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**The Birth of Modern Fashion in Korea:  
Sartorial Transition between *Hanbok* and *Yangbok*,  
and Colonial Modernity of Dress Culture**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in History of Art and Archaeology

2015

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## ABSTRACT

Sartorial change from *hanbok* (Korean dress) to *yangbok* (Western dress) is commonly seen as the transition that modern fashion emerged in Korea since the Open Port era, replacing traditional Korean dress with modern Western dress. However, examining actual cases of Korean sartorial practice, this linear and dichotomous framework has limits in its approach, lacking multiplicity of local meanings and experiences in line with particular social and cultural contexts. This study, instead, explores the protean transition in dynamic ways with a postcolonial perspective, stressing the importance of socio-cultural narratives embedded in dress and fashion. It questions how to seek a nuanced understanding on the sartorial transition and local practice of modern dress and fashion emerged in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century of colonial modern Korea.

Critically reinterpreting diverse sources of object, image and text gleaned from the modern and colonial period, the four main chapters of the thesis build up a rounded picture of the emergence of modern Korean dress and fashion in a thematic approach. First, it examines the beginning of sartorial encounters between Korean and Western clothing to find gradual transition and modernities until the Korean Empire period. Second, it reassesses the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* constructed merely as being opposite to modernity and part of Japan's colonial subjects through exhibitionary spaces, attempting to uncover postcolonial voices of *hanbok* practice. Third, it traces alternative or non-Western sartorial realities of modern dress and fashion in the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok*, through conditions of production, mediation and consumption during the colonial era. Lastly, it explores multiple relations between modern male, female individuals and their dress and fashion practices in terms of identity, class and gender beyond the social criticism, but engaging with the socio-economic and cultural context of the period.

The birth of modern fashion in Korea comprised of both *hanbok* and *yangbok* then reflected modern ironies of the time. The sartorial transition between the two forms of dress resulted in particular colonial modernity within Korean society. The dichotomy between the two dress systems was rather nuanced, multifaceted and intricately developed in relation to modern fashion, local modernities and the ways in which they evolved in the vernacular Korean context, across colonial and Western fashion discourses.

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## **Notes**

- Korean Romanisation: I have used the Revised Romanisation of Korean (2000), except for original sources which follow the McCune-Reischauer system.
- English Translation of Korean Sources: Author's own translation of original Korean texts has been used, unless otherwise noted. Also, I have brought the original texts in footnotes in many cases when necessary.
- Korean Spelling and Word Spacing of Sources: The original early twentieth-century Korean spellings have been mostly kept to show the nuances and exact use of Korean. The word spacing of the texts, however, has not followed the original, as they are not standardised, but instead been made by author to make meanings delivered clearly.



# CHAPTER 1. Introduction

## 1. Rationale and Purpose of the Research

Dress and fashion are key sites of cultural and social construction for both the individual and the collective. This underlines the importance of study that has been developed relatively recently. New approaches to the study of what we wear have shed light on our understanding of the significance of clothing, allowing dress and fashion – once regarded as mundane and frivolous – to speak about socio-cultural meanings and narratives in their own right.

Based on the discipline of ‘dress and fashion studies’, this research intends to explore the social and cultural accounts embedded in dress and fashion, with a regional focus on Korea during the time of modernisation and colonisation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This research period is significant, when we try to understand the emergence of modern fashion in Korea, as it constitutes a transitional phase during which Korea began interacting with Western powers and new material culture, as well as Japan as a modern and colonial power, and during which Western-style clothing interacted with existing dress and fashion in Korea. Sartorial transition between Korean and Western clothing thus emerged in line with the advent of modern fashion practice by Korean people, reflecting particular modernity in Korea through its colonial experience and reaction to the Western modernity, and a specific non-Western or East Asian fashion trajectory along with the Western fashion discourse.

Despite the significance of this historical time, studies on dress and fashion in Korea’s period of modernisation and colonisation have been developed little, because established fashion theories have focused overwhelmingly on Western contexts, neglecting non-Western conditions and realities. Also, in Korean academia itself, although there has been a wealth of studies on Korean traditional dress, *hanbok*, largely with an object-based description, there is a lack of theoretical integration and

discussion of historiography to contextualise Korean costume, Western dress and their sartorial links to Korean fashion during the modernisation of Korea under the Japanese colonial rule, embracing pertinent socio-cultural perspectives.

However, it is necessary when studying dress and fashion of Korea to look at this transitional period, uncovering the historical moment of cultural dominance of Western clothing, the seeming marginalisation of traditional Korean clothing and the transformation of fashion in Korea. This is because this period will provide the scene for critical debate about Korean sartorial transition surrounded by the discourses of tradition, modernity and colonialism, along with the dichotomy between the Western and non-Western dress and fashion, as well as the beginning ground for modern and contemporary fashion of Korea. Such discussion can bridge the gap between the contested and interrelated concepts by producing a better contextualisation and rounded historiography of Korean dress and fashion during the modern and colonial period.

### ***1.1. Dress and Fashion Studies in the West, Non-West and Korea***

The proposed research is situated in the discipline of dress and fashion studies, and intends to fill some lacking state of the discipline in relation to the scope of my research theme mentioned above. Although given the peripheral nature of the subject in the past due to the academics' unwillingness to consider body, clothing and fashion as serious, the birth of fashion in the West is considered as going back to the thirteenth century and writings on fashion date back to as early as the sixteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, dress and fashion became the subject of intense cultural debate and Western fashion theories are indebted to some classical thinkers such as Simmel, Veblen and Flügel to name a few, whose work has profoundly influenced the conceptual and theoretical basis of our contemporary

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<sup>1</sup> See, for more detail, Kim K. P. Johnson, et al. ed. *Fashion Foundations: Early Writings on Fashion and Dress*, 2003.

understanding of dress and fashion.<sup>2</sup> Since the twentieth century, earlier writings within a positivist tradition by social psychologists, clothing and art historians, folklorists and sociologists have been expanded upon as theoretical advances reveal interconnections between material culture and social forms surrounding fashion, but according to Brydon and Niessen, fashion writing has been condemned by its moralising manifestation from a series of critiques such as Marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis.<sup>3</sup> But the hermeneutic turn, which slowly became emergent during the 1950s and 1960s, superseded the functionalist approach, bringing forth analyses of meaning, and interpretive and performative strategies, then up until the late 1970s, in which social and political contexts underpinned the serious study of fashion.<sup>4</sup> The renaissance of fashion studies occurred during the 1970s and finally flourished in the late 1990s under the name of fashion theory,<sup>5</sup> through which cultural studies, semiotics, art and design history, sociology, anthropology, material culture studies examined body, clothing and fashion in a cross-disciplinary way providing social and cultural critiques.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See, for more detail, Michael Carter, *Fashion Classics: From Carlyle to Barthes*, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Brydon and Sandra Niessen, ed. *Consuming Fashion: Adorning the Transnational Body*, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, trans. by Matthew Ward and Richard Howard, 1983 [1967].; James Laver, *A Concise History of Costume*, 1995 [1969].; Georg Simmel, 'Fashion', in D. Levine, ed. *On Individuality and Social Forms*, 1971 [1904].; Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*, 1953 [1899].

<sup>5</sup> This development culminated in the publication of the Journal named *Fashion Theory* by Berg since 1997, and they have produced a series of books in a category of 'fashion and textiles'.

<sup>6</sup> To name a few, for example, see Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Bubolz Eicher, ed. *Dress, Adornment and Social Order*, 1965.; Ted Polhemus and Lynn Procter, *Fashion and Anti-Fashion: An Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, 1978.; Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, 1979.; Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity*, 2003 [1985].; Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 1988 [1978].; Caroline Evans and Minna Thornton, *Women and Fashion*, 1989.; Joanne Finkelstein, *The Fashioned Self*, 1991.; Colin McDowell, *Dressed to Kill: Sex, Power and Clothes*, 1992.; Jennifer Craik,

In this development of dress and fashion studies in the West, especially in Britain since the 1970s, there has been reconciliation of the boundary between museum curators, who had been working on object-based practices and studies, and a new generation of scholars from a wide variety of academic fields, who had developed theoretical studies.<sup>7</sup> This growth in dress and fashion studies finally brought about a ‘positive marriage of theory and artefacts’ and created space for the reconceptualisation and analysis of fashion, dress and bodily adornment through the use of interdisciplinary approaches.<sup>8</sup> The dress and fashion have thus become more critical; the inanimate objects of dress employed to create the clothed body are physically devoid of life, yet ‘clothes have the conflicting ability to initiate and confirm change’, to reveal political or cultural conflict or status within the community, and to be a metaphor of domination or, conversely, opposition.<sup>9</sup>

In this trajectory of Western fashion scholarship, the term ‘fashion’ has been conventionally equated with modern European modes of fashion. Most of the existing research on fashion seems to be limited to Western societies such as Europe and the

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*The Face of Fashion*, 1993.; Gilles Lipovetsky, *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy*, trans. by Catherine Porter, 1994.; Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion*, 1995.; Angela McRobbie, *British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?*, 1998.; Carol Tulloch, ‘Out of Many, One People: The Relativity of Dress, Race and Ethnicity to Jamaica, 1880-1907’, *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, pp. 359-382.; Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History*, 1998.; Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory*, 2000.; Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> For this development of dress and fashion studies in Britain, see for more detail in Christopher Breward, ‘Cultures, Identities, Histories: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress’, *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, pp. 301-314.; John Styles, ‘Dress in History: Reflections on a Contested Terrain’, *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, pp. 383-390.; Lou Taylor, ‘Doing the Laundry? A Reassessment of Object-based Dress History’, *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, pp. 337-358.; Amy de la Haye and Elizabeth Wilson, ed. *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity*, 1999, pp. 1-9.

<sup>8</sup> Lou Taylor, *Establishing Dress History*, 2004, p. 281.

<sup>9</sup> Grant David McCracken, *Culture and Consumption*, 1990, p. 61., cited in Carol Tulloch, ‘That Little Magic Touch: the Headtie’, in de la Haye, and Wilson, ed. *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity*, 1999, p. 63.

US, since they are regarded as being the places of origin of fashion. With regard to the origin of fashion in Western contexts, fashion has been understood as a ‘historically and geographically specific system for the production and organisation of dress’.<sup>10</sup> The problem with this view is that this definition mainly relies on the condition that fashion be a ‘Western system of dress’, and an aspect of ‘Western modernity’.<sup>11</sup>

For example, in one of the most influential books in fashion studies hitherto, *Adorned in Dreams*, Elizabeth Wilson traces the social and cultural history of fashion and its complex relationship to modernity.<sup>12</sup> She delights in the power of fashion to mark out identity or subvert it, in which fashion is one of the most accessible and flexible means by which it expresses ‘modernist ambiguities and irony’.<sup>13</sup> This is the case of fashion in the West and Western modernity, therefore I would not necessarily argue that such an established Western fashion framework is entirely problematic. Yet this lacks non-Western application, leading to a question about fashion and modernity in the non-West, though I do not locate fashion as a binary concept between Western and non-Western, rather posit it somehow as universal depending on different cultures and societies, in which valid theories and concepts about fashion can be traversed.

As such, there appear to be some gaps between Western fashion theories and non-Western fashion realities. According to Wilson, fashion, as the child of capitalism, and the growth of fashion are associated with what has been termed ‘the civilizing process’ in Europe.<sup>14</sup> That is, the idea of civilization could not exist except by reference to a ‘primitive’ or ‘barbaric’ state,<sup>15</sup> and often the problem can be found that non-Western clothing and fashion are regarded as primitive or barbaric. Despite the

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<sup>10</sup> For this argument, see Quentin Bell, *On Human Finery*, 1976.; James Laver, *Concise History*.; Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, pp. 40-77.

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, Vol. I, trans. by Edmund Jephcott, 1978, p. 50., cited in Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p. 13.

fact that non-Western societies have local or traditional dress and perhaps further linking to fashion of their own, Western fashion framework seems to have overlooked the possible discourse of non-Western fashion and clothing beyond the imperialism and capitalism of fashion by the West. Hence, this study tries to see Korean dress, as well as Western dress, in relation to fashion within particular Korean contexts under the scope of the research.

In this regard, the hegemonic fashion discourse, and the Western fashion system as a whole, has received some recent challenges from critical fashion studies with the non-Western background. It questions the view that it is only in Western capitalist societies that dress becomes fashion. On the whole, such a discourse has been criticised as ‘Eurocentric’ in that Western fashion theory has limitations – not adequately explain the spectrum of non-Western social cases – or is biased in elucidating non-Western clothing and fashion realities.<sup>16</sup> Fashion theory thus needs to be examined in a non-Western context to determine its comprehensiveness when applied to the non-Western case materials.

As Hendrickson argues, what is needed for a full understanding of fashion, dress and the adorning of the body is the cross-cultural investigation of the materiality in clothing upon social human bodies, which engages power, discourse, politics, and cultural dynamics within human societies or groups therein.<sup>17</sup> Yet this does not mean generalising fashion across all cultures, times and spaces, but rather emphasising the possibility and particularity of fashion among every different culture. In so doing, the question can be raised of what the underlying basic criteria for explaining the word ‘fashion’ would be. Entwistle claims the condition of fashion in the West by three criteria: ‘social mobility’, ‘relations of production and consumption’, and ‘regular and

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<sup>16</sup> For this argument, for example, see Stella Mary Newton, ‘Couture and Society’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 November 1976.; Ruth Barnes and Joanne B. Eicher, ed. *Dress and Gender: Making and Meaning*, 1992.; Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion*, 1993.

<sup>17</sup> Hildi Hendrickson, ed. *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*, 1996.

systemic change of dress'.<sup>18</sup> However, the condition of fashion should be differently applied to other non-Western societies, where 'fashions' can emerge in vernacular contexts of different conditions and socio-cultural backgrounds. Western fashion theories then can be applicable, or adjustable, even modified for a better understanding of non-Western local settings beyond the Western-centred confines.

Thus, as Lou Taylor noted, with the advance of anthropological approaches, there is now a growing field of dress scholarship that examines the 'fashions' of other cultures than those dominated by Western styles of dress.<sup>19</sup> Also, the development of postcolonial studies in non-Western contexts has facilitated dress and fashion scholarship in those societies that experienced colonial history, strengthening critical voices and theoretical approaches.<sup>20</sup> For instance, different social structure, conditions and ideology have impinged upon the embodied practice of dress and fashion in a particular way. Vernacular local considerations of dress and fashion practices can be emphasised rather than simply accepting the other's view in fashion studies. Emma Tarlo's book, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*, also concurs with this standpoint.<sup>21</sup> She examines sartorial style from the late nineteenth century to the present, showing how trends in clothing are related not only to caste, religion, wealth, urbanisation and levels of education, but also to a larger cultural debate about the nature of Indian identity. This critically examines clothing matters within the context of the complex establishment of Indian identity during the period of British colonialism in India, uncovering the misunderstanding behind the Western view of

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<sup>18</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>19</sup> For example, see Lou Taylor, *Establishing Dress History*, p. 294.; Joanne B. Eicher, ed. *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time*, 1995.; Hildi Hendrickson, ed. *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*, 1996.; Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller, ed. *Clothing as Material Culture*, 2005.; Margaret Maynard, ed. *Dress and Globalisation*, 2004.; Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> For example, see special double issue on 'Fashion and Orientalism', Nirmal Puwar and Nandi Bhati, ed. *Fashion Theory*, 7/3-4, 2003.

<sup>21</sup> Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*.

Indian clothing and identity. In the postcolonial era, therefore, non-Western fashion writings beyond the other's legitimacy should be considered and practiced. The proposed study can then be situated in this context and position.

Within the non-Western dress and fashion scholarship, however, studies on dress and fashion in Korea's transitional and colonial modern period seem to be still missing, comparing with those of other East Asian nations. For instance, the recent *International Institute for Asian Studies' Newsletter* (Vol. 46, Winter 2008) deals with 'the politics of dress in Asia' as a research theme.<sup>22</sup> Among East Asian nations, a Korean case study is absent – in stark contrast to the front cover photograph of the 'APEC Economic Leader's Meeting, Busan, Korea (November 2005)', where all the leaders wear traditional Korean overcoat (*durumagi*) as a uniform (Figure 1.1). It is the first article of the issue, written on Chinese and Japanese modern dress and fashion.<sup>23</sup>



Figure 1.1. 'APEC Economic Leader's Meeting, Busan, Korea (November 2005)' (Source: Max Sparreboom, *IIAS Newsletter*, Vol.46, Winter 2008, p. 1)

<sup>22</sup> This issue devotes seven articles (pp.1-13) to the theme 'The Politics of Dress', that include the cases from Philippine, China, Japan, Thai, Burma and India, in Max Sparreboom, *International Institute for Asian Studies' Newsletter*, Leiden: IIAS, 46/Winter, 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Other articles for the Chinese case in the issue, see Louise Edwards, 'Dressing for Power: Scholar's Robes, School Uniforms and Military Attire in China', *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.; for the Japanese case, see Barbara Molony, 'Modernity, Gender and the Empire: Gender, Citizenship and Dress in Modernising Japan', *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.



Within Korea itself, dress and fashion scholarship has developed in departments of Clothing and Textiles or Fashion Design in universities as a discipline under Home Economics or Human Ecology. With an emphasis of object-based examinations on Korean dress, these have been advanced in examining changes in clothing and issues of construction in a meticulous manner.<sup>24</sup> For example, Korean costume scholar, Cho Woo-hyun explains that, due to the Confucian ideology which governed the Joseon dynasty for over 500 years, few changes in the *hanbok* were made until the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> However, she also points out that certain changes came about in the form of gradual modification and variation such as in length, width and other incidental features. In this respect, I would argue that such subtle changes in Korean dress *hanbok* should be paid attention against the stylistic change of Western mode, in which other factors such as fabrics, colours, dyeing, patterns, weaving and sewing techniques can be highlighted as key features of traditional Korean fashion, when encountered and compared with Western dress and fashion.<sup>26</sup>

Despite their object-based examinations on the history of Korean dress, such work has not reaped the benefits of recent developments in dress and fashion studies such as a methodological synergy between theories and artefacts, the critical stance of non-Western fashion history in response to Western fashion discourse, and the

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<sup>24</sup> For instance, for studies on an object-based approach to *hanbok*, see Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa* [Korean Costume History], 1998.; Yu Hui-gyeong, et al. *Hanguk boksik munhwasa* [Korean Costume Cultural History], 1999.

<sup>25</sup> Cho Woo-hyun, 'Korean Costumes: Design and Development', in *Korean Cultural Heritage: Traditional Lifestyles*, 1997, pp. 116-123.

<sup>26</sup> Similar point was also raised by some Western dress scholars. See, for instance, Elizabeth Rouse, *Understanding Fashion*, 1989, pp. 77-78.: 'India, for example, developed the technique of spinning and weaving cotton into fine muslins. The Chinese developed methods of spinning and weaving silk. In societies where production is a laborious and long drawn out process, there is the tendency to use fabric with care and a reluctance to cut the fabric. [...] The Indian sari and Japanese kimono also follow this kind of attitude to fabric. Another interesting feature of these two garments is the emphasis on the fabric design rather than changing the features of the garment itself.'

interdisciplinary, theoretical advantage of employing various approaches from cultural, social, historical and anthropological studies. Although contemporary Korean dress and fashion have been studied to some extent theoretically in terms of clothing behaviour and socio-psychological perspectives, qualitative insights still appear limited as these studies have commonly employed quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires.

Another side of the object-based approach in Korean scholarship, it receives a common critique that it appears somewhat descriptive. Thus, with the need for more qualitative approaches, a few Korean works have dealt with theoretical and contextual issues beyond the limitation.<sup>27</sup> For example, from the discipline of art theory in Korean academia, in his thesis, Lim U Geun-jun writes about the construction of image of traditional Korean women during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>28</sup> He claims that the traditional Korean women's image was objectified in a double process as Western culture was injected. Lim explores the changes in women's costume culture and the traditional image of women that existed in the Open Port era, which has often been interpreted as the era of coexistence of *hanbok* and *yangbok*. He proves that the popular image of the traditional Korean women is far from the reality, that the obscenity and objectification of women's bodies only appeared after the eras of King Yeongjo (r. 1724–1776) and King Jeongjo (r. 1776–1800), which can be interpreted as symptomatic of modern transformations, and implies that Western citizens in Korea were actively rebuilding the image of traditional Korean women, and

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<sup>27</sup> Some books titled as cultural history of Korean costume have tended to focus on cultural perspectives in conjunction with object-based history of costume. See, for example, Go Bu-ja, ed. *Hanguui boksik munhwasa: Seok Ju-seon gwanjang 10jugi ginyeom nonchong* [Costume Cultural History of Korea: in memorial of 10th anniversary of Seok Ju-Seon], 2006.; An Myeong-suk, *Hanguk boksik munhwasa: Uri ot niyagi* [Korean Costume Cultural History: Our Clothes Story], 2007.

<sup>28</sup> Lim U Geun-jun, 'Jeontongjeok yeoseong imijiui jaehaeseok: Yeong-jeongjo sigi ihu gaehanggikkajiui yeoseong imijireul jungsimeuro' [Decoding the Image of Traditional Korean Women: Focusing on the Women's Image from King Yeongjo and Jeongjo to the Open Port Era], 2000.

that the mechanical episteme of the body spread by missionary doctors changed the imagery of Korean women radically throughout the Open Port era. He concludes that in ‘Third World’ countries such as colonial Korea under Japanese imperialism or South Korea after the liberation from Japan, ‘tradition’ estranged its own history and identity, which was overwhelmed by Western values, and transformed itself into another’s time and space through the differentiated context.

However, such theoretical studies may further need to achieve a balanced stance between theories and artefact-related cases. Theory-based approaches are in turn criticised by object-based studies as often deploying mere abstracted conceptualisations without recognition of embodied practices of dress and fashion. Thus, as reconciliation between the two approaches is needed, a few Korean studies show such balance. For instance, Korean costume cultural historian, Jo Hui-jin’s book, *Sunbiwa Piercing* provides fifteen chapters of case studies which bring integrated narratives between theory and artefact.<sup>29</sup> Her rounded examination of Korean costume with detailed observation resulting from object-based approaches along with qualitative methods makes sense of clothing in Korean history, as she writes to let clothing tell a story of people by ways of dress in which social and cultural contexts are embedded. Conducting in-depth interviews with older informants and using historical written records, Jo’s argument follows that there has been a sense of fashion through which Korean dress changed over time, but also a Korean case of emulation, which is the motivating factor of fashion, and women’s individual agency to adorn themselves, which in a sense brought Korean men’s critical attitude to the seemingly fickle fashion, should not be confined to the Western fashion discourse.<sup>30</sup> Such fashionability, therefore, applies equally to the past and the present or the West and the East, regardless of the differences in modes of fashion change among different socio-cultural settings.

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<sup>29</sup> Jo Hui-jin, *Sunbiwa Piercing* [Aristocrats and Piercing], 2003.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-61.

Further, the aforementioned problematic issues between Western and non-Western fashion discourses in relation to Korean contexts have not been studied yet in Korean dress and fashion academia. In Korea, the transitional period throughout the Open Port era, and by that, the modernisation and colonial period (1910–1945), holds the issue of encountering non-Western and Western fashions, sartorial discourses and change of clothing system between local Korean dress and imported Western dress. However, studies of this influential period remain relatively scant when compared to the large number of studies on *hanbok* in the Joseon period (1392–1910).<sup>31</sup> This is because the colonial past and a perceived lack of data from the period have resulted in a general reluctance to conduct research in the field. Relatively less clothing remains or has been collected from the transitional period without any historical importance given somehow, and as Korean dress scholarship has mainly focused on clothing artefacts with the object-based examination, there has been absence in investigating dress and fashion during this period in terms of employing necessary critical, theoretical and methodological approaches to the hidden era.

With regard to Korean literature on a modernisation context, studies on modernity or ‘modernology’<sup>32</sup> have developed within Korean cultural studies since

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<sup>31</sup> For example, one of the influential Korean costume academies is *The Korean Society of Costume*, whereby two periodicals have been issued: *Boksik* [복식, 服飾, Costume] and *International Journal of Costume*. Among them, articles regarding Korean costume mainly have focused on the *hanbok* from Joseon period, for that period of objects were available to the research, and studies on excavated costume during this period have been also stressed. By contrast, studies on the transitional period and relations between *hanbok* and *yangbok* in this scope have been relatively absent, judging by the lack of publication in the key journals. A few studies are available, though, see Yu Su-gyeong, *Hanguk yeoseong yangjang byeoncheonsa* [A History of Changes in Korean Women’s Western Clothing], 1990.; Kim Jin-sik, *Hanguk yangbok 100nyeonsa* [A 100-Year History of Korean Western Clothing], 1990.

<sup>32</sup> The term is derived from Kwon Bodeure, ‘Saeroun maengmogeul chajaseo’ [In Pursuit of New Purpose], in Jang, ed. *Hanguk geundaeseong yeonguui gireul mutda* [Asking the Way of Studying Korean Modernity], 2006, pp. 41-70.

the 1990s along with Kim Jin-song's seminal book,<sup>33</sup> in which historical enquiry on the formations of modernity through dress and fashion has not been conducted in depth. However, Kim Gyung-il's book, *Yeoseongui geundae, geundaeui yeoseong*, primarily brings *sinnyeoseong* (new woman or modern girl) as key players in women's modernisation in Korea.<sup>34</sup> This group of women, who received modern education in colonial Korea or abroad in Japan, led Korean society as an enlightenment force in women's history. Highlighting this movement, Kim illustrates how these women's identities were related to the wearing of *hanbok* and *yangbok* during the colonial modernisation period, so that the everyday lives of new modern women were contextualised through modern fashion practice, gender and sexuality, women's education and work, mass consumption and popular culture.

Whilst Kim's study is based on his sociology background, Kwon Hyeok-hui's book, *Joseoneseo on sajinyeopseo*, is written from the perspective of the discipline of anthropology.<sup>35</sup> Based on his collection of picture postcards and other collections in private archives and museums in Korea, Kwon reads the image of Korea in a postcolonial manner, deconstructing the politics of representation through the imagery that Japanese colonial power produced and reproduced through the medium of postcards. As photographs are man-made, not natural, and colonial apparatus, the evidence of dress and fashion reality in colonial Korea requires a political interpretation and analysis of the image, with reference to other object- and text-based materials. As such, Korean modernity when it comes to dress and fashion inevitably involves Japanese colonial discourses, and postcolonial approaches in this field are much needed.

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<sup>33</sup> Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui Hyeongseong: Seoule ttanseu Holeul Heohara* [Emergence of Modernity: Allow Dance Hall in Seoul], 1999.

<sup>34</sup> Kim Gyeong-il, *Yeoseongui geundae, geundaeui yeoseong* [Women's Modern, Women of the Modern], 2004.

<sup>35</sup> Kwon Hyeok-hui, *Joseoneseo on sajinyeopseo* [Picture Postcard from Joseon], 2005.

Despite the emergence of postcolonial studies on modernity in East Asian contexts, there seem to be current limitations in looking at Korean dress and fashion during the colonial and modern period. Tani Barlow's seminal edited book, *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, generates the concept of 'colonial modernity' in East Asian contexts contributing to the reinterpretation of modern East Asian history and notions of modernity and colonialism in general.<sup>36</sup> Against the tendency to present imperialists and victims as monolithic categories, it approaches to overcome the lacuna in critical scholarship by exploring some of the internal contradictions and ambiguities that permeate the history of colonialism and postcolonialism in East Asia. Following this line, another seminal work, *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, edited by Shin and Robinson provides an alternative lens for Korea's experience under the Japanese colonial rule, moving away from the view of the nationalist narrative or victims' history, which often dominated Korean historiography, towards transcending 'the binary logic of true nation/anti-nation' by embracing 'more inclusive, pluralist approaches'.<sup>37</sup> Although the essays in those pivotal books do not convey any discussion on Korea's sartorial practice during the colonial period, they are still valid and influential for the current study's revisionist perspective.

## ***1.2. Problems for the Research***

Given the current status of the field, this study pays attention to tackle some problems from the scope of the research in specific. Firstly, it looks at the beginning of the sartorial encounter between Korean dress (*hanbok*) and Western dress (*yangbok*) and the sartorial shift between them in modernising and transitional Korea. Approaching the transitional period more cautiously, here it refers to the period when the use of dress by Koreans largely appeared in *hanbok*, but began to change in wearing *yangbok*. This stresses the nuanced state of coexistence in wearing *hanbok* and *yangbok*, as well

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<sup>36</sup> Tani E. Barlow, ed. *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, 1997.

<sup>37</sup> Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 1999, pp. 1-18.

as the modern alterations of *hanbok* and the gradual decrease in use of *hanbok*, replaced by emerging *yangbok* in Korea.

The change of clothing and dress practice during this transitional period stemmed from the contact between the two forms of clothing from different cultures. The so-called ‘dual ways of dressing from *hanbok* to *yangbok*’ (복식이중구조, *boksik ijung gujo*) is mainly found in describing the shift of dress practice during the transitional period. For instance, in her book *Uri saenghwal 100nyeon, ot*, Go Bu-ja characterises the transitional period of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century as a big shift in Korean dress history.<sup>38</sup> With the term ‘dual ways of dressing from *hanbok* to *yangbok*’, it simply claims people’s sartorial shift from wearing traditional Korean clothing to modern Western clothing. She thus sees the period as having a dual structure in dressing the two forms of clothing, either traditional *hanbok* or modern *yangbok*.

However, this perspective has conventionally approached the change as a simple dichotomy – Korea’s dress change from *hanbok* to *yangbok* by the result of sartorial modernisation from tradition – lacking a sufficient explanation of the nuanced mode of sartorial change and pertinent socio-cultural implications behind it. Despite the apparent intricacy of this period of clothing transition, current studies characterise the period in a dichotomous way of dressing, as a separation or rupture between the two forms of clothing rather than as a nuanced transition. The existing framework then fails to provide a meaningful contextualisation or to account for multiple ways of the shift in Korea’s protean time of sartorial change. Nor does it offer any nuanced understanding of the impact of this turbulent and dynamic period of dress shift.

Secondly, this study addresses the problem of tradition in relation to modernity in Korea’s dress and fashion under the impact of Japanese colonialism. Especially, the colonial power impinged upon the representation of Korean dress through exhibitions,

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<sup>38</sup> See Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal 100nyeon, ot* [100 Years of Korean Life, Dress], 2001, pp. 111-176.

displayed spaces and related fields, inventing the tradition of *hanbok* in a certain way that was rendered as being part of the culture of colonial subjects and as the opposite of modernity. Exhibitions are created through the practice of collecting or selecting objects to be displayed in galleries, museums and exhibitionary spaces and they reflect the practitioner's identity or the purpose of the occasion.<sup>39</sup> Further, when it comes displaying historical artefacts in public exhibitionary space, an exhibition links to 'traditions' in a given culture.<sup>40</sup> As for Korean costume in this regard, the sartorial tradition of Korea began to be constructed through exhibitions and museums in the early twentieth century, when the related practices were conducted by the new Japanese regime. Due to its colonial history, Korean sartorial tradition was not free from the Japanese political agenda. Yet, traditions, as current studies of anthropology have argued, along with modernities, are not meant to be 'static' or a 'fixed' concept,<sup>41</sup> and this can be applied to the discussion of Korean traditional dress in the colonial era.

According to Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's classic work on the 'invention of tradition', the social construction of tradition can be examined in the context of the nation state – here, the colonial state – as many traditions are invented by national/colonial elites to justify the existence and importance of their respective nation/colonial states.<sup>42</sup> In particular, Terence Ranger's chapter on 'the invention of tradition in colonial Africa' is relevant here, for it argues the colonial power would often invent a tradition so as to use it to legitimise their own position as an occupying force.<sup>43</sup> The idea of invented tradition then links to another classic work by Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, in which a nation is a socially constructed

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<sup>39</sup> Susan M. Pearce, *On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition*, 1995, pp. 272-275.

<sup>40</sup> Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, 1995.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Joel S. Kahn, 'Anthropology and Modernity', 42/5, 2001, pp. 651-680.

<sup>42</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, ed. *The Invention of Tradition*, 1992 [1983].

<sup>43</sup> Terence Ranger, 'Chapter 6. The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', in Hobsbawm and Ranger, ed. *The Invention of Tradition*, 1992 [1983], pp. 211-262.



community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group.<sup>44</sup> During the colonial period, it was Japan that was able to construct invented traditions and imagined communities of colonial Joseon state through the course of colonial governance. The tradition in relation to Korean dress *hanbok* was part of this colonial project and the sartorial tradition constructed in this context needs to be re-examined.

Thirdly, the Eurocentric understanding of fashion can be questioned to find a better explanation for non-Western, local Korean cases of dress practice in relation to the emergence of modern fashion in Korea. This, in particular, can be examined in line with the conditions of fashion through ‘production’, ‘mediation’ and ‘consumption’. This nexus I put forward is a critical application of the recent Western dress and fashion scholarship.<sup>45</sup> Despite its depth of theoretical discussion on the subject, non-Western cases of dress and fashion have received some Eurocentric analysis. For example, reviewing dress and fashion studies in a comparative way, Western fashion sociologist Entwistle states that:

Studies of dress, on the other hand, produced mainly by anthropologists, tend to be empirical in scope, examining dress in everyday life within particular communities and by particular individuals, and since they focus mainly on non-Western and traditional communities have little to say about fashion as it exists in the west.<sup>46</sup>

Western development of fashion has been studied in its own way, yet the meanings and practices of fashion in other spheres may vary culturally and socially depending on how dress and fashion have been produced, mediated and consumed in

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<sup>44</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 1991 [1983].

<sup>45</sup> Not as a whole series of production–mediation–consumption, but in part, Western dress and fashion scholars have examined the subject along with Western cases. For instance, as for production and consumption, see Joanne Entwistle, *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress, and Modern Social Theory*, 2000, pp.208-236; and for production, promotion, dissemination and shopping, see Christopher Breward, *Fashion*, 2003, pp. 19-62, 99-114, 143-156.

<sup>46</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, p. 3.

which settings. In other words, Western-centric modernist canons and fashion discourses can be challenged or complemented by exploring non-Western local Korean cases, and entering into such debates with a fresh, plural yet informed perspective will foster a better understanding of what modern fashion and dress practice was in vernacular, non-Western settings of Korea.

Lastly, this study pays attention to meaningful and multiple relations between dress, fashion and people, which have often been overlooked in the Korean dress scholarship that largely focuses on the object description. Beyond this limit and problem, dress and fashion studies have approached the issue in terms of identity, class and gender. Dress tells us something about the wearer, and fashion functions for the individual and the collective as a social register in which people's identities, classes and genders are simultaneously interwoven and contested. How people performed their identities through clothing bore the mark of their social location as members of particular groups, aligned along axes of gender, class, political orientation or culture. The link between dress, fashion and identity, though, is not straightforward:

Fashion and dress have a complex relationship to identity: on the one hand the clothes we choose to wear can be expressive of identity, telling others something about our gender, class, status and so on; on the other, our clothes cannot always be 'read', since they do not straightforwardly 'speak' and can therefore be open to misinterpretation.<sup>47</sup>

Due to their ambiguous nature, links between dress, fashion and people are so 'protean' as to render the essence almost ungraspable. As noted by Wilson, playing 'symbolic, communicative and aesthetic' roles, dress and fashion communicate more subtly than most objects and commodities, because of their intimate relationship to our bodies and our selves.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>48</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, pp. 1-15.

Such relations can be perhaps more complicated during the colonial Korea's period of modernisation. With regard to wearers of modern fashion in Korea, previous studies that have considered the modern figures such as the 'modern boy' (모던보이), 'modern girl' (모던걸) and 'new woman' (신여성) have tended to be simply negative and critical, describing them as exemplars of conspicuous modern fashion without considering the meaningful links between their dress, fashion and society.<sup>49</sup> The problem further lies in the limit of the approach in modern individuals' clothing, in which the relationship between *hanbok* and *yangbok* has often been construed as merely one between old/traditional and new/modern. This binary assumption has resulted in the studies that lack a sense of nuance, plurality and complexity in the social relations surrounding dress – *hanbok* and *yangbok* – and fashion, during the time of Korea facing the emergence of modernity and colonial hegemony.

### **1.3. Research Question and Sub-questions**

Based on the rationale of the research stated above, the proposed study intends to explore rather more complex matters of sartorial change between Korean and Western clothing in the advent of modern fashion in Korea. This study critically questions the period of sartorial transition, hitherto often discussed in accordance with a linear and dichotomous framework of dress change – dual ways of dressing from traditional *hanbok* to modern *yangbok*. Instead, it examines the transition in multifaceted and nuanced ways with a postcolonial perspective, investigating relations and tensions between the two forms of dress encountered and contested through the modern fashion in Korea along with Japanese and Western influences, since the late nineteenth century and throughout the colonial period.

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<sup>49</sup> For example, see Kim Hee-jung, 'Byeolgeongoneul jungsimeuro bon sinnyeoseongui bokjange gwanhan nyeongu' [Study of the Attire of New Women Described in Byeolgeongon], 12/2, 2004, pp. 211-223; and Sin Myeong-jik, *Modern boy, gyeongseongul geonilda* [Modern Boy, Walking in Gyeongseong], 2003, pp. 75-113.

Thus the main question of the research lies in: ‘How can one seek a nuanced understanding on sartorial transition between wearing *hanbok* and *yangbok* and local practice of modern dress and fashion emerged in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century of colonial modern Korea?’

To answer this central question in a thematic and analytical way, I will explore the following four sub-questions derived from the research rationale, in each of four main chapters of the thesis:

First, concerning the beginning of the sartorial encounter between Korean and Western dress and the problem of the simple dichotomy in viewing the encounter and emergence of wearing Western dress in Korea; ‘how can one view the early period of the sartorial transition and modernity emerging in a nuanced way throughout the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period?’

Second, in order to deconstruct the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* rendered merely as being opposite to modernity and part of colonial subjects during the colonial period; ‘how can one critically examine the Japanese power on display of Korean clothing and construction of Korean sartorial tradition through exhibitionary spaces, and further find a nuanced voice of traditional *hanbok* and its practice out of the colonial discourse but with a postcolonial stance?’

Third, as for seeking non-Western local Korean cases in response to the Western-centric fashion discourse; ‘what can be an alternative understanding and nuanced sartorial realities of modern dress and fashion materialised through the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in colonial modern Korea, taking a systematic framework of conditions of modern dress and fashion in production–mediation–consumption?’

Fourth, overcoming the limited approach on the relations amongst dress, fashion and modern figures in terms of identity, class and gender, but pursuing protean and ambiguous nature of the link between the individual and the collective through their sartorial practices within particular background of Korea; ‘how can one explore more

multiple relations among modern female, male individuals and their modern dress and fashion practices manifested through *hanbok* and *yangbok* in terms of identity, class and gender, engaging with social criticism to their new appearances and socio-economic, cultural contexts of colonial modern Korea of the time?’

These four sub-questions are set to reinstate the sense of nuance, multiplicity and intricacy embodied in the sartorial practice of dress and fashion expressed by modern male and female Koreans, which dynamically interacted with the Japanese power and Western impacts of the transitional times.

## **2. Background of the Research**

Based on the rationale of the research, literature review and thesis questions stated above, this section provides theoretical, historical background and definitions of terms for the research. The proposed research takes an interdisciplinary approach in its theoretical and methodological consideration, as it follows the aforementioned characteristic of the dress and fashion studies. Given the general constraints of research materials as fragmented and limited from the research period to some extent, this study tries to make sense of the available materials into Korean contexts of dress and fashion, wherein pertinent theories need to be tested so that appropriate theoretical explanations can be drawn to map out the sartorial realities better into the Korean settings.

### ***2.1. Theoretical Consideration***

As anthropologists have constantly claimed, the terms ‘modern’ and ‘modernity’ are highly problematic: there is no one modernity, any more than there was ever a static ‘tradition’.<sup>50</sup> What the study of fashion and clothing makes apparent is that there is a

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<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Scott Lash and Jonathan Friedman, ed. *Modernity and Identity*, 1992.; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter, 1993.; Joel S. Kahn, ‘Anthropology and Modernity’, 42/5, 2001, pp. 651-680.

constant struggle between ‘competing imaginations of being modern which fight for legitimacy and hegemony’.<sup>51</sup> The study claims that dress and fashion are primary symbols in the performances through which modernity – and therefore tradition and history – have been conceived, constructed, and challenged in a given society. It can be said that both the ‘modern’ and the ‘traditional’ are powerfully and dynamically constituted in body treatments, surrounded by types of clothing in *hanbok* and *yangbok*. One can assume then that ‘the body cannot escape being a vehicle of history, a metaphor and metonym of being-in-time’.<sup>52</sup> Against the notion of clothing systems of the colonial ‘Other’, or fashion as a negative image of the ‘primitive’, anthropological concern with fashion studies can contribute to a cross-cultural, non-Eurocentric understanding of fashion in the era of hybridity or translocality under a postcolonial regime.

