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Our Kimono Mind: Reflections on 'Japanese Design: A Survey since 1950'[1]

Bernard Rudofsky's ingenious text of 1965, *The Kimono Mind*,[2] attempts to understand Japan through the metaphor of the kimono, acknowledging in a quote from Lafcadio Hearn that the Westerner must 'feel indescribably toward Japan'. Rudofsky is perspicacious in thinking of apparel as a significant form of expression and even as a mediation between Japan and the West. Perhaps even as Japan has moved beyond the kimono *per se*, there is even more reason to observe that there are intellectual and other qualities associated with Japanese dress that now surround and convince us in the West as never before.

For example, I would argue that we could not imagine the contemporary phenomenon of oversizing in apparel from sportswear to tailored styles without the Japanese role in Western dress. Let me remind you that there was a time when 'large' was not the only size of T-shirts, tops, bottoms, and other basics. In the 1980s and 1990s, our sportswear has been transmogrified from elements of fit to amplitude. Further, I would argue that we would not have achieved the relative deconstruction of tailored clothing in menswear and womenswear without the example of Japanese dress. With a layering, cloaking propensity offered as a fundamental alternative to tailored clothing comes as well a completely different body *vis-à-vis* clothing expression, subverting or at least posing an option for dress beyond the simple erotics and mechanics of underlying and visible body. Wilful scorn of tailoring is also indicative of a nonchalance and preference for the irregular and unconstrained with clothing composed on the body in a kind of informal pastiche not like even earlier sportswear in the West, but also a function of the kimono mind as it has been introduced to the West. This is not to say that Kenzo, Kawakubo, Miyake, and others cannot employ tailoring to a purpose, but the ethos of their clothing is about the piling on of layers, a construction of continuous tissues on the body.

Further, modern Western culture has assumed fashion to be an élitist form with trickle-down process; contemporary fashion's axiomatic predilection for a broader base and the possibilities of street-chic, trickle-up desires conforms to the model of a more universal dress recognized in Japan. Kawakubo's 1982–3 'lace' sweater with its fragile, moth-eaten character is, of course, indicative of this economic equivocation, so clearly invoking the most rarefied and the most *abîmé* in the same garment. The West assumes that 'street' and couture are antipodes; Japanese design begins with no such assumption and Japanese fashion proceeds from no such dialectic. Rather, we realize a reconciliation and resolution between social and economic extremes. Issey Miyake's recent pleats are a utopian clothing of broad outreach and of social reformation, not a specialized fashion for an aristocracy or style élite.

Further, I would contend that the kimono-shop style that we now see so prevalent in Western retailing, especially as practised by The Gap, would be unthinkable in Western merchandising without the example of Japan. In short, the kimono mind is the compelling faculty of contemporary fashion; we in the West have seen our world transformed by Japanese dress in my lifetime. It is impossible to describe and analyse late twentieth-century fashion in Europe and America without taking account of the substantive contribution of Japanese design. In this, I describe no phase of exoticism, but a change in fashion at its matrix and the resonant changes of fashion in its system in which the West is now ever changed by the presence of Japanese fashion and its ethos. The 'kimono mind' is our contemporary perspective on fashion worldwide.

In the second half of the twentieth century and most particularly in the past twenty years, Japanese designers have recast Western fashion in its most radical transformation since the technological innovation in the nineteenth century of ready-to-wear apparel. The transformation is not only of the design of the garment, but of the fashion system from its

matrix through its fulfilment in consumption. In 1972, Kenzo told Bernadine Morris of the *New York Times*, 'Fashion is not for the few—it is for all the people'.[3] Western fashion, traditionally a sumptuary art emanating from and aspiring to high style and rarity of materials, was changed in a cultural redefinition, an understanding that clothing and fashion are an indivisible phenomenon. As important as Japan's paradigm in showing the West a new pictorial representation that became inextricably a part of Impressionism and modern art and concepts of space and form that transformed twentieth-century architecture, Japanese fashion has rebuilt the structure of contemporary fashion worldwide. To be sure, the West was prompted to change by internal forces, including those acutely observed by Issey Miyake in Paris in 1968, but Japanese design offered the authority and system for Western fashion to change. In this, Japan has offered not merely discrete new perceptions, but a wholly different vision of the phenomenon of fashion. That is, we in the West relinquish only reluctantly our *ancien régime* of the couture's hegemony and of fashion's status, though fashion's cultural status in the West is ironically lower than elsewhere because of our culture's particular repudiation of women and of the discourse of the body.

