

# Costume Design and Arts Management Making Use of Local Resources: Practical Research Towards Stimulating Growth of Tokuji in Yamaguchi-city

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Making Use of  
Local Resources:  
Practical Research  
Towards  
Stimulating  
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Tokuji in  
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**Abstract** This paper is focused on practical research regarding costume design and arts management that make use of local resources and which are influenced by local culture of Tokuji in Yamaguchi-city, located in a mountainous area in Yamaguchi Prefecture in the western part of Honshu in Japan. We will examine possibilities in fashion design through this study. This was a practical research project, done with cooperation between the university and local industry, with priorities being assigned by the requests of residents of the Tokuji area. In 2011 the Aurinko, Tokuji, Talo (it means the Solar Tokuji Building in Finnish) was decided as the base of activities. Other functions were gradually added on, including a salon for people of the area to exchange ideas and workshops for group discussions. This paper will specifically be focused on the handmade paper peculiar to Tokuji and traditionally used as a material in fashion. The fashion designs developed by this researcher's laboratory were strongly influenced by these styles of paper. These costumes were made with a handmade paper called "Kamiko" in Japan, that is aesthetic sense has been historically cherished. This paper suggests that the affluence and depth of costume design may be expressed not only by directly borrowing from these influences, but also by borrowing the traditional aesthetic sense original to Japan. Thus this paper will examine industry and culture simultaneously, examining in particular the impact of arts management and costume design using handmade paper manufactured locally.

**Key words** Local Resources, Handmade Paper, Costume Design, Arts Management, Kimono, Shifu, Ethical Fashion

## Introduction

This study is focused on practical research of local culture of Tokuji in Yamaguchi-city in Yamaguchi prefecture located in the western part of Honshu in Japan in the field of fashion design and arts management, while making use of local resources. It will examine the possibilities of fashion design as an alternative stream of thought in ethical fashion.

In the practice of this research the researcher played the role of total director of fashion design

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and arts management, and seven postgraduate students were managed in the researcher's laboratory, working and assisting each other. This research project was started in 2011 with support from Yamaguchi Prefecture and Yamaguchi City, in the interest of increasing the use of local resources, including the handmade paper peculiar to the region, called Tokuji Tesuki Washi (henceforth referred to as Tokuji Washi.) In other words, this project represents a joint effort between local industry and the university in a display of public cooperation, of which the two key members are "Hori Yonku Machizukuri no Kai" in Tokuji and the researcher's laboratory in Yamaguchi Prefectural University.

In 2011 Aurinko Tokuji Talo was created as a workshop for Tokuji Washi, to prepare for an exhibition at the 2011 Tokuji Natsu Matsuri where craft artists of the area would display their work.

Then in 2012 Aurinko Tokuji Talo was focused on Tokuji Washi, designing and staging two fashion shows, one at the summer festival and the other at Christmas. At these shows costumes utilizing Tokuji Washi were demonstrated, as were several fashion products.

Below is a description of some of the measures and activities utilized by city planners in "machi zukuri", or city plans. The people involved in city planning took into consideration the Tokuji Washi Fashion produced by the researcher's laboratory, comparing present paper fashion between Japanese and foreign paper.

There are some traditions associated with paper costumes, Kamiko, and woven paper costumes, "shifu", that have been carried on since ancient Japan. These peculiar aesthetic tastes are followed not only the functional sides of life but also entertainments such as Kabuki or literature. This paper examines the possibilities for touching on these aesthetic traditions.

### ***Main subject***

#### **The back ground of the research**

The goal of our activities was to be followed cultural tradition and create culture in Yamaguchi Prefecture, in particular in the areas surrounding costume design. Costume design is associated with history, traditions, culture, local industry and local resources. With the cooperation of local companies, the Association of the shopping center as well local administrators and our own University's administrators has allowed us to carry out several Fashion Shows. We performed our projects by creating an organization for each fashion show we have staged.

The result of this project has been a reliable network between the researcher's laboratory and local industry, the chamber of commerce and industry, the association of the shopping center. Local cultural institutions and inhabitants grew closer together with each event.