Addressing Korean costume as tradition against Western fashion as modernity can be reconsidered by looking at what were the ‘local meanings and experiences’ of fashion rather than at ‘modernity as a global project’.<sup>53</sup> Since the *Orient* is said to have been constructed almost as a ‘European invention’, an integral part of European material civilization and culture,<sup>54</sup> non-Western Korean modern fashion can be further discussed in a freer and its own way. Thus, the advance of postcolonial studies has encouraged non-Western ways of writing about colonial dress and fashion history.<sup>55</sup> In the debate of ‘colonial modernity’ in Korea, the ‘perspective of colonial modernisation’

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<sup>51</sup> Mukulika Banerjee and Daniel Miller, *The Sari*, 2003, p. 249.

<sup>52</sup> Elisha P. Renne, ‘Virginitly Cloths and Vaginal Coverings in Ekiti, Nigeria’, in Hendrickson, ed. *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*, 1996, pp. 19-33.

<sup>53</sup> Daniel Miller, *Modernity, An Ethnographic Approach: Dualism and Mass Consumption in Trinidad*, 1993.

<sup>54</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 2003 [1979].

<sup>55</sup> For example, see Homi K. Bhabha, ed. *Nation and Narration*, 1990.; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, 1999.; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, 2000.

(식민지 근대화론, *singminji geundaehwaron*) and the ‘perspective of exploitation’ (수탈론, *sutalnon*) argue for contrasting views of Japanese rule, yet at the same time they regard modernity as representing ‘historical progress’.<sup>56</sup> Colonial modernity in Korea, in this sense, brings out a balanced position between nationalism and colonialism, seeking ‘alternative modernities’ in Korea’s colonial modern conditions.

Materiality of clothing here is the playing out of forces between ‘subject’ and ‘object’ as process, power and agency in a particular circle or ‘objectification’ of a clothing system within Korea.<sup>57</sup> Also, materiality of fashion – based on the materiality of clothing – which is often taken for granted, has a crucial role in identifying fashion as an object/image/text, meaning/signification, and process/representation/practice in the modern period of Korean society. This acknowledges that the materiality of clothing mediates people’s response to culture and history of fashion beyond the mere vanity or ephemerality of fashion itself. Gell argues that if artefacts can be regarded as having an ‘agency’ in relation to persons in an active way, namely as ‘doing’ rather than ‘meaning’,<sup>58</sup> then it can be asked of objects ‘how meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories’.<sup>59</sup> In this regard, the praxis of ‘production’, ‘mediation’ and ‘consumption’ through the agency, meaning and doing of dress and fashion in colonial modern Korea can be traced as for intermediaries between dressed subject and sartorial object, uncovering particular local Korean contexts.<sup>60</sup>

The emergence of modern fashion in Korean history also needs to foreground the issues of ‘power and knowledge’ in terms of how Western fashion discourse impinged upon the genealogy of non-Western Korean fashion through newly imported Western

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<sup>56</sup> Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ‘Introduction: Rethinking Colonial Korea’, in Shin and Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 1999, pp. 9-13.

<sup>57</sup> Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*, 1987.

<sup>58</sup> Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, 1998.

<sup>59</sup> Arjun Appadurai, ed. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, 1986.

<sup>60</sup> For example, Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold, *The World of Consumption*, 1993.; Christopher Breward, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, 1999.

material culture.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, fashion as a cultural form in Korean society engaged with different moments of ‘emergent’ *yangbok* and ‘residual’ *hanbok* under the grand narratives of Western fashion discourse or Japanese colonial hegemony.<sup>62</sup> According to Breward, the virtue of ‘new cultural history’ of fashion invites a more questioning framework that allows for better explanations, multilayered and open-ended perspectives,<sup>63</sup> and this can be no exception in approaching non-Western fashion writings. To this end, any attempt for rounded historiography of modern dress and fashion in Korea may need to integrate non-Western Korean case studies with Western dress and fashion theories.

## **2.2. Definitions of Terms**

In terms of definitions of key terms in this study, ‘dress’ and ‘fashion’, ‘*hanbok*’ and ‘*yangbok*’, ‘modern/modernity’ and ‘colonial modernity’ can be outlined as follows. Dress is defined as ‘collective term for all clothing’ with ‘synonyms of apparel, clothes, costume’, garb and garment.<sup>64</sup> As a narrow definition of dress, it can be a ‘general term for a one-piece outer garment that varies in length but extends at least to below the hips and ends in a skirt’; traditionally worn by women, and the term ‘dress’ as presently used did not come into common usage until the late eighteenth century, before which the terms ‘robe’ or ‘gown’ were used in Western costume history.<sup>65</sup> Comparing the terms ‘dress’ and ‘adornment’, which are most commonly used by anthropologists considering non-Western contexts as well, dress signals ‘an act’ which stresses ‘the process of covering’, whereas ‘adornment’ emphasises ‘the aesthetic aspects of altering the body’.<sup>66</sup> In the field of dress and fashion studies or textiles and

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<sup>61</sup> Michael Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. by A. M. Sheridan Smith, 1972.

<sup>62</sup> Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture: Selected Essays*, 1980.

<sup>63</sup> Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion*, 1995.

<sup>64</sup> Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta and Phyllis Tortora, *Dictionary of Fashion*, 2003, p. 130.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, p. 43.



apparel, a widely accepted definition of dress is ‘the total arrangement of all outwardly detectable modifications of the body itself and all material objects added to it’,<sup>67</sup> and this definition will be used in the current study.

Fashion is generally defined as ‘a socio-cultural phenomenon in which a preference is shared by a large number of people for a particular style that lasts for a relatively short time, and then is replaced by another style’.<sup>68</sup> Welters and Lillethun also defines ‘fashion as changing styles of dress and appearance that are adopted by a group of people at any given time and place’.<sup>69</sup> In terms of change, fashion historians suggest that ‘fashion began when prevailing styles changed within someone’s lifetime’; that is, ‘people started discarding their clothes based on style, not because they were worn out’.<sup>70</sup> Also, change in fashion involves change in styles of dress and appearance. In fashion, ‘style’ is defined as ‘an individual and distinctive type of dress, coat, blouse, or other items of apparel or accessory’ and to have style means ‘to have a certain flair that is specific and individual’.<sup>71</sup> A style is then ‘a combination of silhouette, construction, fabric and details that distinguishes an object from other objects in the same category’.<sup>72</sup> Fashion can be slightly different from ‘trend’ that is a ‘direction in which styles, colours, fabrics and designs of dress are tending to change’,<sup>73</sup> or ‘a direction in which fashion may be heading’.<sup>74</sup>

The change of style in fashion is stressed in the Western context, thus Wilson’s definition of fashion reads ‘fashion is dress in which the key feature is rapid and continual changing of styles’.<sup>75</sup> In line with this, Kawamura explains that ‘a fashion

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<sup>67</sup> Roach and Musa, *New Perspectives on the History of Western Dress*, 1980, p. 11.

<sup>68</sup> Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta and Phyllis Tortora, *Dictionary of Fashion*, p. 154.

<sup>69</sup> Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun, ed. *The Fashion Reader*, 2007, pp. xix.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta and Phyllis Tortora, *Dictionary of Fashion*, p. 437.

<sup>72</sup> Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun, ed. *The Fashion Reader*, pp. xix.

<sup>73</sup> Charlotte Mankey Calasibetta and Phyllis Tortora, *Dictionary of Fashion*, p. 155.

<sup>74</sup> Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun, ed. *The Fashion Reader*, pp. xix.

<sup>75</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p. 3.

system supports stylistic changes in fashion’ and ‘the system provides the means whereby fashion change continually takes place’.<sup>76</sup> She then emphasises fashion as a ‘concept that separates itself from other words which are often used as synonyms of fashion, such as clothing, garments and apparel’ and while these refer to ‘tangible objects’, she argues ‘fashion is an intangible object’ and ‘a symbolic product which has no content substance by/in itself’.<sup>77</sup> In its characteristics, fashion encompasses not only ‘change’ of dress in style but also its ‘novelty’.<sup>78</sup> The newness is a crucial part of fashion as highly valued of its magnetism. Koenig refers to ardent fashion followers as ‘neophilia’, stating that humankind receptiveness for anything new is in some way essential to fashion-oriented behaviour.<sup>79</sup>

These definitions and characteristics of fashion can be applied to non-Western Korean contexts of this study. Craik supports this stance that ‘there are fashions and fashions’, and ‘while Western elite designer fashion constitutes *one* system, it is by no means exclusive nor does it determine all other systems’.<sup>80</sup> She rejects the view that the term ‘fashion’ refers exclusively to clothing behaviour in Western capitalist economies, that is, where certain economic exchanges are invoked in the production, circulation and distribution of clothes. Therefore, the definition of fashion is not necessarily limited to a purely Western context, as ‘fashion systems may be recast as an array of competing and inter-meshing systems cutting across Western and non-Western cultures’.<sup>81</sup>

In this regard, *hanbok* (한복, 韓服) literally means ‘Korean dress’, compared to *yangbok* (양복, 洋服) of ‘Western dress’, and by the introduction of *yangbok* to Korea,

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<sup>76</sup> Yuniya Kawamura, *Fashion-ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, 2005, p. 5.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>79</sup> Rene Koenig, *The Restless Image: A Sociology of Fashion*, 1973, pp. 76-77., cited in *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

both kinds of dress began to be used together since the late nineteenth century.<sup>82</sup> *Hanbok* was also often called ‘*joseon ot*’ (조선옷) meaning ‘Joseon Korean clothes’ with relation to the Japanese style (일본식) and the Western style (서양식) during the colonial period, and ‘*yangjang*’ (양장, 洋裝) was also used specifically referring to women’s Western style or *yangbok* dress.<sup>83</sup> During the research period, fashion was commonly translated as ‘*yuhaeng*’ (유행, 流行) or directly transliterated as ‘패션/패손’ as found examples in the newspapers.<sup>84</sup> When *hanbok* and *yangbok* as a type of dress in the Korean context relates to fashion, the current study addresses a premise that fashion is not only related to Western dress, *yangbok*, but Korean dress, *hanbok*, will be also considered and explored through the research, in terms of fashion’s characteristics in ‘change’ and ‘novelty’.

As for modern/modernity in relation to fashion, Breward and Evans refers to ‘modernity is a term in an abstract classificatory system, invented by scholars to make sense of the world’ and links it to ‘the development of consumer culture in the wake of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century industrialisation’.<sup>85</sup> Modernity as a ‘quality or condition of being new and modern’,<sup>86</sup> the meaning of the concept has varied as it has been discussed by the social sciences and the humanities traditions.<sup>87</sup> Berman draws a

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<sup>82</sup> For instance, *The Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper, Friday, 19 June 1925, shows the use of both *hanbok* and *yangbok* in a series of the story titled ‘On the Way to Hawaii’ [하와이가는길에]: ‘*yangban* dressed in white *yangbok*’ [白色洋服을 입은 양반이] and ‘attired in a gilt-edged student hat and *hanbok*’ [금테두른 學生帽와 韓服 그대로]. p. 1.

<sup>83</sup> For examples, see *The Dong-A Ilbo*, Thursday, 29 October 1925, the article of ‘Which Overcoat to Wear in This Season of Supposedly Very Cold Winter’ [몹시치우리란을겨울엔 무슨윗옷을입을가] uses the terms: ‘*joseon ot*’ [조선옷, Joseon clothes], ‘*joseon buin*’ [조선부인, Joseon women], ‘*joseon sik*’ [조선식, Joseon style], ‘*ilbon sik*’ [일본식, Japanese style], ‘*seoyang sik*’ [서양식, Western style], ‘*yangjang*’ [양장, women’s Western dress]. p. 4.

<sup>84</sup> For instance, see *The Dong-A Ilbo*, Friday, 1 September 1933, featuring ‘fashion show’ [패션 쇼오], ‘fabrics to come into fashion’ [유행될 옷감]. p. 6.

<sup>85</sup> Christopher Breward and Caroline Evans, ed. *Fashion and Modernity*, 2005, p. 1.

<sup>86</sup> Sally Wehmeier, ed. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, 2005, p. 984.

<sup>87</sup> Christopher Breward and Caroline Evans, ed. *Fashion and Modernity*, p. 1.

distinction of the terms: ‘modernisation’ referring to the processes of scientific, technological, industrial, economic and political innovation that also become urban, social and artistic in their impact, while ‘modernity’ referring to the way that modernisation infiltrates everyday life and permeates sensibilities.<sup>88</sup> The emphasis on individual experience becomes important for an expression of modernity that emerges in the material aspects of modern life, in which fashion – involved as it is with production and consumption – suits an impeccable expression of modernity.<sup>89</sup>

Baudelaire brings the term ‘modernity’ in his *The Painter of Modern Life* to designate the fleeting experience of life – as ‘the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent’ – in the flux of the nineteenth-century urban metropolis of Paris.<sup>90</sup> Simmel also relates fashion to the fragmentation of modern life and discusses modern life’s neurasthenia as the overstimulation and nervous excitement that came with the growth of the metropolis.<sup>91</sup> It was then Wilson who aptly captured the moment of dissonance in the modern city, fashion and modernity as being key to twentieth-century style; the ‘hysteria and exaggeration of fashion’ expressed the ‘colliding dynamism, the thirst for change and the heightened sensation that characterise the city societies particularly of modern industrial capitalism [that] go to make up this modernity’.<sup>92</sup>

Colonial modernity in this study is then understood as an ‘alternative postcolonial perspective’ in looking at particular modernity in colonial Korea, as well as another type of ‘modernities’ manifested, interrelated with colonial conditions or coloniality in Korea. Tani Barlow initially suggested colonial modernity as ‘a speculative frame for investigating the infinitely pervasive discursive powers that

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<sup>88</sup> Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*, 1983, pp. 16-17., cited in *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun, ed. *The Fashion Reader*, pp. xxi.

<sup>90</sup> Charles Baudelaire, ‘The Painter of Modern Life’, in *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, 1964 [1864], p. 13.

<sup>91</sup> Georg Simmel, ‘Fashion’ and ‘The Metropolis and Mental Life’, in *On Individuality and Social Forms*, 1971 [1904], pp. 324-339.

<sup>92</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p. 10.

increasingly connect at key points to the globalising impulses of capitalism' in East Asia.<sup>93</sup> This is a way of 'posing a historical question how our mutual present came to take its apparent shape', proposing that 'historical context is not a matter of positively defined, elemental, or discrete units – nation states, stages of development, or civilisations, for instance – but rather a complex field of relationships or threads of material that connect multiply in space-time and can be surveyed from specific sites'.<sup>94</sup> Despite its 'wide range and abstract characteristics' and a 'temporal' category of 'the inter-war period of the 1920s and 1930s', Lee Hyunjung and Cho Younghan explains the 'colonial modernity thesis' as 'an analytic concept', in which it 'does help to explicate the course of both colonisation and modernisation in East Asia', and further attempts 'to perceive the concept as a living structure in East Asia, born at the moment the region was first compelled by imperialism and capitalism to develop and acquire modernised infrastructures'.<sup>95</sup>

Colonial modernity in Korea is a useful framework in this study for exploring dress and fashion in the complex histories East Asia comprises, as well as for examining how traces of colonial modernity have been materialised in the region. It is not to be regarded as 'modernity merely in the context of the colonial period', but should be understood as a 'holistic output newly constituted from the dialectic process of collisions and synthesis of coloniality and modernity which are ultimately distinct from both modernity and coloniality'.<sup>96</sup> Shin and Robinson addresses to explore 'the

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<sup>93</sup> Tani E. Barlow, ed. *Formations of Colonial Modernity*, p. 6. She explains that originally the introduction of the term 'colonial modernity' in historiography of the early 1990s provided an alternative to 'modernisation theory' and an international focus to writing about Japanese and other imperialisms on the China mainland. For further outline of the debate over colonial modernity, see Tani Barlow, 'Debates over Colonial Modernity in East Asia and Another Alternative', *Cultural Studies*, 2012, pp. 623-630.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Lee Hyunjung and Cho Younghan, 'Introduction: Colonial Modernity and Beyond in East Asian Contexts', *Cultural Studies*, 2012, pp. 601-602.

<sup>96</sup> Jung Chungse, 'A Making of Colonial Modernity: The Irrigation Association Project in Early Colonial Korea, 1910-30', *ASA Annual Meeting*, 2009, p. 1.

internal dynamics of social change, the multiple possibilities of representing diverse subject groups, and the origin of various contemporary ideas of nation, modernity, and colonialism’, and further suggests a colonial modern historical field that is ‘conceptually grounded within a triangular field bounded by three interlocking and mutually influencing ideas: colonialism, modernity, and nationalism’.<sup>97</sup> That is, it views Korean modernity during the colonial period as a newly created discursive locus, wherein modernity, colonialism, and capitalism were interacted, contended, and negotiated within the context of colonial social change. The current study then posits that the process and practice of modern fashion by Koreans in colonial and modern society reflect its own path of sartorial modernity, which is much more nuanced and complex as it was contested and interwoven through ‘colonial hegemonic domination’, ‘Korean autonomous agency’ and ‘Western modern influences’.

### ***2.3. Chronological Background of Sartorial Change***

Examining the emergence of modern dress and fashion in Korea requires a certain timeframe of this study. Figure 1.2 is a photograph taken by Limb Eung Sik (임응식, 1912–2001), who is well known for his realism photography as a pioneer in Korea, showing coexistence of *hanbok* and *yangbok* worn by Korean women respectively on a pavement in front of the Midopa (美都波) Department Store (formerly Chojiya, 丁子屋, during the colonial period) in one of the fashion retail streets, Myeongdong in Seoul, early summer of 1956. While one may easily perceive the polka dot, or printed A-line one-piece dress with holding the parasols as fashion (the group of women on the left), can one also view or classify a woman’s appearance on the right wearing the well-made *hanbok* of fine summery fabric with the button knot on the jacket (*jeogori*) rather than using traditional fastening straps (*goreum*) as fashion in Korea? The moment captured by Limb’s photograph implies the problems or questions that this study raises on the transitional period of Koreans’ sartorial practice change and its

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<sup>97</sup> Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ‘Introduction: Rethinking Colonial Korea’, in Shin and Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, pp. 1-18.

relation to fashion, and leads us to focus on the scope of this research period: before the 1956, namely during the colonial period and especially through the 1920s and 30s when *hanbok* and *yangbok* dynamically interrelated with fashion in colonial modern Korea, and the earlier times than that as for the encounter between the two dress forms and the rise of the dual use of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in the late nineteenth-century Korea.



Figure 1.2. ‘Early Summer’ [초여름] / ‘Ladies’ [여인들], 1956 (Source: photograph by Limb Eung Sik)

It is generally considered in the Korean dress and fashion scholarship that the modernisation of Korea’s sartorial practice emerged since around the late 1870s and early 1880s throughout the so-called Open Port era (開港期) or the Korean Empire (大韓帝國) period, when Western-style dress began to be worn by early modernists in Korea.<sup>98</sup> Along with Korea opened its doors to Japan and other Western countries since 1876, figures from the Enlightenment Party (開化黨) such as Kim Ok-gyun (김옥균, 1851–1894), Seo Gwang-beom (서광범, 1859–1897), Yu Gil-jun (유길준,

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<sup>98</sup> See, for instance, Yu Hui-gyeong and Kim Mun-ja, *Hanguk boksik munhwasa* [Korean Costume Cultural History], 1998 [1981], pp. 343-375. Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa* [Korean Costume History], 1998, pp. 337-370.

1856–1914), Hong Yeong-sik (홍영식, 1856–1884) and Yun Chi-ho (윤치호, 1864–1945) are known to have embraced the Western ideas and culture earlier than others in Korea, and adopted *yangbok* as their new style.<sup>99</sup> The Western suit they initially acquired from Yokohama was a sack coat style which prevailed in Japan, originally came from Europe and the State since the eighteenth century, with a stand-up collar alongside narrow lapels and rounded edges of the bodice at front, comprising of a round collared dress shirt, bow tie and normally with striped trousers.<sup>100</sup> Officials at the Joseon court faced changes of their *hanbok* uniform following the reform movement during the 1880s and 90s, which completely changed into *yangbok* style later in 1900.

Korean men's attire in *hanbok* style, however, did not vanish until the 1940s and it was kept further longer and wider in rural areas of Korea.<sup>101</sup> Since the Neo-Confucian Joseon dynasty, with its strict emphasis on etiquette and manners, the form and style of Korean dress developed in a particular way depending on class and ceremonial occasions. The rigid dress code was decided according to the Confucian hierarchy of the emperor, king, government officials, gentlemen scholars, commoners and lower class people. A specific dress for a particular occasion was stipulated with Confucian meanings, and people's wishes were often embedded on the dress through colours and decorations. As for daily wear of *hanbok*, it basically consists of two parts: the top and bottom. The men's *hanbok* is composed of jackets (*jeogori*) and baggy trousers (*baji*) under outer robes (*po*), while women's *hanbok* of bolero-like jackets (*jeogori*) and skirts (*chima*).

The Eulmi reform of 1895 then marked a watershed in men's appearance change, for a decree of cutting topknots (*sangtu*) was introduced. Men's traditional headband (*manggeon*) became less used accordingly, and traditional wide-brimmed hats (*gat*)

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<sup>99</sup> Yu Hui-gyeong and Kim Mun-ja, *Hanguk boksik munhwasa*, p. 345.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 346.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 349.



changed to narrower-brimmed ones, along with use of Western hats such as the Panama hat (*Panama moja*) or straw hat (*maekgo moja*) which white colour became widely accepted later since its use in the year of Gojong's national funeral, 1919.<sup>102</sup> Among the men's *hanbok*, an outer coat (*durumagi*), over jacket (*magoja*) and waistcoat or vest (*joggi*) came into as new during the Open Port era, as they were imported or altered of parts from the existing forms, adapting to Korean style for men's general and wide use.<sup>103</sup>

Women's *hanbok* during this period also began to change following the modernisation in the Korean society. One of the key changes concerned the length of the *jeogori*. Very short jackets (about 20 cm) were used until the 1890s, needing extra coverings for breasts (*gaseum heoritti*) between the short jacket and skirt.<sup>104</sup> Western missionaries and Korean women who assisted the missionary work, known as 'Bible Women' (전도부인, *jeondo buin*), were one of the impetus in female *hanbok* reform. With this movement, the *jeogori* began to lengthen since the 1910s throughout the 1920s (length of the *jeogori* about 22 cm), 30s (about 26 cm) and 40s (about 30 cm).<sup>105</sup> Other parts of the *jeogori* such as arm holes and width of sleeves also became widened alongside the length change, allowing the jacket more ease in its shape to the wearer's body. Women's *chima* was also transformed accordingly resulting in shorter skirts than before, and a black shorter and narrower skirt (*tong chima*) emerged for women who did social activities, including female students. Korean women's use of *yangbok* was rather personally practiced than men's case of the uniform reform. Female modernists such as Park Esther (박에스더, 1876–1910), Ha Ran-sa (하란사, 1875–1919) and Yun Go-ryeo (윤고려, 1891–1913), as well as upper class women such as Imperial Lady Eom (엄비, 1854–1911) at court, were known as early Korean women who dressed in *yangjang* style. The earlier style featured a Western dress with big shoulders and a full

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 350.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., pp. 351-352.

<sup>104</sup> Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa*, p. 362.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 362-363.

skirt line alongside a ribbon around the neck with a hat, or a high-necked blouse with a long A-line skirt.<sup>106</sup>

Since the Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 and throughout the colonial period, *hanbok* continued to be modernised, while use of *yangbok* gradually increased in Korea. The fastening method of women's *hanbok* skirt was also reformed into a hanging way over shoulders, known as first introduced in Ewha School (梨花學堂) during the 1910s.<sup>107</sup> Shortened *hanbok* skirts also enjoyed different details in pleats or gathering around the waist, and it was used together with Western-style parasols and handbags. School girls were the main trend setters among others during this time, and various *hanbok* styles and colours were initially employed in women's schools and settled in a similar uniform style (white *jeogori* and black or dark blue *chima*) during the 1920s.<sup>108</sup> Men's *durumagi* was also used by women for their outer coats in winter season, as women's head coverings (*jangot* or *sseugae chima*) vanished throughout the turn of the twentieth century. Women's *yangbok* often showed a one-piece dress with the Gibson girl style and an X-silhouette of broader shoulders and skirts against narrower waists, as well as using the similar silhouette in blouses and long skirts. This featured high neckline details with stand collars or ruffled collars, and use of gigot sleeves with bare arms and the skirt line ending over ankles, allowing a bit more exposure of the women's body than wearing of *hanbok*.<sup>109</sup>

Men's *yangbok* became more and more available to the white-collar workers since the 1910s. Use of peaked lapels and double-breasted style was largely seen in men's suits this time. Inverness capes or cloaks were introduced, while the use of frock coats became diminished, and dress shirts under the jacket often presented wing or

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pp. 365-367.

<sup>107</sup> Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon* [100 Years of Modern Fashion], 2006, p. 72.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

French collars along with use of bow or derby ties as men's *yangbok* style.<sup>110</sup> During this period male students with short hair covered by school caps often wore *hanbok* style in black *durumagi* over the *jeogori* and *baji* with school badges, which adopted buttons for fastening instead of using traditional *goreum*. Western sports such as baseball, basketball, football, tennis and skating were also introduced to male and female schools, in which *hanbok* and *yangbok* garments were both used in a mixed way as a uniform in playing the sports.

After the March First Movement in 1919, the Japanese Governor-General of Korea (朝鮮總督府, Joseon Chongdokbu) inaugurated the *bunka seiji* (Cultural Rule) under the rule of Saitō Makoto (齋藤実, 1858–1936) during the 1920s, operated until the war effort geared around the late 1930s. Allowed the Korea's cultural activities alongside the surge of Western culture, *yangbok* spread more widely. Women's increased social engagement entailed more use of Western style. During the 1920s, a flapper look was observed in new women and modern girls' appearances, bearing boyish style, short trimmed hair and a loose fit one-piece dress. Women's *yangbok* initially worn by upper class women or *gisaeng* (entertainers, equivalent to the Japanese geisha) now became used by the commoners such as office girls, teachers and students, and even adopted as a uniform for women workers in service areas.<sup>111</sup> A straight silhouette in one-piece or two-piece dresses was enjoyed with the use of a coat, cape or cloak, sweater or jumper, scarf and cloche hat. Hemlines of skirts also changed as it ending around ankles in 1921, over calves in 1925 and about knees in 1928, which in turn affected the length of coats to get them shortened as well.<sup>112</sup> Women's coat design featured changes of different collars such as the sailor, oblong and shawls collars. Blouses showed overblouse style earlier and later tunic style since 1926, along

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>111</sup> Ryu Hui-gyeong, et al. *Uri ot icheonnyeon* [Two Thousand Years of Korean Dress], 2001, pp. 131-133.

<sup>112</sup> Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon*, pp. 98-99.

with bell or bishop sleeves in its detail change.<sup>113</sup> Spread with modern sports further, Western-style sportswear became more and more accepted such as white blouses or shirts matching with black bloomers or skirts with waist belts. Women's *hanbok* change in this period carried on shaping longer *jeogori* matching with shorter *chima* or *tong chima* which had wider pleats up to the hemline. The shortened *tong chima* covering around the knee area worn with the longer *jeogori* reaching near the waistline prevailed and this showed a similar silhouette with the boyish style in *yangbok* appearance.<sup>114</sup> While the length of the *hanbok* skirt shortened, women's bare legs needed to be covered and traditional Korean socks (*beoseon*) or Western socks were used along with Western shoes or rubber shoes which were introduced since around 1915.<sup>115</sup> Also, various Western-style accessories became popular and the scarfs and shawls were most fashionably used among others.

Men's *yangbok* style became further settled in the elite and affluent people in the society. The length of men's jacket got longer while the trousers widened. The so-called lounge jacket of English style was prevalent in the name of *sebiro* (背広, Savile Row suits), which featured narrow lapels with a deeper V-line at front and emphasis on the shoulder line. A straw hat, walking stick or cane and pocket watch completed the ensemble for gentlemen's appearance in *yangbok* style. Another style included the showy *combi* or separates look, in which the check patterned jacket with white trousers, alpaca jacket with white *seru* or serge trousers, and navy or dark blue top and yellow bottom were worn by the fashionable men.<sup>116</sup> Ensemble suits also became widespread during the mid-1920s, which used same fabric on the jacket, waistcoat and trousers, along with the Norfolk jacket, spring coat and overcoat. Men's wearing *hanbok* was still found in the elderly or many in suburb areas, showing *durumagi* matched with Western-style hats as outer appearance. Men's school uniforms yet generally turned

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

into *yangbok* style during this period, comprising of stand collared flannel jacket and trousers in black or grey colours, putting a square cap and five buttons at front bearing school emblems.<sup>117</sup>

Throughout the 1930s, evolving with varied modern cultures and socio-political ideas in Korea until the war mobilisation began in 1938 by the colonial authorities, use of *yangbok* grew more and more and broadly in the society. Women's school uniforms began to change in *yangbok* style, along with increased availability in making Western clothes and handle and care information. Items of women's *yangbok* became offered in a wide variety, such as flared skirts, separate suits, sporty coats and so on, with boyish style replaced by more feminine and soft style. Tailored and bolero jackets came into use featuring various shapes in oblong and tailored collars, striped patterns, set-in and puff sleeves in detail. Knitwear such as cardigans, waistcoats and sweaters also further diffused since the 1920s when short courses and lessons for the knitting technique were available to women in general. The overblouse presented a tunic look earlier this period, and later changed to belted ones and underblouse style, along with change from flat collars to using bow ties. Various skirts came into existence such as a jumper skirt, semi-tight skirt and pleats skirt, featuring the shorter hemline up to around the knees earlier and longer ones around the calves later in the 1930s. One-piece dresses were also favoured with use of belts in the waistline, which showed different neckline and sleeve designs such as a cowl neckline, puff and raglan sleeves with laced decoration at cuffs.<sup>118</sup> Wide-ranging textiles for women's *hanbok* became available such as artificial silk or rayon, velvet, surge, muslin, as well as traditional cotton, silk and ramie cloth, reflecting various colours and patterns.<sup>119</sup> While the *jeogori* lengthened, its sleeve line became more rounded and other areas of the neckline and cuffs had more ease of pattern cutting. Matching with the longer *jeogori*, same coloured *chima* enjoyed its popularity as they looked like *yangjang* suit style. Pleats in the *chima*

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<sup>117</sup> Ryu Hui-gyeong, et al. *Uri ot icheonnyeon*, p. 125.

<sup>118</sup> See further detail, Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon*, pp. 126-129.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

changed narrower and the length just covered around the knees. Mixed use of *hanbok* and Western clothes and accessories became widespread, as in using parasols, bags, shawls and overcoats, along with Western hairstyles.<sup>120</sup>

During this time, men's *yangbok* style in suits also became varied such as a single- and double-breasted suit, frock coat, trench coat, spring coat and chesterfield coat. Well-fitted suits over shoulders were popular in the early 1930s with narrow and long lapels, matched with turnup trousers. Since the mid-1930s, a bold look in suits became trendy using padded shoulders with emphasis on the upper body, resulting in the big shoulder look with double-breasted, wide and relatively short lapels and pleated trousers in the waistline.<sup>121</sup> Various dress shirts were also enjoyed using stand collar or button-down collar designs, and the *combi* or separates look kept its popularity with different colour and pattern matching in top and bottom. Until the mid-1930s, there were still many gentlemen found in *hanbok* style, consisting of *jeogori*, *baji* and *durumagi* made of various trendy textiles, which was mixed used with other Western-style overcoat, hats and shoes.<sup>122</sup>

Lastly, during the 1940s until the liberation in 1945, Korea's sartorial practice faced the so-called 'dark age'; functionality of dress was barely stressed during the Second World War period (1939–1945).<sup>123</sup> As part of the war effort, military-style uniform or national clothing (國民服, *gungminbok*) was imposed to Korean men. It featured practical characteristics such as a small stand collar, angular shoulders, use of flap pockets and five to six buttons at front, made of cowhair fabric in khaki colour.<sup>124</sup> Men's school dress also took the military uniform in their drill instructions, while the local elderly's *durumagi* narrowly adopted any available *yangbok* fabrics in making their *hanbok* clothes.

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<sup>120</sup> Yu Hui-gyeong and Kim Mun-ja, *Hanguk boksik munhwasa*, p. 366-369.

<sup>121</sup> Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon*, p. 132.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

In women's case, simple dress (簡單服, *ganddanbok*) was introduced replacing previously various Western-style clothes. It was a one-piece dress with a belt in the waist and pockets in each side, similar to the utility look or utility dress in the West during the wartime. Also, Japanese loose work trousers (뽕뽕, *mombbe*) were presented to Korean women instead of wearing *chima* or skirts, supposed to maximise women's work efficiency during the period.<sup>125</sup> Women's school uniform also reflected this change as wearing blouse or jacket with *mombbe* trousers. One survey reports that around 1945, among 1,716 women in Seoul aged between 18 and 45, only wearing *hanbok* users were at 24.5%, only *yangbok* users at 34.6%, both wearing *hanbok* and *yangbok* resulted in at about 40%. This can be compared with that among women in Korea aged between 20 and 50, only 1% women were surveyed as dressing in *yangbok* style, which illustrates how women in the capital city quickly and widely embraced the Western style than ones in other local areas.<sup>126</sup>

### 3. Methodology, Sources and Outline of the Research

Given the background of the research above as in the theoretical consideration, definitions of terms and chronological background of sartorial change, this section discusses methodology and sources of the research, as well as an outline of the study along with each material by chapters. The methodological approach that this research takes lies in the 'interdisciplinary' characteristic of dress and fashion studies.<sup>127</sup> To

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<sup>125</sup> Ryu Hui-gyeong, et al. *Uri ot icheonnyeon*, pp. 135-137.

<sup>126</sup> Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon*, p. 156.

<sup>127</sup> Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History*, p. 85. Further, *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* produced a Methodology Special Issue, Volume 2, Issue 4 December 1998 (edited by Anthea Jarvis), wherein the 'Aims and Scope' of the journal reads: 'The importance of studying the body as a site for the deployment of discourses is well-established in a number of disciplines. By contrast, the study of fashion has, until recently, suffered from a lack of critical analysis. Increasingly, however, scholars have recognized the cultural significance of self-fashioning, including not only clothing but also

tackle the main research question, four sub-questions are formulated in a thematic way based on the problems of the subject in the field, and this forms a structure of this thesis resulting in four main chapters afterwards. To examine the four sub-questions in each chapter, this study engages with a wide range of relevant sources related to dress and fashion in Korea, which are gleaned from the modern and colonial period.

### ***3.1. Methodology and Sources: Object, Image and Text***

Even though chronological background of sartorial change has been summarised above based on the current secondary literature of Korean dress history during the research period, there seems to be a limit that it may show a lack of coherent narrative of historical changes in Korean dress – both *hanbok* and *yangbok* – and fashion. On the one hand, existing Korean dress scholarship has well described the remaining objects of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in an object-based examination and their stylistic changes in a fragmented sense, despite the limitations of a good deal of actual objects available. It is reflective of current problematic reality of dress collections in Korea, where *hanbok* and especially *yangbok* have rarely been collected from the research period. Available object sources are disjointed, which can be contrasted to the case of Western dress collections that royal or upper class dress objects are relatively abundant to examine in a chronological manner and writing on them in a comprehensive way seems viable. Alternatively, if not available enough for an object-based research in depth, visual sources such as portraits and paintings have been usefully accessed to write the dress history in the Western context.<sup>128</sup> Such a difference in availability of object or visual

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such body alterations as tattooing and piercing. *Fashion Theory* takes as its starting point a definition of ‘fashion’ as the cultural construction of the embodied identity. It aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the rigorous analysis of cultural phenomena ranging from footbinding to fashion advertising.’ p. 296.

<sup>128</sup> For this approach, see Aileen Ribeiro, ‘Re-Fashioning Art: Some Visual Approaches to the Study of the History of Dress’, *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, pp. 315-325.; Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 1988 [1978].



sources has resulted in methodological constraints for Korean dress and fashion scholarship.

On the other hand, other than the weakness in chronological stringency and comprehensive narrative of stylistic change in Korean dress and fashion due to the source limitations, it reflects another problem that there is a lack of socio-cultural engagement when discussing dress and fashion, and further a shortage of critical enquiry on current historiography of dress and fashion during the colonial and modern period, as mentioned earlier. Despite the scarcity of object or visual sources in Korean context, those issues raise a methodological question about how we approach dress and fashion in colonial modern Korea through fragmented yet still some available sources, and with which perspectives.

In this regard, the proposed study takes a thematic approach and in a sense it employs dress and fashion as an analytical lens towards the Korean society and colonial modernity of the time. This may be seen as the research has to make a detour around the constraints; writing a thorough chronological analysis of dress and fashion change in colonial modern Korea seems not easy in a comprehensive manner due to the limited sources. Rather, this study views the aforementioned issues of the subject problems more seriously than the enquiry on the stylistic change of dress and fashion in a chronological framework.<sup>129</sup> Thus, the methodological approach that this research needs to focus on lies in seeking valid and feasible ways to answer the thematic questions, actively engaging with limited but still meaningful sources. In this sense,

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<sup>129</sup> Although taken the thematic approach of this study, the thesis is written in a chronological sense in general; Chapter 2 deals with the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period (c. 1876–1910) and the rest of chapters mainly examines the colonial period (1910–1945): Chapter 3 (1910 Exhibition compared to international exhibitions of 1893 and 1900; and domestic exhibitions of 1907, 1915 and 1929 during the colonial period), Chapter 4 (late nineteenth century until the colonial period), Chapter 5 (during the colonial period, especially through the 1920s and 30s, before the 1940s of the dark age of Korean sartorial practice). To note, this temporal arrangement is not intended to connect the chapters analytically, nor for a chronological writing in depth though.

non-Western ‘cases’ and ‘case studies’ taken from the Korea’s past become important to make sense of dress and fashion practice in society,<sup>130</sup> as they constitute the historical, socio-economic and cultural scenes of the given society, rendering ‘no longer merely a proof of eccentricity’.<sup>131</sup>

As such, this study will employ case studies as a research method, an empirical enquiry that investigates dress and fashion phenomena within their real-life context in history beyond possible discourses, involving a detailed and multifaceted examination of a subject of study along with its related contextual conditions. This tries to look at cases of modernities and multiplicities embodied through dress and fashion practices in colonial modern Korea. It will then propose possibly more nuanced realities and understandings of Korean modern dress and fashion, taking account of regional specificities, tensions, dynamics and hybridity between the traditional/non-Western and the modern/Western, as well as modern ironies to some degree. In other words, vernacular meanings and colonial modern experiences of modern individuals’ dress and fashion practices are approachable beyond the limits of dress objects, which will reflect local particularities of colonial Korea in the grip of local modernities. In this sense, the transitional period of Korean dress and fashion, in which Western imported dress became dominant while Korean traditional dress was marginalised, captures the transformative process of colonial modernity in Korea. This in turn reflects the particular non-Western emergence and development of modern Korean dress and its fashion trajectory, where *hanbok* and *yangbok* inevitably conflicted and interacted within the arena of Westernisation, colonisation and modernisation.

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<sup>130</sup> According to Thomas, ‘case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more method. The case that is the *subject* of the inquiry will be an instance of a class of phenomena that provides an analytical frame – an *object* – within which the study is conducted and which the case illuminates and explicates’. Gary Thomas, ‘A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure’, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17/6, pp. 511-521.

<sup>131</sup> Lou Taylor, ‘Ethnographical approaches’, *The Study of Dress History*, pp. 193-241.

Such a methodological stance, concerning the framework in order to tackle the main research question, allows more nuanced approaches, than the previously simplistic, in understanding the sartorial transition between the two forms of dress and their relation to modern fashion in colonial modern settings of Korea. This also entails viewing *hanbok* and *yangbok* as rather parallel relations of status, linking with Korean fashion, beyond the non-Western and Western or the traditional and modern. The framework will also lead us to consider local modernities alongside colonialism in a balanced way of ‘colonial modernity’ in Korea, dynamically engaging with Korean, Japanese and Western influences on the subject.<sup>132</sup> Colonial modernity in this sense can be better contextualised in terms of the emergence of modern dress and fashion in Korea. This will demonstrate that the Korean case would not be necessarily similar to or fit for Western cases, but as specific non-Western particularities for modernity in a colonial sphere.

Further, the methodological framework will bring together the artefact-based approach and conceptual approach into the research question. To this end, it is necessary to consider both traditions of approaches in a rounded manner. Lou Taylor addresses the importance of dress objects in its artefact-based method, as reminding of Patricia Cunningham’s cautious advice that dress historians:

should not follow other approaches blindly, but rather let our own questions and materials lead us to new approaches. We must try out available models, but devise our own as well ... We should do whatever it takes to answer our research questions and, above all, when we think our questions take us *beyond artifacts*, we must shift, look back, and then reconsider the artifact. There is more there than we think.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, pp. 1-18.

