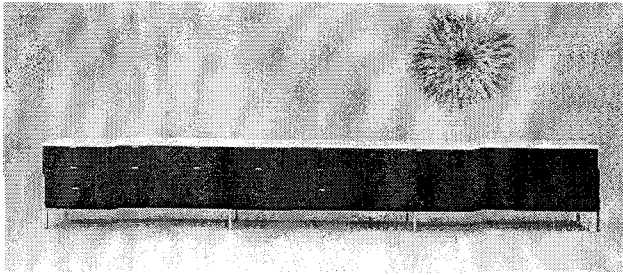


Fig.13. Florence Knoll. *Custom Credenza*, 1950s /c. 1965
Manufactured by Knoll International.

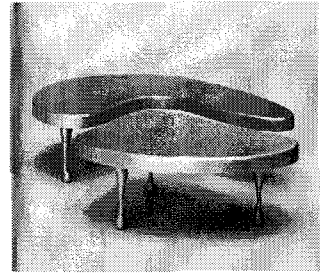


Fig.14. Frederick Kiesler.
Nesting Coffee Table, 1935-38.

Along with Bauhaus inspired furniture, there was organic design raised with surrealism in the late 1930s. While Bauhaus inspired furniture was often associated with office furniture, organic furniture was designed for new home furnishings in the post war period. In the late 1930s Austrian emigrant designer, Frederick Kiesler (Fig.14) and American designer, Isamu Noguchi began to design furniture in biomorphic shape.

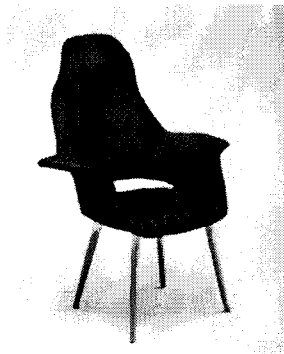


Fig.15. Charles Eames and
Eero Saarinen, *Armchair*
for "Organic design in
Home Furnishings
Competition." c. 1942

When the Museum of Modern Art in New York organized the competition of "Organic Design in Home Furnishing" in 1941 to promote modern design, the competition increased the preference for organic design dramatically. In this competition, Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen won the first prize with their chair design, creating one continuous seat by using bent lamination technique (Fig. 15). The design incorporated new technology of using molded plywood. The chair by Eames and Saarinen was formed of foam rubber covered with upholstery over plywood shells. The advanced technology developed during the Second World War made it possible to make molded seats bent in compound curves. Their design and the competition became a hallmark of launching the organic modern design.

The Second World War was one of the most significant events in the American furniture design, which marked as the beginning of dominant domestic influences. Before the Second World War, American designers looked to the European designs for their inspirations. However, after the

¹⁶ Cara Greenberg. *Mid-Century Modern* (New York 1984), 33.

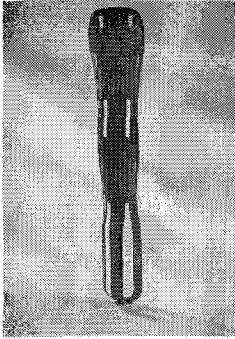


Fig.16. Charles Eames. *Leg splint*, 1942.

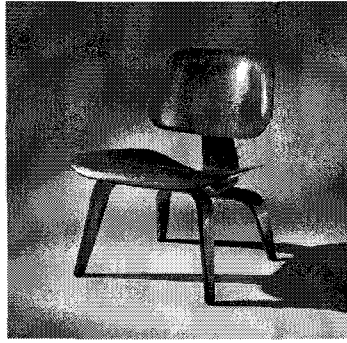


Fig.17. Charles Eames, *Birch* LCW, 1946.

Second World War, when the United States became the most powerful nation in the world, American designers such as Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen who studied at Cranbrook began to influence Europe. In fact, domestic influences began to grow stronger than foreign influences in the post war years. Therefore, the furniture in the post war period was the result of the development of new technology and booming consumerism as veterans returned to home.

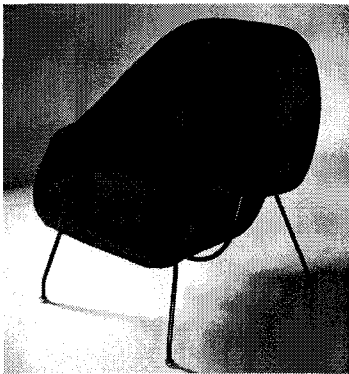


Fig.18. Eero Saarinen, *Womb Chair* 1946 Molded fiberglass seat shell, steel. Manufactured by Knoll International.

