



旧石川組製糸西洋館 Seiyōkan

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埼玉モダンたてもレポーター

埼玉県民生活部国際課国際交流員 ジェーン・ホマーディング

Jane Hommerding, Coordinator for International Relations

and Reporter for *Saitama Modern Architecture*

International Division, Department of Public Services

Saitama Prefectural Government

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入間市にある旧石川組製糸西洋館は、大正10年頃の竣工からほとんど変わらない立派な建物です。西洋館の歴史を考えると、ほとんど変わっていないことが信じられなくなります。始めは石川組製糸の関係で来日しているアメリカ人のビジネスマン等を歓迎する場所、戦後は進駐軍に接収されアメリカ人の3家族が住む場所、その後は日本人の住宅、そして現在は文化財として公開されるとともに、ミュージックビデオ、テレビ番組、映画等のロケ地としても使われています。

The Seiyōkan (literally, the Western House), originally built for the Ishikawa Silk Company and located in Iruma City, is a magnificent building hardly changed from the date of its completion in 1921. This is particularly surprising considering its varied history – first as a place to receive American businessmen with ties to the silk company, later as housing for American families after it was confiscated by occupying forces after World War II, then as a private Japanese home, and finally as a designated cultural property open to public observation and used as a shooting location for music videos, TV shows, and movies.



石川組製糸と西洋館は石川家のもので、茶業をやめてから製糸の業界で会社を立ち上げた石川幾太郎は、海外からの来賓を歓迎するため西洋館を建設しました。幾太郎の弟である石川和助が熱心なキリスト教信者で、地元（黒須地区）で伝道を始め、家族も洗礼を受けました。幾太郎と和助が信じるキリスト教の教義は、西洋館の建築や製糸会社の倫理規定に影響を与えました。建築の面では、キリスト教の

象徴である葡萄のモチーフが使われています。（先日訪れた宮代町にも葡萄のデザインがありましたが意味は異なります。）倫理規定の面では、製糸工場で働いていた若い女性たちは家族と同じように扱われ、合理的な労働時間で働いていたと言われていました。

The Ishikawa Silk Company and the Seiyōkan were first owned by the Ishikawa family. Ishikawa Ikutarō, who built up the silk company after failing to break into the tea industry, used the Seiyōkan to receive guests from abroad. Ikutarō's younger brother Wasuke had studied abroad in the United States and became a Christian priest; when he returned to Japan, he preached at a church older than the Seiyōkan (but on the same block), and his whole family were baptized. Ikutarō and Wasuke's Christian beliefs influenced both the architecture of the house (furniture in the dining room also features grapes – this time as a religious symbol, unlike the grape theme I encountered in my previous trip to Miyashiro Town) and the company's ethics (young women who worked at the silk factories were treated as members of the family at the Seiyōkan and had reasonable working hours).



Find the grapes! On cabinets, on drawers, on drapes!

西洋館は、石川幾太郎のアメリカ人のビジネスパートナーをもてなすために建てられたので、アメリカやヨーロッパの影響が感じられます。建てられた時から電灯があり、2階のある部屋を除いて日本の伝統的な障子や畳の代わりに木の床や壁紙が使われ、木や布張りをしたテーブル、椅子、ソファ等がありました。季節の植物を描いたキリスト教の教会を思い出させるスタンドガラスもあります。1920年代の日本では、これらの特徴は、比較的に珍しいものです。

Since the Seiyōkan catered to Ikutarō's American business partners, there is significant American and European influence in the construction: almost all the original lights were electric, the walls and floors of all but a few of the upstairs rooms were made with wood and wallpaper (instead of Japanese shōji screens or tatami mats), and wooden and upholstered tables, chairs, and couches. There are also a series of stained glass panels, reminiscent of Christian churches, depicting seasonal flowers. These features were all relatively rare in 1920s Japan.



Original upholstered chairs.



The staircase and table and chairs below.



Stained glass depicting seasonal plants and flowers.