<sup>133</sup> Patricia Cunningham, ‘Beyond Artifact and Object Chronology’, *Dress*, 14, 1988, p. 70., cited in Lou Taylor, ‘Approaches based on social and economic history, material culture and cultural studies’, *The Study of Dress History*, p. 85.

Christopher Breward suggests usefulness of the interdisciplinary approach in dress and fashion studies by employing cultural studies methods but with caution:

It would be a mistake to isolate cultural studies at all as a desired or necessarily coherent position, more valid than any other. It is an interdisciplinary field where certain concerns and methods have converged. The usefulness of this convergence is that it can enable us to understand cultural phenomena and social relationships that were not accessible through other disciplines, thus enriching our knowledge of an object category (fashion) that has clearly always played a central role in cultural/social processes.<sup>134</sup>

Hence, this study intends to propose a balanced line between the two main methodological frameworks of dress and fashion studies, applying them to Korean context in an integrated manner by dealing with available sources on the subject with caution and nuanced ways.

With regard to sources of this research, I approach to locate the sources into three categories: 'object', 'image' and 'text'. Those three groups of sources utilised in this study point towards a means of accessing and exploring the 'hidden historical fashion practices' of Korea.<sup>135</sup> This is an attempt to rethink about the lack of sources in examining Korean dress and fashion during the research period, suggesting that we can find and approach other alternatively available sources or complementing ways, not only with scarce dress objects, but also through dress- and fashion-related sources in the forms of image and text. This is because dress and fashion must have been around people, who wore various dress objects and experienced fashion phenomena at that time in their daily lives. Those traces then remain and can be recorded in other sorts of materials. The three forms of sources also interact with each other in the level of

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<sup>134</sup> Christopher Breward, 'Cultures, Identities, Histories: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress', *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, p. 311.

<sup>135</sup> Christopher Breward, 'Renouncing Consumption: Men, Fashion and Luxury, 1870-1914', in de la Haye and Wilson, ed. *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning and Identity*, 1999, p. 51.

forms; for instance, categories of object–image or image–text are possible, in which sources often share their information in different layers and forms, allowing varied analyses through each sphere. Thus, those categories are not rigid boundaries but intended to be practical for nuanced approaches. To this end, rigorous attention will be given to seeking and analysing neglected materials and evidence from daily surroundings in the past, which in itself may constitute an ‘alternative fashion system’ whereby material itself speaks out and reflects the particular milieu of Korea’s modernisation and colonisation.<sup>136</sup>

Firstly, sources in the ‘object’ category include: for Chapter 2, *hanbok* hats and strings (Daegu National Museum), *hanbok* waistcoat and official robe (The National Folk Museum of Korea); Western-style court uniforms of *yangbok* (The Museum of Korean Embroidery, Busan Museum, Korea University Museum); women’s school uniforms (Ewha Girls’ High School Museum), which were accessed by visiting the places and through available collection and catalogue images.<sup>137</sup> For Chapter 3, Korean objects donated to the British Museum from the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition (by Ogita Etsuzo) including women’s *hanbok* jacket, Manchurian jacket (the Victoria and Albert Museum); Korean objects from the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago (The Field Museum) and the Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris were approached by my firsthand research, as well as through secondary sources such as museums’ collection online images and related publications. In Chapter 4, *hanbok* collection at Sungkyunkwan University (loaned by Daejeon Saint Mary’s Girls’ High School), *yangbok* waistcoat (Seoul Museum of History) and women’s *yangjang* collection (The Korea Museum of Modern Costume) were surveyed in detail (especially for the *hanbok* collection at Sungkyunkwan University) and visited during the fieldwork, and extra object images have been acquired through museum catalogues

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>137</sup> For the full details of the sources, please see relevant each chapter, as this will help linking the sources to each question and chapter contents, rather than repeating the details here and there.

and publications. For Chapter 5, women's Western-style dress from the 1930s was accessed via the above *yangjang* collection (The Korea Museum of Modern Costume) and related exhibition catalogues have been used for the object research.

Dress objects in this research largely consist of *hanbok* and *yangbok*, men's clothing and women's clothing, in an embrative manner. Lacking actual garments and their scarcity in collections can be a problem of Korean dress scholarship, compared to the Western case. Major Korean museums have tended to collect elite *hanbok* clothing such as royal costumes from the court, and excavated or historical *hanbok* from the aristocratic or *yangban* class rather than any commoner's *hanbok*, as elite dress is regarded as worthy of preserving in pursuit of Korean tradition and authenticity. In this regard, collecting *yangbok* from the early twentieth century has been omitted from the museum practice, other than some possible reasons of colonial history, which resulted in the gap between *hanbok* and *yangbok* in their collections today. Despite the imbalance in object sources between *hanbok* and *yangbok* – which in a sense also caused the reluctance of dress and fashion scholarship researching this period – this study further pays attention to previously 'uncollected' materials beyond the limit of exiting museum collections. For instance, the collection of commoners' *hanbok* surveyed at Sungkyunkwan University is valuable to investigate details of Korean dress and its interaction with contemporaneous material and design during the colonial period, in conjunction with an examination of remaining *yangbok* uniforms and dresses from the few available sources and collections stated above.

The object-based examination investigates any trace of material evidence in relation to the questions, drawing our eyes into niceties and particulars of the artefacts. Lou Taylor explains this approach and its significance as follows:

Object-based research focuses necessarily and unapologetically on examination of the details of clothing and fabric. This process depends upon a series of patiently acquired, specialized skills. [...] [W]ithout precise analysis of 'every flounce,' where would the historians find the information that would enable recognition of these 'distinct systems of

provisions'? How are coded cultural readings of 'the private versus social' nature of consumption to be made except through meticulous study of these details?'<sup>138</sup>

Within the availability of *hanbok* and *yangbok* objects, this examination will be conducted, yet without the objects from the Korean situation, alternative ways can be pursued beyond the limit. When the access to actual artefacts becomes impossible or difficult due to any practical reason, other available secondary sources such as museum catalogues and print media can provide object-related information through the layers/forms of 'image' or 'text' to a certain extent. Dealing with these extra kinds of sources, Christopher Breward notes that 'cultural considerations have made a direct impact on the writing of fashion history',<sup>139</sup> and elucidates the aim is 'to incorporate elements of art historical, design historical and cultural studies approaches in an attempt to offer a coherent introduction to the history and interpretation of fashionable dress' and the benefit of this approach as: 'Used together carefully, these methods promised to provide a fluid framework for the study of fashion in its own right'.<sup>140</sup> As such, the so-called conceptual or cultural approach will be conducted along with the object-based method in this study, wherein certain subjects of research questions can be approached and substantiated by examining image and text sources, other than the object sources, in a complemented way. Overcoming the paucity of dress objects and embracing other cultural sources, the marriage between the two approaches has been celebrated by recent dress and fashion studies in the West: 'this fusion of multi-disciplinary approaches and methods helps us towards a finer appreciation of dress as "the complication of social life made visible"'.<sup>141</sup> This approach will be beneficial to the Korean context, too.

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<sup>138</sup> Lou Taylor, 'Doing the Laundry? A Reassessment of Object-based Dress History', *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, p. 347-348.

<sup>139</sup> Christopher Breward, 'Cultures, Identities, Histories', p. 305.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

<sup>141</sup> Taking the words of a literary historian, John Harvey (*Men in Black*, 1995, p. 17), in Lou Taylor, 'Doing the Laundry?', p. 355.

Secondly, sources in the ‘image’ category are as follows: for Chapter 2, product cards and picture postcards about Koreans (private collections); illustrations and photographs from old books on Korea (Westerners’ firsthand accounts) including portraits and photographs of official figures (e.g. King Gojong, Imperial Lady Eom and court officials dressed in *hanbok* or *yangbok* uniforms); missionaries’ photographic records (Mission Photograph Collection), photographs of Westerners and their groups in Korea from secondary sources (e.g. Cornell University Library); schools’ historical photo album collections (e.g. Sookmyung Women’s University); photographic records of *yangbok* uniforms and detailed images from museum catalogues (The Museum of Korean Embroidery Collection, National Palace Museum of Korea); photographs of the Korean Empire period from secondary sources and museum photo albums (e.g. Imperial Progresses in Korea from National Palace Museum of Korea). In Chapter 3, image sources include: as for the 1910 Exhibition, displayed Korean objects and textile-related goods shown through archive photographs, Exhibition-related images, posters, maps and floor plans, all of which were accessed from catalogues and archives (London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre, The British Library). As to domestic exhibitions of 1907, 1915 and 1929, photographs and posters were attained from secondary sources (e.g. Photo Collection of the City History Compilation Committee of Seoul), and picture postcards from individual collections (e.g. Kim Yeong-jun Collection). For Chapter 4, images on production include: photographs from secondary and public sources (e.g. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division); advertisement images from newspapers (*Dong-A Ilbo*, *Chosun Ilbo*) and designer-related images from biographical compilations (e.g. Choe Gyong-ja). On mediation, relevant illustrations and photographic images were collected from the newspaper (*Dong-A Ilbo*) and scene images were extracted from a sound film of ‘Sweet Dream’ (Korean Film Archive). On consumption, images of advertisements, leaflets and posters were gained from newspapers (*Maeil Sinbo*, *Hwangseong Sinmun*, *Mansebo*, *Joseon Jungang Ilbo*) and magazines (*Sin Gajeong*, *Sin Yeoseong*). Beer and department sale posters were accessed from catalogues of



individual and museum collections (Busan Modern History Museum). Other photographic images were available from secondary sources, including a guide map of Gyeongseong in 1929 from a museum catalogue (Seoul Museum of History). In Chapter 5, images of various dressed Koreans in *hanbok* and *yangbok* were collected from magazines (*Yeoseong*, *Hyeseong*, *Byeolgeongon*) and private photograph collections (Lee Gyeong-min Collection, Mission Photograph Collection).

Image sources in this research largely concern dressed Korean people as in men and women, wearing *hanbok* or *yangbok*, as well as dress itself as an object image or displayed/represented one. Given the myriad transformations and conflicts of the research period, visual sources are rather complex cultural texts that require more nuanced interpretations. Aileen Ribeiro explicates the visual approach in dress history that an image source is:

[A] text to be de-coded; the image becomes a central fact, and no longer just an illustration to a text, but the text itself. We look at a work of art in order to deconstruct the clothing, and then we reconstruct it in the light of our knowledge of *how* clothing works, and its logic in relation to the body, with visual images as the prime source, allied to documentary and literary evidence. Where garments survive, they add valuable information; after all, clothing *as we wear it* cannot be an abstract concept. We cannot just look at clothes as rhetoric and metaphor, but must regard them in an intimate relationship with their wearers.<sup>142</sup>

In this regard, any kind of images showing dressed people in a certain style of *hanbok* or *yangbok* becomes important to be read as texts in context, implying certain relations between the wearer and dress. Also, images of dress objects and details can enrich our interpretation along with other kinds of sources.

Regarding the types of visual sources, photography came into Korea in the late nineteenth century providing a realistic sartorial scene. Yet it may not be necessarily reality of dress or fashion practice of the time in Korea. It represents something that

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<sup>142</sup> Aileen Ribeiro, 'Re-Fashioning Art', p. 323.

the photographer intends to deliver. In this sense, photographic images are useful but need to be interpreted carefully concerning who is behind the camera. In analysing photographs, the ‘politics of representation’ needs to be prudently considered – questioning who produced, reproduced and consumed the image and in what kinds of ways – in relation to colonial and modern Korean contexts.<sup>143</sup> In many photographs taken by the Japanese, hidden or colonial agendas were often encoded. This becomes clearer when they are compared to the photographs produced by Koreans or Westerners. Thus, a comparative approach is needed in accordance with questions and contexts when and how the picture was made and circulated. Further, visual critiques on colonialism as well as Orientalism often dismiss important details and possibilities of dress and fashion narratives in the image. As they can be visual evidence in a context, this study approaches the photographic sources with care and in much nuanced ways. In this sense, photographic images can be collected and examined as much as possible, sourced from the published, unpublished or private, and even from the Internet.<sup>144</sup>

Other visual materials include advertisements, posters and illustrations of satires and cartoons from the printed media, as well as picture images or postcards from exhibitionary spaces, in examining exhibition displays, conditions of production–mediation–consumption of dress and fashion, and relations between individuals and their sartorial practices in society during the colonial modern period. Throughout those visual sources, discourse analysis is the main approach based on a Foucauldian framework to address questions of ‘power/knowledge’: it ‘tends to pay attention to the notion of discourse as articulated through various kinds of visual images’ as well as

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<sup>143</sup> Kobena Mercer, ‘Ethnicity and Internationality: New British Art and Diaspora-based Blackness’, in Nicholas Mirzoeff, ed. *The Visual Culture Reader*, 2002, p. 198.

<sup>144</sup> Photographic images from the Internet have reluctantly been considered academic material. However, as public interest on the late nineteenth and early twentieth century of colonial period has increased, a great deal of valuable images has been uploaded to the web of individual collections or family photos, etc. When necessary, I will examine them with care.

take note of ‘the practices of institutions’.<sup>145</sup> According to Gillian Rose, discourse analysis is used to ‘explore how images construct specific views of the social world’; it ‘pays careful attention to an *image itself* (as well as other sorts of evidence)’.<sup>146</sup>

Since discourses are seen as socially produced rather than created by individuals, this type of discourse analysis is especially concerned with the *social modality* of the image site. In particular, discourse analysis explores how those specific views or accounts are constructed as real or truthful or natural through particular regimes of truth.<sup>147</sup>

In this sense, viewing the images with which perspectives becomes critical. Beyond the dichotomy between colonialism and nationalism in approaching the sources, the lens of colonial modernity can be a useful framework to read the images in a nuanced way, along with a classic semiotic reading in pursuit of meanings in the visual text. This viewpoint then fairly takes the critiques on Orientalistic and colonialist images on the one hand, and reconsiders the images in other ways with tertiary sources and information, wherever possible, on the other hand. Although it may look inconsistent, the approach draws more nuanced pictures of the sartorial transition, in which images and their interpretations become often ambivalent, paradoxical at times, depending on the context and position. This allows the visual source to project multiple understandings towards Korea’s dress and fashion, while to contain the value of a historical record.

Thirdly, sources in the ‘text’ category contain: for Chapter 2, firsthand encounter records (published books) written by Westerners and Koreans (e.g. Isabella Bishop, Min Yeong-hwan), historical accounts such as *Gojong sillok* (The Anal of King Gojong) and Hwang Hyeon’s diary, advertisement excerpts from newspapers and museum catalogues. In Chapter 3, it includes the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition’s

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<sup>145</sup> Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2001, pp. 146-147.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147.

Official Catalogue (third edition), Official Guide (first/third/fifth editions), Official Report and Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old/Modern Fine Arts, as well as secondary sources of catalogues, published by national, university and private museums in Korea, and their history compilation sources. Also, a cartoon article was used from the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper. In Chapter 4, text sources include newspapers (*Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-A Ilbo*), secondary sources of missionary records, interview articles, women's school curriculums and designers' biographical compilations (e.g. Choe Gyong-ja, Nora Noh). It also includes a series of fashion reports, accessed from the *Dong-A Ilbo* (in 1933, 1934), partly cross-examined for some price details with a personal diary (Mun Il-pyeong's diary); a semi-autobiographical novel *Soseolga Gubossiui Iiril* (Novelist Mr Gubo's One Day, by Pak Tae-won); personal stories and memories from designers' biographies (Nora Noh, Choe Gyeong-ja). For Chapter 5, text sources are satirical articles from the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper; magazine articles (*Byeolgeongon*, *Samcheolli*, *Sisapyeongnon*, *Jogwang*); an individual diary (Yun Chi-ho's diary); advertising texts from the *Chosun Ilbo*; an oral history interviewed by a beautician (Im Hyeong-seon).

Text sources in this study generally deal with descriptions of dress itself and fashion practice, as well as relations or backgrounds of the sartorial practice with the wearers and fashion-conscious people. It offers contextual conditions and implies circumstantial situations of the time. Further when the textual source is produced from, and located in, social settings, the aforementioned discourse analysis comes first as a key method for examination. This method can be aptly applied to the types of sources such as newspapers and magazines, which are most available and representative sources for the studies of modern times, and this research tries to bring these materials more actively into the discipline of Korean dress and fashion in terms of a colonial modern context.

Other sources such as exhibition reports/guides, travelogues, diaries, novels and interview/oral history records used in this study can be considered as 'literary sources'

that dress historians have always drawn on ‘to lend accuracy and historical “feel” to their work’, in which ‘novels, newspapers, journals, autobiographies and diaries are all carefully trawled for the apt quotation’.<sup>148</sup> Among them, when analysing firsthand accounts from Western observers and records from colonial authorities, there needs to be a balanced line to discern whether the text is a historical fact or a writing of Orientalism or colonialism. As mentioned earlier, a comparative approach with the third text can help the balanced interpretation, which will reconstruct closer reality of sartorial practice in the past, moving away from the Orientalistic biases or colonial projections. Despite these sources seemingly less objective, nuanced readings can be achievable for the complex reality than the simplistic view throughout the texts, as Lou Taylor points out:

Further well-trawled sources of period comment on dress are autobiographies, diaries, personal letters and travel stories. Exaggeration, political bias, romanticism and invention are just as possible to find here as elsewhere and no historian would accept these texts at face value, or without additional evidence. They provide too many personal opportunities to settle old scores, to distort and fantasise. They can also, however, provide rare and valid glimpses into ‘the complication of social life made visible’ and into the lost past of destroyed cultures.<sup>149</sup>

Besides, as the text material is often found having images on them – such as satires with illustrations and picture postcards with inscriptions, sources in the mixed category of image–text are noticeable in this field. In this respect, such multi-layered sources become a powerful and nuanced means to comprehend dress and fashion in the colonial context. Carol Tulloch states the role and value of dress history from the colonised, and often research materials are located in concurrent textual and visual state, from which colonial hegemony can be further revealed:

Dress history has the methodological facility to reassess the representation and subjectivity of colonized subjects in relation to the colonizer. Much of

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<sup>148</sup> Lou Taylor, ‘Approaches using literary sources’, *The Study of Dress History*, p. 90.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

the current historiography maintains the hegemony of the latter and was informed by imperial tracts, such as novels, travel guides, postcards and photographs. The re-evaluation of received history is an ambitious and complicated task, but may overturn misconceptions.<sup>150</sup>

In short, this study engages with fragmented yet varied and multifaceted sources in the range of object, image and text. Due to the nature of patchy sources from the Korean background, they may not be valid for writing a narrative in stylistic change of dress and fashion in Korea with a chronological depth, but rather effective in arguing for a nuanced understanding against the simplistic historiography of the sartorial shift. This study therefore takes a thematic approach to tackle the research questions across the main chapters, employing interdisciplinary analyses on the sources by each theme of the chapters. The aim of the methodology is to explore each question by examining objects of men and women's *hanbok* and *yangbok*, interpreting images in multiple ways and critically reading texts with a colonial modern perspective, through narrating specific case studies of Korean dress and fashion practice. The project will not simply see dress and fashion history as static within the dichotomous structure, but acknowledge dress and fashion in a way which were inherently entangled and rendered through the forms of object, image and text that surrounded the wearer and people in Korean society. In this sense, the research is also intended to expand new areas of sources and open possibilities of insightful methodologies in Korean dress and fashion studies. It further tries to establish a more rounded framework whereby one can better view Korean dress and fashion in colonial and modern contexts along with vivid and vernacular Korean cases, which in turn links to how Korea responded and negotiated with Japanese and Western influences onto its sartorial practice and transition. Taken together the methodological position, sources and approaches, this study allows us to draw a more nuanced picture of how modern Korean dress and fashion emerged through *hanbok* and *yangbok* during the critical period of modernisation and

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<sup>150</sup> Carol Tulloch, 'Out of Many, One People: The Relativity of Dress, Race and Ethnicity to Jamaica, 1880-1907', *Fashion Theory*, 2/4, 1998, p. 370.

colonisation of Korea. This may challenge the existing framework of Korean dress and fashion history, potentially reframing our understanding of the subject as an alternative.

Having provided the overview of methodology and sources of the research, the following sections will deliver an outline of the study by each chapter, along with sources and methodological considerations of the chapter, which are formulated in order by four research sub-questions. After the main chapters, final Chapter 6 will write a conclusion by bringing the findings from each chapter, and this will be followed by concluding remarks of the thesis at the end.

### ***3.2. Outline and Material of Chapter 2***

Chapter 2 discusses the beginning of the sartorial encounter between Korean and Western dress during the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period. It examines the early period of sartorial transition, aimed at tackling the simplistic view on the contact between *hanbok* and *yangbok*, and to explore nuanced emergence of wearing Western dress in relation to evolving reforms and modernities in Korea. The chapter first looks at Western records of encounter with Korean dress and culture, which uncovers nuances and details of what Korean sartorial practice looked like that time. It then traces how Western dress formally came into Korea, in specific through court official's dress reform as for men's attire change, and explores any nuanced account related to the process in terms of military, civil official's dress and individual implications on the shift. Lastly, the chapter examines transitional characteristics of the sartorial encounter and dress change in terms of emerging modernities in Korea during the period, through the cases of Westerners and missionaries' use of Korean dress; women's dress reform; changes of *hanbok* detail; *yangbok* uniform's modern Korean statement; and modern surroundings of transportation and photography in relation to new appearance.

With regard to sources and methodological consideration of this chapter, it first brings textual and image sources from selected encounter records. Among the various Western accounts, firsthand accounts (Captain Broughton's of 1804, Mrs Coulson's of

1910, Mr Weber's of 1915, Mr Lowell's of 1886 and Mrs Bishop's of 1898, as in Chapter 2) are used, because they feature relatively detailed records, based on authors' direct and firsthand experiences, on Korean sartorial practice during the early encountering period. Among them, male and female authors' books often show different observations and record views unlike on the same sartorial issues, hence they will be brought together to cross-examine the cases in a comparative way, which will generate nuances of the encounter and Korean's dress practice of the time. This also may help us not fall into any subjective description or position of the Westerners' records to a certain extent. Besides, acknowledging the critiques of 'Orientalism' and 'colonialist vision' on non-Western Korean visual material (images of a product card by the Liebig Company and a picture postcard on Korean women), illustrations and photographs from the firsthand accounts (Mr Weber's and Mrs Bishop's) will be carefully approached to seek for any further nuances and counterevidence.<sup>151</sup>

As for examining dress reform at court, the chapter takes *Gojong sillok* (高宗實錄, The Anal of King Gojong) to trace relevant details on a series of reform movement, and looks at available portrait and photographs of King Gojong and court official's dress as for visual evidence. Keeping Western records such as Bishop's account as in detailing some nuances on military uniforms during the late 1890s, Min Yeong-hwan's journal (海天秋帆, Sea, Sky, Autumn Voyage) will be closely examined as for Korean's firsthand record on encountering Western dress and culture through his mission to Russia in 1896. This attempt can be seen as a balanced approach to understand the sartorial encounter from both Western and Korean viewpoints.

To explore transitional traits of sartorial encounters and dress change during the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period, a series of case studies will be explored. Missionaries' photographic records are useful here in examining Westerners' experience of *hanbok*, along with other available and relevant sources such as Hwang

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<sup>151</sup> Gillian Rose, 'An anthropological approach: directly observing the social life of visual objects', *Visual Methodologies*, pp. 216-236.



Hyeon's account on Möllendorff. On women's dress reform, existing literature and records on schoolgirl's uniform will be employed, together with related photographs including Ewha and Sookmyung School's uniform and Imperial Lady Eom's *yangbok* and *hanbok* appearances. Hybrid nature of *hanbok* during this period can be examined through advertising materials on import of Western goods, which will be further supported by examining photographic records of *hanbok* objects and the way it was used at that time. From museum collections, meticulous object photographs of Western-style court uniform can help us scrutinise how modern Korean state was manifested through decorations and details of the uniform. Reading the encounter records and looking into images produced from the period, the final section of the chapter addresses nuanced conditions of sartorial change through modern emergence of transportation and photography that can be interpreted in multiple and ambivalent ways.

### ***3.3. Outline and Material of Chapter 3***

Chapter 3 critically engages with formations of sartorial tradition of *hanbok* in relation to colonial discourses of modernity and representation through exhibitionary spaces during the colonial period. Taking the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 as a main case study, the chapter firstly investigates how Korea and Korean dress and textiles were represented by the Japanese power at the Exhibition place in London, in comparison to two previous international Korean exhibitions of 1893 and 1900. This investigation then moves into comparatively looking at domestic exhibitions of 1907, 1915 and 1929 with Japan's own display of its sartorial culture at the 1910 Exhibition, along with other related museum and material culture practices within the Korean peninsula. The final section then hints at how the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* constructed as opposite to modernity can be read alternatively with a much nuanced and postcolonial perspective.

This chapter reassesses the materials of the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition in accordance with the research question and context. With the centenary of the 1910 Exhibition in 2010, many related events took place in London, including conferences and exhibitions.<sup>152</sup> Those events highlighted the importance of the Exhibition and the allied imperial ethos, as well as Japanese arts and crafts, commodities and cultural aspects at that time. Comparatively, there has been little discussion on colonialism and aspects of colonies' artefacts exhibited in the occasion. In Korea the same year was commemorated as the centenary year of the annexation, however it was the timely events in London that became useful sources for the research material of this chapter. Also, throughout the opening of the 1910 Exhibition, many accompanying texts were published in London,<sup>153</sup> among them varied editions of 'Official Catalogue (1910)',

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<sup>152</sup> On 15 May 2010, at LSE, STICERD (Suntory Centre, Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines), the International and Japanese Studies Symposium was with the title 'The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910'; here 6 speakers presented their papers: in the morning session, Toshio Watanabe (on the arts exhibits in general), Meri Arichi (on the retrospective Fine Arts) and Kimio Miyatake (on the Ainu village at the Exhibition), and later in the afternoon, Ayako Hotta-Lister (on imperialism and the Exhibition), Janet Hunter (on economics and the Exhibition) and Ian Nish (on the periphery of the Exhibition). Another academic event was held by the Japan Research Centre at SOAS, hosting the triennial conference of the British Association for Japanese Studies (BAJS) on 9–10 September 2010. Of the 7 sessions, on the second day, in the Session 6, 6B, Panel: 'The Japan-British Exhibition 1910: one hundred years on' was discussed, including some of the previous speakers at LSE: Ayako Hotta-Lister, 'The Japan-British Exhibition: its centenary historical assessment'; Jane Kimber (Hammersmith and Fulham), 'A Meeting of East and West: the Japan-British Exhibition at the White City, 1910'; Meri Arichi (SOAS), 'Treasures of the Nation: Japanese Exhibits in the Fine Art Palace'. Also, exhibitions held in London include: 'Japan in London: The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910', at Fulham Palace, between 17 July and 19 September, jointly organised by London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre, and Museum of Fulham Palace; and 'Marking the Centenary: 1910 Japan-British Exhibition', between 8 December 2010 and 11 February 2011, at the Embassy of Japan in London.

<sup>153</sup> Ayako Hotta-Lister, *The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910: Gateway to the Island Empire of the East*, 1999, pp. 226-228, a list of accompanying publications is recorded in Appendix D.

‘Official Guide (1910)’ and ‘Official Report (1911)’ from the British Library are the main sources of this chapter,<sup>154</sup> along with relevant scraps and photographic images collected in the local archive.<sup>155</sup> Additional related objects that survive at the British Museum (Ogita Etsuzo’s donation) and the Victoria and Albert Museum among others will be examined firsthand, while other sources difficult to access are examined indirectly through secondary sources.

As for the materials in relation to domestic exhibitions and related material culture practices within Korea, they are gleaned from secondary sources (relevant books, photography compilations, museum catalogues, newspaper articles and illustrations, and images even from the Internet with care when necessary) in terms of textual and visual evidence and a critical examination on the subject.<sup>156</sup> The critical approach I will be conducting in the chapter lies in a dialectical standpoint in looking at Korea’s colonial past.<sup>157</sup> Reading textual and visual sources, I intend to address any counter and nuanced argument on the existing interpretations of the material produced within the colonial context, which often only critical to what Japan did, yet subject’s agency is not considered in a balanced way, thus accounting for that autonomy is necessary in a sense to reconsider Korea’s dress and fashion, when engaging with the sources from the colonial period.

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<sup>154</sup> *Official Catalogue*, Japan-British Exhibition, 1910, Shepherd’s Bush London, London: The Japan-British Exhibition British Commission, Bemrose & Sons, third edition, 1910.; *Official Guide*, Japan-British Exhibition, 1910, Shepherd’s Bush London, London: The Japan-British Exhibition British Commission, first / third / fifth edition, 1910.; *Official Report* of the Japan British Exhibition, 1910, at the Great White City, Shepherd’s Bush, London, London: Unwin Brothers, 1911.

<sup>155</sup> For the archive, ‘London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre’ holds related materials including photographs and newspaper articles on the 1910 Exhibition, as the Exhibition place White City was located in the Borough.

<sup>156</sup> Gillian Rose, ‘Discourse analysis II’, *Visual Methodologies*, pp. 172-195.

<sup>157</sup> Carter J. Eckert, ‘Epilogue: Exorcising Hegel’s Ghosts: Toward a Postnationalist Historiography of Korea’, in Shin and Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, pp. 363-378.

### **3.4. Outline and Material of Chapter 4**

Chapter 4 explores sartorial realities of modern dress and fashion materialised through *hanbok* and *yangbok* in parallel throughout colonial modern Korea. This intends to suggest an alternative or nuanced non-Western understanding of Korean sartorial practice, taking the framework of production–mediation–consumption as conditions of modern dress and fashion. The chapter first examines modern changes and local specificities emerged in the mode of production in making *hanbok* and *yangbok*, bringing case studies of increased availability of textiles; colour discourses and white of *hanbok*; introduction of sewing machines in relation to women’s *hanbok* and *yangbok* making; examination of production of *hanbok* objects; and advent of men’s *yangbok* and women’s *yangjang* production in Korea. In the second section on mediation, the chapter explores how fashion trends and information were disseminated through the newspapers, films and fashion-conscious people in Korea, in relation to both dress forms of *yangbok* and *hanbok* by taking relevant sartorial cases from the colonial and modern period. Lastly, on the consumption aspect, it examines in what nuanced ways dress and fashion consumption in *hanbok* and *yangbok* were represented and discoursed through advertisements in colonial Korea, and explores local meanings of modern individuals’ fashion consumption through the city space.

In terms of production, the chapter takes secondary sources and newspaper articles on the issues of textile production. Japanese colonial policy on the white colour of *hanbok* will be also discussed through secondary sources and relevant newspaper articles. Examination on the advent of sewing machines in Korea and its meaning especially with women at home can be conducted through some close readings of newspaper articles/interviews and available photographic images. An object-based examination will then be followed to find material evidence of modern changes and characteristics in *hanbok* garments (The Daejeon Saint Mary’s Girls’ High School

collection at Sungkyunkwan University).<sup>158</sup> As for *yangbok* production, development of men's *yangbok* in relation to tailor shops will be examined through secondary sources, relevant photographs, museum object images and newspaper articles.<sup>159</sup> Women's *yangjang* production deals with object examples through the collection catalogue (The Korea Museum of Modern Costume collection) and a case from the collection at Sungkyunkwan University in a complemented way. An individual record (Choe Gyeong-ja's legacy on women's Western-style dress and fashion in Korea) will be highlighted in this line by looking at her biographical account, as well as examining secondary sources of women's school curriculums and relevant photographic evidence will be employed.

As for mediation, the chapter closely examines a series of fashion reports in the *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper (four articles in 1934) as a case study to detail fashion trends and information that permeated the Korean society, in which textual and visual traces of the reports will help our understanding of the non-Western, local scene of Korean fashion at the time. Also, other newspaper articles such as the *Chosun Ilbo* and magazine articles including *Byeolgeongon* are useful in exploring spread of fashion through the media, films/film stars and modern fashion-conscious male and female individuals. In order to demonstrate that modern fashion in Korea was not only to do with *yangbok*, the following section also pays attention to examining fashion through *hanbok*. This is supported by bringing case studies of another newspaper articles (fashion reports in the *Dong-A Ilbo* in 1933), as well as an analysis of a sound film (迷夢, Sweet Dream, 1936) by looking at female and male characters' appearances and fashion practice in the narrative at the time.

The chapter takes advertisement materials for the examination of consumption. Despite the limit of accessing actual dress and fashion consumption practice during the

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<sup>158</sup> Lou Taylor, 'Artefact-based approaches: collection, identification, conservation', *The Study of Dress History*, pp. 3-23.

<sup>159</sup> Lou Taylor, 'Artefact-based approaches: display and interpretation', *Ibid.*, pp. 24-63.

period, advertising sources in print media become one of the valuable sources for exploring how modern Korean fashion emerged and changed in relation to the two forms of dress, *hanbok* and *yangbok*. In advertisements, one can see that the new Western appearance arrives as a shock, calling individuals to the new way and making them public consumers, while Korean costume becomes marginalised. This can be examined by a discourse analysis with nuanced views.<sup>160</sup> The material also uncovers changed meanings of commodity in relation to lye and dye products for *hanbok* colour when colonial power began to interfere in daily sartorial practice. Further, modern women's representation in *hanbok* and *yangbok* can be traced through different advertising contexts. Other than the advertisements, the final section tries to discuss women's fashion consumption in a positive and meaningful light, by reassessing articles in the newspaper and available photographic images. Further, modern male and female individuals' fashion consumption in the city Gyeongseong will be scrutinised through a reading of a semi-autobiographical novel (소설가 구보씨의 일일, Novelist Mr Gubo's One Day), engaging with traces of fashion retail streets and department stores, and all of which tries to reconstruct the scene of Korean fashion consumption during the colonial period.

### **3.5. Outline and Material of Chapter 5**

Chapter 5 examines the final research sub-question that pays attention to multiple, protean, yet ambiguous relations between modern male and female individuals and their dress and fashion practices among the collective within the changing Korean society in terms of identity, class and gender. Taking relevant satirical articles from the newspaper as a main case study, it firstly looks at how society viewed modern women and their fashion practice through *hanbok* and *yangbok* in a nuanced and critical way. The chapter then follows an examination of how modern men's new appearance and fashion in *hanbok* and *yangbok* were read by the media in terms of socio-economic

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<sup>160</sup> Gillian Rose, 'Semiology', 'Discourse analysis I', *Visual Methodologies*, pp. 74-106, 141-171.

contexts, class and gender relations. Lastly, by approaching other sources from the daily life, the chapter takes a more positive stance to explore various socio-cultural relations between modern male, female Koreans and their dress and fashion practices in the society, which reflect regional particularities of the time and colonial modernity of Korea. This entails a series of local case studies of schoolgirls and working women's modern dress practice; meaning of *gisaeng* with modern fashion in Korea; modern fashion and style discussion with *hanbok* and *yangbok*; modern male individual's sartorial practice in *hanbok* and *yangbok* through changing identities; and expressions of dress and fashion in *hanbok* and *yangbok* between the individual and collective within the city and society.

The chapter first engages with satirical articles from the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper (mainly from the 1920s and 30s), which will allow us to understand how Korean society viewed the emergence of women's new dress and fashion, often critical and gendered viewpoints.<sup>161</sup> Social discourses of the time on women's modern appearance can be closely explored by readings of texts and images from the satirical sources. This is intended to critically and creatively reinterpret the sources, which may have been used in other studies of Korean modernity, focusing on matters of dress and fashion in relation to wearer's identity, class and gender issues in general.<sup>162</sup> Examining men's case from the satirical sources will be followed then, which may entail some discrepancies from the women's case, reflective of somewhat gendered society during the time.

The final section of the chapter, on the other hand, tries to draw positive and multifaceted meanings between the modern Korean people and what they expressed through their dressed bodies in the society. Taking multiple sources not only from limited dress objects, but also from articles and photographs of newspapers and

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<sup>161</sup> Lou Taylor, 'Approaches using literary sources', 'Approaches using visual analysis: paintings, drawings and cartoons', *The Study of Dress History*, pp. 90-149.

<sup>162</sup> Gillian Rose, 'Discourse analysis I', *Visual Methodologies*, pp. 141-171.

magazines, missionary records and photographs, personal diary and oral history records, which are derived from socio-economic, material culture and cultural studies background, I intend to dynamically ‘fuse artefact-based and theoretical approaches’ in searching for a nuanced understanding on Korea’s modern dress and fashion practice within the colonial modern milieu.<sup>163</sup>

In particular, the section sets to delve into positive comments on schoolgirls and working women’s new attire and fashion from the newspaper (*Chosun Ilbo*) and magazine (*Samcheolli*) articles, which are yet to be uncovered. Reconsidering the status of *gisaeng* as the modern cultural figure and leader of fashion at that time, textual and visual sources from magazines (*Jogwang*, *Sisapyeongnon*), newspapers, photograph collections and secondary sources will be examined. It then explores how society discussed changing styles and fashions not only through *yangbok*, but also with *hanbok*, by looking at texts and images from magazines (*Byeolgeongon*, *Jogwang*, *Samcheolli*), newspapers, as well as an object item from the collection (The Korea Museum of Modern Costume). A modern individual, Yun Chi-ho’s dress practice will be also examined as it reflected his changing identities and styles according to his position and situation throughout the time and society he lived. His diary (*Yun Chiho Ilgi 1916–1943*) and family and group photographs will be used for this case. Lastly, it will explore nuanced modern fashion manifested through *hanbok* and *yangbok* between the individual and the collective in Korean society, in which modern figures’ identities were expressed in relation to social strata as distinction across the city space. This will be examined by looking at theoretical aspects from secondary sources, as well as empirical cases gathered from magazine and newspaper articles, advertisements in the newspaper (*Chosun Ilbo*), missionary records and photographs (Mission Photograph Collection), and an oral history of a beautician (Im Hyeong-seon) and her wedding photograph.

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<sup>163</sup> Lou Taylor, ‘Approaches based on social and economic history, material culture and cultural studies’, *The Study of Dress History*, pp. 64-89.



## CHAPTER 2. Sartorial Encounters and Nuanced Transition of Modern Dress Change during the Open Port Era and the Korean Empire

By the Treaty of Ganghwa Island (江華島條約) in 1876 under pressure from Japan and following other treaties, Korea gradually opened its doors to Japan and foreign countries, and began to interact with neighbouring and Western powers in terms of trades and politics until the Japanese annexation of 1910.<sup>1</sup> This was reflective of the international relations and geopolitical tensions of the time in East Asia. Throughout the so-called ‘Open Port era’ (開港期), Korea was exposed to Westerners and foreigners in Western garb alongside modernised Western material cultures, resulting in unfamiliar but inevitable experiences of sartorial encounters, namely between two different types of clothing – Korean dress (*hanbok*) and Western dress (*yangbok*) – through their appearances and dressed bodies. During this transitional period, the introduction of Western-type clothing engendered resistance to the newness by conservatives in general, whereas embracing it was regarded as a sign of reformation or modernity, often with political implication.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Since the Treaty with Japan (朝日修好條規, signed in 1876), Joseon and Korean Empire continued to sign the treaties with other countries: the US (朝美修好通商條約, 1882), the UK (朝英修好通商條約, 1883), Germany (朝德修好通商條約, 1883), Russia (朝露修好通商條約, 1884), Italy (朝伊修好通商條約, 1884), France (朝佛修好通商條約, 1886), Austria (朝奧修好通商條約, 1892); Qing (大韓國大清國通商條約, 1899), Belgium (韓白修好通商條約, 1901), Denmark (韓丁修好通商條約, 1902). For a more historical background of this time, see Carter J. Eckert, et al. *Korea, Old and New: A History*, 1990, pp. 192-253.; Martina Deuchler, *Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys: The Opening of Korea, 1875–1885*, 1977.; for a more recent account of the period, see Kang Man-gil, *Gochyeo sseun hanguk geundaesa* [Rewritten Korean Modern History], 2006.

<sup>2</sup> A general historical background to the changes of the dress during this period can be found in Yu Hui-gyeong and Kim Mun-ja, *Hanguk boksik munhwasa* [Korean Costume Cultural History], 1998 [1981], pp. 343-375.

With the beginning of the contact between two dress cultures, this chapter pays attention to encounters between Western and non-Western Korean clothing and emerging sartorial modernities, to explore nuances in the sartorial transition – shift of wearing dress between *hanbok* and *yangbok*, dress/uniform reform and modernisation of *hanbok* – during the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period (1897–1910). Focusing on nuanced encounters and sartorial changes, this chapter explores the nuances in three parts.

In the first section, it questions, with increasing encounters between Westerners and Koreans, how Westerners perceived and recorded different cultures of Korean dress and its practice through their firsthand experiences, and what nuances and useful details can be found. Second, concerning the emergence of Western-style dress worn by Koreans as part of the modern dress practice in Korea, what was the gradual process of dress reform at court as a noticeable shift into Western style, along with nuanced accounts for appearance change such as military and civil officials' uniform reform and personal motivation for the sartorial change? Third, as for transitional traits of the sartorial encounter and dress change, the last section explores nuances and local modernities emerging around the new people in Korea, within the dress itself and through changing surroundings of the Korean Empire, until the colonial intervention in 1910.