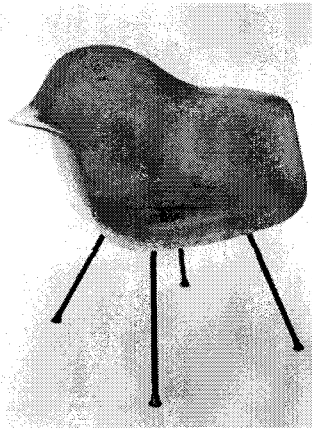


Fig.19. Charles Eames, *Chair*, 1948-50. Fiberglass, rubber, and steel, Manufactured by Zenith Plastics, Gardena, CA.

In terms of new technology developed during the war, molded plywood became an enormously influential material in the mid century furniture design. From the nineteenth century bent lamination technique was used to create lightweight and was appropriate for mass produced chairs. In the twentieth century, Finnish architect Alvar Aalto designed furniture using bent laminated technique in the advanced technology plywood in compound

the previous decades. However, made it possible to bend

curves that was more appropriate to ergonomics. In 1942 Charles Eames used advanced technology to make leg-splints for wounded servicemen in the Second World War (Fig. 16). Charles Eames later designed two separate pieces of molded plywood chairs manufactured by Evan Wood Products in 1946 and later by Herman Miller (Fig. 17).

In addition to the bent lamination techniques, plastics gave great impact on mid-century furniture. Fiberglass was a wartime material that did not exist before the Second World War. The *Womb* chair by Eero Saarinen manufactured by Knoll in 1948 was the first fiberglass chair manufactured in America (Fig. 18). Since the molded shell was completely upholstered, the fiberglass is not exposed. However, this was a new technology to produce chair in an efficient way. A few years later, Eames took it to the next step by creating the first one-piece plastic chair exposed of its material (Fig. 19). The plastic shell chair was a remarkable way to create lightweight chair that was inexpensive and displayed them in a colorful way. Bright color schemes also suggested

optimistic life after the war.¹⁸ In fact, with the development of the technology during the war, furniture designers had more chances to use new materials for design possibilities of organic form of furniture.

After the Second World War had ended in 1946, as veterans from the war returned to home or began to build new houses through the G.I. Bill of Rights, a whole new middle market was formed.¹⁹ The shortage of houses made the emergence of prefabricated houses which was a new technology of building inexpensive houses in time-effective way in this period.²⁰ Such designers as Saarinen and Eames tried to capitalize new forms and materials for the whole new market.

In this milieu Edgar Kaufmann Jr. organized “International Competition for Low-Cost Furniture Design” at MoMA in 1948 to elevate the public life after the long wartime and to boost the low-cost mass-produced furniture.²¹ Kaufmann noted, “furniture that is adaptable to small apartments and houses, furniture that is well designed yet moderate in price, that is comfortable but not bulky, and that can be easily moved, stored, and cared for; in other words mass-produced furniture that is planned and executed to fit the needs of modern living, production and merchandising.”²²

Storage units and foldable furniture were essential and economical items for post war modern living. Isamu Noguchi designed series of tables with boomerang shape top manufactured by Herman Miller representing biomorphic style of modern. The table in 1947 can be folded which was easier for manufacturer to produce at low cost and for consumer after the war (Fig. 20). Moving away from the geometric formalism of the modern movement, the proliferation for free form asymmetrical furniture continued. Indeed, boomerang shape furniture became one of icons of post war design.

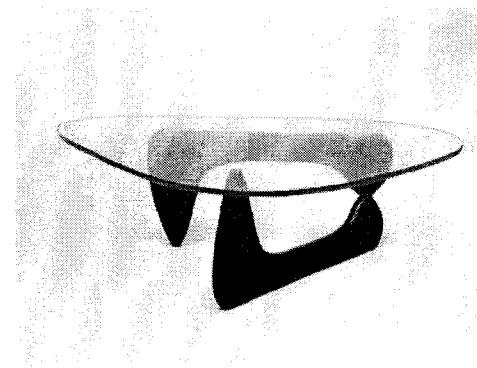


Fig.20. Isamu Noguchi. *Coffee Table*. c. 1947.