Of Japan, Roland Barthes argued, 'the empire of signifiers is so immense, so in excess of speech, that the exchange of signs remains of a fascinating richness, mobility, and subtlety'.[4] In the final third of the century, Western fashion struggled to find a new sign system that recognized fashion as a quotidian phenomenon more than as a function of an élitist couture, that observed richness in the propagation of imagery and cognate advertising, and that appreciated invention of both product and the application of garment artefacts to styling. As an intellectual system, Western dress yearned for a new universal. Why did Japanese designers offer the best new options from the 1970s to the 1990s? Japanese design offers the extant alternative that reconciles kimono ceremony and applied use for dress (formality and informality). The ethos of fashion in Japan, and especially the objectives of the new designers, did not functionally separate the best from the most basic in apparel. And Japan offered an aesthetic and practical possibility beyond conventional Western tailoring.

The importance of Japanese fashion to the West since 1970 is not of inventive designers alone, but of a comprehensive aesthetic shift. By 1978, Issey Miyake would rightly declare in his book title, *East Meets West*.[5] The encounter was already fruitful for the West, as so many ideas of Japanese design were already coming to the West through a first generation of important Japanese designers, especially Issey Miyake, but also Kenzo, Kansai Yamamoto, and (somewhat earlier) Hanae Mori. These designers were bringing some things, especially textiles, but they were not traders. They were, in fact, the future for fashion. Fitful fluctuations between the formal and informal, jeans and the late-1970s oxymoron of designer jeans, and the increasing role and potential of ready-to-wear clothing demonstrated the need for a new and unified solution to clothing in the West.

Further, in the West as in every culture, fashion has traditionally been associated with special occasions, whether collective ceremonies or individually fulfilled rites of passage. But the West had also associated dress with times of the day and occasions specific to daily life, thus a differentiated outfit for riding, separate apparel for other sports, particular dress for cocktails and early evening, and distinctive dress for the evening. This stratified dress—with its dogmatic coding—was in degeneration by the 1960s due to changing social standards, but its vestiges remained. When the West sought an apparel that was less specific to place and function, Japanese design again offered a perfect, beckoning example. Western fashion was bound to a principle of differentiations by gender, class, value, and even specific occasion. Fashion in our time has instead demanded fashion that is detached from specific purpose to serve many options and existing in a free realm of intellectual and aesthetic postulation. Japan has provided the model of adaptability that has been required for functions of dress and for reasons of modern simplicity in life.

Additionally, Western dress has customarily been associated with an aesthetic appropriation to the purpose and occasion of the garment. For example, day wear is conservative; evening wear is extravagant and fanciful. Japanese designers such as Rei Kawakubo, Issey Miyake, and Kansai Yamamoto offer a wholly different view of clothing. The emotional and spiritual presence of the clothing takes no regard for the time of day, but only for the emotional and intellectual position of the designer and thereby

of the wearer [1–2].[6] Thus, there are designers who are invariably *hade*, displaying the boisterous, unmitigated joyousness and celebration of life; others are of *jimi* quietude and implied spiritualism just as much on the basis of personal proclivity and aesthetic, designing for the contemplative, almost introspective view of life. Japan has traditionally been needed by the West and Japonisme has been constructed by the West to afford first an opulent and exotic model of Kabuki, Samurai, and *ukioy-e* culture, then also to provide a spiritual quiet in alternative to the secular din of Western culture.[7] In fact, the West has more or less eradicated its indigenous forms of spiritual dress; Miyake and Kawakubo are perhaps the designers who today come closest to an apparel of metaphysical or spiritual allusion in their pensive reserve and intellect.