There is an opportunity to become known throughout the country by means of this project and its media coverage, and possibly draw attention from other areas. There was also a request to participate in regional stimulation from concerned people in Tokuji of Yamaguchi-city. Consequently, this researcher will start arts management activities within the town that utilize local resources, by exploring the fields of fashion design or space design with students in the researcher's laboratory.

Some of the events are already being enjoyed by people, for example putting on a kimono and walking around Kyoto and Nagahama in Shiga Prefecture and Hagi in Yamaguchi Prefecture. As for the stimulating the economies of towns in mountainous regions through fashion design, the activities of this researcher are only a beginning.

### The foundation of activity base of “Aurinko Tokuji Talo”

Aurinko Tokuji Talo is planned to found at first by the Tokuji people for an activity base of art gallery and salon for the residents in Tokuji which was an individual town in Saba-Gun in the Yamaguchi Prefecture until it was merged with Yamaguchi City in 2005. The people of Tokuji have worried that the traditional culture of Tokuji might not be passed on, and their worries came from desire to stimulate the fields of tourism in local culture and industry. In addition to, the population of Tokuji is aging, leading them to request the researcher’s laboratory to assist them in city planning.

At first, in 2011 there was a demand to design and establish a base of activities from which people concerned with tourism industry and town planning in Tokuji could meet. Before deciding on a store, members of the project considered candidates in the shopping district had once been a kimono boutique (Fig.1). The shopping district “Hori area” was a commercial center in Tokuji. From 1919 to 1964 Boseki Railway had run from the neighboring Hofu to Tokuji, and this railway had a terminal in the Hori area, perhaps explaining why it flourished as a shopping district.

During the first meeting about concerning with city planning (Fig.2), the researcher suggested that Tokuji people made the cultural exchanges with other mountainous regions. The researcher had already had considerable success exchanging with the University of Lapland (UOL), allowing for design projects and exchange students to study design at Yamaguchi Prefectural University (YPU). The researcher believed this background could aid town planning through a project in the field of design.

Many Finnish designers say that their designs are inspired by the forest. The normal life style in Finland includes living in harmony with nature. In Finland, summer houses in particular strive to blend in with nature. Therefore Finnish designs might be a good reference for Tokuji, which is surrounded by



**Fig. 1.**  
Candidate of base of  
activities before renovation  
2011



**Fig. 2.**  
First meeting between Tokuji  
people and member of  
University 2011



**Fig. 3.**  
Base of activities named  
Aurinko Tokuji Talo 2012. 1

forests.

The name given to the base of activities, as requested by the people of Tokuji, was Aurinko Tokuji Talo (ATT) (see below, ATT, Fig.3). In Finnish, Aurinko means sun and talo means building. This came from the expectation that the building would become the center of Tokuji, and shine like the sun. This name was given not only to the base of activities, but also to the project itself. The logo of Aurinko Tokuji Talo was designed by the Finnish exchange student Tanya Severikangasu from UOL.

The people of Tokuji wanted to make the space art gallery at first, so Koji Fujita drew a plan through a meeting with them, and working with the people of the area painted and installed furniture, creating an exhibition space. It took three months for completion from starting in June, 2011.

Naoko Matsubara planned the exhibition and remodeling ceremony of ATT in December 2011. She requested that the craftsmen and women of Tokuji join the exhibition. Artists in the fields of Japanese paper dolls, woodwork furniture, wooden form and glass art agreed to do so.

There were over 300 visitors to the exhibition over the course of one week, in an area with a population of 7,800. Visitors ranged from schoolchildren to senior citizens. Some elderly people simply seemed to enjoy the chance to dress up and get out. Since then there have been requests from people to set aside a corner of the gallery for people to meet and drink tea, grown in Tokuji. The event has drawn a strong response from residents of Tokuji.

The researcher's laboratory also made contributions to the remodeling ceremony. Two sets of projects were completed. One set of project had three parts, and the others had one part. The first part was post cards made from Tokuji Washi, using marble dyeing techniques, and directed by Kazue Kimura. The second was art frames representing the season using patchwork technique, directed by Miyoko Mastunaga. And the third was corsages made with a knitting technique directed by Yoko Asada.

