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Authentic Design? Transnationalism and Modernities in Modern East Asian Design Development I: Fashion

The two panels in this session concern the notions of authenticity in the production of three design activities, graphics, craft/products and fashion, across three East Asian regions, China, Japan and Korea. Design creation involves a series of activity ranging from cultural borrowing to branding to re-branding. The varied socio-cultural and historical trajectories in China, Japan and Korea mean that both East Asian and non-East Asian producers are involved in its making. A presumed transnational process seems to be at work yet challenges the expectation of 'authentic tradition' in modern design development in East Asia. The extent to which 'Chineseness' or 'Japaneseness' or 'Koreaness' expressed in a specific creation can represent its design identity deserves inquiry. In another words, the components of these terms under the rubric of authenticity and transnationality warrant critical scrutiny. Questions arise include the various kinds of 'authenticity' discourse in relation to modern design creation and development, the ways in which the idea of 'authenticity' engages with modernity, its relation to consumption, national/transnational cultural dynamics and the implications on 'Orientalism' and/or 'Self-Orientalising', and hybridity. This panel seeks to address these questions through case studies of graphic, craft/product and fashion design in China, Japan and Korea in the 20th and 21st century.