In the Middle Ages in the West, two options for human behaviour were offered: *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, but this simple and useful dialectic has waned in the West, not apparent in any clothing but that of reclusive hermits and religious orders. The clear choice in Japanese culture between *hade* and *jimi* expression pervades all decisions of dress. Kansai Yamamoto's delightful *hade* joy might be akin to Jean Paul Gaultier's aggressively optimistic fashion; the imperturbable *jimi* serenity of Rei Kawakubo and Issey Miyake (though his earlier

1 Rei Kawakubo, design for Comme des Garçons, 1982 (photo by Peter Lindbergh)

2 Issey Miyake, design in pewlon and wool, 1977 (photo by Bishin Jumonji)

work had aspects of *hade* exuberance) is admired but not equalled in the West. That same choice is now operative in the West and no one is forced into undue frivolity of a gala evening or of uncharacteristic sobriety during the day and working life. The West has realized another standard of clothing behaviour that reads the signs of *hade* and *jimi* even in Western culture as deliberate decisions on the part of the individual and therefore an important, functioning part of modern expression. Today one's wardrobe in the West discloses the basic sensibility of the individual who wears the clothing, equally for all times of day: he or she who wears *hade* flamboyance will have a very different attire than one who prefers sober *jimi* clothes. This reformation of Western dress has, in fact, been the force that has made fashion more important than ever, indicative of individuals and not merely determined by protocols of the day and circumstance. Even the sense of designer identity and consumer's allegiance to a designer's sensibility that now prevails in ready-to-wear clothing in the West has been encouraged by the Japanese in providing an example of strong designer personality and singularity. Whereas American and European culture had willingly recognized the designer of couture and élite clothing, the recognition of the designer's presence and sensibility in common clothing was diffuse. First in America, and from there, Europe, the designer's identity is ever more present in secondary lines.

Of course, the Japanese model provides wonderfully for Western culture. The prior necessity for the designer to attend to one sensibility for one category of clothing and to another for clothing to another purpose was a kind of schizophrenia and perhaps ultimately a design compromise. By seizing deliberate style leadership, the designer is not forced to compromise a vision and the aesthetic is paramount. In fact, if one applies this simple dialectic, the rivalry of two Milanese designers, Gianni Versace and Giorgio Armani, becomes a clear contrast between Armani's *jimi* softness and earthbound palette and Versace's effulgent *hade*, over-the-top stylistics.

By these substantive variances from the tradition of fashion in the West has modern dress been irrevocably altered. Culture and particularly the West's voracious assimilation of Japanese culture in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s have led the change in fashion, but the specifics of fashion have changed as well due to concepts and achievements of Japanese designers in America and Europe. The long voyage by sea that took Kenzo from Yokohama to Marseilles in 1964–5 is now a fast and easy commutation in ideas and garments.

Both traditional and contemporary Japanese fashion has approached the human body differently than Western dress. Tailoring and the body-penumbra or body-shaping silhouette have been paramount in Western culture, whereas layered cushioning and abstract shaping have been more characteristic of Japanese design, as evident in Issey Miyake's work.[8] Even today Western culture tends to hang clothing; Japanese culture tends to fold clothing. The erotic and feminine ideal of Western dress simulates the body, whereas the wrapping, geometric abstract, and cloaking of Issey Miyake and Rei Kawakubo have functioned in a completely opposite way. It is a revelation for the West, remaking fashion from the body outward, to realize what Japanese fashion has always known and foremost Japanese designers have proved: that the body carries the garment organically, but that the garment may secure its own expression beyond that which is merely the body's double or interpreted silhouette. Of course, the propensity to wrapping in place of the tailored definition of the body is one that has profound ramifications for contemporary dress, promoting both oversizing as a model and a virtual one-size-fits-all aptitude heretofore unknown in high-style Western dress. Cloaking and swaddling the body is a manner that builds outward; Western dress had tended to migrate inward.

The crux of technical skill in Western dress has traditionally been in tailoring. Japanese design has offered the possibility of exceptional skills brought to dress beyond tailoring. Hanae Mori has brought the most refined crafts in subtly coloured fields of beadwork and embroidery, as from ancient craft, to the modern vocabulary of dress. Issey Miyake has commanded virtuoso skills of textiles, dyeing, and decoration to the untailored garment. Of course, the predisposition to tailoring and cut in Western dress inevitably limits and focuses fields of ornamentation; contemporary Japanese dress, as conceived in flat fields of cloth, even as subsequently wrapped or folded, provide a larger domain of decoration. I remind you of Issey Miyake's Vitruvian garment. Moreover, without the predisposition to the body's articulation that tailoring implies, decoration is more abstract as it is not innately located on and compromised by the body. The Occident's propensity to exo-skeleton and tailored form is inherently antagonistic to the textile's fulfilment in flat beauty. The possibility for pattern and textile to maintain their primacy is accommodated by this Japanese approach. Tailoring necessarily obliterates or obfuscates the larger patterning of cloth. We could not be as we are today without the intervention of the Japanese alternative to tailored clothing. Not only is conventional high style transformed, but so too are the several current avant-garde forms with such designers as Martin Margiela of France and Belgium and John Galliano of England and France recurrently indebted to Kawakubo and Miyake.