Yoshina Takenaga had already participated in the renovation of an old house before participating in the second project. She had the idea to refine old kimonos. And she transformed old kimono into pants inspired by the monpe style, a kind of traditional working wear, also known as "hakama". She came up with a business model and named it the hakama Pants Project (Fig.4), where locals produced hakama on demand.

Elderly women in the area approved of Takenaga's business model and joined her, the result being a product group named Sansa Studio. Sansa is the name of a dance at a local festival. Some staffs of Sansa had experience working at apparel manufactory, others had produced clothes on demand before. These technicians participated in the Hakama Pants Project.

At ATT's opening exhibition in December, the works of Tokuji Washi groups and the Hakama Pants Project were also exhibited. At the end of the exhibition only one furniture artist chose not to con-



**Fig. 4.**  
Yoshina TAKENAGA  
'Hakama Pants' made by  
Sansa Kobo 2012

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tinue having his works exhibited to an effort to increase demand for them.

The workshops goal was to create an interest in Tokuji Washi. The initial reaction was very positively, many visitors were fascinated with the works. Up to date, a business model to expand on this opportunity had not yet been created.

After the exhibition the Hakama Pants Project borrowed a corner of ATT as a studio. From there they made hakama to order for “Ryokan(traditional Japanese hotel)” for Yamaguchi City hall for costumes, and for individual requests. Up to that time, a proper marketing system is still not in place, and therefore continuous production is not possible. In 2013 Takenaga plans to continue to ahead with Sansa Studio. She already has orders for costumes for the Sansa dance.

During 2012 ATT was also the performance hall of the Tokuji Ningyo Joruri, Japanese Puppet Theater, in which recited narrative and dialog is accompanied by a shamisen (traditional Japanese string instrument), a Tokuji tradition. People involved with the theatre got in contact with a professional researcher through the researcher’s introduction, and developed an infrastructure for training their staff. During the 2012 summer festival, over 60 spectators watched the puppet theatre at ATT.

From 2011 to 2012 the former kimono store was considered new place to represent the culture and arts of the area, to exchange ideas and traditions between regions, and to make costumes. Along with this came the expectation that a souvenir suitable for the area would be developed. However, in the absence of an infrastructure that covers everything from the design to selling completed products, this dream will stay stuck in the development phase. Therefore, it is up to the locals to set up items and carry out a symposium of product development, create an organization and decide who must come up with a sales plan. The researcher’s laboratory can make prototypes, but if the local people are not involved this project, it will not succeed. It will fall upon the locals to create an organization to oversee this.

### **Paper Fashion in World**

We will examine how paper fashion is being represented today. Issey Miyake has displayed his collection, which includes traditional dyeing-and-weaving craft inherited in various parts of the Tohoku district. Issey Miyake, in collaboration with manufacturers in the Tohoku area has developed a new dress material. For example, material developments were carried out by Issey Miyake for the Paris Prêt-à-porter collection using the inherited techniques to make distinctive cloth.

These techniques include “Shina-fu” for men of Yonezawa City in Yamagata Prefecture, “Karamushi-Ori” of Onuma-gun in the Fukushima Prefecture, “Kogin-Sashi”, a kind of Japanese traditional quilting, “Sashiko” of Hirosaki City in Aomori Prefecture and “Saki-Ori”, Rag Weaving of Towada City in the Aomori Prefecture. In Tohoku, “Shiroishi” handmade paper from Shiroishi City in the Miyagi Prefecture was developed. Miyake displayed this paper fashion in the Paris Prêt-à-porter Autumn/Winter collection of 1982 named “Kamiko”. “Shiroishi Washi Kobo” which used a technique to make handmade paper has remained only in the Shiroishi area.

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The Shiroishi Washi tradition has descended from “Mutsu-Washi”. It is quite famous, and its quality is very high, as they use “kajiki no kozo” to make the paper. Kamiko has a good reputation, as its wearers can feel cool in the summer and warm in the winter. In the summer of 2011 I visited Mashiko Endo, headmaster of Shiroishi Washi Studio. There, she showed me a belt for a kimono, and “obi”, and a short work coat, “hanten” woven with paper yarn for the woof and hemp yarn for the warp. Despite of being somewhat shabby old due to repetitive washing, they still looked very nice and were comfortable and light to wear.