## **1. Western Encounters with Korean Clothing: Details and Nuances of the Firsthand Accounts**

In late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Korea, where encounters between Western dress and Korean dress emerged, amazement and interactions or clashes on the two forms of dress were often recorded in texts and images by foreigners and Koreans. Foreign travel accounts, drawings and photography often functioned as a tool of visual or textual evidence for new findings and experiences, and clothing was a key

determinant in identifying and describing people unfamiliar to their own culture, and underscoring otherness.<sup>3</sup> The Western encounter with Korea resulted in valuable records, and tracing such records offers nuanced details about Korean dress during the Open Port period, providing insights into the sartorial practice of Koreans when they encountered Western observers. Such encounters as the beginning of dress change in Korea can provide prior context, as after this, certain edicts on dress change at court officially initiated the shift of what people wore in Korea.

### ***1.1. Westerners' Records on Korea***

Encounters between clothing from different cultures were often the result of people's direct interactions. Korean people wearing *hanbok* began to meet foreigners in *yangbok* and to be described by Western visitors. While one was observing the other's dress culture, one's own dress was simultaneously viewed by the other. Among the earlier encounters were Westerners' exploration of, or visits to, the Korean peninsula, which entailed Koreans and Westerners meeting in the peninsula; this was then recorded both sides. For instance, the British ship HMS *Providence* reached Korea in 1797 under the command of Captain William Robert Broughton (1762–1821), and his journey and experiences were published in 1804 as *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*.<sup>4</sup> Broughton and his fellow naval officers had the task of exploring and charting the coasts of Northeast Asia and the North Pacific. An initial attempt at surveying the Korean coast after their departure from China was unsuccessful, but later, on 14 October 1797, they docked near the Busan area and remained for one week before heading south towards Macau.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Christine Guth, 'Charles Longfellow and Okakura Kakuzō: Cultural Cross-Dressing in the Colonial Context', *Positions* 8:3, 2000, p. 605.

<sup>4</sup> William Broughton, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 1804, in Koh, 'Transitional Images of Chosŏn', p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

In Broughton's book, among other things, he recorded the Korean people's reactions to his men's attire and presence: 'All their attention was paid to expedite our departure; and yet many articles of European manufacture excited their curiosity, particularly our woollen clothing'.<sup>6</sup> Investigating the possibilities of British trade with Joseon as one of the underlying missions of their journey, Broughton observed little chance for trade in items other than Western apparel. Broughton's visit is also recorded in a Korean account, found in 'the *Joseon wangjo sillok* (朝鮮王朝實錄, Annals of the Joseon Dynasty), under the twentieth year of King Jeongjo (47:41)'.<sup>7</sup>

During the Open Port era, foreigners' visiting Korea with various purposes recorded accounts of their encounters with Korea, including Korean dress. Moreover, during their visits, foreigners' Western-style dress had been viewed by Koreans with curiosity. In Korea's modernisation efforts, certain groups of Korean officials were also sent to neighbouring and Western countries and observed the changing world and modern civilisations, including Western-style dress practices. The resulting material generated by these encounters can be categorised into two groups: foreigners' records on Korea and Koreans' records on the Western world. In the latter category, relatively few records remain as compared to the former category, with one notable example being a series of travel accounts, *yeonhaengnok* (燕行錄), in which Korean officials' traditionally visiting the neighbouring country of China left a number of records.<sup>8</sup> This lack of availability of sources for the Korean perspective seems to have caused an imbalanced voice on the subject. Yet, to propose a balanced examination in this chapter, I will make an effort to bring a case of the Korean voice from available Korean records on its first experience with Western attire in a later section.

With regard to the former group in this section, many Western accounts on Korea have been published by the foreign visitors and writers in respective countries and

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<sup>6</sup> Broughton, p. 343, in *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> This entry is highlighted by Grace Koh's note, in *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> For the study of *yeonhaengnok*, see Lee Hyung-dae, 'Transitional Images of the West in Chosŏn Literature', No. 9, July 2009.

languages throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, alongside the opening of Korea. Some of them are translated recently in Korean with selected interests and availability.<sup>9</sup> These records depict different types of encounters, based on the author's role and purpose for visiting Korea. Varied layers of Western perspectives and understandings on Korea are recorded, some of which provide detailed and valuable observations of Korean dress practice at the time and highlight the 'strangeness' of these first Western encounters with the *hanbok*. The sources shed light on valuable details of dress practice at the time, and on the varied contemporaneous transition states and tensions, which until now have been overlooked to some degree by the simplistic interpretations on the period and the literature. Thus, issues on Korean dress can be brought and tested each other through the encounter records, to explore and reveal the nuances and different views on *hanbok* and its practice recorded by the non-Korean viewers.

On the one hand, in the studies of Western engagement with Korean culture, there has been recurrent criticism, claiming a preponderance of misread, misunderstood or biased interpretations on Korean dress from the Western perspective. Often underscored as Western 'Orientalism' towards Korea, this issue has mostly been

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<sup>9</sup> For instance, in addition to original sources in English and other languages, the Korean translated versions that I have encountered during the fieldwork can be categorised as followings: (1) Missionaries and missionary medical doctors (for example, Lillias Horton Underwood, *Sangtuui nara* [A Country of the Topknot], trans. by Sin Bok-ryong and Choe Su-geun, 1999; Richard Wunsch, *Gojongui dogirin uisa Wunsch* [King Gojong's German Doctor Wunsch], trans. by Kim Jong-dae, 1999), (2) Diplomats (Claire Vautier and Hippolyte Frandin, *France oegyogwani bon gaehwagi Joseon* [Joseon in the Open Port Era Seen by the French Diplomat], trans. by Kim Seong-eon, 2002), (3) Scholars (Vatslav Seroshevskii, *Koreya 1903nyeon gaeul: Reosia hakja Seroshevskiiui daehanjeguk gyeonmunnok* [Korea, Autumn in 1903: Russian Scholar Seroshevskii's Records of the Korean Empire], trans. by Kim Jin-yeong, 2006), (4) Travellers or journalists (William A:son Grebst, *Sweden gija Ason, 100nyeonjeon hangugeul goetta: Eulsajoyak jeonnya daehanjeguk gyoehaenggi* [Swedish Journalist A:son, Walked in Korea 100 Years Ago: Travelogue of the Korean Empire before the Eulsa Treaty], trans. by Kim Sang-yeol, 2005).

raised from anthropological studies.<sup>10</sup> Kwon Hyeok-hui exemplifies the case with the product card images of the ‘Liebig Extract of Meat Company’ in his book (Figure 2.1).<sup>11</sup> With its advertisement in French, the card’s images present street scenes from Seoul and Jemulpo port of Korea, along with a Korean-seeming man and woman. As Kwon points out, while the depictions of the landscapes of Korea and of the man in his hat and outer robe are realistic, the illustration of the woman and her attire is far from accurate, and probably represents a confusion of Korean dress with that of China or some other Asian countries. Kwon argues that in the nineteenth century, Korea was little known to Europeans and the image of Joseon would have been constructed in the Westerner’s own imagination, as the misrepresentation of the card proves. He further claims that advertising product cards, such as that shown in Figure 2.1, together with picture postcards, became the primary means of constructing and representing Korean images to the West in the late nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The critique of those studies is mostly based on the notable work by Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1979.

<sup>11</sup> Kwon Hyeok-hui, *Joseoneseo on sajinyeopseo* [Picture Postcard from Joseon], 2005, pp. 26-27. As for the product company, in 1840, German organic chemist, Justus von Liebig (1803–1873) developed a concentrated beef extract to provide a cheap and nutritious meat substitute for those unable to afford the real thing. He founded a company, Liebig Extract of Meat Company, that later trademarked the Oxo brand beef bouillon cube.

<sup>12</sup> Those Western images of Korean people and dress can be contrasted with the images made by Koreans at the time. For instance, Gisan Kim Jun-geun (箕山 金俊根, c. 1853–?) famously painted various genre paintings at port areas in the late nineteenth century that depict Korean people’s life styles and dress customs in detail. See Kim Soo-Young, ‘Suchulhoehwaroseo gisan Kim Jun-geun pungsohwa yeongu’ [A Study on the Genre Painting by Gisan Kim, Jun-Geun as Export Painting], Vol. 8, 2009, pp. 89-119.

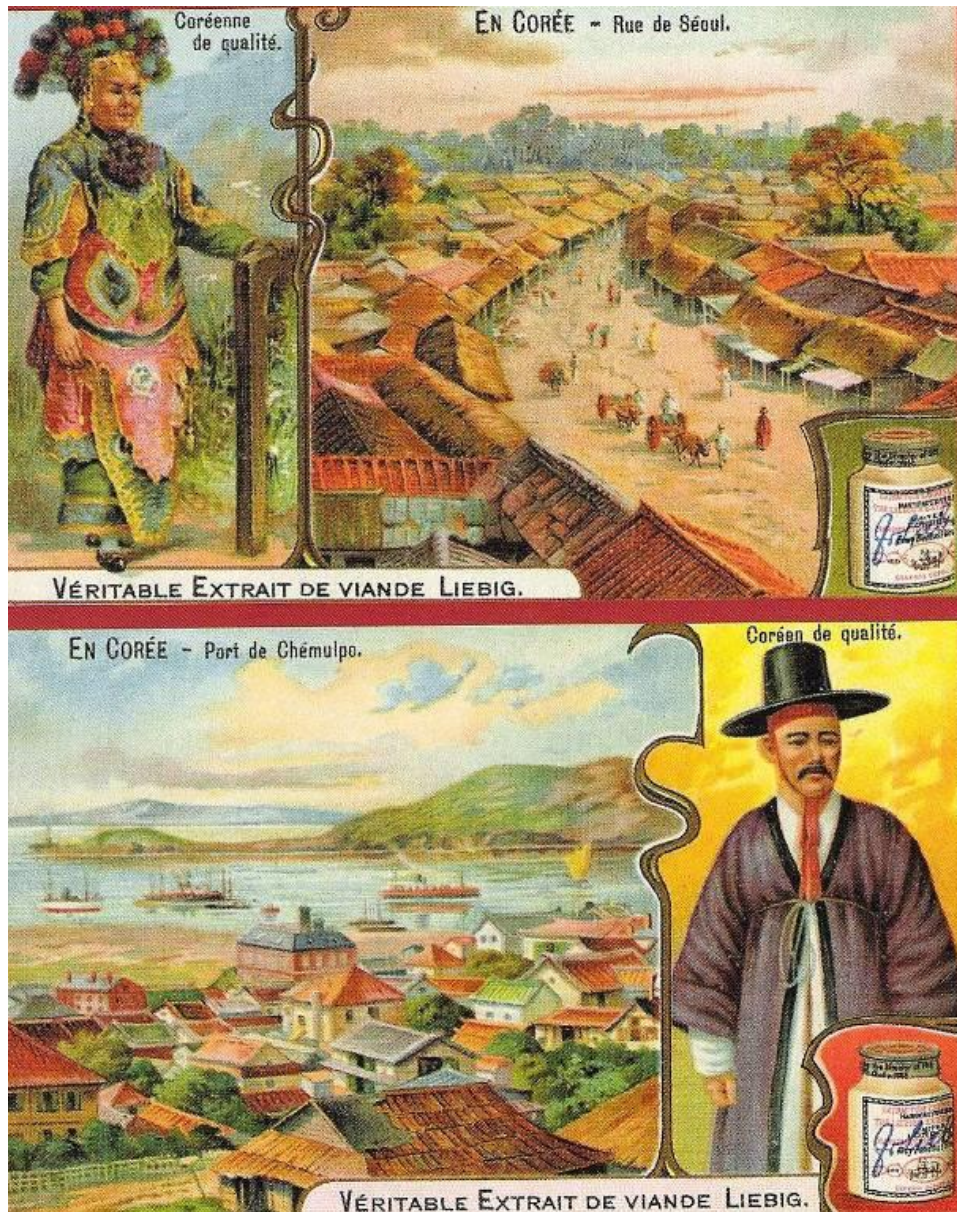


Figure 2.1. Product Card Images, Liebig Extract of Meat Company (Source: Kwon Hyeok-hui, 2005, p. 26)

On the other hand, although there may have been some intentional bias on the part of Western Orientalism, unintentional mistakes or lack of information on Korea, which was still largely closed to the outside world, often underlay Western misconceptions on Korea during the late nineteenth century. According to Grace Koh, Western, in specific British, accounts of Joseon Korea largely fall into two broad categories: ‘accounts by contiguity and firsthand accounts’.<sup>13</sup> As the accounts by

<sup>13</sup> Grace Koh, ‘Transitional Images of Chosŏn Korea – Accounts by Contiguity versus Firsthand Accounts’, No. 10, July 2009, p. 3.

‘contiguity’ normally include hearsay, reported and secondhand material procured while residing in neighbouring countries (Japan and China), these records featured some fault or misreading in their descriptions on Korea. In contrast, firsthand accounts were valid to deliver observations that are more accurate on subjects by authors, while personal expressions remained, making these sources more helpful in understanding Korean dress practice and the clothing encounters of the time in a nuanced way.

### ***1.2. Usefulness and Nuances of Firsthand Accounts, and the White-clad Folk***

Focusing on the firsthand accounts, one of the sources that help to illuminate Korean sartorial culture is the Coulson’s account. The English travelogue *Peeps at Many Lands: Korea*, written by Constance J. D. Coulson (1868–1948), offers a valuable observation on Korean clothing among other writings, along with twelve colour illustrations by E. H. Fitchew.<sup>14</sup> In specific, ‘Chapter VII. The Clothes of the Koreans’ deals with men and women’s Korean dress and related issues of daily life. In explaining the fans used in summer time in Korea, Coulson writes, ‘They are made of coloured paper which has been soaked in oil, and when they are held up against the sun, they look like pieces of stained glass’.<sup>15</sup> It is worth noting that, while explaining the Korean object with the making method, this line reflects her Western way of understanding the object, as referencing to the ‘stained glass’. The British author’s encounter with the Korean’s use of the fan entailed the compromised interpretation on the colourfulness, in which the nuance of meeting between the West and the East took place.

Further, the author’s careful observation on sewing and the care of clothing provides an insight into how clothes were made, a technique that has barely been passed down orally among Koreans themselves to date:

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<sup>14</sup> Constance J. D. Coulson, *Peeps at Many Lands: Korea*, with Twelve Full-Page Illustrations in Colour, by the Author and E. H. Fitchew, 1910.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.



A strange thing about Korean clothes is that they are not sewn, but are gummed together, and so they have to be taken to pieces every time they are washed, and put together again afterwards! (Figure 2.2)<sup>16</sup>

While one may argue that the woman author expressed pity for what she observed as the endless drudgery and perceived slave-like role of the Korean women, the sympathy can turn the other way. Gluing the seams of clothes without sewing, or even rough pattern cutting, was often used in making the summer dress of the Korean commoners.<sup>17</sup> In this way, housewives could save time, material and labour by not having to sew the clothes again, after the frequently increased laundering required by the hot and humid summer weather. Despite this, the Korean practice was seen as ‘a strange thing’ to Coulson as she noted. While the firsthand accounts can be useful than the accounts by contiguity, the Coulson’s text proves that it also requires our nuanced reading on the encounter; yet the very difference recorded in the text can provide us with insights on what sartorial practice in Korea was peculiar compared to the West.



Figure 2.2. ‘Washer-women by the River Side’ (Source: Constance J. D. Coulson, 1910, p. 37)

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 37-38.

<sup>17</sup> For more detail, see Korean summer clothes in the collection online from the National Folk Museum of Korea.

Such a nuanced reading further sheds light on the reality of colour use in Korean dress at that time. An useful insight can be found as a counter-argument or evidence against the constructed description on Koreans as the White Korean people, so-called the ‘white-clad folk’ (白衣民族, *baeguiminjok*). This view can be said as formulated when foreigners observed Korean commoners’ general use of white colour, for instance, men’s outer robe (*durumagi*) in white colour that was easily seen in streets and outside places in Korea (Figure 2.3).<sup>18</sup>



Figure 2.3. A Market Day at Taehwaru (太和樓) in Ulsan (Source: Seoul National University Museum)

However, other careful observations from the firsthand accounts generate extra and nuanced views on the Korean’s use of colour. For instance, other than colourful illustrations of varied Korean people wearing *hanbok* in her book, Coulson describes a street market scene in Seoul: ‘The shops in Seoul are full of silks and gauzes in the prettiest colours, of ribbons, of strings of coral and amber, which are used as hat-

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<sup>18</sup> For a more aesthetic and historical discussion on the issue, see Kim Eun-kyoung and Kim Young-in, ‘Hanguginui baeguipungsoge naejaedoen miuisik’ [The Aesthetic Consciousness Latent in the Korean People’s White Clothes Customs], 2006, pp. 1-17.

strings; [...]'.<sup>19</sup> This proves that not only white, but also a range of colours, was used in Korean dress, textiles and related accessories. Moreover, other than Korean women's use of dress and accessories in colours, her description of the varied material used in men's hat-strings sold in the market can attest to the consumption and fashion of Korean men's attire at the time; for instance, some of the examples are shown in the collection of Daegu National Museum (Figure 2.4).



Figure 2.4. Traditional Men's Hats and Strings with Varied Material (Source: Daegu National Museum)

Although white can be recognised as the dominant colour of Korean dress around the turn of the twentieth century, other colours were also used in Korean dress and these hues were encountered and recorded by foreigners. Notably, the German Benedictine priest Norbert Weber (1870–1956)'s visit to Korea in 1911 resulting in many coloured photographic illustrations of Koreans in his book, *Im Lande Der Morgenstille: Reiseerinnerungen An Korea*.<sup>20</sup> For instance, Figures 2.5 and 2.6, taken

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>20</sup> Norbert Weber, *Im Lande Der Morgenstille: Reiseerinnerungen An Korea* [In the Land of Morning Calm: Travel Memories of Korea], 1915.

from this book, show a woman's green outer gown (*jangot*) and the vivid combination of coloured costumes, jackets (*jeogori*) and skirts (*chima*) worn by girls, respectively. Thus, not only men's white outer robes (*durumagi*) were seen in the streets of Korea during this period, women and children in wide-ranging shades were also seen by the observant onlooker.

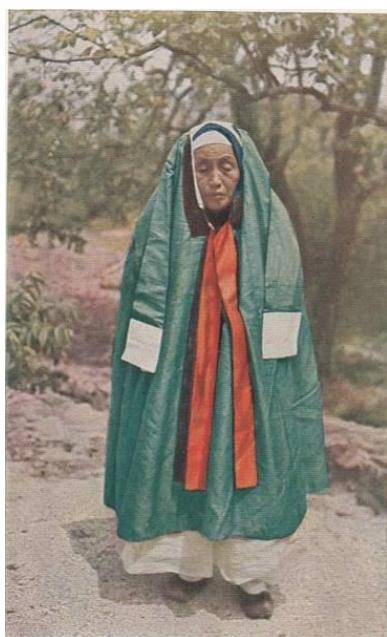


Figure 2.5. 'Frauentracht in der Hauptstadt und Umgebung' [Women's costume in the capital and surrounding area], 1911 (Source: Norbert Weber, 1915, p. 16)



Figure 2.6. 'Mädchenschule auf dem Lande' [Girls' school in the country], 1911 (Source: Norbert Weber, 1915, p. 144)

Since the Open Port era and throughout the colonial period, the colour 'white' was stereotyped as the colour describing Koreans. This has been known due to men's wearing of white outer robes and the white clothing for commoners in general. Yet, beyond this, women and children's clothing employed many colours, reflecting the natural dyes that they could make from their surroundings. Not only used of colour in an aesthetic reason, was the bold and varied colour combination through the *obang* colours (五方色) – five cardinal colours of yellow (centre), blue (east), white (west), red (south), black (north) – perceived as having apotropaic power, thus with a

symbolic reason it was widely used in children's *hanbok*.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the upper class and high officials enjoyed elaborate clothing in a vast array of colours as a statement and symbol of their rank. This was further complemented by their costumes for festive days, weddings and other ceremonies. The white colour commonly representing Koreans was subject to politics, in that white was associated with certain notions of the state of Koreans, such as their being a sorrowful nation with many complications.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, the notion of only white colour standing for the Korean people as a whole was not derived from the Koreans and their full reality, but was often constructed by others and their discourses.<sup>23</sup> It is therefore worth noting what encounter records reveal the actual variety of colours used in Korean dress and everyday life, before the stereotype settled in Korea. While there is no denial that white colour was used in many Korean men and commoner's dress, the nuance lies in that there existed encounter records on colourful *hanbok* worn by other many Koreans and coloured materials traded in the market, but it was overshadowed by the simplistic or political discourse.

### ***1.3. Bishop's Detailed Firsthand Record on Korean Sartorial Practice***

In this context, Mrs Bishop's firsthand account of Korean dress can be significant to scrutinise among others, as it further offers nuanced details on Korean sartorial

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<sup>21</sup> For more detail, see Park Yun-mi, 'Giwoni damgin eorini ot' [Children's Clothes Containing Wishes], K-heritage Column, Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, Yanagi Muneyoshi (柳宗悦, 1889–1961)'s affection for Korean ceramics and its white colour referenced from Korean's funeral white costume developed the sorrowful aesthetics of Joseon white. This view was later criticised by Kim Yang-gi and further discussed by Hong Sa-jung in 1977, generating the so-called 'White Colour Debate' (백색논쟁), despite Yanagi's legacy and appreciation on Korean and folk culture during the colonial period. See Yoon Jin-yi, 'Hanguk monochrome misurui jeongcheseongdamrone daehan talsingminjuujeok gochal' [A Critical Study on Identity Discourse of Korean Monochrome Painting from the Postcolonial Perspective], 2010, pp. 115-147.

<sup>23</sup> In Chapter 4, I will discuss further the nuanced politics of colour by the Japanese in terms of production (campaign on the colour white) and consumption (advertisements on lye and dye products).

practice during the time. Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop (1831–1904)'s *Korea and Her Neighbours* was written about her extensive travels in Manchuria, China and Siberia from the base of visits to Korea. She made four visits to Korea between January 1894 and March 1897 (staying for a total of 11 months), including tours to neighbouring countries such as China, Siberia and Japan. The book was published in two volumes on 10 January 1898, with the second edition out within 10 days. Demand in England brought forth multiple editions, and there were five editions in the United States.

Mrs Bishop was a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and a well-known author and traveller. In her book, she covered a range of issues including the physical features, customs, institutions, beliefs, fauna and flora of Korea, as well as anthropological descriptions, and details of the political perturbations of the country and of its international relations, tensions at the time. Initially describing Korea as 'barbaric' and 'the most uninteresting country' she had ever travelled in,<sup>24</sup> she made strenuous efforts to learn more about the country, which led to change of her initial view on Korea. Her resultant knowledge was sufficient to describe her audiences with the King and Queen, the troubled political atmosphere of the capital, and to recount her laboriously gathering firsthand Korean, British, American and Russian sources regarding the Queen's assassination in 1895. As noted by Walter C. Hillier (British Consul-General in Korea at that time)<sup>25</sup> and Park Tae Sun, Mrs Bishop's capability for the project gave the value to the book as that 'we get of the living facts of modern Korea by reading her realistic descriptions based upon her first hand witness'.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and present position of the Country*, Vol.1, 1898, pp. xi.

<sup>25</sup> In his preface to her book, Walter C. Hillier praised Mrs Bishop's work on Korea: 'Those who, like myself, have known Korea from its first opening to foreign intercourse will thoroughly appreciate the closeness of Mrs. Bishop's observation, the accuracy of her facts, and the correctness of her inferences' (Walter C. Hillier in 'Preface' in Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, p. v).

<sup>26</sup> Park, Tae Sun in 'Plan for reprints of books on Korea' in Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbors: A Narrative of Travel, with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the*

As a meticulous woman writer, Mrs Bishop extensively observed and described in the book many aspects of Korean appearance and clothing-related issues. In the 'Introductory Chapter' of the book, she started by commenting, 'Koreans are certainly a handsome race' in physiognomy and 'good' in physique.<sup>27</sup> Yet in her 'First Impressions of the Capital' (Chapter II), Mrs Bishop seems not to have found substantial interest in commodities sold in shops in Seoul, listing the goods with the comment: 'white cottons, straw shoes, bamboo hats, [...] laundry sticks, [...] etc. the genius of bad taste presiding over all' and 'embroideries in silk and gold thread, but the designs are ugly, and the colouring atrocious'.<sup>28</sup> With her well-nurtured eyes, those clothing and textile goods would have been appreciated as a lack of good taste. While recording the objects and colours in the shops at firsthand, her personal judgement on the goods was reflected and it can be compared with the aforementioned British woman author Coulson's view. A nuanced and comparative reading can be also found in the description on Korean women and their sartorial practice.

In Bishop's observation similar to the Coulson's account, we can find her sympathy to Joseon women. When she describes women 'washing clothes in the fetid pools which pass for a stream', she claims that, 'The women are slaves to the laundry'.<sup>29</sup> Mrs Bishop's female compassion for Joseon women and eagerness to understand Korean culture are also well traced in 'Chapter IX, Korean Marriage Customs'. Detailing the custom of Korean marriage and related issues, she particularly

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*Country*, 1970 (Reprinted), p. ii.

<sup>27</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 42-43. With the page of 'Female Slavery' headed, 'Washing is her manifest destiny so long as her lord wears white. She washes in this foul river, in the pond of the Mulberry Palace, in every wet ditch, and outside the walls in the few streams which exist. Clothes are partially unpicked, boiled with ley three times, rolled into hard bundles, and pounded with heavy sticks on stones. After being dried they are beaten with wooden sticks on cylinders, till they attain a polish resembling dull satin. The women are slaves to the laundry, and the only sound which breaks the stillness of a Seoul night is the regular beat of their laundry sticks' (p. 43).

adds illustrations of Korean women (Figures 2.7 and 2.8). Unlike the images of Korean women that exhibit their breasts under the jacket and are conceived as uncivilised, often portrayed in the form of picture postcards of Joseon folklore by the colonial administration (Figure 2.9),<sup>30</sup> Mrs Bishop includes comparative captions under the illustrations: ‘a Korean lady’ and ‘Korean maternal costume’, respectively. In doing so, readers were able to understand the reason for the woman’s bare breast in Figure 2.8. Thus, the latter image is given due to the author’s careful description of Korean women and dress, and is not affected by any discursive female body image often objectified by the male coloniser’s gaze.



Figure 2.7. ‘A Korean Lady’  
(Source: Isabella Bishop, Vol. 1, 1898, p. 133)



Figure 2.8. ‘Korean Maternal Costume’  
(Source: Isabella Bishop, Vol. 1, 1898, p. 135)

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<sup>30</sup> For more detail, see Kwon Hyeok-hui, *Joseoneseo on sajinyeopseo* [Picture Postcard from Joseon], 2005, pp. 195-209. This issue will be discussed more as ‘invented sartorial tradition’ in Chapter 3.





Figure 2.9. A Picture Postcard, Joseon Woman with Bare Breasts (Source: Busan Museum Collection, Kwon Hyeok-hui, 2005, p. 207)

Further, it shows the female Western author's observation on Korean women's clothes was more faithful to the context of female Korean lives, less gender biased, compared to what male Western authors often described on the subject. For instance, American writer, businessman, mathematician and astronomer Percival Lowell (1855–1916)'s description of a similar image to that shown in the Figure 2.8 reads:

Female dress is made up of a very short jacket, [...] a slit exposing the breasts in the result. I may add that such unfortunate exposure is not intentional, and is only to be seen among that class whose lot is to draw water at the wells.<sup>31</sup>

The description such as 'a slit exposing the breasts', 'unfortunate exposure', under a 'very short jacket' can be read as a gendered vision. While Lowell states that the practice is 'not intentional', his interpretation was more about the women's class issue

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<sup>31</sup> Percival Lowell, *Chosön, The Land of the Morning Calm: A Sketch of Korea*, 1886, Chapter XXX. Costume, p. 322.

as his comment ‘class whose lot is to draw water at the wells’ shows. Here the nuance lies in the different male and female Western authors’ understanding on the Korean women’s short jacket with their bare breasts, which was regarded either as the necessity of mother’s breast-feeding or as the women’s odd attire from a lower class, not to mention the rather intentional colonial gaze represented in the picture postcard above.

Other than the aforementioned Western accounts detailed on the colours of general Korean dress, Mrs Bishop further described Korean clothing and its colour in a royal context. Her book ‘Chapter III, The Kur-Dong’ provides colourful details of the traditional costume worn in the royal procession. The occasion was a visit of the King Gojong in state to sacrifice in one of the ancestral temples of the dynasty.<sup>32</sup> To Bishop, the event was an opportunity to view ‘one of the most remarkable spectacles’ she had ever seen, and to detail various colourful costumes and splendid ceremonial followings.<sup>33</sup> This certainly impressed her in its contrast to her previous encounters with the white clothing of the commoners and green silk coats (*jangot*) over the heads of women going out around the city,<sup>34</sup> as she stated in the book: ‘On such monotony and colourlessness, the *Kur-dong* bursts like the sun. Alas for this mean but fascinating capital, that the most recent steps towards civilisation should involve the abolition of its one spectacle!’<sup>35</sup>

With minute description of the procession in the chapter, we learn the colours and details of costumes used in the pageant owing to Mrs Bishop. She notes firstly the spectators, such as ‘children in colours, and some of the poorer class of women with

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<sup>32</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, p. 48.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Mrs Bishop wrote her description of women’s overhead gowns (*jangot*) on her visit to Seoul: ‘All wear one costume, which is peculiar to the capital, a green silk coat – a man’s coat with the ‘neck’ put over the head and clutched below the eyes, and long wide sleeves falling from the ears. It is as well that the Korean woman is concealed, for she is not a houri’ (*Ibid.*, pp. 42-43).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

gay handkerchiefs folded Roman fashion on their hair'.<sup>36</sup> Often children's coloured clothing was contrasted with the white of most commoners' clothing. The chapter describes that:

The singular monotony of baggy white coats and black crinoline hats was relieved by boy bridegrooms in yellow hats and rose pink coats, by the green silk coats of women, and the green, pink, heliotrope and Turkey red dresses of children.<sup>37</sup>

With her knowledge on rank badges (*hyungbae*), Mrs Bishop accounts for officials and their *hyungbae* in the procession:

Either on the back or breast or both of the superb dresses of officials were satin squares embroidered in unique designs, representing birds and beasts, storks indicating civil, and tigers military, rank, while the number of birds or animals on the lozenge denoted the wearer's exact positions.<sup>38</sup>

In her descriptions of the 'soldiers'<sup>39</sup> and 'palace attendants'<sup>40</sup> at the procession, Bishop meticulously details the high officials' costumes as including: 'black high-crowned hats', 'crimson tassels', 'black ostrich plumes', 'mazarine blue silk robes', 'orange silk under robes', 'crimson trousers', 'knots of sky-blue ribbon', 'streamers of ribbon', 'amber beads', 'yellow silk banneret', 'orange upper part of sleeves and crimson in the lower part'.<sup>41</sup> This spectrum of colours must have made the day one

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 52: 'Soldiers in rusty black belted frocks, wide trousers, bandaged into padded socks, and straw shoes, stacked arms in a side street. Closed black and coloured chairs went past at a trot.'

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-53: 'Palace attendants in hundreds in brown glazed cotton sleeved cloaks, blue under robes' tied below the knee with bunches of red ribbon, and stiff black hats, with heavy fan-shaped plumes of peacock's feathers, rode ragged ponies on gay saddles of great height, without bridles, the animals being led by collies.'

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 53: 'High officials passed in numbers in chairs or on pony back, each with from twenty to thirty gay attendants running beside him, and a row of bannermen extending across the broad street behind him, each man with a silk banner bearing the cognomen of his

full of spectacles. She also admits her misinformation on Joseon cavalry, as supposedly attired in 'European fashion'.<sup>42</sup> The procession was conducted in a traditional manner, and by her description of the costumes on display we can find it preceded the dress change of soldiers and officials promulgated at court in 1895.

After this long march, when Mrs Bishop finally turned to describing King Gojong and Crown Prince Sunjong, her impression of them seems rather dull.<sup>43</sup> This suggests that she may have had preconceived opinions about them from outside sources beforehand. As she notes, the costly procession (estimated at \$25,000) was not only a chance for the King to appear in public, but also for the partakers' costumes to be seen, forming a part of the splendid display. As stated in her final remark in the chapter: 'It must be remembered that the people taking part in the pageant are not men

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lord. These officials were superbly dressed, and made a splendid show. They wore black, high-crowned hats, with long crimson tassels behind, and heavy, black ostrich plumes falling over the brim in front, mazarine blue silk robes, split up to the waist behind, with orange silk under robes and most voluminous crimson trousers, loosely tied above the ankles with knots of sky-blue ribbon, while streamers of ribbon fell from throats and girdles, and the hats were secured by throat lashes of large amber beads. Each carried over his shoulder a yellow silk banneret with his style in Chinese characters in crimson upon it, and in the same hand his baton of office, with a profusion of streamers of rich ribbons depending from it. The sleeves were orange in the upper part and crimson in the lower, and very full.'

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 56: 'cavalry in antique armour were jumbled up with cavalry in loose cotton frocks and baggy trousers, supposed to be dressed and armed in European fashion, but I failed to detect the flattery of imitation. There were cavalry in black Tyrolese hats with pink ribbon round them, black cotton sacks loosely girdled by leather belts with brass clasps never cleaned, white wadded stockings, and hempen shoes.'

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-58: 'and then come the Royal chairs, the first, which was canopied with red silk, being empty, the theory being that this was the more likely to receive an assassin's blow. A huge trident was carried in front of it. After this, borne high aloft by forty bearers clothed in red, in a superb chair of red lacquer, richly tasselled and canopied, and with wings to keep off the sun, came the King, whose pale, languid face never changed its expression as he passed with all the dignity and splendour of his kingdom through the silent crowd. More grandees, servants, soldiers, standard-bearers, arrowmen, officials, cavalry, and led horses formed the procession of the Crown Prince, who was also carried in a red palanquin, and looked paler and more impassive than his father.'

hired and dressed up by a *costumier*, but that they are actual court officials and noblemen in the dress of to-day'.<sup>44</sup>

In addition to her detailed observation and records on the royal procession, Mrs Bishop's audiences with King Gojong and Queen Min are also worth referring to for the appearance of the King and Queen at her first encounter, which is recorded in her second volume, 'Chapter XXI, The King's Oath – The King and Queen'. In January 1895, Mrs Bishop received an invitation from the Queen to a private audience, accompanied by Mrs Underwood, an American medical missionary and the Queen's physician and valued friend.<sup>45</sup> With her great interest and detailed notes, Bishop and Underwood were treated with coffee and cake, followed by a full course of 'foreign style' meal.<sup>46</sup> In Mrs Bishop's first encounter with Queen Min, she records, with a favourable image of the Queen, full details of the dress worn on the day.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, her descriptions of the King and the Crown Prince seem less favourable, although details of their costume were also well recorded.<sup>48</sup> This may show that Mrs Bishop

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>45</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, 1898, p. 37.

<sup>46</sup> For details, see Ibid., pp. 38-39.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 39: 'Her Majesty, who was then past forty, was a very nice-looking slender woman, with glossy raven-black hair and a very pale skin, the pallor enhanced by the use of pearl powder. The eyes were cold and keen, and the general expression one of brilliant intelligence. She wore a very handsome, very full, and very long skirt of mazarine blue brocade, heavily pleated, with the waist under the arms, and a full-sleeved bodice of crimson and blue brocade, clasped at the throat by a coral rosette, and girdled by six crimson and blue cords, each one clasped with a coral rosette, with a crimson silk tassel hanging from it. Her head-dress was a crownless black silk cap edged with fur, pointed over the brow, with a coral rose and full red tassel in front, and jewelled aigrettes on either side. Her shoes were of the same brocade as her dress. As soon as she began to speak, and especially when she became interested in conversation, her face lighted up into something very like beauty.'

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 39-41: 'The King is short and sallow, certainly a plain man, wearing a thin moustache and a tuft on the chin. He is nervous and twitches his hands, but his pose and manner are not without dignity. His face is pleasing, and his kindness of nature is well known. In conversation the Queen prompted him a good deal. He and the Crown Prince

had heard about the royal family and had a preconceived opinion of them. However, in spite of this, her documentation of the appearances of the Korean royal family does not seem biased. Rather, she presents her own respectful view on the audiences at the Palace, contrasting with others' negative views previously known:

Travellers received by the Korean King have often ridiculed the audience, the surroundings, and the Palace. I must say that I saw nothing to ridicule, unless national customs and etiquette varying from our own are necessarily ridiculous. On the contrary, there were a simplicity, dignity, kindness, courtesy, and propriety which have left a very agreeable impression on me, and my four audiences at Palace were the great feature of my second visit to Korea.<sup>49</sup>

As such, Bishop's firsthand account of Korea's clothing and people provides colourful details of dress practice across men, women and the varied classes at that time. This provides the nuances that can be compared and contrasted with other views and records written about Korean dress and related sartorial practice of the time. In this regard, Western encounters and their accompanying firsthand accounts can be helpful and approached carefully to capture the very scene of Koreans' sartorial practices during the Open Port era; and Westerners' different and nuanced records on them allow us to avoid interpreting Korean dress of the period in a simplistic or biased manner.

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were dressed alike in white leather shoes, wadded silk socks, and voluminous wadded white trousers. Over these they wore first, white silk tunics, next pale green ones, and over all sleeveless dresses of mazarine blue brocade. The whole costume, being exquisitely fresh, was pleasing. On their heads they wore hats and *mang-kuns* of very fine horsehair gauze, with black silk hoods bordered with fur, for the mercury stood at 5° below zero. The Crown Prince is fat and flabby, and though unfortunately very near-sighted, etiquette forbids him to wear spectacles, and at that time he produced on every one, as on me, the impression of being completely an invalid. He was the only son and the idol of his mother, who lived in ceaseless anxiety about his health, and in dread lest the son of a concubine should be declared heir to the throne. To this cause must be attributed several of her unscrupulous acts, her invoking the continual aid of sorcerers, and her always increasing benefactions to the Buddhist monks. During much of the audience mother and son sat with clasped hands.'

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

## **2. Korean Officials' Dress Reform at Court: Nuances of Western-style Uniform and Individual Decision of Sartorial Change**

With the inflow of Western material culture and gradually increasing encounters with the people in Western-style garb, awareness towards the modern was awakened in Joseon Korea. During the Open Port era, it is known that the Western-style suit as a norm of international communities' official clothing was introduced by diplomats who visited Japan and other Western countries, some of whom later initiated government reform movements, including edicts of appearance change. Thus it can be said that the modernisation of Korean dress began in a context of the royal court with male officials' uniform, yet it was not a straightforward process but evolved in a nuanced way, which will be explored in this section.

### ***2.1. Nuanced Sentiment to Modern Military Uniform***

It is noteworthy that the first adoption of Western-style uniform in Korea took place in the reformed military unit 'Byeolgigun' (別技軍) in 1881, rather than through civil official's uniform. The Joseon government had sent envoys, named Yeongseonsa (領選使), under the command of Kim Yun-sik (金允植, 1835–1922) to Qing China, where they learned modern ways of producing arms and training the military. Having returned from China, the Korean army was formed into the Byeolgigun, the first modernised Korean military troop, armed with modern weaponry and Western uniforms and trained by a Japanese drill instructor.<sup>50</sup> Due to such a military organisation, it was possible that the change into the modern-style uniform occurred straightforwardly by hierarchical orders.

Such utilitarian military uniforms worn by Koreans as well as non-Korean officials then became one of the most seen Western-style clothing and 'attraction' by Korean people at the time around 1897. Throughout the Open Port era, and due to the rivalry between Russia and Japan in the Korean peninsula, military troops in Western-

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<sup>50</sup> See Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, p. 60.

style uniforms from both empires came into Korea, some even camping in Seoul. Isabella Bishop recorded 'Seoul in 1897' in 'Chapter XXXVI' of her book, detailing the Russian army's support for the Korean government alongside other powers at the time:

Novelties in the Seoul streets were the fine physique and long grey uniforms of Colonel Putiata and his subordinates, three officers and ten drill-instructors, who arrived to drill and discipline the Korean army, the American military adviser having proved a failure, while the troops drilled by the Japanese were mutinous and rapacious, and the Japanese drill-instructors had retired with the rest of the *ravel*. This 'Military Commission' was doing its work with characteristic vigour and thoroughness, and the flat-faced, pleasant-looking non-commissioned officers, with their drilled slouch, serviceable uniforms, and long boots, were always an attraction to the crowd.<sup>51</sup>

While the photograph below (Figure 2.10) indeed shows Russian drill instructors' uniform and Korean cadet corps' Western appearance in uniform, which was attached in the page of Bishop's book, it seems that such Western-style uniforms were well exhibited to the people in Korea, as noted they were 'always an attraction to the crowd'. In this regard, the presence and display of the soldiers in Western-style clothing then influenced the way in which Koreans perceived the modernising society of the time through other groups of Korean people dressed in Western style.