The role of MoMA in encouraging furniture manufactures and elevating the public taste in the post-war design in America continued in the fifties by organizing exhibitions of “Good Design” between 1950 to 1955. The exhibition was held jointly with the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. The manufacturers in the exhibitions were able to make changes to stimulate the sales with the stamp of approval.²³

Nonetheless, in this climate, the studio furniture movement as part of the Craft Revival appeared in reaction to low-cost and mass-produced furniture. So-called studio furniture has represented an alternative for people who want individual objects

in their homes rather than industrially produced products. Opposed to plastics and industrial material, artists in studio craft mainly focused on one natural material, emphasizing its singular beauty.

Studio craft is defined by Davira Taragin as, “unique or limited edition works created primarily

¹⁸ Marcus 1998, 8.

¹⁹ Ibid 1998, 39.

²⁰ Ibid 1998, 37.

²¹ Aaron Betsky et al. *Sitting on the edge* (exh. cat., New York: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1998), 30.

²² Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. *Prize designs for modern furniture from the International competition for Low-Cost Furniture Design* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1950), 6.

²³ Greenberg 1984, 25.

in small studio environments or in university programs.”²⁴ The craft revival in the United States was rooted in the ideals of John Ruskin and William Morris, advocating back to nature and craft and against the industrial production, became basis of the studio furniture movement in the United States. Nonetheless, in the stylistic development of studio furniture, Scandinavian modern design was a predominant influence. Although Scandinavian furniture in the period was largely mass-produced, American craftsmen were fascinated by the aesthetics of natural expression in Scandinavian furniture, especially Danish furniture that mostly relied on natural materials with restrained forms.

The craft education in a college or a university in the post-war period made it possible to be educated to the same level as in the fine arts.²⁵ The most important contribution in the proliferation of craft education in colleges and universities was the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act—G.I. Bill of Rights in 1944 that funded the tuition and living expenses of veterans.²⁶

In the American craft education, Scandinavians directly devoted spreading studio furniture. The American Craft Council recruited Danish craftsman, Tage Frid to teach in the wood department of the School for American Craftsmen at Alfred University in New York in 1948 and at Rochester Institute of Technology in 1951.²⁷ After Frid was recruited by the Rhode Island School of Design in 1962, Scandinavian furniture design continued to teach at SAC with the guidance of James Krenov who had studied in Sweden and joined to the faculty at RIT in 1968.²⁸ The 1950s, with the boom in consumerism the further expansion of craft education that had been founded in the earlier decades and newly established craft departments resulted in proliferation of the studio craft movement.

Table 1. Foreign Influence and Domestic Character by Time Period

Time Period		Foreign Influence	Domestic Character
Before World War I	1900-1914	British Arts and Crafts Japanese	
Inter War Period	1915-1925	Historical Wiener Werkstätte	
	1925-1929	French Art Deco	
	1929-1940	German Bauhaus Scandinavian	Streamlining Design
World War II	1941-1945 1945-	Scandinavian German Bauhaus	Organic Design -Bent Lamination -FRP Studio Furniture

²⁴ Davira Spiro Taragin, ed., *Contemporary Crafts and Saxe Collection*. (exh., cat. Toledo, OH: Toledo Museum of Art, 1993), 12.

²⁵ Ibid 1993, 15.

²⁶ Ibid 1993, 11-12.

²⁷ Michael Stone, *Contemporary American Woodworkers*, (Salt Lake City 1986), 48, 60.

²⁸ Ibid 1986, 113.

CONCLUSION

The first half of the twentieth century, there were strong foreign influences. After the two world wars, strong domestic influences came into play. The two world wars provided the essential catalysts for change: new materials, developing technology, and changes in life style and consumer values. In the early of the century, American designers were influenced by British, French, German and infrequently Austrian modern design responding to change of social needs. However, American designers indeed developed their own characteristics and conversely influenced to Europe with streamlining design from the 1930s. Furthermore, after the Second World War, Organic design based on newly developed technology of bent lamination and new material of FRP characterize true American modern furniture design. All throughout the century, advances in technology and adaptation of new materials allowed designers greater freedom in experimentation and expression.

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