Another example is the “shifu-ori” belt reproduced by Yoshimura Shoten. I saw it in the 2013 exhibition in Sendai City of the Miyagi Prefecture. The original belt was collected by Kodaiori-Sanshu-Kan in Yonezawa City of Yamagata Prefecture. It looked like a white belt with many black dots. Accounting book weft by paper yarns had once been used by merchants and written on with black ink. It is these fragments of characters that gave the belt its black pattern.

In poor areas it is wise to use waste material, and the paper belt in Tohoku is excellent example that can point the way towards more sustainable modern living. It can also serve as an example of ethical fashion. As for the above-mentioned traditional dyeing and weaving techniques, Issey has drawn attention to them once again with the special exhibition “Tohoku no Sokojikara, Kokoro to Hikari” ‘I’ Miyake Issey’, Northeastern Potential Power, Heart and Light ‘Costume’ by Issey Miyake at 21\_21 Design Sight at the end of July 2011, after the Great East Japan Earthquake (1).

In January 2012 Miyake also produced a television program for Shiroishi Washi, with Mashiko Endo. She made Washi for the Kamiko kimonos (Fig.5), which the monks of Todaiji-temple had made themselves in the ceremony of “Shunie”. Miyake designed the Kamiko coat for her trip to Todaiji, when she would deliver the washi. The program was helped spread knowledge and interest in Japanese handmade paper, demonstrating its beauty and value. Issey Miyake had an exhibition of men’s clothing, made with Shiroishi Washi in 2012.

Additionally, at a special exhibition during the Tokyo Design Week in autumn 2011 many people got to see Japanese traditional craftsmanship and materials of Tohoku. This exhibition was drew additional attention to handmade paper.

In 2012, Koji Hamai, who was a CEO on his private brands, had an exhibition; “Bingo Two Ply” demonstrated a style of clothing using Japanese paper yarn on the weft. In April 2013 Right-on, a kind of Fast Fashion, introduced “Washi Denim” (2), jeans for men and women. This simultaneously drew attention to Washi material and Japanese traditional culture by including geometrical patterns from the Edo era on insides of the jeans pockets.

Jum Nakao, Brazilian Fashion designer and artist has represented Paper Fashion and Arts (3) since 2007, in São Paulo Fashion



**Fig. 5.**  
Shiroishi Washi Kobo ‘Used  
Kamiko for Shunie at  
Todaiji-temple’

Week in Brazil. Nakao is a third generation Brazilian of Japanese origin, and he makes strong use of Japanese “kirie”, or paper cutting technique, and Origami. This also allows him to bring a very unique feel to his collections.

The above examples are not directly concerned with city planning. Instead, they demonstrate the stimulation and growth of handmade paper industry and the culture surrounding it. In Nagarakawa of Gifu City the Mino Washi Paper Fashion Show (4) has been carried out since 2011. Such an interest has even spread beyond Japan, it could be found out through the South Korea the Wonju City Paper Fashion Show (5) has been held once a year in October to appeal to South Korean paper, in relation to the South Korean Paper Festival. These events are held to stimulate the paper industry, in part through creating an interest in the culture surrounding this paper.

This leads us to compare the examples of Gifu and Wonju to the researcher’s planned activities for the future.

#### **Costume Design making use of Tokuji Handmade Paper**

There is disagreement about the origin of Tokuji handmade paper. Tokuji Handmade Paper was originated in the Nara era, or when Chogen the Priest came to Tokuji. According to the “Tokuji Fudo Ki”, Tokuji Regional Chronicle the name Tokuji Washi first appeared in the Lord Ouchi era, Momoyama era (6). Since many books were published in this period, much paper was needed. Initially the papers were ordered from Iwami (present-day Shimane Prefecture) and Aki (present-day Hiroshima Prefecture).

However, at Lord Ouchi’s request the technology relating to high-quality paper in Iwami was transferred to Tokuji, and Tokuji has prospered as a paper manufacturer since then. After Lord Ouchi, Lord Mori ruled Yamaguchi, which was known at the time as Choshu and Suo. Lord Mohri’s strategy was to produce rice, salt and paper, which came to be called the “Bocho San Paku”, or three white products. Throughout the Edo era paper making flourished and the tradition has been passed on to the present day.