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<sup>51</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, pp. 262-263.





Figure 2.10. 'Korean Cadet Corps and Russian Drill Instructors' (Isabella Bishop, Vol. 2, 1898, p. 262)

In the West, according to Daniel Roche, the birth of the uniform in the seventeenth century was as part of the social transformation of armies; when princes, to reduce their dependence on the feudal nobility, increasingly resorted to cash or wages to pay conscripted troops or mercenaries.<sup>52</sup> Joseph also states that the military origin of uniforms comes from the organisational need for identification and distinction from other social groups, which is the 'prerequisite for uniforms'.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, in Korea, the uniforms derived from the West were a means of distinguishing groups, but they were also regarded as a shift from the old to the new by the change of consciousness into modern practicality.

Yet, a different nuance can be also found in a Korean context. Often those new military uniforms, which had also become associated with the reformed police force at the time, were a subject of criticism due to the police force's brutal manners and sometimes improper attitudes. Isabella Bishop wrote about the appearances of the old

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<sup>52</sup> Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'Ancient Regime'*, trans. by Jean Birrell, 1994, p. 225.

<sup>53</sup> Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication through Clothing*, 1986, p. 35.

and new police regimes with the illustrations (Figure 2.11), and detailed the shifting perceptions, and reasons for these, of the police and soldiers in uniform.<sup>54</sup> One of the lines indeed shows: ‘European clothes and arms transform him [Korean army] into a truculent, insubordinate, and oftentimes brutal person, without civic sympathies or patriotism, greedy of power and spoil’.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, pp. 264-265. ‘The old *kesu* or *gensd’armes* with their picturesque dresses and long red plumes are now only to be seen, and that rarely, in attendance on officials of the Korean Government. Seoul is now policed, much overpoliced, for it has a force of 1200 men, when a quarter of that number would be sufficient for its orderly population. Everywhere numbers of slouching men on and off duty, in Japanese semi-military uniforms, with shocks of hair behind their ears and swords in nickel-plated scabbards by their sides, suggest useless and extravagant expenditure. The soldiers and police, by an unwise arrangement made by the Japanese, and now scarcely possible to alter, are enormously overpaid, the soldiers receiving five dollars and a half a month, ‘all found,’ and the police from eight to ten, only finding their food. The Korean army is about the most highly paid in the world. The average Korean in his great baggy trousers, high, perishable, broad-brimmed hat, capacious sleeves, and long flapping white coat, is usually a docile and harmless man; but European clothes and arms transform him into a truculent, insubordinate, and oftentimes brutal person, without civic sympathies or patriotism, greedy of power and spoil. Detachments of soldiers scattered through the country were a terror to the people from their brutality and marauding propensities early in 1897, and unless Russian officers are more successful than their predecessors in disciplining the raw material, an overpaid army, too large for the requirements of the country, may prove a source of weakness and frequent disorder.’

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*



Figure 2.11. ‘Seoul Gend’arme, Old *Régime*’ (left), ‘Seoul Policeman, New *Régime*’ (right)  
 (Source: Isabella Bishop, Vol. 2, 1898, pp. 264, 265)

The nuanced and negative sentiment attached to the modern military and police uniforms can be also found in the Korean diplomat Min Yeong-hwan (閔泳煥, 1861–1905)’s journal on the visit to Russia in 1896. When visiting St. Petersburg after the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in Moscow, Min Yeong-hwan noted the Russian police uniform, with its short sword, probably comparing it with the longer sword used in Korea, and commenting on the advantages of Russia’s modernised force, likely feeling that a similar style of better police reform was needed in Korea, even though its uniform change of the force already occurred:

In Russia the city constables’ clothing and hats are very smart, and they wear a belt with a short sword. They stand in the streets and patrol a fixed area. They work hard day and night, and if someone’s home catches fire, they immediately fetch water and other equipment and go and help. If anything illegal takes place, they go immediately to catch the perpetrators.

There are also mounted constables who ride about looking out for trouble. Because of this we can sleep peacefully without fear of drunken brawlers, thieves, and robbers.<sup>56</sup>

## 2.2. A Series of Dress Reform at Court, 1884–1900

While the modernisation of military uniforms took place in Western-style clothing relatively at once, court official's dress reform in modern style was not suddenly changed into Western style. Rather, subtle and nuanced changes can be observed throughout a series of dress reforms from 1884 to 1900. During this period, Korean government made efforts to reform the country and introduced certain edicts, some of which were related to modernising clothing and appearance. In 1884, by the Gapsin dress reform (甲申衣制改革, *Gapsin uije gaehyeok* in the twenty-first year of King Gojong), court officials' uniforms were the first to undergo simplification. The edict introduced a change to the colour of official robes, from various colours to only a black round robe (黑團領, *heukdallyeong*); the wide-sleeve robe (廣袖, *gwangsu*) was also changed to a narrow-sleeve robe (窄袖, *chaksu*). Other ceremonial uniforms such as *jobok* (朝服), *jebok* (祭服), *sangbok* (喪服) remained unchanged to respect the old tradition.<sup>57</sup> However, a few days later, court officials opposed the new rule on the costume change in line with Neo-Confucian thinking.<sup>58</sup> Yet, the King persisted with

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<sup>56</sup> Min Yeong-hwan, *Haecheonchubeom*, in Michael Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan: The Selected Writings of a Late Chosŏn Diplomat*, 2008, p. 143.

<sup>57</sup> *Gojong sillok* [高宗實錄, The Anal of King Gojong], Vol. 21, 24 May 1884, 21st Year [卷21 21年 閏 5月 24日], ‘관복을 오로지 흑단령(黑團領)으로 하는 것은 곧 고제(古制)이니 일이 매우 간단하고 편리하다. 당상관의 시복(時服)인 홍단령(紅團領)은 대전통편과 원전(原典)의 예에 따라 입지 말고 지금부터 모든 조정의 관원들은 항상 흑단령(黑團領)을 입되 대소(大小)의 조의(朝儀)에 진현(進見)할 때와 궁내외의 공고(公故)가 있을 때에는 흉배를 달아서 문무와 계품의 구별을 삼으라. 단령의 제도를 반령착수(盤領窄袖)로 하는 것도 또한 한결같이 국초의 제양을 따르라’ (trans. by Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa*, pp. 339-340).

<sup>58</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 21, 27 May 1884, 21st Year [권21 윤 5월 27일], ‘포와 중의(中衣)는 모두 선비의 상복(上服)이니 이것이 없다면 무엇으로 위의를 나타낼 것이며 귀천을 표시하겠습니까. 우리 나라의 공복(公服)과 사복(私服)은 모두 명나라의 제도를 따라 일왕지제(一王之制)가 되었으니 오늘날 변경할 수 없습니다’ (trans. by Go Bu-ja, *Uri*

the change, arguing that the dress reform was aimed at rejecting cumbersome traditions, and instead adopting simplification. Thus, despite the tension at the palace about the costume reform, Korean dress change into modernisation initiated from the simplification of the *hanbok* style first, rather than from the sudden adoption of Western costume.

In 1894, the Gabo dress reform (甲午衣制改革, *Gabo uije gaehyeok* in the thirty-first year of King Gojong) was introduced to push for further dress reform, as many people's mind-sets had not yet changed. In this edict, officials' uniforms were categorised into major ceremonial uniforms (大禮服, *daeryebok*), minor ceremonial uniforms (小禮服, *soryebok*) and normal everyday uniforms (通常服, *tongsangbok*).<sup>59</sup> Again, the aim of the edict was to simplify court officials' costume in *hanbok*, such as by keeping narrow-sleeve robes (Figure 2.12) and limiting the variety of official robes. Yet tensions still remained, and such reformed ideas realised in the simpler *hanbok* uniform troubled some aristocrats who still insisted that traditional ideas of authoritarianism were reflected in the wide-sleeve robes and in having many types of traditional upper class men's robes.

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*saenghwal*, p. 66).

<sup>59</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 31, 16 December 1894, 31st Year [권31 12월 16일], '조신(朝臣)의 대례복(大禮服)은 흑단령(黑團領)으로 하고, 대궐에 나올 때의 통상복(通常服)은 검은색 토산 명주로 지은 두루마기(周衣)와 더그레(塔號) 및 사모(紗帽)와 목긴 신(靴)으로 하여' (trans. by National Institute of Korean History, *Guksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe*, 36/32, 70:B, 36책 32권 70장 B면).



Figure 2.12. Narrow-sleeve Official Robe (*chaksuui gwanbok*) (Source: Yu Song-ok, 1998, p. 340)

Throughout the following year of 1895, the Eulmi dress reform (乙未衣制改革, *Eulmi uije gaehyeok* in the thirty-second year of King Gojong) promulgated a series of dress edicts and a decree of cutting topknots (斷髮令, *danballyeong*). In March, further simplification of officials' uniform was announced. Now, wearing *juui* (周衣 or *durumagi*) without *dapho* (褶護, sleeveless topcoat), and black *juui* were encouraged, and wearing this was permitted for both officials and the people.<sup>60</sup> The reason for this was given as pursuing convenience and not differentiating officials and general people.<sup>61</sup> This reflected the beginning of modern change of the rigid class-oriented Joseon society.

<sup>60</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 32, 29 March 1895, 32nd Year [권32 3월 29일], ‘공적인 예복(禮服)과 사적인 예복에서 답호(褶護)를 없애고 대궐로 들어올 때만 모(帽), 화(靴), 사대(絲帶)를 착용하고, 주의(周衣)는 관리와 백성들이 똑같이 검은색 종류로 하라’ (trans. by National Institute of Korean History, *Guksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe*, 37/33, 43:A, 37책 33권 43장 A면).

<sup>61</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 32, 10 August 1895, 32nd Year [권32 8월 10일], ‘의제상으로는 관민을

Taken together with edicts on military officials' uniforms in April and further changes to civil officials' uniforms in August, it was the biggest change ever to the Korean appearance until the issuing of the hair-cropping edict and the granting of permission to wear Western styles, which was announced on 15 November (or 30 December 1895 by the solar calendar).<sup>62</sup> Especially, the edict for adult males to cut their hair short demanded a huge change into what Korean men had previously grown their hair long and tied it up in a style called *sangtu* (topknot). Based on Neo-Confucian beliefs, cutting any part of the body, including the hair, was considered an impingement on filial piety, as all flesh was seen as a blessing from one's parents. With fierce resistance to the hair-cropping edict, hard feelings spread across the country, where the edict was opposed by various groups of people and elites.<sup>63</sup> After King Gojong's flight to the Russian legation in 1896, this unpopular edict was adjusted to allow the change to be made at one's liberty, rather than by force.<sup>64</sup> The severe tension between the government authorities and the people was also well recorded in Bishop's account, with her comment, 'the foundations of social order were threatened when the top knot fell!'<sup>65</sup>

By the 1895 Eulmi reform, the topknot became the watershed for the King's appearance between the old and the modern. King Gojong (高宗, 1852–1919, r. 1863–

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일시(一視)하사 구별하지 않고, 또한 편의를 위해서' (trans. by Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, p. 67).

<sup>62</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 32, 15 November 1895, 32nd Year [권32 11월 15일], '이제 단발(斷髮)은 양생(養生)에 유익하고 일하는 데에 편리하기 때문에 우리 성상폐하(聖上陛下)가 정치 개혁과 민국(民國)의 부강을 도모하며 솔선궁행(率先躬行)하여 표준을 보인 것이다. [...] 나라의 상사(喪事)를 당하였으니 의관(衣冠)은 나라의 거상 기간에는 그전대로 백색(白色)을 쓴다. 망건(網巾)은 폐지한다. 의복 제도는 외국 제도를 채용하여도 무방하다' (trans. by National Institute of Korean History, *Guksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe*, 37/33, 83:A, 37책 33권 83장 A면).

<sup>63</sup> For more detail, see Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, pp. 69-71.

<sup>64</sup> For further political tensions and nuances, see Hyung Gu Lynn, 'Fashioning Modernity: Changing Meanings of Clothing in Colonial Korea', 11/3, 2004, p. 75-93.

<sup>65</sup> See Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, Chapter XXXI, The 'Top-knot' – The Korean Hegira, pp. 173-187.

1907) indeed set himself as an example of the new hair cutting decree. As recorded in *Gojong sillok*, he proclaimed that ‘For me, taking initiative and have my topknot cut, the people may accept my will deeply and let the great work succeeded in order to stand side by side with the foreign countries’.<sup>66</sup> Percival Lowell recorded a photograph of King Gojong before the hair cut in his book (Figure 2.13).<sup>67</sup> The following photograph of King (or Emperor) Gojong shows his changed hairstyle and official attire in the Western style, in tandem with the launch of the Korean Empire in 1897 (Figure 2.14). Thus, at the end of nineteenth century, Korea underwent huge sweeping change, from a traditional society to a modern reformed state. The change of dress and appearance was a significant symbol of this shift, and a means of demonstrating the modernising will of the ruler of the country, on the one hand.



Figure 2.13. His Majesty the King Gojong of Korea, c. 1884 (Source: Percival Lowell, 1886, p. 50)

<sup>66</sup> *Gojong sillok*, Vol. 32, 15 November 1895, 32nd Year [권32 11월 15일], ‘짐(朕)이 머리를 깎아 신하와 백성들에게 우선하니 너희들 대중은 짐의 뜻을 잘 새겨서 만국(萬國)과 대등하게 서는 대업을 이룩하게 하라’ (trans. by National Institute of Korean History, *Guksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe*, 37/33, 80:B).

<sup>67</sup> Percival Lowell, *Chosön*, p. 50. Percival Lowell (1855–1916) was foreign secretary and counsellor to the Korean special mission of the United States of America and a member of the Asiatic Society of Japan.





Figure 2.14. Emperor Gojong in his 'Emperor' Regalia, c. 1897 (Source: Go Bu-ja, 2001, p. 72)

On the other hand, behind this change there were inevitable social tensions in Korea and adopting the new appearance was not a simple matter to officials in the court and general people in the country. The edict and modernisation efforts more generally, provoked uproar in Neo-Confucian Joseon Korea. Cutting the topknot was not a mere act of style change, nor was it a single issue towards the new hairstyle. Rather, it represented a symbolic, politically charged contest between two powers: the traditional faction denying the changes of foreign forces and struggling to retain the traditions of Joseon, versus the reform faction accommodating Western cultures and moving to modernise Korea. Throughout the Gabo and Eulmi reforms, the latter faction wielded the reform movement. It was the cabinet led by minister Kim Hong-jip (金弘集, 1842–1896), known as having influenced by the pro-Japanese and linked to the murder of Queen Min (乙未事變, *Eulmi sabyeon* on 20 August 1895 by the lunar calendar), who initiated the reforms towards Western-style official uniforms and

modern hairstyle cuttings. Due to this, the dress and appearance change into Western style was not widely welcomed entailing oppositional views, and the modernisation project in dress reform turned into not being purely sartorial but political, given the Korean context.

Considering such political affiliations of the reform movement, opposition to modernisation drew not only upon traditional Neo-Confucian values, but also upon anti-Japanese sentiment. These factors explain the reluctance of Koreans to change into modern styles during the period; at the time, the choice of wearing the Western or Korean style was understood as projecting one's political stance towards modernisation, tradition and the Japanese. Thus, the change into Western-style dress was not necessarily or simply linked to wearer's sartorial statement of modernisation, yet it was often associated with a pro-Japanese stance under the circumstances of Japanese advancement on Korea. In this regard, the Figure 2.14 is representative of such a nuanced sense; while representing Emperor Gojong's modernisation effort by donning the Western-style regalia, the iris motif of the background screen – a visual Japanese sentiment – simultaneously suggests that the powerful neighbouring empire had influence on the new modernising Korean court to some extent.

In 1897, when Joseon was renamed to the Korean Empire (大韓帝國, *Daehan Jeguk*, 1897–1910), the King and Queen's official ceremonial costume was uplifted to the state of emperor and empress, like those of China. Notably, the yellow dragon robe (袞龍袍, *gollyongpo*) – previously red dragon robe – was introduced into the new Emperor Gojong's daily costume (Figure 2.15), and his highest ceremonial costume (冕服, *myeonbok*) was advanced to the twelve-line crown (十二旒冕, *sibiryumyeon*) and twelve-motif robe (十二章服, *sibijangbok*) from the nine-motif robe (九章服, *gujangbok*). In addition, first-class high official's ceremonial costume headgear was renewed as having seven lines rather than five.<sup>68</sup> Free from the previous dress code of toadyism, in which Korean court dress was made in a lower rank manner than that of

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<sup>68</sup> For further detail, see Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, p. 71.

China as in the aforementioned downgraded way worn by King, Queen and officials, the inauguration of the Korean Empire lifted its status parallel with the Chinese Empire, and official costume reform was conducted in line with the lifted state.



Figure 2.15. Portrait of Emperor Gojong in the Yellow Dragon Robe (Source: National Museum of Korea)

Alongside the elevation of traditional-style court costume to the status of empire in 1897, full adoption of Western-style dress at court finally arrived in 1900. The Korean Empire's setting up of a modern state resulted in edicts and rules issued to change officials' uniforms completely into the Western style. The main ceremonial uniform (大禮服, *daeryebok*) was referenced to Japan's European-style uniform of embroidered swallow-tailed coat attire, and the minor ceremonial uniform (小禮服, *soryebok*) was adopted from European morning coat attire (Figure 2.16).<sup>69</sup> Although those sartorial edicts were mainly related to male court officials' costume change in the

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<sup>69</sup> For more detail, see Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa*, pp. 345-350.

public domain at the end of the nineteenth century, Korea finally embraced the formal wearing of the Western style as officials' modern attire, shifting from the traditional Korean costume system with the gradual, tense and nuanced process.



Figure 2.16. Civil Official's *Daeryebok* (Embroidered swallow-tailed coat attire, left) and *Soryebok* (Morning coat attire, right) (Source: The Museum of Korean Embroidery)

### ***2.3. Korean Official's Encounters with Western Dress and Modernity: Min Yeong-hwan's Sartorial Change***

Throughout the aforementioned process of court official's dress change, one diplomat's case can be focused on to examine further nuances of sartorial change in an individual level. Also, this section intends to provide a balanced account of the Korean encounter with Western clothing and related Western modernity during the time, in parallel with the Western encounter with Korean sartorial practice examined in the earlier section.

During the Open Port era, Korean envoys began visiting the West and they sometimes recorded their experiences of encounters with the Western culture. Min Yeong-hwan (閔泳煥, 1861–1905) was a minister during the Korean Empire who is

best known as a conservative proponent for reform, who committed suicide in protest against the Japanese-Korean Treaty of Protection of 1905 (乙巳條約, Eulsa Treaty). Relatively less well known was his contribution to Korea's early efforts with the West through his mission to Russia in 1896 and to the United Kingdom in 1897. Using recent studies of his life and encounter records with the West,<sup>70</sup> this section will examine clothing-related issues via Min's journals, principally of his mission to Russia, *Haecheonchubeom* (海天秋帆, Sea, Sky, Autumn Voyage), and partly to Britain, *Sagusokcho* (使歐續草, Additional Notes of an Envoy to Europe).<sup>71</sup>

Min Yeong-hwan's mission to Russia was part of the political and diplomatic efforts of King Gojong and his Korean government. These came in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and the consequent domestic upheaval inside Joseon, which included the assassination of Min Yeong-hwan's aunt, Queen Min (8 October 1895), and the flight of King Gojong from Gyeongbok Palace to the Russian legation on 11 February 1896. In the same year, Min Yeong-hwan was sent to Russia as Joseon's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to participate in the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II (26 May 1896). With his mission entourage,<sup>72</sup> Min departed from Seoul's Dongui Gate on 1 April 1896 and, after his mission in Russia, arrived back to Jemulpo (Incheon) on 20 October 1896. The next day, Min entered the Russian legation, where he had an audience with King Gojong to report on the mission

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<sup>70</sup> Michael Finch's works have been useful in the examination of this section: Michael Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan: The Selected Writings of a Late Chosŏn Diplomat*, 2008; Michael Finch, *Min Yŏng-hwan: A Political Biography*, 2002.

<sup>71</sup> The English translations of *Haecheonchubeom* and *Sagusokcho* are taken from Chapter 3 (pp. 65-186) and 4 (pp. 187-268), respectively, of Finch's *Min Yŏnghwan*, 2008, which is based on Min Yeong-hwan, *Min Chungjeonggong yugo* [The Posthumous Works of Min Yeong-hwan], 1971.

<sup>72</sup> The Joseon mission group comprised Yun Chi-ho (윤치호), who was appointed adjutant to the envoy; Kim Deuk-nyeon (김득련), second-rank mission secretary; Kim Do-il (김도일), third-rank mission secretary; Son Heui-yeong (손희영), Min's personal valet; and the Russian legation dragoman Evgeneii Stein, who assisted the Korean party in all aspects of its journey and activities in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

and present Tsar Nicholas II's personal letter, completing his mission on 21 October 1896 that took 'seven months' and passed through 'eight countries'.<sup>73</sup>

Focusing on the Korean's encounter with Western clothing and civilisation as for the context of this section, we can find many examples of Min Yeong-hwan's wonder and reflexive notes in facing the foreign enlightenment. Arriving in Nagasaki on 12 April 1896 and passing through Yokohama, Min and his party were impressed by the evidence of the modernisation that they witnessed in Japan. On the day of the mission's departure from Yokohama, Min commented on the orderliness and beauty of the harbour and praised the accomplishments of the Japanese.<sup>74</sup> As Michael Finch suggests, Min's praise of the Japanese was perhaps implicitly criticising the Korean administration for her excessive dependence on foreign advisers at that time.<sup>75</sup> Crossing the Pacific and arriving at Vancouver on 29 April, the group stayed at the Vancouver Hotel, where the Koreans had their first experience of a lift. Min wrote, 'As climbing the stairs is considered inconvenient, there is one room on the ground floor that goes up and down according to one's wish by means of electricity. This is a good idea'.<sup>76</sup> While recording his awe on encounters with the Western cities and modern surroundings,<sup>77</sup> Min would have had some conflicted feelings regarding the

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<sup>73</sup> Min Yeong-hwan, *Haecheonchubeom*, in Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan*, p. 175.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76: '[17 April (Lunar date: 5/3) Clear, cold morning.] We arrived at Yokohama again and anchored there. The beauty of the mountains and rivers, the solid construction of the harbour front, the height of the buildings, the orderliness of the main roads, and the incessant twinkling of the gas and electric lamps make one's mental outlook to be suddenly enlightened. In Tokyo, moreover, everything is set up in an exquisite way, more and more refined and improving every day. This enlightenment is the result of the diligent study of Western methods by all the Japanese people, not because they have borrowed the assistance of others.'

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>77</sup> For instance, we can find Min's notes of admiration on New York and London: *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83: '[6 May (Lunar date: 24/3) Clear weather.] At 10:00 P.M. we arrived in New York. Everything was one hundred times better than Montreal. It was so amazing that I am not able to put it into words. This is truly a world famous city (this port is the second biggest in

modernisation in Japan and in other Western countries, reflecting his own country's current state and ways of achieving future modernisation.

The first note made by Min Yeong-hwan upon finally arriving at Moscow on 20 May 1896 described the Russian's uniform. Settling at the official lodgings,<sup>78</sup> prepared by the Department of the Imperial Household of Russia, where the Korean flag was flown for the first time in Russia's old capital, the Korean entourage was well attended by four liveried messengers and twenty-one servants, and was being assigned two three-horse carriages. Min records: 'The Department of the Imperial Household sent four official messengers to attend us (they wore red uniforms and black hats which were all embroidered with gold)'.<sup>79</sup> The officials' Western-style uniform attire intrigued Min and offered him the chance for a good deal of observation.

The Russian emperor had already arrived in Moscow (Russia's southern capital) on 18 May from St. Petersburg (Russia's new northern capital city), and Min and the Korean entourage were invited to view the Procession to the Kremlin Palace in the city. On 21 May, Min recorded the event with notes of partakers' appearance in his diary:

This was the route along which the Russian emperor would pass. Foot soldiers carrying rifles stood shoulder to shoulder forming two rows marching along each side of the street. After them came cavalry and mounted police in ranks (their uniforms were all different). At the appointed time they formed a vanguard and led a procession of civil and military officials in carriages (the coaches were gold with red wheels and

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the world). We entered the Waldorf Hotel. It is a ten-story building with a thousand rooms, and it always has several thousand guests. Everything is convenient and comfortable. Immediately, we forgot the suffering of our cramped journey.'; Ibid., p. 87: '[16 May (Lunar date: 4/4) Overcast.] We entered the British capital, London, at 2:00 P.M. This city has a population of five million. Its highways and streets, markets and shops, buildings and carriages are equal to those of New York, but its splendour surpasses that city.'

<sup>78</sup> Min's diary records '42 Pavarskaya Street in Troofnikovsky', while Yun Chi-ho's diary gives the address as 'the House of Mr. Holmsky, Troofnikovsky Lane, Pavarskaya Street, No. 42, Moscow', cited in *Yun Chiho ilgi*, Vol. 4, p. 206, in Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

four horses). After a while the emperor appeared (his name is Nikolai; he is twenty-eight years old and is of average build with a courageous bearing). He wore a blue military uniform. (The Russian military system is regarded as very important, so the emperor has to wear military uniform in order to uphold his dignity. The present emperor used to be enlisted in an army regiment. His rank was not above that of major. He participated in all their activities, wore the same uniform, and followed the same routine as everyone else).<sup>80</sup>

The official uniforms in the procession looked spectacular to him as recorded, yet the colour code used and its symbolism was different to that of the Koreans. Moreover, the Russian emperor's wearing of the blue military uniform would have felt relatively modest or even improper to Min Yeong-hwan when compared with the dress custom of clear distinction between military officials and kings under the Neo-Confucian manner, which seems to have led Min to wonder and leave the additional note on the procession at the end.<sup>81</sup> Ceremonial costumes were an important part of the spectacle when encountering the new culture of processions. This can be compared with the Isabella Bishop's account on the royal procession in Korea, recording the event in detail but involving the lens of author's own culture.

The next day, 22 May, the Korean envoys had their first audience with the Russian emperor and empress. Regarding the costume, Min records:

I got up early and many times checked the personal letter and the list of gifts. Our party put on our main ceremonial robes and waited until 2:00 P.M. [...] There was also an escort of six mounted attendants (they wore

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., pp. 90-91.

<sup>81</sup> The costume of the women of the imperial family in the procession was described relatively less; Ibid., p. 91: '[21 May] The dowager empress (her name is Maria Dagmar; she is forty-nine years old and is the daughter of the king of Denmark) rode in a carriage (the coach and wheels were gold, and it was drawn by eight horses). The empress (her name is Alexandria; she is twenty-four years old and is the daughter of the German prince of Hesse and the granddaughter of the British empress) rode in a carriage (identical to the one above). It was quite magnificent (all the men and women servants and grooms accompanying the imperial carriages wore gold hats and gold uniforms.'



black clothes and hats embroidered with gold). [...] When we entered, we all bowed, then advanced a little and bowed again, and when we reached the emperor, we bowed in front of him. The emperor took off his hat and stood up, and the empress also stood up. (The emperor was wearing the same clothes as he wore in the procession yesterday, and the empress wore a pale pink dress.) There was only one imperial attendant beside them.<sup>82</sup>

The Korean mission made an effort to dress in ‘main traditional ceremonial robes’ (大禮服, *daeryebok*) for the occasion, showing due courtesy in accordance with the Neo-Confucian manner of Joseon, and this appearance contrasted with the Western-style uniforms. By this note, we can find the Korean envoy’s uniform remained in *hanbok* style, rather than Western style as in 1896, despite the changes through the 1894 Gabo and 1895 Eulmi dress reforms. As for the emperor’s dress at the audience, Min wondered about his wearing of the blue uniform unchanged from the previous day’s procession, while recording the empress’s pale pink dress, which again reflects the different dress custom between Korea and Russia.

On the coronation day, 26 May 1896, Min Yeong-hwan further described the splendour of the emperor and empress’s costume:

At 8:00 A.M. the emperor and empress appeared. [...] At midday the empress came out of the coronation first wearing her crown. This crown was studded with diamonds (its style resembled that of our country’s women’s ceremonial coronet). She wore a yellow embroidered robe trailing behind her (the outside was yellow silk embroidered with gold, and the inside was lined with ermine fur). It measured three *chang* [3.2 meters]. Her personal servants attended her and walked together. A short while later the crowned emperor appeared. His crown was studded with diamonds (its style resembled that of our country’s gold crown). He was also wearing a yellow robe as described above. His personal servants also attended him and walked together. The emperor held an orb in his left hand (this symbolizes his dominion over a vast territory) and a gold sceptre in his right hand (this symbolizes his imperial majesty). They walked past four or

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., pp. 91-92.

five places near the cathedral and then returned to the palace (the crowns, orb, sceptre and robes are all handed down from generation to generation).<sup>83</sup>

His encounter with the coronation and imperial regalia can be found as well recorded as depicted in the painting of the same event (Figure 2.17). Min's notes on the emperor and empress's crowns also reflect the Korean custom in their reference to Korean items that would have been natural to him in drawing parallels with what he encountered in foreign settings.



Figure 2.17. Coronation of Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna in 1896 (Source: Laurits Tuxen, 1898, The State Hermitage Museum)

However, unfortunately, Min's observation of the coronation was based on only the partial experience – outside the cathedral where the actual ceremony took place like the painting of Figure 2.17 – allowed to the Korean entourage because of their Korean traditional costume. Min and the group had donned the main ceremonial robes early in the morning and conveyed themselves to the Kremlin Palace. Yet, to enter the 'Uspensky Cathedral' where the coronation was to be held, people had to remove their

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., pp. 95-96.

hats under the Russian custom. As they could not do this due to different rules of decorum, the envoys from ‘Korea, along with China, Turkey and Persia’ could not enter the cathedral, but watched from a balcony outside the cathedral.<sup>84</sup> Missing the coronation itself inside the cathedral, the Koreans may have regretted dressing in their traditional style and the ensemble with the official hat (*gwanmo*), which can be seen in the Min Yeong-hwan’s photograph, took in Russia, dressed in the main ceremonial attire, *daeryebok* with the *gwanmo* (Figure 2.18).



Figure 2.18. Min Yeong-hwan dressed in the Main Ceremonial Robe (*Daeryebok*) with a Hat (*Gwanmo*), wearing his First-Rank Award (Source: Korea University Museum)

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<sup>84</sup> Min’s record shows the happening on the day; Ibid., p. 95: ‘[26 May (Lunar date: 14/4. Russian date: 14/5) Clear weather.] At 6:00 A.M. our party put on our main ceremonial robes and went to the Turkish legation together with Paskov and Planson. All the envoys gathered together, and then we entered the Kremlin Palace. The Russian style of coronation ceremony takes place in a cathedral (The Uspensky Cathedral). If you do not remove your hat, however, you are not allowed to enter the cathedral. The envoys of our country, China, Turkey, and Persia are not permitted to remove our hats, and so we could not enter. Therefore, we watched as before from a balcony outside the cathedral. The cathedral is not far from the palace grounds.’

The head part and headgear were traditionally regarded as important to suit an ensemble, which as a whole was conceived as respectful and an appropriate Neo-Confucian manner. Michael Finch describes the incident as a diplomatic crisis faced by Min and his colleagues unable to attend the coronation ceremony. Finch argues that:

After a journey of thousands of miles across two oceans and two continents to arrive in time for the coronation, Min must have felt considerable frustration at this unexpected turn of events. It was probably partly as a result of this experience that Min cut his hair and adopted a Western-style military uniform in the following year before departing for Great Britain to attend the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria [on 20 June 1897].<sup>85</sup>

Since the Eulmi dress reform of 1895, change into the modern Western-style attire and cutting topknots caused social tensions and resulted in the decision was up to each individual by 1896, as examined earlier. Here we can find how Min Yeong-hwan's personal experience as the important Korean official changed his view on Western-style appearance through the individual and international circumstances.

His reflective and nuanced view on traditional *hanbok* style can be further traced. At the end of his journal *haecheonchubeom*, Min Yeong-hwan's poems take the title of 'A Collection of Poems from the Journey of an Envoy'.<sup>86</sup> Among them, two 'untitled poems' reflect his conflicted emotions and lack of sympathy for the traditional Korean appearance:

Untitled Poem

In the Russian capital there is a photography studio.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p.12. Regarding Min's hair cut on the second journey, the mission for Britain departed from Seoul on 24 March 1897 and spent the first night at a hotel in Incheon where Min met other people including Yun Chi-ho on the day. It is from Yun's diary that we know that Min Yeong-hwan and Min Yeong-chan cut off their traditional topknots and adopted Western-style clothes from this point in their journey (Ibid., p. 17).

<sup>86</sup> Min notes at the beginning; Ibid., p. 181: 'After departing from Incheon harbour, each time I wished to compose a poem, words were lacking and my speech was unpolished so that it was difficult to describe the scenes we encountered. Finally, I was not able to express them in true and exact poetic form.'

They said that it made good pictures for its customers.  
I went together with both secretaries to that studio to take one photograph.  
It was an excellent picture.  
Now it is already damaged and makes me laugh at the memory.  
*My appearance is no better than that of a farmer from Qu.* [Author's emphasis]  
I served as an official, but what did I contribute?  
By mistake I gained some reputation, but my family's reputation declined.  
I hope I can work for clear and efficient government.

#### Untitled Poem

There are many migrants from the famine years.  
Ten thousand thousands, who are farming, labouring, trading, and studying.  
They try to speak their native tongue, but their lips are already dull.  
Our government is too weak to impose its authority over them.  
*In appearance they are haggard and wear the topknot.* [Author's emphasis]  
They just work to feed and clothe themselves.  
Rejoicing and weeping as one, they are kind and polite.  
All praise compassionate Heaven for forgiving their past mistakes.<sup>87</sup>

Thus, the case of Min Yeong-hwan illustrates that, despite the 1895 edict of issuing of the hair-cropping and granting of permission to wear the Western style, there were individual officials who did not change their style until their personal circumstances led them to do so. In other words, edicts on the new Western style did not suddenly change Korean's appearance; rather, change was subject to one's decision or preference. This transitional state of change entailed many individuals feeling tension and/or confusion to some degree about what to wear, yet eventually this led one's important decision on critical appearance change. To Min Yeong-hwan, keeping the traditional style caused a feeling of failure as an envoy in Moscow. Thus, from this moment in encountering Western dress custom, the traditional uniform of *hanbok* seemed to become troubled and dated from Min's perspective.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

On the last day of the celebrations, 7 June, Min recorded the Korean mission's receiving decorations and medallions:

By imperial command the Department of the Imperial Household conferred decorations and large medallions (inscribed with the portrait of the emperor and empress). The envoys received a first-rank award (a blue silk sash with the national emblem next to one's chest, and a white hawk with a jewelled star hanging from it) and a large gold medallion. Accompanying officials received a second-rank award, which had a flowery pattern and hung in front of the neck, and a large silver medallion. Both secretaries received a second-rank decoration (which had a flowery pattern, was somewhat smaller, and hung on one's chest) and a large silver medallion. Servants also received a decoration (a small medallion with the emperor's portrait).<sup>88</sup>

Showing Min's main ceremonial *hanbok* uniform (*daeryebok*) wearing headgear (*gwanmo*) and outer robe (*gwanbok* or *danryeong*) in the Figure 2.18, it also features Min's wearing of the 'first-rank award' of the sash decoration and medallion, as described above. This stands in stark contrast with Figure 2.19, which shows Min Yeong-hwan in Western uniform with his hair cut in modern style. This image projects Min as a proponent of the modern enlightenment reform movement in the Korean government, as he was after his missions to the West. Michael Finch states that Min's mission to Russia was undoubtedly one of the most significant efforts in late-Joseon diplomacy before the country was absorbed into the Japanese Empire; the Min-Lobanov Agreement was one concrete result, but 'Min's own personal change in outlook was perhaps the more valuable and significant achievement of the mission'.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 15.



Figure 2.19. Min Yeong-hwan in his Western Uniform, c. 1904 (Source: Willard Dickerman Straight and Early U.S.-Korea Diplomatic Relations, Cornell University Library)

Soon after his return from Russia, Min Yeong-hwan had an interview for the *Independent* newspaper (獨立新聞). He gave a favourable impression to the interviewer, Seo Jae-pil (徐載弼, 1864–1951), the newspaper’s founder. The interview appeared in the newspaper in English on 10 November 1896:

The representative of *The Independent* has had an interview with Mr. Min Yung Whan [Min Yeong-hwan], who has just returned from his mission to Russia. Mr. Min has become a new man altogether, judging from his conversation with the interviewer. His trip through America and his four-month sojourn in Europe have given him an entirely new idea of the world. He says ‘Before I went abroad, I had heard a great deal of the wonderful things of Europe and America through those who have travelled in these places, but I will be frank with you, and tell you that I did not believe all that they told me. Now, after I have seen them for myself, I rather think that these travellers did not tell me half of the wonders that are existing in these countries. I firmly believe that energy and science can accomplish many things that unscientific men have never even dreamed [...] ‘Then so

you fully realize the necessity of introducing reforms in your Government.’  
‘Not only the necessity of introducing them, but I am willing to do all I can  
for the accomplishment of them.’<sup>90</sup>

As noted by Michael Finch, the interview provides an invaluable account of how Min’s travels to the West affected his views and why he was subsequently to become increasingly identified with the Independence Club and the movement for reform and modernisation in Seoul.<sup>91</sup> Further, it reflects his individual determination and rationale of his change into the Western style, and his view and reaction to Korean and Western costume through personal experiences during the transitional period. In this regard, even though the sartorial edicts had been promulgated in Korean government since 1884, the actual changes of one’s dress and appearance occurred in an individual level – how one experienced and perceived the modern, and Western modernity in Min’s case, and the Western style meant to the individual – throughout the late nineteenth century. Thus it can be argued that the shift of Korean’s wearing dress between *hanbok* and *yangbok* styles was much more intricate rather than positioned as a simple binary opposition.

### **3. Transitional Traits of Sartorial Encounters and Dress Change as Emerging Modernities in Korea: Cross-dressing, Women’s Dress Reform, Hybridity of *Hanbok*, National State Symbol, Nuanced Visual and Modern Surroundings**

Since the opening of Korea to neighbouring and Western countries, it brought out various nuanced aspects of the sartorial encounters and dress change, reflecting transitional characteristics along with emerging local modernities in Korea. In specific, increased encounters between Westerners, missionaries and Koreans provided some

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<sup>90</sup> *The Independent*, 10 November 1896.

<sup>91</sup> Michael Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan*, p. 15.



opportunities of cross-dressing to Westerners and familiarity of Western dress to Koreans. During the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period, unlike the men's case, women's dress reform emerged from the people through modern schools and print media, by continuing the *hanbok* form but with modernisation of the dress and adapting Western accessories. The modernisation of Korean dress also featured the hybrid nature in which Western elements mixed with Korean dress. Further, court officials' reformed Western-style uniform retained modern Korean symbols designed to represent the Korean Empire. Emerging modernity during the period entailed modern infrastructure such as electric trams and visual media of photography in Korea. While they influenced how Korean people perceived the new style, readings of photographic images on dressed subjects such as Emperor Sunjong were not straightforward, but rather nuanced, opening multiple interpretations, especially since the Japanese protectorate over Korea began in 1905.

### ***3.1. Westerners and Missionaries' Wearing of Korean Dress***

Along with the adoption of Western-style dress by Koreans, Westerners were also found dressing in Korean style. Foreigners' transcultural experience of wearing Korean clothing temporarily can be observed as a transitional state around the turn of the twentieth century. The German national Paul Georg von Möllendorff (1847–1901) was the first official Western adviser to the Korean government, from 1882 to 1885 (Figure 2.20). His entrance to the Joseon government was also recorded in Hwang Hyeon (黃玹, 1855–1910)'s *Maecheon yarok* (梅泉野錄), which includes details such as Möllendorff's Korean name, Mok Induk (穆麟德), notes about how his good work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade was favoured by King Gojong, and a description of his wearing traditional official uniform when attending government meetings.<sup>92</sup> Isabella Bishop also recorded her travelling outfit as mixed with Korean

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<sup>92</sup> Hwang Hyeon, *Maecheon yarok* [Maecheon's Unofficial Records], in trans. by Heo Gyeong-jin, 2006 [1864-1910], p. 92. Also note his record about the increasing numbers of Western officials in the court (Ibid., pp. 115-117).

shoes in her book: ‘For the benefit of future travellers I will mention that my equipment consisted of a camp-bed and bedding, [...] Warm winter clothing, a Japanese *kurumaya*’s hat (the best of all travelling hats), and Korean string shoes completed my outfit, and I never needed anything I had not got!’<sup>93</sup>



Figure 2.20. Möllendorff in Traditional Korean Civil Official Uniform (Source: Hwang Hyeon, in trans. by Heo Gyeong-jin, 2006, p. 116)

As a growing number of Westerners arrived in Korea, and through Korean contact with Western legations and communities, it was increasingly common for Koreans to view Western people and their foreign styles in certain districts of the capital. For instance, Figure 2.21 shows American Miss Alice Roosevelt (Alice Lee Roosevelt Longworth, 1884–1980)’s visit to Korea in 1905 and the party held in the United States legation in Seoul. Through these international communities, their families and members of non-Korean diplomatic missions residing in Korea, Western customs and different appearances were observable and open to some Koreans involved in these groups.