Correspondingly, fit has been the paramount achievement of Western dress. In the couture, the garment is made for unique, perfect fit. Even in Western ready-to-wear, fit is the function of precise sizing, often arrived at with complex measurements and with anticipation of demographic needs and wishes. Advanced Japanese fashion, in loose fit and layered and wrapped oversizing, has transformed the fit of contemporary clothing. With less impact in France, clinging to its traditions of fit, Italy and the United States have embraced the Japanese penchant for drapery to a much more exaggerated droopy oversizing that defies the conventions of fit. One could hardly imagine Romeo Gigli's pensive and

poetic fashion without the work of Yohji Yamamoto or even Giorgio Armani's earthy palette and natural grandeur of textures without Issey Miyake.

Contemporary Japanese fashion has questioned the nature of dress in a way unparalleled in recent Western dress. Miyake begins *East Meets West* with fundamental enquiry regarding the nature and function of apparel. That examination *ad originem* has not been conducted in late Western dress. Examining the properties of cloth, even pursuing body painting and tattoo, Miyake involves fashion in a more trenchant examination than that in the West. Perhaps because the Western tradition, reasoning from a Genesis text, associated clothing with modesty (and, of course, made fashion re-reveal the body), Western culture has inhibited any thorough investigation of fashion's primary purposes. Moreover, the West's twentieth-century preoccupation with fashion for women and doubt in corresponding expression for men has tended to emphasize the gender and sex differentiation in fashion. The extreme and often ludicrous attempts of Western dress, with the battle cry of unisex, to redress gender dichotomies were patently unsuccessful. Ironically, Japanese fashion has stood in the 1980s and 1990s in particular as a model for the West's new-found desire to reconcile dress for men and women. Jil Sander and Giorgio Armani have both clearly looked at contemporary Japanese design and popular styles to render their fluid and androgynous suits and jackets. Ironically, many Western observers of Japan have remarked on the nuanced difference in Japan between men's attire and women's. A cultural issue of gender equity has prompted the West to look to Japan as a model for clothing that acknowledges gender difference, but that also unifies. 'Clothing,' argues Akiko Fukai, 'does not exist to adorn women as sex objects but as logical attire.'[9] In particular, Kawakubo's Stygian women of wondrous swathing and shaping have not been the overt vixens of the West, however enthralling they may be in terms of fashion. Arguably, Western fashion has been so long, so insensitively, and so unquestioningly propelled by erotic desire that the examples of Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo, Kenzo, and Yohji Yamamoto for women of power and independence have been a fundamental option and one so apt, even politically correct, to our time.

While Western dress has a long history of borrowing (often surreptitiously) from other cultures, especially from Japan, contemporary Japanese fashion expects both encyclopaedic and global references for fashion. Syncretistic assimilation of many styles, the aggregate of a new style from an assembly of many sources, and the joy of multiple styles working better in versatile compatibility than in singular isolation are traits of contemporary Japanese fashion that have led the way for the West to admit to its multicultural appropriations. In particular, Kenzo's vagabondage and eclectic mix of styles, including his splendid Scandinavian sweaters of 1973 as one instance among many, Hanae Mori's international resources of techniques and pattern, and Issey Miyake's inventive, ultimately indeterminate style minglings exemplify a more advanced idea of apparel globalism than that of the West. Rei Kawakubo's spring 1991 referencing of Gothic stained glass is of an erudition and enthusiasm unaccustomed in Western fashion and deeply respectful of the Western visual tradition. Folkloric renewal, even of exotic European traditions by Kenzo, a steadfast understanding of Chinese dress by the Japanese, and a fresh, unprejudiced look at Egypt, India, and Sub-Saharan Africa have been provided by Issey Miyake and Kenzo. The proposition of a contemporary, hybrid culture has come to supplant the monolithic culture of the West, advancing chiefly in colonialist or imperialist appropriation of its best observations and outreach. For these designers the aesthetic of absorption provides a model for contemporary fashion. Arguably, even for Japanese designers who have chosen to locate their international junction in Paris, the American aesthetic responds best—more naturally and more quickly than Europe—to the polyglot internationalism of contemporary Japanese fashion.