The Shimaji district was known as the center of the paper business, especially in Tokuji. Until the Second World War almost every farming family made paper in their farm houses during the off-season of agriculture in the winter. After the war, almost every family in Tokuji stopped making paper. Only two families, the Yamanouchi Family and the Chijimatsu Family remained. Currently Yukio Yamanouchi produces the mainly the raw materials for paper production while only Tetsuo Chijimatsu (Fig.6) produces actually papers. This state of affairs has been continued from the previous generation.

People of the area do not know the unique history



**Fig. 6.** Tetsuo CHIJIMATSU ‘making Tokuji handmade washi’ 2013

of handmade paper in Tokuji. Thus, a workshop was held to give people a chance to see the history, culture and attraction of handmade paper. In 2012 for the Fashion Show during Tokuji Summer Festival, only non-cross Tokuji paper was used, as at the time we did not have access to traditional cross style paper. Therefore the costumes revealed at that event were made using on the simple method. However, a cross style paper is more desirable for kimonos or raincoats, as it makes the paper stronger and thicker. In the future we hoped to obtain cross-style paper for the costumes.

Yoko Asada and Hatsumi Suizu created their original works using papers made by "Chijimatsu." Asada entitled her series of work "Kishin", which means returning to forest. She made her works using Tokuji Paper and wool yarn using knitting techniques (Fig.7 8). Hatsumi Suizu entitled her work "camellia" and made a belt, Obi, woven with paper yarn for kimono (Fig.9) and shawls (Fig.10), and showed the possibility for development of products specific to Tokuji paper project. Yoshina Takenaga designed a costume (Fig.11) for the unreligious festival dance, Sansa. She used Tokuji paper for two parts of the costume; one as a covering for the back of the hand and wrist and the second as a hat decoration.

Furthermore I had the main theme of the workshop held at the University of Lapland in 2012 along with denim, Yanai-jima, wool and reindeer skin, required the use of Tokuji handmade paper . There was a demonstration that allowed people to rub Tokuji paper, and the paper was used for costumes at UOL. The demonstration (7) to rub Tokuji paper and make the paper material for costume was



**Fig. 7.**  
Yoko ASADA 'Kishin' I II  
III Paper works with knitting  
technique 2012



**Fig. 8.**  
Yoko ASADA  
'Kishin' VI  
Knitting work  
with paper lines  
2012



**Fig. 9.**  
Suizu HATSUMI 'Camellia'  
Shifu-ori Obi' made with warp,  
silk yarn and weft, paper yarn  
2012





**Fig. 10.**  
 Suizu HATSUMI 'Paper works  
 represented in Exhibition at Aurinko  
 Tokuji Talo' 2013



**Fig. 11.**  
 Yoshina TAKENAGA  
 Costume Design for Sansa  
 Danse at Fashion Show in  
 the Summer Festival in  
 Tokuji 2012



**Fig. 12.**  
 Costume made in the  
 workshop at UOL  
 represented in Christmas  
 Fashion Show at YPU

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**Fig. 13.**  
 Costume made in the  
 workshop at UOL  
 represented in Christmas  
 Fashion Show at YPU



**Fig. 14.**  
 Costume made in the  
 workshop at UOL  
 represented in Christmas  
 Fashion Show at YPU



**Fig. 15.**  
 Costume made in the  
 workshop at UOL  
 represented in Christmas  
 Fashion Show at YPU

held at UOL. Finally four works were created by Finnish, Japanese, Italian and Brazilian students (Fig. 12 13 14 15).

While carrying out the above dress-and-ornaments creation and product development, we also developed a confidential relationship with Chijimatsu, a handmade Japanese paper craftsman.

In the process of costume and product development, a relationship of mutual trust between Chijimatsu and my laboratory was established, and in the spring of 2013 he made traditional cross style paper for us. It was his first experience manufacturing it, although he is in 80's.

Our goal in 2013 is to increase awareness about paper fashion, and demonstrate the attractiveness of Tokuji paper, while developing as many uses for it as possible.