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<sup>93</sup> Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, p. 79.



Figure 2.21. Miss Alice Roosevelt and her Party during their Visit to Korea, September 1905 (Source: Willard Dickerman Straight and Early U.S.-Korea Diplomatic Relations, Cornell University Library)

Such sartorial encounters between Korean and Western clothing through the wearers can be found closer in missionary groups arrived in Korea. Korean interpreters and tutors were the first point of contact to the missionaries and their families. As part of guiding Korean cultures and local lives, clothing became an intermediary role to understand each other's culture. Also, to Korean people, the presence and life of missionaries helped appeasing the unfamiliarity and wonder or even fear about Westerners, their culture as well as the Western attire. Figure 2.22 shows a 'group portrait of the first missionaries to Korea from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who were commonly known as Southern Presbyterians'.<sup>94</sup> The archival photo features one Korean man in *hanbok* attire of *durumagi* and American missionaries in their Western garb, and further records:

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<sup>94</sup> The Korea Society, *Missionary Photography in Korea: Encountering the West through Christianity*, 2009, p. 70.

The Southern Presbyterians opened their mission station in November 1892. In agreement with the other missions, they chose to begin their evangelical work in Chōlla Province. They are pictured in front of one of their properties. Beginning from the top row, left to right, are: Mrs. William M. Junkin; Mrs. William D. Reynolds; an unidentified Korean language teacher; Lewis Tate; William M. Junkin and a child who died in infancy; William D. Reynolds; Mattie Tate; and Linnie Davis, who later became Mrs. William B. Harrison.<sup>95</sup>



Figure 2.22. ‘Pioneers of the Southern Presbyterian Mission, Chōlla Province, 1892’ (Source: Collection of the Presbyterian Historical Society, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 70)

Through this closer relationship in missionary communities, cultural exchange and Western missionaries’ work and understanding of Korean culture and society resulted in mutual benefits and growing local modernity in Korea. Donald Clark states that ‘the “triad” of missionary work – evangelism, education, and medicine – contributed to dramatic social change in the first half of the twentieth century’, and it means the ‘adaptations in both directions – of Koreans to modern things and of Western missionaries to the Korean environment’.<sup>96</sup> In Figure 2.23, American

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Donald N. Clark, ‘Introduction’, in *Ibid.*, p. 6.

missionary Horace H. Underwood, his wife Ethel, and their son, Horace G. Underwood II, modelled Korean clothing for their American relatives, while they were home on leave in Massachusetts.<sup>97</sup> Four generations of the Underwood family are well known for being associated with Yonsei University founded in 1885 in Korea, and according to the photo record, missionaries sometimes dressed in traditional Korean attire when they visited American churches to raise funds for their activities in Korea.<sup>98</sup>



Figure 2.23. ‘Underwood Family in Korean Attire, Pittsfield, MA, 1923’ (Source: Underwood Collection, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 78)

As such, with the inflow of Westerners and missionaries during the Open Port period of Korea, clothing was situated as one of the key items of each culture, helping

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

the understanding on both sides of the encounter. Korean dress was used and experienced through the lives of Western people in Korea that can be seen as cultural cross-dressing in given contexts, while Koreans also experienced Western dress through them and became open to the Western attire, which gradually led to modern ways of Korean's dress change and sartorial practice.

### **3.2. Women's Dress Reform**

One of the important contributions that the Western missionary work brought to Korean society was women's education. In this new setting from which women's dress also benefitted in terms of modernisation, female *hanbok* began to be reformed – notably changed into longer *jeogori* and shorter *chima* – mainly via schools and missionary institutions, emerged in the late nineteenth-century Korea. Baejae School (培材學堂) was established in 1885 with American missionary Henry Gerhard Appenzeller (1858–1902)'s support, and as in 1908, 25 schools had been formed, among which 14 were women's schools.<sup>99</sup> Within the curriculum, clothing and textile-related subjects were taught to the female students. Ewha School (梨花學堂) was set up in 1886 by American female missionary Mary Scranton (1832–1909). It became the first school to launch a school uniform: scarlet *jeogori* and *chima* in *hanbok* style made of cotton from Russia (left one in the back row of Figure 2.24).<sup>100</sup> As same colour combinations of jacket and skirt in *hanbok* were uncommon at that time, the school uniform drew people's attention. Supposedly, the choice of using the same colour for both parts of the uniform was purposeful, and later different colour combinations were used (the rest of three uniforms in the back row of Figure 2.24 used until the colonial period).

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<sup>99</sup> Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, p. 75.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.



Figure 2.24. Change of Uniforms at Ewha School (from left to right, and back to front row) (Source: Ewha Girls' High School Museum)

Other women's schools such as Baehwa (培花) and Hanseong (漢城) also used reformed *hanbok* jackets and skirts for their students' uniforms. The first Western-style uniform was adopted at Sookmyung School (淑明學院, initially named as Myungsin 明新) in 1907. A one-piece style dress with a bonnet and Western shoes was the *yangjang* uniform (Figure 2.25). However, this changed into *hanbok*-style uniform – white *jeogori* and black *chima* – after 3 years (Figure 2.26), as parents were reluctant to have their daughters wear the Western uniform, which gave them the appearance of what was called a 'Western ghost'.<sup>101</sup> Families who could support their daughters' education were a relatively affluent and enlightened group as compared to the other Korean social classes at that time. The redesigned and well-turned-out female students' uniform in *hanbok* was often desired by other young girls, along the line of their modern learning, and these uniforms were regarded as a symbolic figure of the reform movement through schools and women's modern education.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 79.



Figure 2.25. Western-style *Yangjang* Uniform at Sookmyung School, 1907–1910 (Source: Sookmyung Women’s University, 2007, p. 60)



Figure 2.26. Korean-style *Hanbok* Summer Uniform at Sookmyung School, 1910–1931 (Source: Sookmyung Women’s University, 2007, p. 61)



Women's dress reform was also discussed and assisted by newly emerged print media such as newspapers during the 1900s. The main issue in the reform of women's *hanbok* was the abolition of women's covering (*jangot* or *sseugae chima*) as shown in the Figure 2.5 and the lengthening of *jeogori*. For example, *Jeguk* newspaper (帝國新聞), on 31 May 1906, identified the problem of *hanbok jeogori* as too short causing female wearers' body part exposed; and explained the reason for women's wearing of *yangbok* or Japanese costume was to avoid the inconvenience.<sup>102</sup> It also hinted at modern-minded women awaited any edict for reform of women's *hanbok* from the Korean government.<sup>103</sup> Such a consensus on women's *hanbok* reform was circulated through the modern media and practiced through modern schools and institutions as mentioned before.

Discarding the coverings, women needed something to conceal their faces. Western-style goods such as umbrellas and parasols were alternatively adopted and they became fashionable items for the groups that could afford them, as shown in Figure 2.27 of Imperial Lady Eom (純獻皇貴妃 嚴氏, 1854–1911). By the Japanese Governor-General's report, imports of umbrellas reached 13,405 *won* among the total trade imports of 908,245 *won* at Busan in 1911.<sup>104</sup> This indicates that Korean women were being increasingly freed from traditional coverings and reformed of their old-style appearances. Yet, it is noteworthy that those modernisation efforts of Korean women's appearance did not mean abandoning the Korean *hanbok* at once.

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<sup>102</sup> *Jeguk sinmun*, 31 May 1906, '남자도 수족 이외에 살이 보이면 체면을 잃었다고 하는데 하물며 여자이겠는가. 여자의 저고리는 소매만 있고 길이가 없어서 아무리 단속해도 허리가 보이므로 정부에서 의복 제도 반포하기를 기다릴 수 없어 일본여자의 복식이나 양복을 입으니 그 여자들이 외국 복식을 좋아서 입는 것이 아니라 우리 옷으로는 무엇을 쓰던지 타지 않고는 나갈 수 없어서 값이 비싸고 법 밖의 일이 부득이 행한다.'

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Report of Governor-General of Korea [朝鮮總督府官報], 20 May 1911.



Figure 2.27. Imperial Lady Eom in Western Dress (Gibson girl style) with a Parasol, c. 1907 (Source: Yu Song-ok, p. 366)

For instance, in Figure 2.27, Imperial Lady Eom dressed in Western style posed at court in circa 1907. Alongside the 1895 Eulmi reform, women from royal families and aristocratic circles began appearing in Western style. This is often known as the Gibson girl style, derived from the West, intended to project a tall and slender figure, with ample bosom, hips and bottom, having an exaggerated S-curve torso shape with emphasised shoulders, and a pompadour hairstyle. Yet, in other occasions and photographs, ladies in the palace more often appeared in Korean *hanbok* style. Figure 2.28 shows Imperial Lady Eom's another photograph, dressed in a full ceremonial costume called *wonsam* at this time. Around the turn of the twentieth century, unlike the men and court officials' case of uniform reform, certain upper class women's dual appearance either in *yangbok* or *hanbok* style did not mean their existing sartorial practice completely changed into Western style.



Figure 2.28. Imperial Lady Eom in Korean Ceremonial Dress (*Wonsam*), c. 1904–1907 (Source: National Palace Museum of Korea)

Even, women who lived and worked closely with Western missionaries are found that they continued their Korean-style appearance, but having modifications of *hanbok* in the trend of women's dress reform. Figure 2.29 shows a Korean nanny with a missionary baby (Horace Grant Underwood II, 1917–2004); according to the record 'missionary children typically were tended during the day by a Korean nanny, known in the missionaries' parlance as *amah*, who usually became a surrogate mother'.<sup>105</sup> The nanny's *hanbok* jacket can be noticeable that it was plainly made, but with rather conveniently short and narrow sleeves, compared to the ceremonial dress in Figure 2.28. Admitting clearly different two women's social positions and occasions, the nanny's dress reflects how women's *hanbok* can be modernised to suit the wearer's work and living, here the simplified cut of sleeves in the *jeogori* was well fit for the nanny's daily job with the Underwood family.

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<sup>105</sup> The Korea Society, *Missionary Photography in Korea*, 2009, p. 80.



Figure 2.29. 'A Missionary Child and his Korean Nanny, 1918' (Source: Underwood Collection, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 81)

### ***3.3. A Transitional State and Hybridity of Hanbok***

Modernisation of Korean dress entailed a transitional stage in the process of change. Western goods became available in Korea throughout the Open Port era, and this led to some degree of hybridity in Korean dress by encountering with Western elements. Isabella Bishop recorded in her book various Western materials sold in the market in Pyeongyang, including 'shirtings of Japanese and English make, Victoria lawns, hempen cloth, [and] Turkey-red cottons'.<sup>106</sup> The first advertisement also shows how new Western materials of dress and textiles came into Korea (Figure 2.30). The advertisement was titled *Deoksang sechang yanghaeng gobaek* (德商世昌洋行告白, Avowal of the trader in German goods, Sechang Company), in *Hanseong Jubo* (漢城週報) on Vol. 4, 22 February 1886.<sup>107</sup> The advertiser, Sechang Company, was

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<sup>106</sup> For further detail, see Isabella Lucy Bird Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*, Vol. 2, Chapter XXVI, 'From Song-do to Phyang-yang', pp. 104-108.

<sup>107</sup> Ma Jeong-mi, 'Hanguk geundae inswae gwanggoreul tonghae bon geundaeseonggwa ilsangseong' [Modernity and Everydayness Examined through Korean Modern Print

the first German trader established in Jemulpo, Incheon, in 1884 and who sold various Western goods in exchange for Korean goods. The advertisement announced the Sechang Company's interest in buying all types of Korean goods, including animal skins and leathers, while selling intriguing Western products, including Western buttons, various colours of Western textiles, Western fabrics, dyed clothing, bright pigments, Western needles and threads. Since then, it is known that the needles and dyeing pigments from the Sechang had been popular until the 1950s.

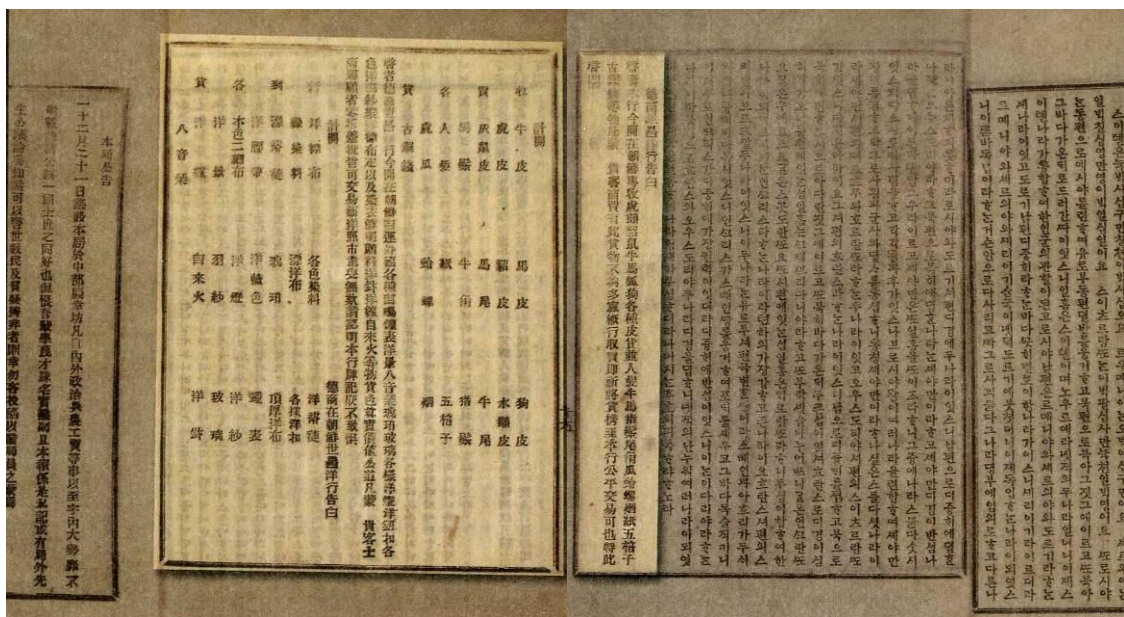


Figure 2.30. The First Advertisement by Sechang Company (Source: Sin Yeon-su Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 18-19)

In addition to other uses, the buttons were desirable for making *joggi* or *baeja* (*hanbok* waistcoat). Through the encounter with Western *yangbok* and materials, the Western-style waistcoat was adapted in *hanbok* and favoured by men. In this sense, the *joggi* was a hybrid item, mixing elements of *yangbok* and *hanbok*, normally having five buttons at the front centre and Western-style pockets in the bodice, but made of *hanbok* fabric (Figure 2.31). As Korean *hanbok* traditionally had straps for fastening and no pockets in the upper and lower parts of the garments by carrying a detached

Advertisements], in Busan Modern History Museum, *Gwanggo, geurigo ilsang 1876-1945* [Advertisement and Daily Life 1876-1945], 2004, pp. 210-223.

pouch instead, these new buttons and pockets replaced the function and provided modern ways of use.



Figure 2.31. *Joggi* or *baeja* (Waistcoat of *Hanbok*) (Source: The National Folk Museum of Korea, 2003, p. 48)

In this regard, another example of hybridity can be seen in the replacement of traditional tie by Western buttons. In the picture taken by German missionary Norbert Weber in 1911 (Figure 2.32), we can see a boy's overcoat (*durumagi*) fastened by two buttons, instead of using the traditional fastening straps (*goreum*) which is used by other family members' upper garment *hanbok*. It seems that the boy was a student from one of the schools, which uniform had been reformed as a process of modernisation, and he posed by wearing his school uniform. This is an example of how the Western-style button supplanted the traditional way of fastening the *hanbok* coat. Further, this demonstrates that, rather than a clear change from *hanbok* to *yangbok*, the sartorial shift was characterised by hybridity, with parts of Western and Korean dress intermingling, and by a transitional state of coexistence between, for instance, the father's traditional topknot style and his son's modern short haircut, as observed in the Figure 2.32.

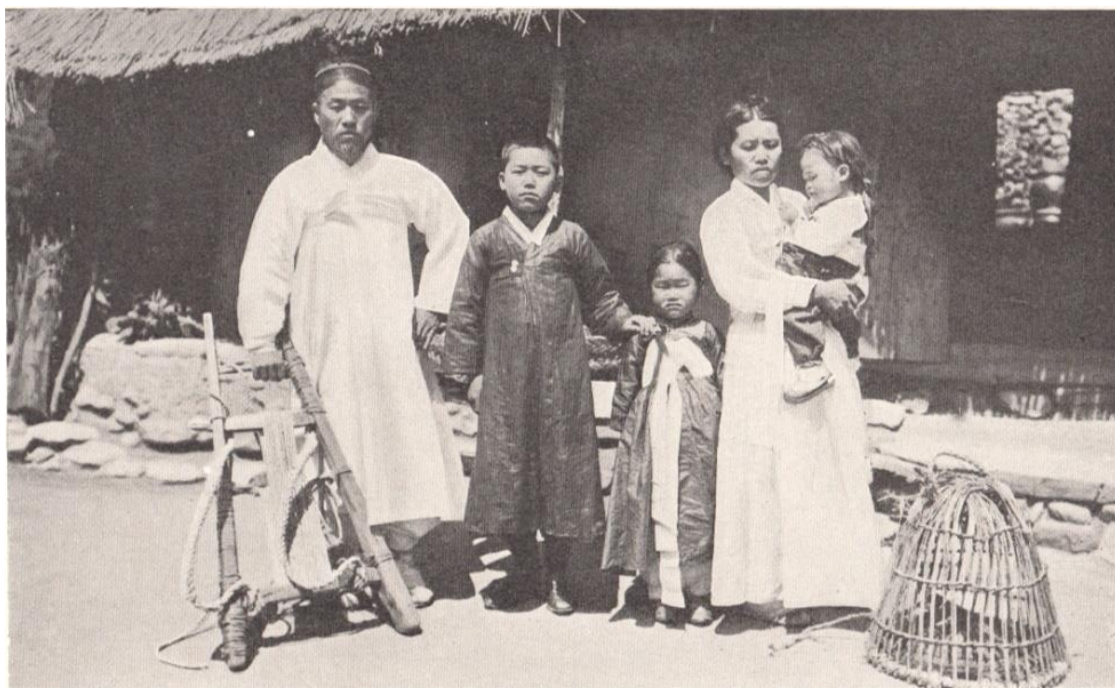


Figure 2.32. ‘Koreanische Familie’ [Korean family], 1911 (Source: Norbert Weber, 1915, p. 357)

### ***3.4. Manifestation of the Korean State in Western Uniforms***

Modernisation manifested in the court officials’ uniform reform was not only about adopting Western-style suits, but also Korean national state was pursued in its design. On the one hand, this can be seen as hybridity between Western uniform and Korean elements, yet on the other certain efforts were given to embody a modern national symbol in the new uniform.

First of all, as part of the inauguration of the Korean Empire, national visual symbols were established. These were designed in accordance with the modern system, to symbolise national identity visually, via diplomatic relations, and to unify the national people and raise the authority of the royal family. Of great importance was the design of the national flag (*taegeukgi*). With modern diplomatic relations established after Korean ports opened in 1876, the flag has officially been used since 1883, to keep pace with the international trend.<sup>108</sup> In Min Yeong-hwan’s mission to Russia, three

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<sup>108</sup> See Mok Soohyun, ‘Geundaegukgaeui gukgiraneun sigak munwha – gaehanggwa daehanjegukgi taegukgireul jungsimeuro’ [The Visual Culture of ‘National Flags’ of the

sealed national flags were also given and the Korean flag was flown for the first time in Moscow when the envoys arrived in 20 May 1896.<sup>109</sup> In addition, the motif of the national flag was used in the design of the medal that was awarded at the last day of the celebration on 7 June 1896 to the twenty-seven envoys who attended the Russian Emperor's coronation, as recorded in Min's journal:

I decided to invite all the envoys to award them with a decoration as this is the general custom. The medal is made of silver inscribed with our national flag (on the obverse is engraved in a circle 'The Founding Year of Kōnyang,' [Lustrous Inauguration, 1896–1897] and on the reverse, 'The Legation of Great Chosŏn') and was given out to twenty-seven people.<sup>110</sup>

As for clothing uniforms, the new Western-style officials' uniform was imbued with various modern national symbols to represent the Korean Empire. The *mugunghwa* (rose of Sharon) as a national flower was a notable symbolic pattern, embroidered with golden thread on the front bodice of the main ceremonial uniform (*daeryebok*); the number of flowers identified the wearer's rank (Figure 2.19). The uniforms of the civil officials followed the European style of embroidered swallow-tailed coat (*yeonmibok*) via the Japanese adoption, and comprised a bicorne hat, waistcoat, sword and sash decoration.<sup>111</sup>

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Modern Nations – based on the 'Taegeukgi'], Vol. 27, 2006, pp. 309-344.

<sup>109</sup> Min Yeong-hwan, *Haecheonchubeom*, in Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan*, '[30 March (Lunar date: 18/2)] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs [Yi Wan-yong] sent three national flags, one *injang* seal inscribed with the words 'The Seal of the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Chosŏn,' and one *tojang* seal inscribed with the words 'The Seal of the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Great Chosŏn' (p. 66); '[20 May (Lunar date: 8/4. Russian date: 8/5) Clear weather.] The train travelled 2,500 leagues, and at 3:00 P.M. we arrived at Moscow (Russia's southern capital). The Department of the Imperial Household had already prepared official lodgings in the city at 42 Pavarskaya Street in Troofnikovskiy ['the House of Mr. Holmsky, Troofnikovskiy Lane, Pavarskaya Street, No. 42, Moscow']. [...] We hung our national flag from the top of the house. It is more than 42,900 leagues across land and sea from the port of Inch'ŏn to here' (pp. 89-90).

<sup>110</sup> Min Yeong-hwan, *Haecheonchubeom*, in Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan*, p. 104.

<sup>111</sup> For further detail, see Lee Kyung-Mee, 'Daehanjegukgi seogusik mungwan daeryebok





Figure 2.33. Ceremonial Attire (*Daeryebok*) of Min Chul-hun (閔哲勳, 1856–1925), as 1st-1st Ranking Civil Official, 1901 (Source: The Museum of Korean Embroidery Collection, Yu Song-ok, 1998, p. 347)

For further detail, Figure 2.34 shows another civil official Park Gi-jong (朴琪淙, 1839–1907)’s main ceremonial attire and its details in a dressed mannequin form. As the 1st-2nd ranking civil official (文官勅任官) lower than Min Chul-hun in the Figure 2.33, Park’s *daeryebok* attire features the lower ranking symbol on the front bodice, which two full-size *mugunghwa* (instead of three in Min’s case) and three half-size *mugunghwa* (same with Min’s case) are embroidered in each panel. Introduced by the 1900 edict of civil officials’ uniform reform, this first Western-style uniform of the Korean Empire was made of black woollen fabric, lined with white silk fabric. Embracing the Western coat from, the rose of Sharon as the national symbol is used as a main motif, not only in the front bodice as identification of the wearer’s rank, but elaborately in the bicornet hat, cuffs, neckline and centre back, taking golden thread

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jedoui gaejeonggwa gukgajeongcheseong sangsil’ [A Study on the Revision and the Loss of National Identity of Western-styled Court Costume in the Korean Empire], 61/4, May 2011, pp. 103-116.

embroideries designed with the stem of the flower and the foliage in the button, as shown in Figure 2.34. Such details were employed to represent visual authority of the modern state, and they shifted from traditional motifs of *hanbok* uniforms. Thus this can be seen as the Korean Empire's modern effort was embodied through the court uniforms, projecting Korean or local design identity onto the Western clothing.



Figure 2.34. Ceremonial Attire (*Daeryebok*) of Park Gi-jong (朴琪淙, 1839–1907), as 1st-2nd Ranking Civil Official (Source: Busan Museum Collection, National Palace Museum of Korea, 2010, pp. 166-167)

With regard to military uniforms, pear blossoms and the *mugunghwa* were used for the patterns of the cap badges, shoulder straps and buttons as the modern-style decoration. Figure 2.35 shows Emperor Sunjong (純宗, 1874–1926, r. 1907–1910)'s wearing of the main ceremonial military uniform, and at the end of the sleeves, the nine 人-shaped line decoration of golden thread represents the highest rank of the military organisation. Next to him, the picture shows the shoulder straps of this

military uniform, decorated with the national flag symbol and pear blossoms in golden thread.<sup>112</sup> Emperor Sunjong expressed his imperial authority by wearing this military uniform of the highest rank, following the custom of other imperial states during the time. Despite his brief reign until the annexation of Korea, Sunjong's Western attire in military uniform was meant to represent his supreme power capable of controlling the military as Korean emperor.

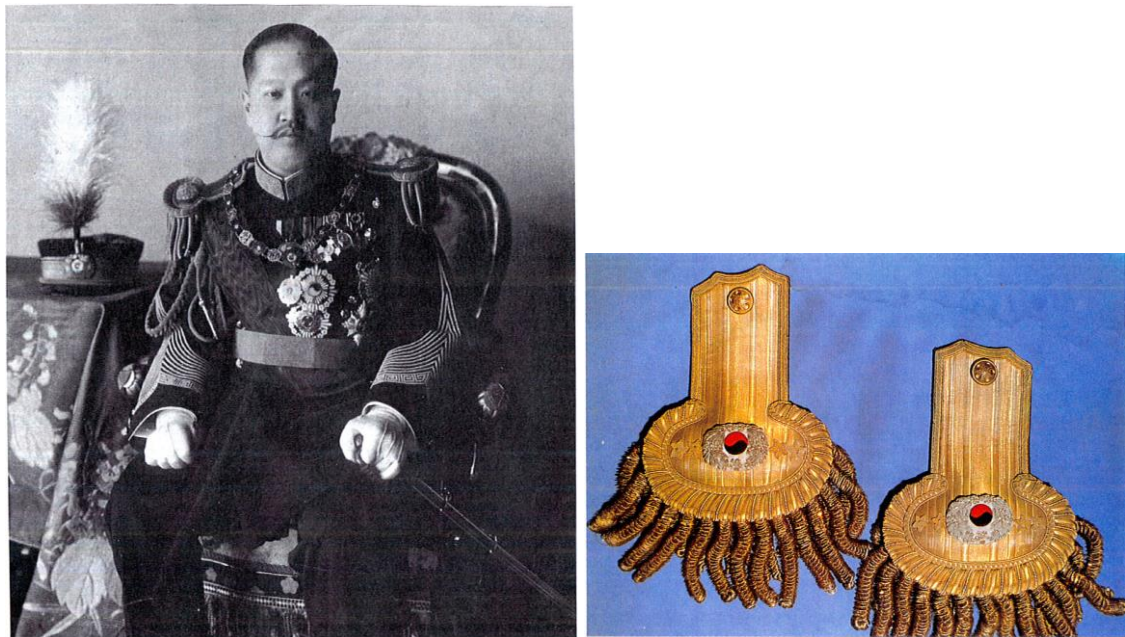


Figure 2.35. Emperor Sunjong in Main Ceremonial Military Uniform, and Shoulder Straps (Source: Yu Song-ok, 1998, p. 356-357)

Compared with Sunjong's military uniform, Figure 2.36 is Min Yeong-hwan's main ceremonial military uniform. In the sleeves of his uniform, the eight 人-shaped line decoration (instead of nine in Sunjong's case) indicates his rank as Lieutenant-General (陸軍副將). Lined with red fabric in the collar, belt, cuffs and side seams of trousers, this stand-up collar jacket is made by using the princess line cut to give the wearer more ease for movement, which can be seen in the back bodice. With golden thread work, the decoration motif is based on the pear blossoms pattern (梨花紋) symbolising the imperial family and the Korean Empire. In the detail images, this pattern can be found on the top of the hat and the shoulder strap by the thread work.

<sup>112</sup> For further detail, see Yu Song-ok, *Hanguk boksiksa*, pp. 345-360.

Following the 1897 edict on military uniform reform, this uniform design was intended to suit the inauguration of the Korean Empire, showcasing the modern state with a modernised military force.



Figure 2.36. Main Ceremonial Military Uniform of Min Yeong-hwan as Lieutenant-General (Source: Korea University Museum Collection, National Palace Museum of Korea, 2010, pp. 169)

As shown by these Figures, the new state symbols of Korea decorated Western-style uniforms, which can be understood as a hybrid form and/or modern efforts of Korean design in detail. When adopting the Western uniform, something Korean was needed to detail the uniform and represent the new state. The encounter and change thus required new adaptation of costume symbols and codes for wearers and viewers alike, leading to a significant shift in Korean dress practice towards the Western style in the vernacular context.

### ***3.5. Nuanced Conditions for Sartorial Change through Modern Surroundings and Photographs***

Emerging modernity in surroundings of everyday life in Korea provided conditions of sartorial change during the Korean Empire period. Unlike the sartorial change at court, there seems to have needed more time to catch up the changes of sartorial modernisation by common people in daily lives of Korea. Modernisation in Korea entailed new settings of infrastructure and visual media such as electric trams and photography, which in turn influenced Koreans' sartorial change in subtle and nuanced ways, alongside the Japanese protectorate began in 1905.

As for one of the important modern surroundings, the tram system as a means of new transportation arrived in Korea.<sup>113</sup> Other than the Western-style uniforms directly adopted as a modern scene, the Korean Empire period brought all kinds of new imported surroundings and modern infrastructures to settle in the capital, which provided the space for heterogeneity between the old and new. This provided indirect and necessary conditions for the new style to spread, allowing gazes of other people's look in the new spatial environment.

Figure 2.37 shows a photograph of the tram, first built in Seoul, 1899, taken from *Korea* written by Angus Hamilton.<sup>114</sup> The photographer captured a scene of the modernisation in Korea, with this modern transport mode bearing the national symbol (*taegeuk*), and carrying passengers of mixed attire, both Korean and Western styles. There was coexistence between the old and new in this transitional period: uniformed people and Western-style dressed tram assistants are depicted in the picture, alongside

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<sup>113</sup> See Choe In-yeong, 'Dongdaemun bak jeonchawi doipgwa yeokhal' [The Introduction and Role of the Electric Tram in the Outer Area of Dongdaemun], *Seoulhak yeongu*, Vol. 37, 2009, pp. 83-115.

<sup>114</sup> Angus Hamilton, *Korea*, with Map and Illustrations, 1904. He describes about foreign influence and transformation of the capital in Chapter III. pp. 23-40.

traditional-style wearing men with topknots, brimmed hats (*gat*) and white robes (*durumagi*), and even a short haired boy at the front left.

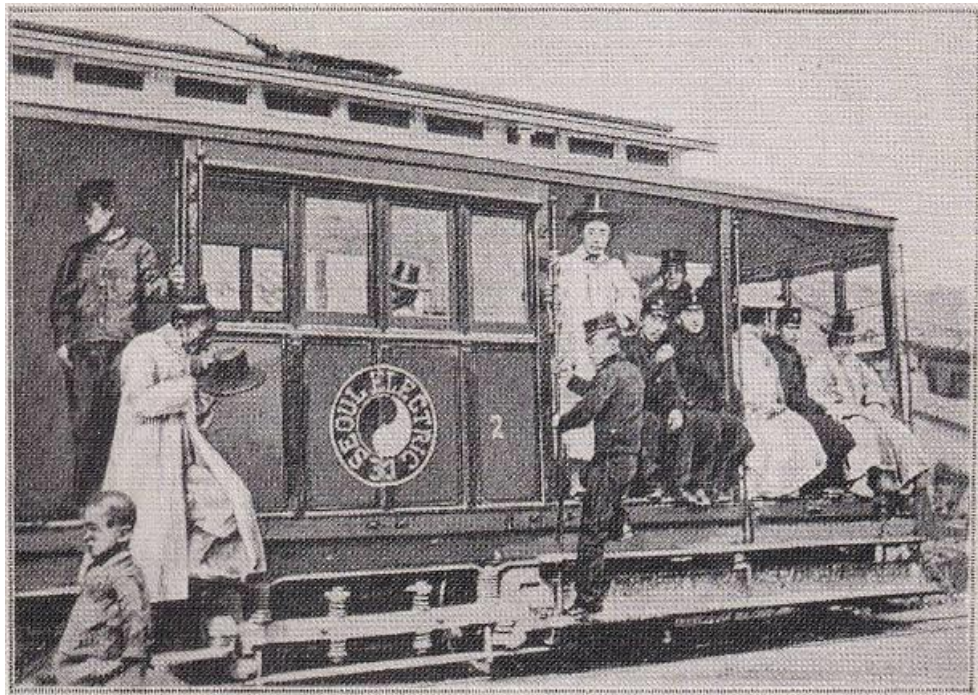


Figure 2.37. Scene of Tram Run in Seoul, Korean Empire, May 1899 (Source: Hamilton, in *Wolganmisul* [Monthly Art Magazine], No. 309, October 2010, p. 188)

This coexistence of people in Western and Korean attire was a feature of the transitional process whereby society was being modernised; dress, closely attached to the body, seemed to be relatively reluctant to change than did Koreans in embracing Western technology such as the electric trams at the time. Thus, just as the emerging atmosphere was one of modernity, so people remained attached to other traditional ways, creating a hybrid between the new and old.

However, simultaneously, the modern setting gradually influenced people more willing to consider dress change. Increasing exposure to the Western style through new surroundings, and a desire to emulate others, resulted in a stage that different Western style of clothing coming into people's mind, individuals amenable to change into the new appearance. As captured in the photograph above, sitting in a tram and viewing different styles of people inside or outside the cabin was a new experience for the passengers in the modernising era. People from the streets could also view the

passengers in the tram. Given the new visual space for gazing each other, this provided Koreans with another opportunity to observe others' appearances, causing people in the city to become aware of the changing of others' clothing and hair styles, and in turn influencing their own stance regarding the appearance change.

With regard to another significant visuality in the new modern surroundings that influenced sartorial change, was the use of photography. Photographic images as a modern technology began to be produced and consumed throughout the Open Port era; these projected the subject's state in terms of appearance by a means of the new medium.<sup>115</sup> Circulation and use of such images reflected the will of the owner, and influenced viewers' attitudes on sartorial change.

For instance, Min Yeong-hwan's journal recorded that King Gojong used his portrait photograph in an active way, presenting it to foreign delegates as the good will of custom. Recipients and viewers in return valued it with honour. When Min and his group were passing by Tokyo on 16 April 1896, they received an invitation from the Russian *chargé d'affaires*, Alexis de Speyer, in Tokyo. Speyer had briefly been the *chargé d'affaires* in Seoul, January 1896, under the influence of Karl Ivanovich Waeber, the Russian Consul-General and *chargé d'affaires* in Seoul (1885–1896).<sup>116</sup> Min records Speyer's invitation:

He sent a carriage inviting our party to dinner. At 7:00 A.M. we went to the magnificent legation. The wine and food was fine and clean, and Speyer and his wife treated us extremely sincerely. When Speyer was at our capital, His Majesty the King bestowed on him a photograph of himself, and Speyer had put it in a place of honour. Our party gazed upon it reverently and was sincerely delighted.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> See Gwon Haeng-ga, 'Geundaejeok sigakchejeui hyeongseonggwajeong' [The Constitution of Modern Visuality in Korea], *Hanguk geunhyeondae misulsahak*, Vol. 26, 2013, pp. 195-228.

<sup>116</sup> See Finch, *Min Yŏnghwan*, footnote, p. 75.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

In addition, when returned to Korea, Min delivered the Russian Emperor's photograph to King Gojong after having received it at the Alexander Palace, where an audience was held to hear the Russian Emperor's reply to King Gojong's personal letter and credential letter sometime after the coronation.<sup>118</sup> This practice of granting and sharing photographs of self-images in costume was conducted as a means of projecting and circulating one's dignity in the diplomatic context.

Conversely, with a discursive nature of photographic images, they were also often used as a propaganda tool, or at least interpreted in that way, in representing dressed subjects shown in the photographs. By the Eulsa Treaty of Protection, signed on 17 November 1905, the Korean Empire became Japan's protectorate. Itō Hirobumi (伊藤博文, 1841–1909) became the first Resident-General of Korea on 21 December 1905. He urged Emperor Gojong to abdicate in 1907 in favour of Gojong's son Emperor Sunjong. Figure 2.38 is a photograph from the album recording Emperor Sunjong's imperial progresses to north-west Korea (西北巡幸), accompanied by Itō Hirobumi, from 27 January to 3 February 1909. The scene features officials in full Western-style uniform, with Emperor Sunjong (signalled by a black arrow) walking with Itō Hirobumi (on his right) at the train station of Jeongju, Pyeonganbuk-do (North Pyeongan province).

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 124. '[14 July (Lunar date: 4/6. Russian date: 2/7) Clear weather.] The emperor said that from now on the good friendship between our two countries would become close and that we would together enjoy the happiness of peace and prosperity without end. He asked me to return and completely report his sincere feelings to His Majesty the King. Then he gave me a photograph of himself and told me to present it to His Majesty on his behalf.'





Figure 2.38. Imperial Progresses to North-West Korea (西北巡幸), 31 January 1909 (Source: National Palace Museum of Korea)

Such an image circulated through the media of that time seems to have been read in two ways. It is said that the event was planned to appease Korea's anti-Japanese sentiments during the protectorate period (1905–1910).<sup>119</sup> Hanging two empire's flags together and showing the modern appearances of Emperor Sunjong and the government officials, this photograph may have been used to legitimise the Japanese protectorate regime and to promote the modern style to assuage the unpopularity of the reform on cutting topknots. On the other hand, to Korean viewers of the image, it is said that the scene would have inspired patriotism.<sup>120</sup> Often associated with Japanese colonial discourse, such a reading of the image relates to Japanese control over the Korean ruler, resulting in a passive explanation of downtrodden Korea.

However, it can be argued that a more nuanced and alternative reading on the image is also possible. Focusing on the costumes represented, the photograph can be served as a neutral tool to trace the modern dress practice occurring at that time. Emperor Sunjong's Western-style large cloak is distinct, befitting his role. Next to him, Itō Hirobumi's darker coloured coat, trimmed with fur at the neck and lapel, reflects his authority in the regime as well, and seems practical for the northern Korean winter

<sup>119</sup> See Kim, Eugene C. I. 'Japanese Rule in Korea (1905–1910): A Case Study', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 106, No. 1, 1962, pp. 53-59.

<sup>120</sup> See Lee Wang-mu, 'Daehanjegukgi sunjongui seosunhaeng yeongu' [A Study on Sunjong's West Imperial Progresses during the Korean Empire Period], *Dongbuga yeoksa nonchong*, Vol. 31, 2011, pp. 285-318.

season of January. Most of the officials' ceremonial uniforms in Western style also have a frock coat with a golden-appearing decoration on the front, which in turn proves the court officials' Western-style uniform change since the edict of 1900. Furthermore, a careful observation allows us to find one seemingly provincial official dressed in a traditional Korean-style costume (*jobok*) that previously used for major ceremonies including an audience with the king, standing on the left under the two flags crossed (signalled by a red arrow). The scene captured in the photograph asks us for a nuanced reading on the state of coexistence about the officials' uniforms, in which the dress reform of the central government had not fully reached to the local government officials yet in 1909.

Drawing on the subject of the image and viewers as autonomous agency embracing Western styles, the Figure 2.38 can also be read as an introduction to the new modern image of the Korean emperor. The Western-style appearance of Sunjong in this photograph may have elicited a negative response towards his Western attire as implying the coloniser's interference. Yet, for others, the spectacle of the new Western style by the emperor and officials would have brought forth their admiration for the modern sartorial change. In this regard, the image opens up more varied interpretations, functioning as an early introduction to, and for the wider circulation of, the wearing of Western clothing; diffusing from the emperor since the 1900 edict, to officials and aristocrats, and further to the people in modern mind who could afford to do the sartorial change into Western style.

Thus, the modernity practiced in men's appearance was initiated from above, and diffused downwards, while simultaneously intertwining with the Japanese influences. With a dual value, images of the modern attire were regarded as colonial propaganda by some, but also functioned as an introduction of the new Western-style modern appearance. While the recurrence of the images of Western style produced by the Japanese engendered hostility towards the protectorate state politically, the new mode gradually became the norm for the upper classes sartorially. Korean people who

viewed the picture may have reflexively considered their own appearance, according to their political stance or sentiment on the current circumstances. While this begs the question of how to read the images produced by the Japanese colonialists, it seems valid that such visual records provide the means by which to trace how people dressed in the contested and transitional time, allowing our further nuanced interpretations.