Even the conspicuous return of black to fashion in the 1980s and 1990s—eschewed since its last revival in Beat Generation black of the 1950s—in the West has been chiefly sponsored by Japanese designers, especially Kawakubo. Its *jimi* spirit is justified in the history of black attire in the West, but fashion black of the contemporary era is primarily inspired by Japanese design.

Fashion has always held an inferior place in the hierarchy of the arts in the West. Probably because of its mutability and conjunction with the body, fashion has been little esteemed and its separation by tailoring from the world of flat textiles has only exacerbated fashion's isolation and low status. I am not

certain that the status of fashion is truly changed even today, despite the effective evidence of 'Japanese Design' or, let us say, the less convincing case of 'The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943–1968' at the Guggenheim Museum.[10] But I would challenge any art to come closer to the ethos and new representation of the Philadelphia Museum's great *Nude Descending a Staircase* by Marcel Duchamp than its moving counterpart in pleated energy by Issey Miyake. In the 1970s and 1980s, Western culture has sought to re-evaluate the arts and practices pertaining to women. In this process the West has sought a model of higher respect for clothing and has emulated the Japanese design aesthetic as well as valued contemporary fashion designers. Japanese fashion educates us to another approach to the body, beyond the sexual obsessions of the West. Issey Miyake's keen interest in tattooing is a recognition of the body, but one that is about decoration and delight in the body as a field, and not exclusively for erotic excitement. Kawakubo and Miyake do not deny the body nor do they deny an impulse to the erotic, but they have discovered a way through the Occidental mania that permits no body to be shown without sexual provocation.

Urban resourcefulness, while not unknown in the West, has been pursued with particular zeal and shrewd transfiguration into fashion by Rei Kawakubo. Kawakubo's singular development of an analytical and abiding high style from punk manifestations served to reveal to French and English designers their native sources, largely overlooked by them. Like the gypsy travels and mutations of Kenzo and Issey Miyake, always more aggressive and footloose than Saint Laurent, the Japanese pastiche and passion *vis-à-vis* street fashion from London and Paris may always benefit from the tourist's acuity and the world traveller's wisdom over the local's diffident address to what happens before one's eyes. It took Kawakubo to open the West's eyes to punk as more than a musical aberration or a costumed theatrical celebrated in marginal dress by Vivienne Westwood. Do we see better by distance and alternatives? As in every prior instance of Japonisme, Japan becomes not only the model, but the self-reflecting mirror that Western culture craves. The possibilities of formal invention and critical reinterpretation are enhanced when the preconceived notions of social, cultural, and aesthetic link are broken. To arrive at any culture through the formal witness and intervention of an artist is to reinvent its meaning. As the West has misinterpreted Japan again and again, so Japan has been free to offer the West something better than a mirror—a critical study, unfettered by predisposition.

Of course, fashion ideas have travelled back and forth between Japan and the West in the modern period. Hanae Mori's absorption of traditional Western dress, Kenzo's Paisleys that cross from Kashmir in India to European production of Paisley and finally to resolution by a Japanese designer, and Issey Miyake's respect for the bias and fashion engineering of Madeleine Vionnet, for example, begin with elements out of Western dress that are revised and reinterpreted.[11]

Japanese fashion has also transformed fashion as a communication system. The expectation in the West of an autonomous network of retailing and consumer desire has been re-examined on the basis of the successful Japanese model of fashion design being continued through controlled environments of display, advertising, and retailing. For American and European designers, previously content to release their merchandise to others for realization, now increasingly make the same committed intervention into fashion's communication of Japanese fashion design. One cannot imagine fashion retailing today without the spaces, categorical display of garments, and simplicity of Japanese apparel retailing under the aegis of the fashion designer. The entrenched systems of Western retailing are beginning to yield to what some call the effects of the decline of the department store, but what the sagacious know as the Japanese model of a vertical system that is sustained through to consumer fulfilment. One cannot visit a Gap or Banana Republic store without feeling a *déjà vu* of a Kyoto kimono shop and Shinjuku.

Contemporary Japanese design in the West has been seen as advanced, even avant-garde. In fact, the West has been very slow to recognize the great achievement of contemporary Japanese designers, often through the patient advocacy of artists, writers, and other intellectuals more than through the expected leaders in dress. As in every previous Japonisme, the West has viewed elements of Japan that are most traditional as radically new in their alternative to Western convention and has perceived

Japanese innovation and custom alike as an iconoclastic vanguard.