しかし、西洋館は日本の建築の影響を受けていないわけではありません。天井は、典型的な日本の住宅より高いですが、伝統的な模様や作り方が用いられました。各天井はユニークな特徴があります。当初は畳のある和室もありましたが、進駐軍が接収して洋風に改造され、返還後に和室に戻されました。西洋館の不思議なものの一つは、たんに書かれている漢字です。

That isn't to say the Seiyōkan is without any Japanese influence. The ceilings, though higher than a typical Japanese home, were traditionally patterned and constructed. Each ceiling has unique features. There were originally some Japanese-style rooms with tatami as well, but these rooms were converted into Western-style ones by the occupying forces and only later restored in a Japanese style. One mystery of the house is a series of *kanji* (Chinese characters used in Japanese) on a wooden cabinet; the origins of the words (China or Japan) are still unclear, but the cabinet has been in the house from the beginning.



Japanese room; note the *tokonoma* "closet" on the right.



The mysterious cabinet.

石川組製糸は1937年に解散しましたが、西洋館は関東大震災や第二次世界大戦から被害を受けませんでした。戦後は進駐軍に接収され、ジョンソン基地（現在入間基地）に近かったため、アメリカ人の将校や民間の者とその家族に家として、そして基地を訪れる連合国軍最高司令官総司令部の高官たちの迎賓館として使用されました。「ベースハウジング」として扱われたので、米軍の定期的な検査の対象となりました。畳や障子の代わりに木の床や壁を入れたり、床の間にドアを加えてクロゼットにしたり、和室を変更したアメリカ人は、2階の大広間のとなりに1940年代のアメリカ風のキッチンも作ったりしました。その改造や屋根の取り換えのような必要な改修以外は、西洋館はほとんど元の状態のままでした。

The silk company collapsed in 1937, but the Seiyōkan went undamaged during the Great Kanto Earthquake and World War II. After the war, the Seiyōkan was confiscated by the occupying forces. Because it was located near the Johnson Air Base (present-day Iruma Air Base), the house was used by the American families of commissioned officers and private contractors and also hosted higher-ups from the General Headquarters of the occupying forces on their visits to the base. As part of "base housing," the Seiyōkan was subject to regular military inspection. In addition to changing the Japanese-style rooms on the second floor (taking out the tatami and shōji in favor of wood, converting the *tokonoma* alcoves into closets by adding doors, etc), the Americans added a modern kitchen off the second-floor hall. Other than those modifications and other necessary repairs, such as replacing the roof, the rest of the house was largely left in its original condition.



The added kitchen – a piece of 1940s America.



Furniture on the second floor.



Furniture continuing a traditional Japanese theme – seasonal flowers – in a fusion of styles.

朝鮮戦争後、基地の職員は日本を去り、西洋館は石川さん一家が 1955 年頃から 1962 年にかけて住みました。1962 年以降でもお客さんを迎える時、西洋館で時間を過ごしました。私が訪問した時、石川さんのお話をうかがいました。同級生を全員誘って食堂で食べたり遊んだりしたことや、両親、祖母、妹と一緒に生活していた頃の思い出話が非常に興味深かったです。お話によりますと、西洋館での日常生活はかなり不便だったそうです。町の中央部から離れており、高い天井のせいで冬は寒かったが、屋敷が広く自分の部屋があったことが良かったというお話でした。家族が西洋館の維持に心をかけてきたお陰で現在の西洋館があるのです。現在、西洋館は国登録有形文化財で、春と秋に数日公開されますので、機会があったら行ってみてください！

Most of the base personnel left Japan after the Korean War, and the Seiyōkan fell back into the hands of the Ishikawa family (descendants of the original owners), who lived there from around 1955 to 1962, but continued using the house after that time to host guests. During my visit, I was able to speak with Mr. Ishikawa, who reminisced about inviting his entire class at school to eat and play in the dining hall while living in the house with his parents, grandmother, aunt, uncle, and sister. Daily life in the Seiyōkan was, by his account, rather inconvenient – its high ceilings made the house cold in the winter and it wasn't near the center of town – but he was happy to have his own room! This family also made sure the house was preserved and restored so that the Seiyōkan still exists today. Now a designated cultural property, the Seiyōkan is open to the public for a few days in the spring and the fall.



The dining hall.



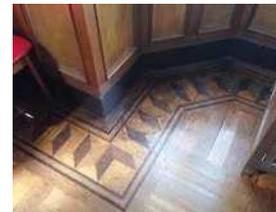
Western room, Japanese ceiling.



On the stairway (a silk reel).



An optical illusion – same floor, different angles.



A selection of floor and ceiling design (above and below), and a bonus cabinet with Christian imagery.