### **CHAPTER 3. Colonial Display and Constructing Sartorial Tradition of *Hanbok*: The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 and Other Exhibitionary Spaces, with Nuanced Readings**

Early in Japan's official colonial rule over Korea, the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition was an effective opportunity to promote Japan's power worldwide, alongside that of Imperial Britain. The Exhibition then comes under scrutiny in this chapter due to the fact that rigorous preparation for and creation of the Exhibition by the Meiji government (1868–1912) took place in the very year of the annexation of 1910 outside Korea.<sup>1</sup> Exhibiting Japan's new colonies at the metropolis of allied Imperial Britain to the Western world could be seen as a way of legitimising Imperial Japanese power over the colonies in the Asia. For Korea, it was the first exhibitionary occasion for the country to be introduced in Britain after the Korea-Britain Treaty (朝英修好通商條約) in 1883, however it failed to set up its own national image in its own light. Japanese colonial discourse impinged upon the exhibited artefacts including clothing and textiles, and sartorial tradition of *hanbok* as a result, through imperial representations at the international exposition in London, and in other exhibitionary spaces within Korea during the colonial period.

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<sup>1</sup> In her seminal book on the fair, *The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910: Gateway to the Island Empire of the East* (1999), Ayako Hotta-Lister includes Appendix A, which deals with Japan's previous participation in national and international exhibitions before the 1910 Exhibition, showing how the Meiji government placed great importance on exhibitions to promote Japan's development. For the 1910 Exhibition, a great commitment was made both by the Japanese government and the private sector, in terms of energy, funds, manpower and enthusiasm (pp. 7-8). In fact, Appendix B in the same book highlights the effort that went into the 1910 Exhibition by highlighting the expenditure (2,080,000 *yen*). The high cost clearly distinguishes it from Japanese participation in other international exhibitions following the Vienna International Exhibition of 1873 (pp. 221-222).

It is then questionable whether connotations of Korean sartorial tradition, in the context of colonial Korea, lie in the positive or negative, and whether they can be ironic to some extent. Perhaps the fraught concept of tradition can be neutral, but could have been used differently depending on the user's intentions. Identifying who created or fixated on the tradition to certain ends can be significant in this sense. Yet, it is also worth exploring the colonised group's reality, response or reaction to the coloniser's use of tradition, for this can open multifaceted ways of interpreting sartorial objects and images with discussion on the contested traditions.

Such tradition, in a social context, are often contrasted with modernity, particularly in terms of the dichotomy generally associated with a linear model of social change, in which societies progress from being traditional to being modern.<sup>2</sup> Japan would claim its new regime developed traditional Korea into modern Korea, which often created a discourse contrasting modernised Japan with traditional Korea. Japan's colonial projects in the field of material and visual culture, through exhibitions, museum practice and folklore studies, provided Koreans with experiences of modernity to some extent, but Korea's traditions often became positioned as the 'Other' and the antithesis of modern culture. Modernity was associated with the West, as the Japanese modern movement had been based on imported Western modernity, and this in turn influenced, and was refracted in, Korea later.

The postcolonial concept of 'colonial modernity' in Korea comes in useful here. The discussion of modernity in colonial Korea has had a tendency to juxtapose Japan on the one hand as a brutal or modernised coloniser, and Korea as a victim or autonomous nation that resisted the influence of Japanese control on the other. However, as is often the case, the approach based on an overly simplified and generalised dichotomy is usually counter-productive, and thus the emergence of a new perspective of colonial modernity in Korea that reaches beyond the views fixed by

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<sup>2</sup> Joseph R. Gusfield, 'Tradition and Modernity: Misplaced Polarities in the Study of Social Change', 72/4, January 1967, pp. 351-362.

Japanese colonialism and Korean nationalism is significant.<sup>3</sup> With this nuanced perspective, sartorial tradition formed under the colonial discourse can be deconstructed through alternative readings of tradition and modernity in relation to *hanbok* and *yangbok* in colonial modern Korea.

Concerning the chapter question of critically examining Japanese colonial power on display and constructing sartorial tradition of Korean dress through exhibitionary spaces, and finding a nuanced and postcolonial voice of traditional *hanbok* and its practice, this chapter approaches the issue in two parts.

In the first section, bringing the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 as a main case study, it will investigate how the Japanese authority displayed Korean clothing and textiles within which context of Korea at the 1910 Exhibition. This case will then be compared with two previous exhibitions that had been organised differently out of the colonial context. In the second section, it will examine in which way sartorial tradition of *hanbok* was constructed by the Japanese through domestic exhibitions and related fields within Korea, making a comparison with Japan's own display of its sartorial culture at the very Exhibition of 1910. Such sartorial tradition of *hanbok* will then be deconstructed by nuanced and alternative readings on Koreans' dress practice in context, with a postcolonial perspective of colonial modernity.

## **1. Colonial Display of Korea at the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910**

In 1910, following Korea becoming a Japanese protectorate in 1905,<sup>4</sup> Japanese colonial reign in Korea officially began with the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty

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<sup>3</sup> See the seminal works on colonial modernity in East Asian and Korean contexts: Tani E. Barlow, ed. *Formations of Colonial Modernity*, and Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*.

<sup>4</sup> The Japanese protectorate of Korea was formed by the 1905 Eulsa Treaty (乙巳條約), and Japan positioned herself to rule over Korea, since the subsequent defeat of Imperial Russia

signed on the 22nd of August and proclaimed seven days later. In the same year in London, the Japan-British Exhibition took place – the largest international exposition that the Empire of Japan had participated in to date, and the annexation was made during the opening period of the Exhibition. While the Exhibition was driven by Japan's wish to develop a more favourable public image in Great Britain following the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1905, following 1902), Korea was part of the displays alongside Taiwan and the Kwantung Leased Territory. This allowed Japan to demonstrate how it was following in Britain's footsteps as an imperial power in the East to improve the lives of the 'natives' in the colonies.

Due to the coincidence with the annexation of 1910, the Exhibition was the first time that Korean artefacts – including Korean clothing and textiles – were introduced and displayed in Britain by Japan, and consequently put in a colonial context. However, it is important to note that Korea's participation in international exhibitions prior to 1910 include the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, in 1893 and the Exposition Universelle, Paris, in 1900, both of which can be said to be free from the colonial context, and thus can be examined as comparative cases.<sup>5</sup> The representation and displays of Korean exhibits in 1910 were inevitably situated under the sphere of Japan's interest.

Ayako Hotta-Lister explains the lead up to the Exhibition between 1905 and 1910, and notes that the annexation of Korea taking place during the opening period of the Exhibition was an uncomfortable issue.<sup>6</sup> With imperialistic interest and political tension regarding Korea in Russia, China and Japan at the turn of the twentieth century, Japan was the power who finally entered Korea after the victories of the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05). This led to Korea formally becoming a Japanese protectorate in November 1905, which was made possible partly

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and the elimination of pro-Chinese factions within the Korean court began in the 1880s.

<sup>5</sup> For the details of the two exhibitions, see Kim Youngna, 'The First Encounter with the West: Korean Exhibits at the World Expositions', *20th Century Korean Art*, 2005, pp. 40-63.

<sup>6</sup> See Ayako Hotta-Lister, *Japan-British Exhibition*, p. 23.

by recognition on the part of the United States and Britain that Korea lay within Japan's interest.<sup>7</sup> Hotta-Lister also notes that, for Japan, the annexation of Korea was in motion by early 1909, before the Exhibition; by then, the collective opinion of the Japanese leaders was that the first Resident-General Itō Hirobumi's protectorate system was not working well and so a better solution had to be found.<sup>8</sup>

The section then devotes attention to the 1910 Exhibition as the first colonial display of Korea outside the peninsula. The events coinciding forces us to examine the Exhibition in terms of Korea-Japan relations that have been overlooked behind the two empires; how Korea was represented in a particular way at the international exhibition by the Japanese and how clothing and textile-related artefacts played a part in the colonial exhibitionary discourse. The subjugated display of Korean sartorial culture will then be compared to those of two previous exhibitions that Korea autonomously participated in Chicago of 1893 and in Paris of 1900.

### ***1.1. Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 in London***

The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 was held in the Great White City, Shepherd's Bush in London, from 14 May to 29 October 1910, attracting over 8 million visitors thanks to the Japanese Meiji government's three long years of effort and preparation (Figure 3.1). The aim of the Exhibition, clearly stated in the official catalogue, was to

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<sup>7</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24. Also, according to Donald Richie, with Japan's new standing as a military power, the Daily Telegraph was particularly congratulatory: 'Japan has now won her place as a Colonial Power', the main example being the Formosan Village. This island (now Taiwan) was said to have 'under Japanese government [been] transformed from a worthless haunt of savagery into a peaceful and prosperous land'. To be sure, there was some criticism when, right in the middle of the Exhibition, this same peaceful Japanese government annexed Korea. In general, however, the British approved of bellicose aims and enjoyed the signs of power (battleships, brass bands and the like) that were also a part of the Exhibition. (*The British Press and the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910*, '1910 Exhibition remembered', The Japan Times Online, Sunday, 1 July 2001, <http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/fb20010701dr.html>, Accessed on 27 September 2010.)

<sup>8</sup> See Ayako Hotta-Lister, *Japan-British Exhibition*, pp. 24-25.



cement the two great empires' political and commercial alliance in a way that had not been done before; their allies had in fact taken part in many International Exhibitions, in Melbourne in 1872 and in St. Louis in 1904, for example.<sup>9</sup> Also, at the banquet in honour of the Japanese Ambassador and to welcome the Commissioner-General of the Imperial Japanese Government, Mr Wada Hikojira, at the Hotel Cecil on 14 February 1910, the Japanese Ambassador said: 'It must serve as a substantial means of bringing still closer the two Island Empires of the East and West, and securing for them both much more important benefits than hitherto of a moral, intellectual, and material character.'<sup>10</sup> The two Island Empires of the Far East and West engaged with each other at the Japan-British or Anglo-Japanese Exhibition of 1910 in pursuit of their diplomatic and mercantile relations.



Figure 3.1. Poster of the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 (Source: author's photograph taken from the exhibition 'Japan in London: The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910' at Museum of Fulham Palace)

<sup>9</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxix.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. xxxi. Also, for more detail of the banquet, see Official Report, 1911, pp. 489-505.

Compared to the minimal British content, there were some 2,271 Japanese exhibitors. The Japanese display covered 242,700 square feet (22,550 m<sup>2</sup>), three times the space Japan occupied at the previous Paris Universal Exposition (Exposition Universelle) of 1900, not including an additional 222,877 square feet (20,706 m<sup>2</sup>) for two large Japanese gardens (Figure 3.2). The Exhibition place, known as the White City, had been established previously for the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908, covering 100 acres with 100 buildings painted white to protect them from the weather, which gave rise to the term ‘White City’. Imre Kiralfy (1845–1919) was the Commissioner-General of the 1910 Exhibition, who had also sat as the Director General of the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition at White City, after being the Director at the Balkan States Exhibition of 1907 in Earl’s Court. It was Imre Kiralfy and his committee who invited the Japanese Government to come to London in 1910 to show the world their manufacturing and crafts. He was motivated by his experience with the 1908 Exhibition, having observed the success of the Japanese displays at the 1907 Balkan States Exhibition where the Colony of Art Missionaries had invited Japan to take part and display their crafts, showing Japanese carpenters, frame makers, screen and basket makers, bronze workers, lantern painters and embroiderers from Kyoto.



Figure 3.2. ‘Bird’s eye view of the Japan-British Exhibition, Shepherd’s Bush, London, 1910’ (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 2)

In White City in 1910, most of the buildings remained unchanged from the Franco-British Exhibition; the Canadian Pavilion became the Wrestling Hall and Japanese gardens and floating islands were built along with Japanese-style buildings. The Formosa Hamlet with the Formosa Oolong Tea Room was constructed, as well as the Uji village and an Ainu home village. Each of the Japanese government ministries were represented, along with the Japanese Red Cross and the post office, displaying the modern systems and facilities used by the governmental departments. Almost 500 leading Japanese firms also sent items of the highest possible quality to London, wishing to offset the popular perception that Japanese products were cheaply-made and tawdry.<sup>11</sup> In addition to the manufactured goods, traditional and modern fine arts, and arts and crafts were well represented. Fairground rides like the Flip-Flap, previously favoured at the Franco-British Exhibition, also attracted visitors.

The imperial practice of hosting international fairs provided an arena for imperial powers to exhibit their achievements and advancements worldwide, a notable previous example being the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, London. Exhibiting the imperial powers, along with their colonies, and introducing new technology, products, art and culture were part of the celebrated goal of the world fairs. However, to the colonised, it was a chance for their oppressors to represent their culture. Despite the glory of the international exhibitions, the imperial and colonial discourse has been criticised since the advent of postcolonial studies.<sup>12</sup> For instance, exhibits of native peoples from a country's colonies displaying aspects of their traditional life style and culture, though supposedly serving an educational purpose, were in reality popular entertainments, which fitted well with the organisers' imperial themes, and so such

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<sup>11</sup> Don R. Knight, 'Marking the Centenary: 1910 Japan-British Exhibition', The Embassy of Japan ([http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/en/event/webmagazine/dec10/1910\\_exhibition.html](http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/en/event/webmagazine/dec10/1910_exhibition.html), Accessed on 15 December 2010.)

<sup>12</sup> For an example, see Peter H. Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian, and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War*, 2001.

‘live exhibits and attractions’ became standard features.<sup>13</sup> In the 1910 Exhibition, such issues were not an exception under the direction of Imre Kiralfy, who considered the success of the Exhibition to lie in its ‘attractions’. This was an issue for colonial Korea and other Japanese colonies.

### ***1.2. Korean Exhibits at the ‘Palace of the Orient/Colonization’***

The display of Japanese colonies was in charge of the Government Exhibits. Following Japan’s victory in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), Taiwan (Formosa) was ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895) as Japan’s first overseas colony. Japan’s subsequent victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) resulted in the Portsmouth Treaty (1905), through which the Kwantung Leased Territory came under Japan’s control. The South Manchuria Railway Company was founded in 1906, operating within northeast China in the Japanese-controlled South Manchuria Railway Zone. Japan’s exhibitions of its colonies was in a separate building, known as the ‘Palace of the Orient (Building 23)’ (Figures 3.3, 3.4), which housed sections named ‘Government of Formosa’ (Figure 3.5), ‘Formosa Exhibits’ (Figure 3.6), ‘Exhibits by South Manchuria Railway Company’ (Figure 3.7), ‘Government of Kwantung’ (Figure 3.8) and ‘The Residency-General of Japan in Korea’ (Figure 3.9).<sup>14</sup> The official guide states that: ‘The whole of this building has been taken by the Japanese Government to show what they have accomplished in their Colonies and in Formosa, Korea, and Manchuria’.<sup>15</sup> The Palace of the Orient not only exhibited Imperial Japan’s achievements, but also reveals their limited colonial representation of the selected colonies’ material culture.

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<sup>13</sup> See Ayako Hotta-Lister, *Japan-British Exhibition*, pp. 3-5. The author adds that those imperial themes were popular with the general public in countries possessing overseas colonies, and the themes featured prominently in the exhibitions held in Britain, France and the United States towards the end of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century.

<sup>14</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 232-238.

<sup>15</sup> Official Guide, first edition, p. 45.



Figure 3.3. ‘The Palace of the Orient’ (Building 23), with author’s arrow (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 86)



Figure 3.4. Building 23 in the map of the Exhibition, with author’s arrow (Source: author’s reproduction of the map, photographed from London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre)



Figure 3.5. 'Formosan Section' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 281)



Figure 3.6. 'Formosan Camphor Exhibit' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 287)



Figure 3.7. 'South Manchuria Railway Company's Exhibits' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 288)



Figure 3.8. 'Kwantung Government's Exhibits' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 287)

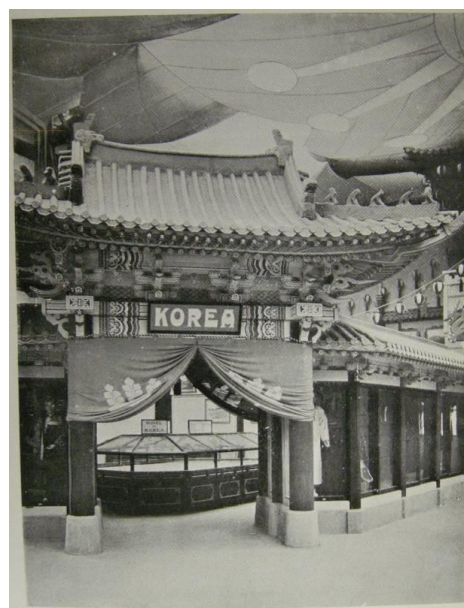


Figure 3.9. 'Korean Section' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 288)

Colonial representations of the Japanese colonies at the palace seem to have been carefully arranged to show Japan's awareness of sensitive diplomatic concerns related to the overseas expansion in the early twentieth century – this is revealed in its name. In fact, the initial name of the palace displaying the colonies was not the 'Palace of the Orient', but the 'Palace of Japanese Colonization' or 'Japanese Colonial Palace'. This is revealed in the first official guide (first edition, p. 45), following which it was changed to 'Palace of the Orient' (second edition, p. 45). The official catalogue also originally showed 'Palace of Japanese Colonization' (first edition, p. 220) and later the 'Palace of the Orient' (third edition, p. 232). On the ground plan reproduced in the same third edition (p. 231) of the official catalogue, the original name of the building remained, however, signed off by Imre Kiralfy on March 5, 1909 (Figure 3.10).

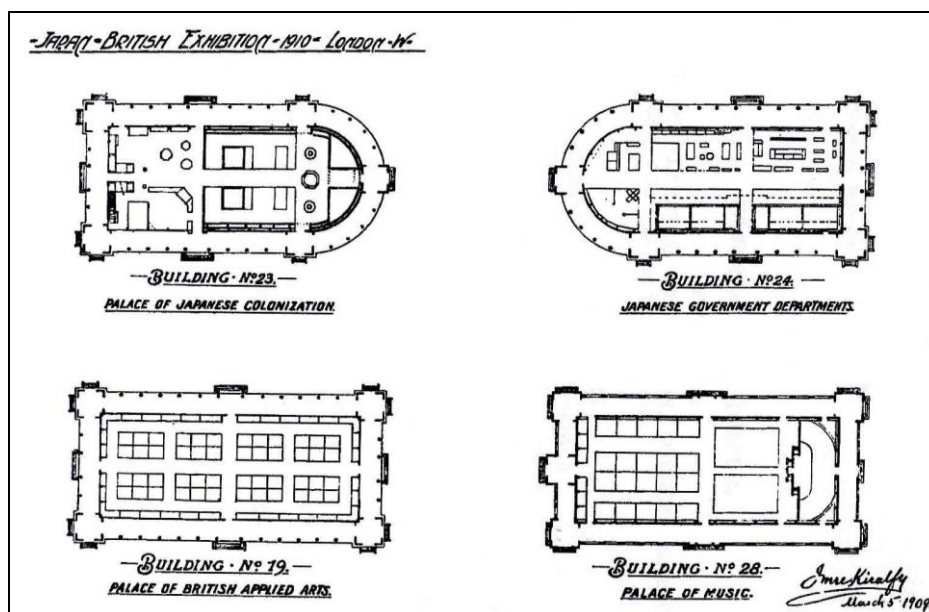
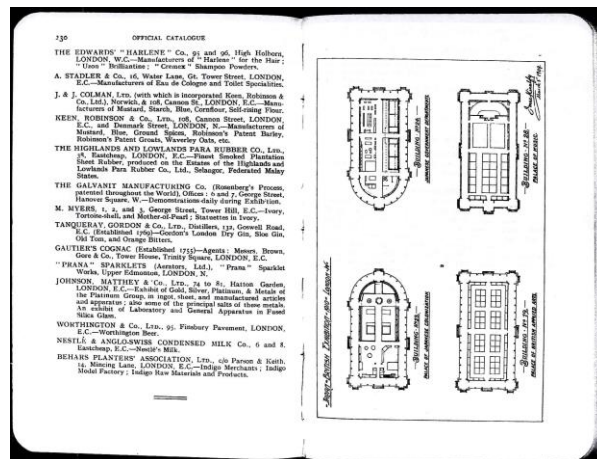


Figure 3.10. Ground plan showing the Building 23, 'Palace of Japanese Colonization' (Source: Official Catalogue, third edition, 1910, p. 231)

‘The Orient’ may have sounded more exotic, not being explicit, than ‘colonization’, alluding to the Japan’s legitimate position as an allied Eastern partner of Imperial Britain. Regardless of the name change, it appears that Japan at least were conscious of other powers’ eyes on their aspirations to overseas colonial expansion. Yet, simultaneously, Japan wished to project its imperial status worldwide through the colonial/oriental palace, in order to be placed on a par with Britain at the 1910 Exhibition. This can be found in the official guide. With the amended title of the ‘Building 23’ renegotiated, the official guide referring to the Palace of the Orient reads: ‘we have again stepped from the West to the East. The spacious building presents a fascinating array of quaint and artistic stalls of a truly Oriental character. This portion of the building is devoted to exhibits from Manchuria, then follows Korea and Formosa’.<sup>16</sup> The official guide then states that ‘We see the results before us, sufficient to justify the Eastern Empire’s claim to respect as a Colonising Power’.<sup>17</sup>

With regard to the Korean section at the Palace of the Orient, Korean objects were exhibited by the Residency-General of Japan, as the title of the section shows. Two people were named by the Japanese government in the official catalogue, guide and report as being in charge of setting up the Korean Pavilion (see Figure 3.9).<sup>18</sup> Mr Ogita Etsuzo (荻田悦造), Secretary of the Residency-General of Korea, sat on the Committee as one of the Directors of the Government Exhibits. His involvement in the Korean section seems to have stemmed from his administrative position in Korea during the time of the Exhibition preparation; and later he became Councillor of the Residency-General of Korea between 1916 and 1919. Mr Ishizuka Eizo (石塚英蔵, 1866–1942) also sat on the Committee as one of the General Councillors, who was Councillor of the Residency-General of Korea between 1908 and 1910. In the Pavilion,

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<sup>16</sup> Official Guide, third edition, p. 45.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>18</sup> In the Official Report, it is recorded ‘Etsuzo Ogita’ from the section ‘Directors of the Government Exhibits’ (p. 33) and ‘Eizo Ishizuka’ from the section ‘General Councillors’ (p. 34).



as the official catalogue lists, there were 61 listed single or group Korean exhibits, along with 40 listed photographs (Table 3.1).<sup>19</sup> When the Exhibition closed, following the disposal of the exhibits back to Japan, to Europe or other UK institutions,<sup>20</sup> 48 Korean objects displayed at the Pavilion arrived at the British Museum by means of a donation made by Ogita Etsuzo himself in November 1910 (Table 3.2).<sup>21</sup> Thanks to this, comparing the Tables 3.1 and 3.2, one can now discern what was exhibited and selected in 1910. One hundred years later, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Korea Foundation Gallery at the British Museum in 2010, it can be noted that 10 objects from the Ogita's donation were on display, highlighting their own artistic value outside of the colonial discursive space of the 1910 Exhibition.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 237-238.

<sup>20</sup> The final stage of the Exhibition was the disposal of the exhibits. These fell into three categories: those to be sent back to Japan (400 boxes in three separate shipments), those to be presented to various institutions (over 200 boxes divided between thirty recipients), and those to be sent to other cities in Europe where international exhibitions were planned for the near future (Dresden and Turin, both in 1911). See Ayako Hotta-Lister, *Japan-British Exhibition*, pp. 106-108.

<sup>21</sup> Jane Portal, 'The Origins of the British Museum's Korean Collection', Vol. 70, 1995, pp. 37-52. Also, the detailed records with images are from the British Museum's database, Merlin (all 50 objects of the donation from Ogita).






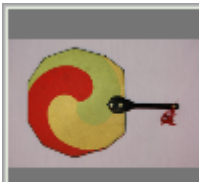







<sup>22</sup> For the details of the shifted context of the Korean exhibits from the Korean Pavilion at the 1910 Exhibition to the Korea Foundation Gallery at the British Museum in 2010, see the author's article: Jung-taek Lee, 'Korean Artefacts Donated to the British Museum by Ogita Etsuzo in 1910', November/December 2010, pp. 78-83. The paper examines the Japanese colonial discourse on the Palace of the Orient and in particular the exhibits of the Korean Pavilion in the 1910 Exhibition, along with the Korean objects later donated to the British Museum. It details the changed name of the palace and the ways in which the Japanese government exercised its power through the objects of display. Tracing the changed meanings and current curatorial interpretation of the Korean objects through historical contexts, the author argues that the cultural biography of the objects narrates the centenary year of the 1910 Exhibition and the annexation of Korea, as well as the 10th anniversary of the Korea Foundation Gallery at the British Museum, uncovering the varied politics of the exhibitionary space between 1910 and 2010.

Table 3.1. Full list of Korean exhibits at the Korean Pavilion, 1910<sup>23</sup>

Full List of Korean Exhibits (61 numbered in the list and 40 photographs)		
<p>1. Model of Korea  <b>2. Korean Models</b>  <u>3. Model of a Korean Dwelling House</u>  4. Korean Currency  5. Articles relating to Police Administration  6. Earthenware of Silla Period  7. Earthenware, Porcelain, and Metal-work of the Koryo Period  <b>8. Armour, Bow, Arrows, and Sword</b>  <u>9. Cabinet inlaid with Mother-of-Pearl</u>  10. Small Bamboo Boxes  <u>11. Silver Ware</u>  12. Brass Ware  <u>13. Ironware inlaid with Silver</u>  <b>14. Silk Fabrics</b>  <b>15. Ramie Cloth</b>  <b>16. Hemp Cloth</b>  17. Paper  <u>18. Mats</u>  <b>19. Korean Shoes and Sandals</b>  <u>20. Marble Boxes</u>  <u>21. Stone Pans</u>  <u>22. Pottery</u>  <b>23. Fans</b>  <u>24. Tobacco Pipes</u>  25. Rice  26. Barley  27. Wheat  28. Beans  29. Tobacco  <b>30. Cotton</b></p>	<p>31. Ginseng  <b>32. Silk Cocoons</b>  <b>33. Ramie</b>  <b>34. Hemp</b>  35. Gold Ore  36. Copper Ore  37. Iron Ore  38. Graphite  39. Coal  40. Mica  41. Alluvial Gold  42. Salt  43. Larch  44. Red Pine  45. Korean Pine  46. Spruce  47. White Fir  48. Mongolian Oak  49. "Minebari"  50. Manchurian Nut-tree  51. "Shihoji"  52. Lime  53. "Baramomi"  54. Yew  55. Elm  56. "Sennoki"  57. "Doroyanagi"  58. Rue  59. "Uwamizuzakura"  60. "Kobunire"</p>	<p>61. Photographs:  -Seoul  -Fusan  -Chemulpo  -The Inchong Hall, Changtok Palace  -The Garden, Changtok Palace  -The Kyonghoi Hall, Kyonpok Palace  -Korean Schools  -Post Office  -Court of Justice  -Tai Han Hospital  -Waterworks at Pyongyang  -Lighthouses at Chemulpo  -The Printing Bureau  -The Model Agricultural and Industrial Farm  -The Model Horticultural Station  -The Industrial Training School  -Rafts on the Yalu River  -A Korean Plantation  -A Mulberry Plantation  -Cattle Market  -Construction Work of the Railway Bridge over the Imjin  -Protective Embankment and Afforestation at Paikun-tong  -Salt Pans  -Japanese engaged in Fishing  -A Korean Community  -The Yalu River  -The Whahong Gate at Suwon  -The Iron Bridge over the Han River  -The Barrier of Hakwon  -The Taitong River  -Buildings of Silla Period  -Imperial Tour  -Family Group of a Yangpan  -Cattle employed as beasts of burden  -Washing by Korean Women  -The Marriage Procession of the Crown Princess  -The Street of Chongno  -A Korean Market  -The Lyongnam Hall, Milyang  -Kwangheui Gate, Seoul.</p>

<sup>23</sup> Source: Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 237-238. Numbers and spellings are as shown in the catalogue. Also note the author's highlight: **Bolded** objects are related to clothing and textiles, and underlined lists are related to the objects donated to the British Museum.

Table 3.2. Korean objects donated to the British Museum after the 1910 Exhibition and their images<sup>24</sup>

Objects donated to the BM (50 objects, donated on 11 and 13 November 1910) and images with the BM object record number			
<b>1 woman's jacket (<i>jeogori</i>), 2 figures &amp; costume, 1 shoes, 2 sandals, 5 fans</b>			
			
As1910,1111.2b	As1910,1111.4a-b	As1910,1111.5a-b	As1910,1111.6a-b
			
As1910,1111.7-8	As1910,1111.9-10	1910,1111.12	
<b>1 thread-winder, 2 spools, 1 ruler, 1 sewing box</b>			
			
1910,1111.21	1910,1111.22	As1910,1111.23	1910,1111.25
<b>3 mats, 2 smoking-pipes, 1 plaque</b>			
			
As1910,1111.43	1910,1111.30		

<sup>24</sup> Source: Records and images from database (Merlin) of Korean collections, Department of Asia, the British Museum. The 7 groups of objects have been created by the author to distinguish between the kinds of objects selected and donated to the museum. The donation was made in 2 instalments: the first 44 objects on 11 November 1910, and then another 6 objects including 2 Japanese dishes on 13 November 1910. Also note the author's highlight: **Bolded** objects are related to clothing and textiles.

1 brush-pot, 3 caskets & lids, 1 box, 1 cosmetic box, 3 cabinets



1 jar, 1 storage-jar, 1 tea-bowl, 1 bowl & cover, 1 vessel, 3 dishes (including 2 Japanese dishes)



(one of the Japanese dishes)

1 sword, 1 sheath, 1 bow, 1 quiver, 6 arrows



1 model building structure



Judging from the list in Table 3.1, these Korean exhibits can be categorised as a general introduction to Korea; the current Japanese regime; artefacts of old Korea; contemporary (Joseon) Korean goods of various materials including clothing, textiles

and accessory kinds; natural resources of agriculture, horticulture, mines and metallurgy; and photographs. Such categories were found to be similar to that of other Japanese colonies' pavilions at the Palace of the Orient.<sup>25</sup> Judging from the exhibits across the pavilions, it seems to have reflected Imperial Japan's sphere of interest regarding the exploitable materials of the colonised, although Japan also exhibited her natural resources at the 'Japanese Palace of Natural Resources (Building 21)' in a modernised way which was one of the themes of the world fairs.<sup>26</sup> In addition, old/traditional types of goods produced in Korea, Formosa, Kwantung and Manchuria may have been compared and contrasted to Western and modern Japanese and British products by visitors, and in this way exhibits and things from colonial countries were

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<sup>25</sup> See the exhibits listed in the Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 232-238. With the title 'THE PALACE OF THE ORIENT', 'Government of Formosa' shows a list of 48 exhibits: '1. Stuffed Animals', '3. Photographs', '9. Samples of Agricultural Products', '22. Oolong Tea', and '31. Grass Cloths', for instance (pp. 232-233). Following the Government exhibits, the section 'Formosa Exhibits' lists private exhibits under the titles of 'Education', 'Agriculture', 'Alimentation', 'Forests, Sports, Fishing, Gathering Wild Crops', 'Mines and Metallurgy', 'Textiles', 'Chemical Industries', and 'Various Industries' (pp. 233-234). Next is the 14 listed of exhibits from the 'Exhibits By South Manchuria Railway Company' including '3. Photographic Views Along The South Manchuria Railway – on walls' (pp. 234-235). The 'Government of Kwantung' shows 6 listed exhibits: '1. Articles produced at the Central Laboratory in Hexagonal Revolving Show-case: Wild Cocoons, [...]', '4. Photograph Show-case displaying Pictures of: Kwantung Government Office, [...]', etc. (pp. 235-236). And finally 'The Residency-General of Japan in Korea' is followed by 61 listed exhibits (pp. 237-238). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that, unlike other colonies, for the Korean Pavilion, some of the traditional Korean objects were included in the display, such as '6. Earthenware of Silla Period' and '7. Earthenware, Porcelain, and Metalwork of the Koryo Period' (see Table 3.1). Japan seemed to be aware of the Korean situation and tradition, stating in the Official Guide: 'Korea, occupying quite a large area. Korea [of course, is not, strictly speaking, a Japanese possession, but there (first edition)] is Japan's protégé, and there is such a strong affinity of interests, and the relationship is so close between the two countries, that this attempt to portray Japan as a colonising power would not be complete if Korea were not represented.' (Official Guide, fifth edition, p. 46.)

<sup>26</sup> See Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 197-227. Japanese Palace of Natural Resources includes: Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Tokyo; Agriculture; Horticulture; Fishery; Mines and Metallurgy.

deemed and shown as the undeveloped and backward. In some ways, this facilitated to emphasise the status of the two modernised imperial countries and particularly presented Japan's colonial legacy in the colonies, showing improved products and infrastructures under the new regime.

Photographs, in particular, were used and juxtaposed with other objects to confirm the legitimacy of Japanese colonisation, reinforced by the visual discourse (see the framed photographs hanging on the wall inside the Korean Pavilion, Figure 3.11). Visitors would appreciate the Japanese regime and its work in Korea through looking at photographs depicting 'Lighthouses at Chemulpo', 'The Industrial Training School' and 'Construction Work of the Railway Bridge over the Imjin', etc., which sat in contrasted to other scenes such as 'Buildings of Silla Period', 'Washing by Korean Women' and 'A Korean Market', etc. As Kim Youngna commented, the Korean exhibit was Japan's attempt to display the country's stagnant, pre-modern status and show how it had been changed since becoming a Japanese protectorate in 1905.<sup>27</sup>



Figure 3.11. Close view of the Korean Pavilion, with author's arrows (Source: author's reproduction of the image, photographed from Official Report, 1911, p. 288)

<sup>27</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 46.

As shown in Table 3.2, some of the objects from the Korean exhibits then went on to be displayed at the British Museum, which was famous for its ethnographic collections. This may show the perceived value or position of the Korean objects at the time as representing one of Japan's colonies', rather than Korea's own material culture. Among the 50 objects donated by Ogita Etsuzo, only 2 objects (Japanese dishes, one of which is shown in the fifth line group of the Table 3.2) were exhibits from the Japanese culture section in the 1910 Exhibition. Other than the context of the collection history, the selection of the exhibits in the Korean Pavilion was important. For instance, the 'bow and arrows' (in the sixth line group of the Table 3.2, and the '8. Armour, Bow, Arrows, and Sword' in the Table 3.1) could have been compared to the Western modernised arms of Japan and Britain displayed at the Exhibition, which in turn helped reinforce the colonial discourse over the colonies (Figure 3.12). The selection, yet, can be questionable as Korea had already exhibited 'rifles' and 'a 400-year old cannon' in its first participation in the world fairs, namely, the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.<sup>28</sup> Also, Korea had launched a modern style army, *Byeolgigun* (別技軍), implemented with modernised arms and uniforms under King Gojong's instruction in 1881, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Thus it proves that the selection of Korean objects for display in the Korean Pavilion reflected the intention of the organiser, the Residency-General of Japan in Korea of 1910.



Figure 3.12. 'Messrs. Vickers Sons and Maxim's Exhibit of Weaponry' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 427)

<sup>28</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 50.

### ***1.3. Korean Clothing and Textiles at the Korean Pavilion***

This section will now focus on clothing and textile-related goods, which were also laid out within the Palace of the Orient. Colonial representation was evident and rather difficult to overcome, with the colonial others represented as being less civilised and needing to be modernised. Clothing was one of the key identifiers of the colonial subjects and their culture. Textile-related goods, including raw materials for cloth, fabrics and various accessories, also influenced the subjects' appearances; these were local goods or manufactured commodities that fit into the commercial character of the Exhibition. Within the scope of clothing and textile-related goods, they were also selected and displayed as an effective means of manifesting colonial objects, by which Japan exercised its discursive power through the exhibitionary space.

According to the official guide, Korean life figure models were standing at the both sides of the entrance to the Korean Pavilion. The photograph of the Korean Pavilion from the official report clearly shows the outside view of the section, which is characteristic of the traditional style of Korean buildings, with a signboard saying KOREA; if one examines it closely, there are two standing figures displayed next to the gateway, side by side, wearing Korean costume (Figure 3.13). On the left, the female figure is in a woman's costume (*jeogori* and *chima*), while the man's costume consists of a long coat (*durumagi*) and a horsehair hat (*gat*) and is found on the right by the male figure. Judging from the limited image, the woman's appearance is rather odd; together with unusual female headgear, the jacket and narrowly wrapped skirt combine unnaturally with poorly fastened sash belt. The Korean woman's look would appear strange, comparing to the Korean man's stereotypical appearance with the *durumagi* and *gat*, which reflects some misunderstanding or a rather careless approach on the display, intended or otherwise.



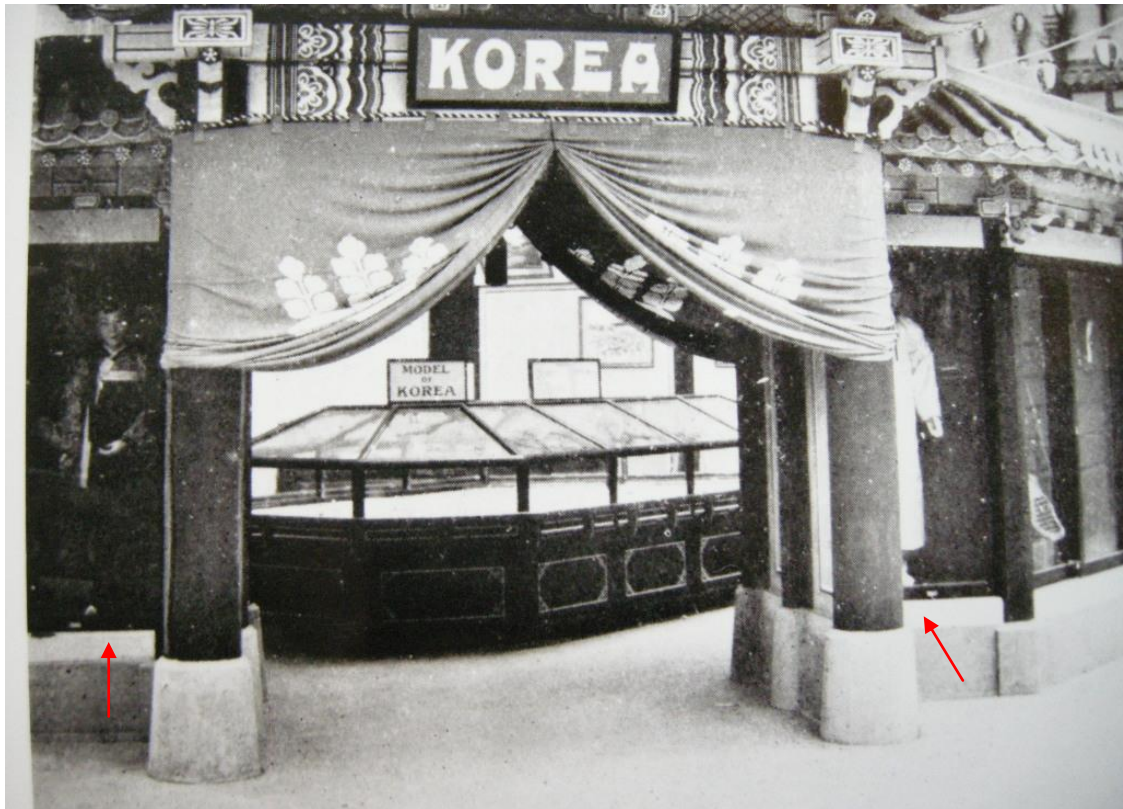


Figure 3.13. Close view of the Korean Pavilion, with author's arrows (Source: author's reproduction of the image, photographed from London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre, copied from Official Report, 1911, p. 288)

The male and female Korean clothing styles were different from other colonies' costumes at the Palace of the Orient, as well as being contrasted against Japanese traditional costume. Some of the Japanese traditional costumes were displayed in the Palace of Fine Arts, treated as one of the fine arts and exhibited hanging like an art form (Figure 3.14). In contrast, the Korean dresses on the mannequins were rather treated like a stuffed model – an anthropological way of representing the 'Other'.