Simultaneously, it is important that we create a system that can rapidly produce goods and that will receive orders from both inside and outside the Yamaguchi-Tokuji area.

### **Expression of Kamiko**

It is important for a costume designer to recognize the impression someone wearing Kamiko gives off. To do this we need to know the traditional aesthetics of the paper. The beginning of historical and aesthetic research of Kamiko is 'The Early Modern Devices in Edo Costumes- Expression by "Kamiko"- (8)' written by Mitsue Koike. In the following I will clear some of the understandings surrounding Koike's thesis.

Turning to the History of Costume in Japan we found the documents, that Kamiko was at first used by priests in the middle of Heian period, and the tradition of wearing Kamiko was inherited by monks for training wear in the time of "Shunie", called Omizutori in Todaiji temple. It was the reason why the priests made kimono using paper, the one was that paper was a simple material, and kamiko didn't use women in the process of spinning, weaving and sewing like hemp and silk do.

Koike suggests that in the Kanazoshi "Chikusai", novel of the Edo period the impression of someone wearing Kamiko made the reader feel the lunacy of someone who wore broken Kamiko on their back (8).

In Edo period rich merchants wore Kamiko as haori, short coat and nagagi, main kimono. In Kabuki theatre came to reflect merchant culture surrounding Kamiko. Koike analyzed 'Sukeroku', very typical Edo Kabuki, and suggested the character of Kamiko had both positive and negative aesthetics associated with it. For example one was poor and broken Kamiko and the other was luxurious Kamiko.

Koike said Kamiko in Kabuki was put on by merchants when they went to visit the licensed pleasure quarter called 'Yukaku'to buy the service of a prostitute. Here the aesthetics of Yatsushi were to mean that the merchants who became richer than warriors disguised themselves as poor. Additionally, Keisei, high class prostitutes, were shown in Kabuki to continue wearing broken Kamiko under their kimono in order to express their affection for guests who fell upon hard times while visiting them.

Aside from the aesthetics formed in the culture of Yukaku in Kabuki, there is another example. Haiku poet, Basho Matsuo composed haiku poems about Kamiko, although covering these was beyond the scope of this paper. However it is worth noting that the poet spoke quite favorably of Kamiko.

The Kamiko-Jinbaori(9), an army jacket without sleeves which KenshinUesugi, a Feudal Lord in

the Warring States period wore, has remained unchanged until now. It was demonstrated Kamiko's functionality on the battlefield and at the same time the beautiful decoration directed his figure as the great Feudal Lord.

As mentioned above in Japan peculiar aesthetics on Kamiko have been brought up, so it is good when conceiving designs for Kamiko fashion to refer to those aesthetics.

### Conclusion

We have verified that the field of costume design in Tokuji in Yamaguchi-city was closely tied to Tokuji handmade paper and with traditional culture and industry in the area. As well, activities have

been carried out to stimulate the Tokuji region, and arts management in the area. In the context of ethical fashion, development of a fashion style that makes use of local resources can be considered key. This can cause a region to get pride in its own culture, stop the decrease of population through urbanization, revitalize agriculture by stimulating demand for a raw material, by encourage a harmonious balance between humans and nature, enhance the cultural generation of a region and stimulate the growth of local industry. Throughout this, it is important that local residents take action spontaneously.

Fashion design using Japanese paper is a place of free expression and creativity for the designer. However, from the standing point of fashion design using local resources, the researcher suggests looking to Kamiko in traditional Japanese culture for a representation of paper fashion. The reasons for this can be



**Fig. 16.** Naoko MATSUBARA & Yumiko MIZUTANI Poster for the 26th International Costume Congress in Taiwan

seen in Koike's study of the traditions of Kamiko and its aesthetics. The depth and richness of Kamiko

fashion should be brought forward by using Kamiko's aesthetics as a design concept. There is a possibility to create an original fashion and send a message from Japan to the rest of the world.

This article was rewritten by Yumiko Mizutani in the Mizutani side from the poster (Fig.16) titled 'Creating a Regional Culture of Costume Design through Arts Management' presented by Naoko Matsubara and Yumiko Mizutani in the part of poster session in the 26th International Costume Congress held in National Museum of Nature and Science in Takao in Taiwan in 2012.

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