In dealing with the recent past, we do not yet have history's corroboration of Japan's profound and sustained influence on the West, as we do in earlier periods. The recognition of Japan as a continuing influence on Western art and design for more than one hundred years would have suggested some measure of the continued allure of Japan and the Japanese aesthetic. What Japanese fashion in its presence in the West since 1970 suggests, however, is something far more substantive. Not only will Japan continue to influence the West, but a Western design culture will attend to Japanese forms and cultural options in dress more profoundly and demonstrably than at any time in the period. The long flow of Japanese influence is no longer just an option; it has *tsunami* strength and inevitability in revising the manner of dress in the West. Bernard Rudofsky, the fashion historian who sought to perceive the whole of Japanese culture by clothing metaphor in *The Kimono Mind*, claimed that the Japanese would often ask of visitors from the West if they liked the kimono, seeking Western approval of the vanishing form of dress. The enquiry is not moot: the West has shown that it wants and needs and fully assimilates the ideas of Japanese dress in our time. Akiko Fukai rightly assesses in her essay in the catalogue *Japanese Design: A Survey since 1950*:

> Simply, these [Japanese] designers dismantled the symbolism that had become ingrained in Western clothing during the nineteenth century. If Japanese fashion revolutionized the international fashion scene, and it continues to do so, this is not just an indication of Japan's originality; it may be a proposal for a clothing of the future that will transcend ethnic and gender differences and even the confines of an establishment called fashion.[12]

So be it. Japanese design provides both the precepts and the fulfilment of apparel that transcends fashion and that posits a new order of and for clothing. We are today universally of a kimono mind.

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Notes

1 A version of this essay was originally presented at a symposium in October 1994 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in conjunction with the exhibition 'Japanese Design: A Survey since 1950'. The exhibition will be subsequently presented in Milan (Triennale) and Düsseldorf (Kunsthalle) in 1995, in Paris (Centre Pompidou) in 1995–6, and will conclude its tour in Osaka in 1996. I am grateful for the kind invitation of Kathryn B. Hiesinger, Felice Fischer, and Elizabeth Anderson to participate in the symposium. It was a very special privilege to speak along with my esteemed friends Yoshiko Wada and Kaori Kitao.

2 Bernard Rudofsky, *The Kimono Mind*, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1965; subsequently republished since 1971 by Charles E. Tuttle, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo.

3 Quoted and expounded on in Richard Martin, 'Kenzo', in Richard Martin (ed.), *Contemporary Fashion*, Detroit, 1995 (forthcoming). In fact, the importance that I argue for Kenzo here is unconventional: his impact was never structural, like Miyake's or Kawakubo's, but he plays an important, if assimilated, historical role.

4 Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, Hill & Wang, New York, 1982, p. 9. Of course, Barthes poses that he is creating a fiction of Japan, a self-conscious 'orientalism', but one that elucidates as well as satisfies.

5 Issey Miyake, *East Meets West*, Heibonsha Ltd., Tokyo, 1978.

6 Portions of the text following borrow from a text I wrote with Harold Koda published in Japanese in *Japonisme in Fashion*, Kyoto Costume Institute, 1994. I am most grateful for guidance and shared thinking to Harold Koda and Jun I. Kanai.

7 Professor Kaori Kitao's compelling review of Japanese post-war cinema employed a similar model of an aesthetic dialectic within Japanese culture.

8 Like many other concepts in this essay, this one is expanded in a broader geographic scope and historical dimension in Richard Martin & Harold Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress*, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1994.

9 Akiko Fukai, *Japanese Design: A Survey since 1950*, catalogue, Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1994, p. 37.

10 In a coincidence, American visitors could see post-Italian design at the Guggenheim Museum in autumn 1994 at the same time as the 'Japanese Design' exhibition in Philadelphia. The Italian testimony, largely formed in Italy, was far less convincing than the more cogent and critical view of Japanese design directed by American curators.

11 Throughout this essay I have benefited from my concomitant thinking in planning 'Orientalism: Visions of

the East in Western Dress', the exhibition presented at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 7 December 1994–20 March 1995. As always, I have learned greatly and generously from my colleague and friend Harold Koda.

12 Fukai, op. cit., p. 37.