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The Construction of Japaneseness in Fashion Design

How Japanese designers fabricated the notion of 'Japaneseness' in clothing production is the aim of my presentation. Western clothing culture has been assimilated into mainstream clothing in Japan whilst fading away traditional clothes since the Meiji restoration in 1868. While young designers like Issey Miyake and Kansai Yamamoto in the late 1960s challenged conventions through their highly unique styles inspired by the hippie movement, a new generation of fashion designers in 2000s reverts to redefine their own tradition in response against cultural globalization. How did the mixing of two different cultures come about in Japanese clothing? What is media and consumers' reception of 'Japaneseness' in Japanese fashion? My paper begins with a brief history of Japanese fashion by focusing on the transgressed boundary in Japanese fashion design and how some Japanese design practitioners struggled to mediate between different cultures. Based on interviews with the new generation of Japanese fashion designers, it investigates how identities are constructed in the new Japanese fashion through which issues of cultural identity in design production will be discussed.