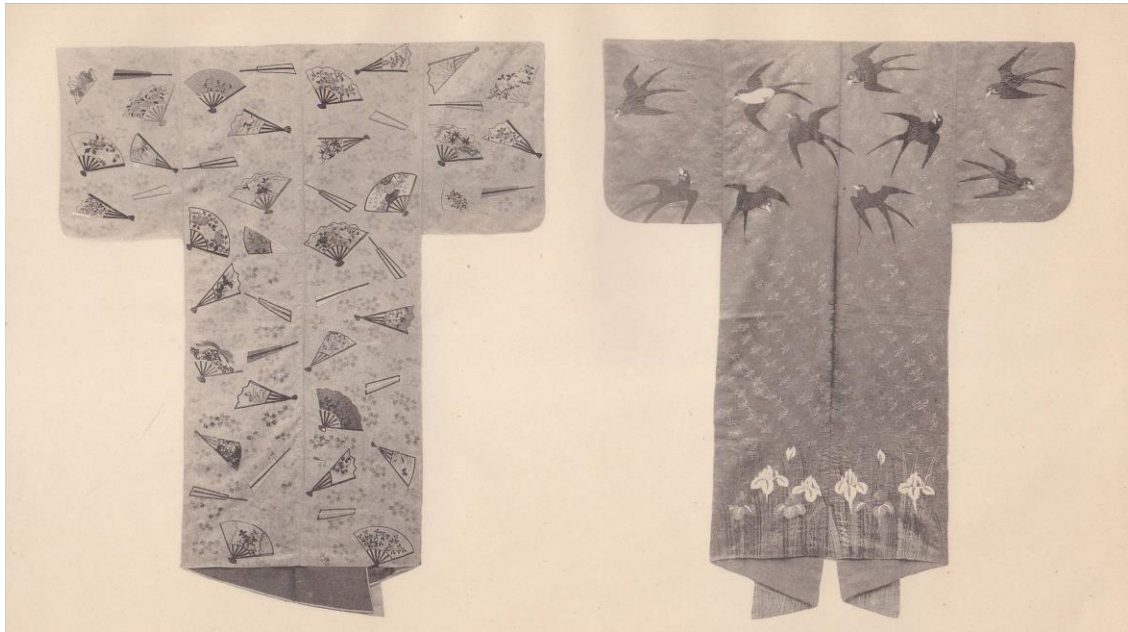


Figure 3.14. ‘Light-Green Clothes with Pattern of Fans, embroidered’ (left), ‘Light-Green Clothes with Pattern of Iris-flowers, embroidered’ (right) (Source: An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, 1910, pp. 257, 258)

Similarly, in the case of Formosa, the tableaux ‘Formosans’ and ‘Formosan Tea Plantation’ were used to represent the other colonial subjects wearing their indigenous costumes (Figures 3.15, 3.16). In the latter tableau (Figure 3.16), mannequins wearing their Formosan traditional costume are depicted working in a tea farm, and it is worth noting that the Japanese officers act as a contrast in modern garb, representing a modernised and controlling power over the female Formosans’ labour. In the section on Formosa, the official report reads: ‘the natives were depicted by means of tableaux in their primitive state in the wild country, while on the other side the Formosan people were shown by a similar method peacefully engaged in work on a tea plantation, thus demonstrating their progress since coming under the influence of Japan in contrast to their former primitive state.’<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Official Report, p. 284.



Figure 3.15. 'A Tableau - Formosans'  
(Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 282)



Figure 3.16. 'A Tableau - Formosan Tea Plantation'  
(Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 282)

Among the Korean objects donated to the British Museum, a woman's jacket (*jeogori*) was included (Figure 3.17). The museum record shows that the jacket was originally attached to the model figure and later preserved separately. It can be surmised that this *jeogori* is the one displayed in the pavilion, as shown in Figure 3.13. Having examined the surviving garment, the quality of the jacket seems relatively poor based on the material and sewing, and it seems to have been taken from a female commoner in Korea (Figure 3.18). This type of jacket is known as *banhoejang jeogori* using three differently coloured cloths in different parts of the bodice: the collar (*git*), cuffs (*kkeutdong*) and fastening straps (*goreum*) are of purple cloth, while the rest of the bodice exterior is green. Lined with pink, this colour combination of purple on green was commonly used for daily wear, most likely by a young married woman. The lined jacket is made of relatively thick silk, satin, and decorated with the iris motif, which tells that the *jeogori* is for winter use and the motif reflects Japanese favoured sentiment selected rather than other popular motifs of Korean women's jacket.



Figure 3.17. Korean Women's Jacket (*Jeogori*), Silk, Purple on Green Colour with Pink lined, Length: 41 cm, Width across sleeves: 142 cm, Donated by Ogita Etsuzo, British Museum (As1910,1111.2.b) (Source: [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details/collection\\_image\\_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=404213&objectid=471598](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=404213&objectid=471598), Accessed on 13 November 2010)



Figure 3.18. Close view of the *Jeogori*, British Museum (As1910,1111.2.b) (Source: [http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection\\_online/collection\\_object\\_details/collection\\_image\\_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=404226&objectid=471598](http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&assetid=404226&objectid=471598), Accessed on 13 November 2010)

The selection and condition of the object speaks to the colonial status of Korea about a hundred years ago. It leaves a question as to why royal or upper class costumes of finer and more exquisite material were not displayed. The quality of Korean dress displayed falls short even compared to other colonies' clothing. For instance, better quality Manchurian women's costumes were displayed in the Palace of the Orient. In the official catalogue, under the section 'Exhibits by South Manchuria Railway Company', the list of exhibits includes '12. Life Figures of Manchurian Ladies'.<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>30</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, pp. 234-235.

female life figures must have worn the Manchurian costume. In fact, the Manchurian jackets are preserved at the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 3.19). The description of the object states that the museum acquired the garment from the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, and suggests it may be for men's wear too, as the term 'riding jacket' sewn inside the jacket refers to the name commonly used for a Chinese man's short jacket.<sup>31</sup> Under the roof of the Palace of the Orient, the Japanese committee showcased each colony's material culture and the displayed clothing on the life models functioned as a key identifier for Western visitors in discerning each colonised group or ethnicity from similar looking East Asian people, as well as for Japan to introduce the colonial 'Other' subjects to the West.



Figure 3.19. Manchurian Jacket, Outer Jacket for a Manchu lady, China, 1900–1911, Purple, cut velvet trimmed with black bias-cut, Satin, Height: 64.2 cm, Width: 134 cm, Victoria and Albert Museum (T.5-1911) (Source: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O25769/jacket/>, Accessed on 17 November 2010)

In conjunction with traditional dress, cloth, raw materials of sericulture, accessories and other textile-related goods were exhibited at the Korean Pavilion, as well as in other colonies' sections. In each pavilion at the Palace of the Orient, the articles were meant to present materials and manufactured products that benefitted from the modernised Japanese regime. The cloth materials found in the Korean

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<sup>31</sup> The V&A, Search the Collections: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O25769/jacket/> (Museum number: T.5-1911), Accessed on 17 November 2010.

Pavilion were cotton, silk cocoons, silk fabrics, ramie, ramie cloth, hemp and hemp cloth. Other related articles included fans, Korean shoes and sandals, and those which are now preserved in the British Museum (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Japan's discourse on displays like the clothing on model figures lies in stressing its colonial role in the undeveloped colonies. The official catalogue states that 'the Japanese Residency-General in Seoul shows exhibits to indicate the progress that has been made by the Peninsula under Japanese protection'.<sup>32</sup> Also, in using the display of photographs depicting textile-related themes such as 'The Model Agricultural and Industrial Farm', 'The Model Horticultural Station', 'A Korean Plantation' and 'A Mulberry Plantation' (see Table 3.1), Japan tried to underline the new regime's impact on Korea. All these efforts can be understood as Japan's visual discourse through the Exhibition for the legitimacy of its colonisation of Korea and other parts in East Asia.

#### ***1.4. A Comparison: Displays of Korean Clothing and Textiles at Previous International Expositions in 1893 and 1900***

The clothing and textile objects displayed at the 1910 Exhibition can be compared to the ones exhibited in the two previous international exhibitions in which the Korean government autonomously participated before the colonial interference. These offer different approaches of object interpretations, displays and exhibits related to the Korean clothing and textiles. At the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago, Korean costumes were exhibited in a designated pavilion along with other exhibits as seen in the photo of the Korean section from *The Book of the Fair* (Figure 3.20).<sup>33</sup> As Kim Youngna notes, clothing and textile-related objects such as a 'military official's uniform', 'gentlemen's clothes', 'straw shoes' and 'leather shoes' were displayed in the hall and can be found from the remaining photograph.<sup>34</sup> These objects appear to have been displayed as one of the Korean manufactured articles alongside other Korean

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<sup>32</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxiii.

<sup>33</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 49.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

goods through the body forms, display cases and shelves. Given the name of the space as ‘Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building’, one can now sense the different tone in the display of the Korean exhibits that the Korean committee wanted to portray, compared to the colonial settings of the 1910 Exhibition.



Figure 3.20. ‘The Korean exhibit at the Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building’, World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, Chicago (Source: *The Book of the Fair* in Kim Youngna, 2005, p. 49)

After the Exposition, clothing and textile-related objects were sent to the Field Museum in Chicago, where they remain today, and other Korean objects were donated to several museums in the USA. Examining the Field Museum’s ‘1893 World’s Columbian Exposition Collection Database’ (one of the Anthropology Collections), the costumes displayed in the Exposition seem to be of fine quality and taken from court or upper class people than in the 1910 Exhibition.<sup>35</sup> For example, the helmet and armour reveal that the costume was for high-ranking military officials (Figures 3.21,

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<sup>35</sup> In Kim Youngna’s article, she also comments: ‘Kim Samdaeja, a former curator of National Folk Museum in Korea, has stated that the Korean works in the Field Museum are of high quality, and in fact represent a higher standard than works remaining in Korea’ (Ibid, p. 61).

3.22), along with the arm sleeves, which feature textile woven patterns linked to a higher rank or use at court (Figure 3.23). In terms of women's clothing, the quilted jacket is not from a commoner, but rather a noble or court woman, judging from the line and length of the jacket, together with the well decorated headgear (*ayam*) (Figures 3.24, 3.25). These exhibits are well distinguished from the counterparts of the 1910 Exhibition in terms of their quality and provenance.



Figure 3.21. Helmet and Cover, Korea, Field Museum (32509), Chicago (Source: [http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115\\_Korea&fileName=32509.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=32509&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=helmet and cover](http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115_Korea&fileName=32509.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=32509&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=helmet%20and%20cover), Accessed on 23 November 2010)



Figure 3.22. 'An Armour, Field Museum, Chicago' (Source: Kim Youngna, 2005, p. 52)





Figure 3.23. Arm Sleeves, Korea, Field Museum (33111), Chicago (Source: [http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115\\_Korea&fileName=33111.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=33111&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=pair of sleeves](http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115_Korea&fileName=33111.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=33111&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=pair of sleeves), Accessed on 23 November 2010)



Figure 3.24. 'A Quilted Korean Jacket, Field Museum, Chicago' (Source: Kim Youngna, 2005, p. 52)



Figure 3.25. Women's headgear (*Ayam*), Korea, Field Museum (33110), Chicago (Source: [http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115\\_Korea&fileName=33110.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=33110&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=hat](http://fm6.fieldmuseum.org:8080/WCE/PopUpTemplateGenerator.do?accessionDir=115_Korea&fileName=33110.jpg&accession=115&catalogNum=33110&continent=Asia&country=Korea&description=hat), Accessed on 23 November 2010)

The higher standard of costumes displayed in the 1893 Exposition must have resulted from the Joseon government's careful preparation for the first participation of such a world fair under King Gojong's supervision. His active policy of modernisation through adopting Western culture and products may have been behind Korea's acceptance of the request to participate in the Exposition, and he appointed Assistant Interior Minister Jeong Gyeong-won (鄭敬源, 1841–1898) as a Korean commissioner, wishing for success of Korea's partaking.<sup>36</sup> The comparison of the exhibits, object qualities and displays between the 1910 Exhibition and the 1893 Exposition reveal how Japan's colonial agenda impinged upon the ways Korean clothing was portrayed in London 1910, contrasted with the undisturbed ways that Korean costumes were carefully selected and represented for the sake of Korea's own interest in Chicago 1893.

The other exposition the Korean government participated in prior to 1910 was the Exposition Universelle de Paris (Paris Universal Exposition) of 1900. Like the previous World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, clothing and textiles were also part of the display. Several photographs of interior scenes of the Exposition can be found in Paul Gers's *En 1900* with an explanation of the historical and political background of Korea, and one of which vaguely shows a dressed mannequin in Figure 3.26.<sup>37</sup> The clothing-related exhibits included 'male mannequins wearing official clothes of the commander in chief, a gate guardman, and a mourner' among other artefacts.<sup>38</sup> Due to the limited source and image, it is unclear whether those displayed military clothes were traditional Korean uniforms or Western-style uniforms that the Korean government had newly adopted through the dress reforms, while the mourner's clothes could have been the traditional Korean costume (*sangbok*).

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<sup>36</sup> 'Gojong-sunjong silrok (True Record of Gojong and Sunjong), 24 January 1893', in *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>37</sup> 'Paul Gers, *En 1900*, pp. 205-208', in *Ibid.*, pp. 54, 62.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

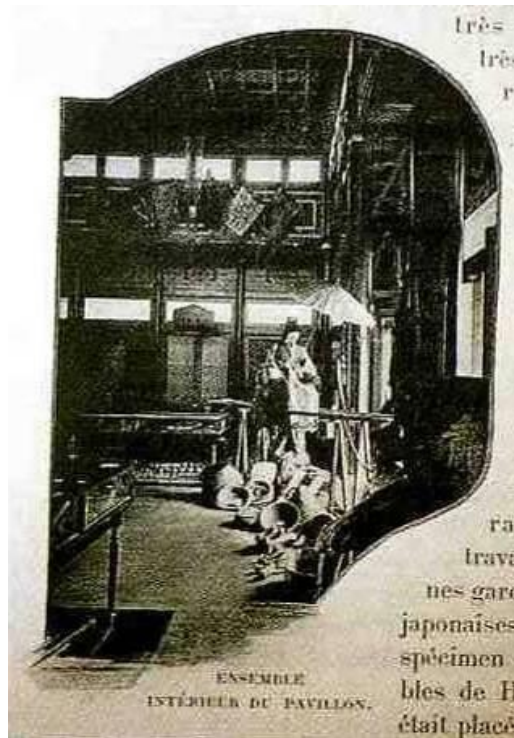


Figure 3.26. ‘Photograph of the Korean exhibit in *En 1900*’ (Source: Kim Youngna, 2005, p. 54)

Yet, clothing and textile objects seem to have been carefully selected by French and Korean commissioners, even from the emperor Gojong, to meet the both parties’ interests at the Exposition and to represent Korea and its culture properly, since Joseon renamed it to Korean Empire in 1897 and made an effort to show the world the country’s modernising state. According to Daniel Kane, one period publication described the Korean section as follows:

Done entirely in wood, painted in a vivid display of colors, and covered by a large roof with the upturned eaves characteristic of Far Eastern architecture, the structure captures the attention of the passerby. The design of the unique inner chamber finds its inspiration in the audience hall of the old royal palace. The walls are covered in silk drapes, the oldest dating from the 7th century; and two panels facing one another as you enter are covered with grimacing masks and other theatrical items. The showcase displays include precious collections sent by the emperor himself, items belonging to several Frenchmen who have spent some time in Korea, as well as a sampling of national produce... all of which give a strong conception of the resources of Korean industry.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> ‘*L’Exposition de Paris*, 3 vols, Paris: Librairie Illustree, 1900, p. 315’, in Daniel Kane,

In contrast to the more or less warm reception the display received in Paris and the Korean commissioner's work at the Exposition, Western misunderstanding or misrepresentation of Korea was inevitable to some extent. The Korean Pavilion appeared in the illustration of *Le Petit Journal* on 16 December 1900 and featured Korean people wearing their male and female costumes (Figure 3.27).<sup>40</sup> As Kim Youngna points out, the illustration reflects some possible misunderstandings of Korea, such as the flag with a carp following a Japanese custom and some figures wearing Chinese costume or in an incorrect Korean style.<sup>41</sup> Compared to the colonial case in the 1910 Exhibition, the misrepresentation of Koreans' clothing seems to have been not intentional at least. Despite the fact that Korea had opened its doors to the West several decades before, Korea was still known as the 'Hermit Nation'.<sup>42</sup> Maurice Courant who visited the Korean pavilion in Paris wrote: 'The crowds remain unaware of the Korean pavilion: it seems that out of timidity or modesty Korea wishes to confirm, in this far corner, the image of isolation with which she has so long been associated.'<sup>43</sup> A note with the illustration (Figure 3.27) also reflects the nuanced situation and Korea's efforts for the Exposition: 'It is surprising that Korea, reluctant as it has been to be exposed to the outside world, participated in the exposition. The special items exhibited at the Korean pavilion, built in a distinguished style, seemed to long for new exchanges'.<sup>44</sup>

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'Display at Empire's End: Korea's Participation in the 1900 Paris Universal Exposition', Vol. 4, No. 2, 2004, p. 59.

<sup>40</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 54.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> A 1900 National Geographic Magazine (Vol. XI, pp. 145-155) article on Korea still chose its title as 'Korea – The Hermit Nation'.

<sup>43</sup> 'Maurice Courant, *Bibliographie Coreenne*, 4 vols, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1901, p. 223', in Daniel Kane, 'Display at Empire's End', p. 60.

<sup>44</sup> 'Paek Seong-hyeon, Lee Han-wu, "Paris Exposition," p. 385', in Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', pp. 54, 62.



Figure 3.27. ‘Le Petit Journal, 16 December 1900’ (Source: Kim Youngna, 2005, p. 54)

## 2. Making Tradition of *Hanbok* in Colonial Korea and Nuanced Decoding of Sartorial Tradition as Colonial Modernity

After the annexation of 1910, within the Korean peninsula notions of Korean sartorial tradition can be questioned under the Japanese rule, since colonial Japanese exhibitionary discourse relegated *hanbok* to an inferior, colonised status in the 1910 Exhibition. In regard to modern fashion later in colonial Korea, sartorial tradition needs to be discussed in tandem with sartorial modernity, which in turn relates to the forms of Western and non-Western dress. At the 1910 Exhibition, Japanese discourse made the non-Western form of traditional Korean dress seem distant from modernity or pre-modern style, rather than a succession to modernity. The differences between non-Western and Western dress were imposed on *hanbok* in a repressing way that implied traditional non-Western Korean dress to be an opponent of modernity and to be underdeveloped. The discourse compelled unnecessary discontinuity to be read into

the historical shift of traditional Korean dress towards modernity, in which only the Western form of dress *yangbok* could retain modernity. This sartorial rupture in relations between traditional Korean dress and modernity was thus constructed by Japan to underpin its colonial legitimacy. In contrast to this, Japan juxtaposed her non-Western traditional dress alongside Western modern dress in the historical tableaux at the 1910 Exhibition to claim historical progress of its sartorial culture, which will be examined as part of this section.

In the colonial peninsula, the Japanese regime seems to have operated on a rather clear binary framework of dress forms between tradition and modernity to serve the colonial aim. In pursuing Japan's projects of modernising Korea, Korean sartorial tradition needed to be positioned as pre-modern, rather than a respected tradition or old civilisation. This is clearly contrasted when we examine how Japan portrayed its sartorial tradition as valued status of arts at the 1910 Exhibition. In other words, the colonial regime utilised a discourse of 'tradition and modernity' in dress culture to suit her colonial interests, legitimising her colonial rule over Korea.

Establishing the critical stance, I would further argue that we can find substantial nuances in Japan's representations of traditional *hanbok*. Alternative and multifaceted voices can be found in relation to sartorial tradition and modernity in colonial Korea, for the period can be seen as a contested field or a space of 'hybridity' between *hanbok* and *yangbok*, competing with sartorial discourses of tradition and modernity conjured up by Japan or challenged by Korea.<sup>45</sup> In fact, a postcolonial perspective on the constructed dress tradition in line with sartorial modernity is needed and the alternative framework can provide useful grounds for discussion of modern fashion in colonial Korea. The emergence of modern fashion has often been associated with the import of Western dress and its practice. However, the discourse that non-Western traditional Korean clothing's lack of association with modernity was perhaps the obstacle of discussing modern fashion in Korea along with the traditional form of dress *hanbok*.

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<sup>45</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994.

This section thus examines how sartorial tradition of *hanbok* was constructed by the Japanese power through a series of major domestic exhibitions in Korea of 1907, 1915 and 1929, in comparison with Japan's artistic and historical displays of its own sartorial culture at the 1910 Exhibition. It then discusses how Japan's engagement with collecting, museum practice and its formation, as well as folklore studies, shaped a particular notion of traditional Korean dress. Once critically examined the colonial legacy, the last section will hint at how one can read the traditional Korean dress and its practice in rather nuanced and postcolonial ways, beyond the colonial depiction in the images produced around the domestic exhibitions.

### ***2.1. (Un)Display of Korean Dress at the Domestic Exhibitions in 1907, 1915 and 1929***

In questioning of how the colonial power constructed the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* in material culture practices, Japanese authorities continuously set up exhibitions and museums, collecting artefacts across the peninsula throughout the colonial period. According to Mok Soohyun, the exhibition spaces in Gyeongseong (京城, capital of Korea and currently Seoul) during the 1930s reached the culmination of exhibition culture, which visualised understandings of society, providing sightseeing of exhibitions as a trend, and generated a new class of 'audience' who remained anonymous.<sup>46</sup> Not only were the exhibitions new to Koreans and considered modern, Japan's organising of the exhibitions aimed to project its colonial discourse and legitimacy over Korea, as a way of expressing 'colonial knowledge'.<sup>47</sup> Through the exhibitions, various objects of Korean material culture were collected and exhibited, and they served as formation of museums on the peninsula. Japanese archaeologists

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<sup>46</sup> Mok Soohyun, '1930nyeondae Gyeongseong-ui Jeonsigonggan' [The Exhibition Space in Gyeongseong during the 1930s], 2009, pp. 97-116.

<sup>47</sup> Choe Seok-yeong, *Hanguk geundaewi bangnamhoe-bangmulgwan* [Exhibitions and Museums of the Modern Korea], 2001.

began digging into Korea's past and anthropologists supported by the Japanese government researched the history and culture of Korean civilisation.<sup>48</sup>

Against Korean nationalist narratives of the self-proclaimed 'discoverers' of Korea's unique past, Pai Hyung Il argues that the first objectification and codification of Korean heritage as museum objects worthy of display was a cumulative effort of Chōsen Sōtokufu bureaucrats, archaeological committees such as the Koseki Kenkyūkai (Research Committee on Korean Antiquities) and individual connoisseurs.<sup>49</sup> Yet, Japan's activities in this regard were motivated by the new colonial authorities' interests. During the colonial period, the Japanese military government planned to assimilate the Korean people and the outcome of the archaeological and anthropological studies would serve to facilitate this process.<sup>50</sup>

Japan had participated in the Paris Universal Exposition (Exposition Universelle) of 1867 and began to hold a varied range of fairs and exhibitions within the archipelago from 1872. In Korea, Japanese intervention started in 1905 by the Eulsa Protectorate Treaty and lasted until 1945, with the new colonial regime opening various exhibitions and fairs on the peninsula that displayed Japanese products, Korean

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<sup>48</sup> As Pai Hyung Il criticises, nationalist narratives and historiography of 'Korean origins' can be rooted from the colonial period and the related scholarly practices. (See Pai, Hyung Il, 'Chapter 1. The Colonial Origins of Korea's Collected Past', in Hyung Il Pai and Timothy R. Tangherlini, ed. *Nationalism and the Construction of Korean Identity*, 1998, pp. 23-33.; and *Constructing "Korean" Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories*, 2000, especially 'Chapter 2. The Colonial Origins of Prehistoric Korea', pp. 23-56). However, without neglecting Korean nationalism, especially as constructed through the postwar period of Korea, and to follow the scope of my research period, the present chapter focuses more on Japanese colonial activities of tradition construction and legitimating modernity during the colonial regime of Korea.

<sup>49</sup> Pai, Hyung Il, 'Chapter 1. The Colonial Origins of Korea's Collected Past', in Hyung Il Pai and Timothy R. Tangherlini, ed. *Nationalism and the Construction of Korean Identity*, 1998, pp. 23-33.

<sup>50</sup> See Choe Seok-yeong, *Iljeui joseonnyeonguwa singminjijeok jisik saengsan* [Japan's Study of Korea and Production of Colonial Knowledge], 2012.



artefacts and Korean material culture, and showcased the regime's governing success. Notable examples include the Gyeongseong Exhibition (京城博覽會, Gyeongseong Bangnamhoe) of 1907, the Joseon Industrial Exhibition (朝鮮物産共進會, Joseon Mulsan Gongjinhoe) of 1915 and Joseon Exhibition (朝鮮博覽會, Joseon Bangnamhoe) of 1929. The exhibitions were an effective means to publicise Japan's modernised administration in the development of Korea. Various objects and material culture produced and rooted in Korea were displayed. Those exhibited were the result of Japan's excavation and collection efforts across the peninsula, and they formed notions of Korean tradition as they eventually built museum collections throughout colonial Korea. In this process of institutionalising Korean material culture through exhibitions, Korean tradition began to be formed by the Japanese involvement, and Korea's sartorial tradition was also part of this process and constructed along a particular trajectory to Japan's ends. Such a particular trajectory will then be examined through the aforementioned three major exhibitions that Japanese authorities devised.

First, the Gyeongseong Exhibition of 1907 was organised during the Japanese protectorate period. Although both Korea and Japan intended to participate, the Japanese Resident-General of Korea (統監府, Tonggambu) solely planned and opened the Exhibition. According to Kim Youngna, paintings and sculptures were exhibited in the Exhibition, but clothing and textiles were not included. Also, most of the displays at the Exhibition were contributed by the Japanese, with only 193 out of 1493 made by Koreans.<sup>51</sup> In the beginning, the Exhibition was not popular, but more and more people came to see the products of modern industrial life, resulting in an average of 2,800 visitors a day.<sup>52</sup>

By this time, as Korea was already a Japanese protectorate, it is difficult to describe this as an independent event run by Korea. But as a result of the Exhibition,

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<sup>51</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 57.

<sup>52</sup> Angus Hamilton, Major Herbert H. Austin, and Viscount Masatake Terauchi, *Korea, its History, its People, and its Commerce*, 1910, p. 293.

which promoted industrial arts for their contributions to national wealth, Hanseong Artworks Production was founded in 1908 by the Korean government to manufacture high quality products, later becoming the Yi Royal Arts Production in 1911.<sup>53</sup> Before these efforts produced any results, Korea succumbed to political turmoil and was absorbed by Japan. It is at least worth noting that clothing and textiles were excluded again in this process, as the notion or categorisation of Korean sartorial objects as arts was not yet established in Korea. This cannot be said to be due to Japan's lack of interest in clothing and textiles as arts at the 1907 Exhibition, because an examination of the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition will show Japan's clothing and textiles were well displayed at the Palace of Fine Arts. Therefore, Japan's selection of Korean objects at the Gyeongseong Exhibition of 1907 impinged upon the beginning of a particular trajectory of Korean sartorial tradition in that *hanbok* was not included nor regarded as arts of appreciated status.

Secondly, commemorating the fifth anniversary of Japanese governance in 1915, Joseon Industrial Exhibition (or Joseon Products Fair, 朝鮮副業品共進會, Joseon Bueoppum Gongjinhoe) was held in Gyeongseong from 11th September to 31st October, with 48,760 exhibits in 13 categories of industry and administration, attracting 2,160,000 visitors.<sup>54</sup> In its organisation and construction, the Exhibition was similar to Western exhibitions. The Japanese demolished some of the smaller buildings in the Gyeongbok Palace (景福宮), the symbolic heart of the Joseon dynasty, and built new Western-style buildings for the Exhibition space. The buildings included Pavilions 1 and 2, a Reference Pavilion, an Art pavilion, a Machinery Pavilion, a Provincial Pavilion, a VIP Pavilion, an East Asia Company of Colonial Development and a Special Railroad Centre.<sup>55</sup> Later, the headquarters for the Japanese Government-General of Korea (朝鮮總督府, Joseon Chongdokbu) was built in 1926 on the site of

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<sup>53</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 57.

<sup>54</sup> National Archives and Records Services (*Gukgagirogwon*, 국가기록원, <http://theme.archives.go.kr/next/place/subject01.do>, Accessed on 11 January 2011)

<sup>55</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', p. 58.

Pavilion 1. The Japanese created dazzling spectacles with bright lights at night in imitation of Western exhibitions. Among these buildings, the Art Pavilion, which was the only stone building, remained standing and became the Government-General Museum (Figure 3.28). Post liberation, this became the National Academy and much later the Traditional Crafts Centre. This building was demolished later in the process of restoring the previous Gyeongbok Palace.<sup>56</sup>

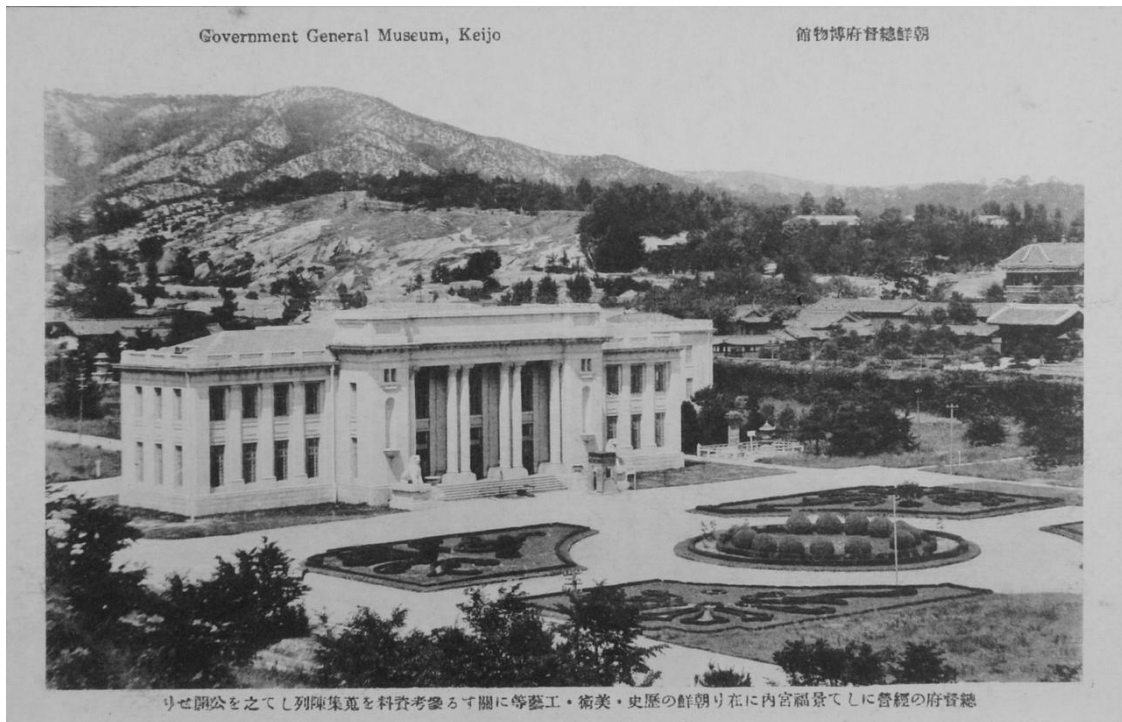


Figure 3.28. Government-General Museum, Gyeongbok Palace, Seoul (Source: The City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 2002, p. 275)

The Exhibition is said to mark the beginning of modern art exhibitions in Korea. In the Art Pavilion, about 1,300 works were exhibited, including archaeological remains discovered in different regions of Korea. Traditional paintings were exhibited at the main Art Pavilion, whereas new Western-style arts like oil paintings and sculptures were shown in the annex Art Pavilion or Reference Art Centre. These included works by Korean artists such as An Jung-sik (安中植, 1861–1919), Jo Seok-jin (趙錫晉, 1853–1920) and Ko Hui-dong (高義東, 1886–1965), as well as those of

<sup>56</sup> See Mok Soohyun, *Iljeha bagmulgwan-ui hyeongseonggwa geu uimi* [The Formation of the Museums and the Meaning under Japanese Governance], 2000.

many Japanese artists. The Exhibition thus preceded the Joseon Art Exhibition (朝鮮美術展覽會 or 鮮展) – an official salon of Korea, which started in 1922 – in exhibiting art works.<sup>57</sup> At this point, Korean clothing and textiles were not exhibited like an art form or at least in a designated exhibition space.

As for the third and last occasion, in 1929, the Joseon Exhibition was opened in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Japanese governance from 12th September to 31st October (Figure 3.29). Like the Joseon Industrial Exhibition, the Exhibition was held in the Gyeongbok Palace, which had been the traditional symbol of Joseon kingship, but turned into a symbol of Japanese colonial and modern administration. Compared to the previous Exhibition, the scale of the 1929 Exhibition was larger and was an international fair in which Manchuria, Taiwan and Japan participated. Through the Exhibition, Japan wished not only to demonstrate its successful colonial rule of Korea internationally in East Asia, but also to promote trade between the participating countries and the major cities in Japan. In fact, by the time of the Manchurian Incident (also known as the Mukden Incident) in 1931, Japan had invaded Manchuria and established a puppet state, Manchukuo. From Manchuria through to Korea and Imperial Japan, it is said that Japan strengthened its colonial power of economy through trade with the established colonial states in East Asia.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the Exhibition of 1929 showcased the expanding Japanese Empire, while the 1915 Exhibition was a domestic exhibition held within the peninsula.

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<sup>57</sup> Kim Youngna, 'First Encounter', pp. 57-59.

<sup>58</sup> Ha Se-bong, '*Singminjigwollyeogui du gaji eolgul: Joseon bangnamhoe (1929nyeon)wa Daeman bangnamhoe (1935nyeon) bigyo*' [Two Faces of the Colonial Power: A Comparison between Joseon Exposition (1929) and Taiwan Exposition (1935)], Vol. 51, June 2004, pp. 111-143.



Figure 3.29. Poster of the Joseon Exhibition of 1929 (Source: The City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 2002, p. 106)

When Korean dress was displayed in the Exhibition by the Japanese organisers, it was excluded from any artistic or valued context, but arranged in a similar way to the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition. Figure 3.30 shows an example of how Korean dress was displayed at the Joseon Exhibition of 1929. Similar to the 1910 case, Korean traditional dress was exhibited on mannequins in an ethnographic context rather than as cherished traditional objects as within other material cultures. Two Korean female models wearing *hanbok* were standing with *jangseung* (Korean traditional totem pole at the village entrance) on the left side, against an illustrated backdrop. Korean traditional culture was often contrasted in the exhibition space with other modern products made with Japan's involvement.<sup>59</sup> Here the traditional totem pole, along with Korean women in traditional clothes, was contrasted against the backdrop of the modern style illustration depicting traditional Korean scenery.

<sup>59</sup> Choe Seok-yeong, *Hanguk Geundaeui Bangnamhoe*, p. 54.

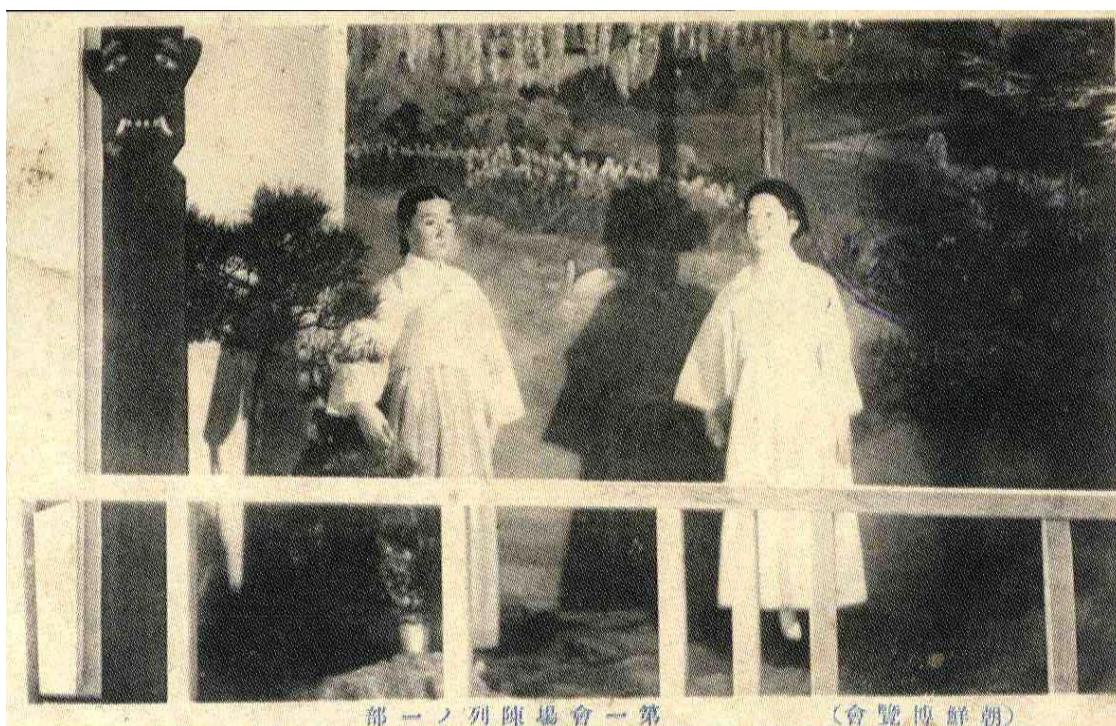


Figure 3.30. Display of Korean Mannequins, Joseon Exhibition, 1929 (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Kwon Hyeok-hui, 2005, p. 142)

Mannequins were often used for displays depicting the ‘Other’. As Kwon Hyeok-hui noted, the particular hairstyle and dress represented here is the style of the Joseon people and their traditional appearance at the Exhibition.<sup>60</sup> Within the aforementioned international and colonial context of the 1929 Exhibition, the appearance of such models would have been notable one another among the participated Manchuria, Taiwan, Japan and Joseon Korea. Similar displays of Korean people were also found at the Hokkaido Exhibition (北海島博覽會) of 1918 in Japan (Figure 3.31). Compared with the two female Korean models, this case features a group of Korean mannequins including men and women, as well as a boy and a girl. Each costume worn was again a clear identifier, telling Japanese visitors who the people were and how they looked, and collectively the appearance of the colonised Joseon subjects.

<sup>60</sup> Kwon Hyeok-hui, *Joseonese on*, p. 136.



Figure 3.31. Display of Korean Mannequins, Hokkaido Exhibition, 1918 (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Kwon Hyeok-hui, 2005, p. 142)

This rather anthropological style of dress representation – using dressed mannequins standing for a certain ethnic group of people – is clearly contrasted with the Japanese costume display at the 1910 Exhibition, where modern style of headless mannequins were used in a commercial context at the Japanese Textile Palace (Figure 3.32), and selected clothing and textile objects received an artistic context at the Palace of Fine Arts (see Figures 3.37, 3.39). The Japanese organisers at the exhibitions had different ways of representing sartorial culture, and these demonstrate the difference between the coloniser and the colonised, or the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’. The colonial intention behind the differentiation thus initiated unequal trajectories in the formation of sartorial traditions between Korea and Japan over time.



Figure 3.32. 'Japanese Textile Fabrics' at the Japanese Textile Palace (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 217)

Those major exhibitions held in colonial Korea by the Japanese clearly reflected colonialism, contrasting the modernity of the new exhibition buildings, products and displays with Korea's old ways of traditions. They provided a sense of modernity but simultaneously contrasted Korean traditions with the aim of Japanese colonial agenda. This discourse underlying the exhibitions was intertwined with the formation of tradition and modernity in Korea, and it created and circulated the concept of Korean tradition as underdeveloped versus the modernity provided by Japan. In this context, Korean traditional dress *hanbok* was portrayed as stagnant and old-fashioned. Sartorial tradition of Korea thus came to have unfavourable connotations and be linked with the colonial subjects. Sartorial tradition of *hanbok* in this way became situated under Japanese colonial discourse.

Such a discourse was further diffused and reinforced effectively through the print media in visual terms. Picture postcards were largely available during this time.



Various traditional Korean images were produced and distributed accompanying the exhibitions. For instance, Figure 3.33 shows a picture postcard advertising the Joseon Exhibition of 1929. Regarding the ‘Exhibition place’ [會場], it reads ‘Gyeongseong former Gyeongbok Palace’ [京城旧景福宮]. The Japanese authority, the publisher of the postcard, replaced the former Joseon royal palace with the Exhibition place. In addition, a female entertainer (*gisaeng*) dressed in a jacket of *hanbok* (*jeogori*) with a neat hairstyle and make-up is trimmed in a leaflike shape, inscribed with ‘Pyeongyang gisaeng’ [平壤妓生], by which viewers would know the *gisaeng* is affiliated to Pyeongyang (one of the celebrated cities as for the *gisaeng*). This is juxtaposed with the other framed image, ‘Pyeongnam-gwan’ [平南館], a related exhibition building at the Exhibition with Pyeongyang, against the illustrated background that depicts seemingly modern factories with chimneys.



Figure 3.33. Postcard of the Joseon Exhibition, 1929 (Source: <http://blog.naver.com/zoesu/30109961731>, Accessed on 19 January 2011)

While Japanese women in kimono were often put on postcards or souvenir photographs at the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition (Figure 3.34), Japanese authorities

also utilised Korean *gisaeng* for the postcard images of colonial Korea.<sup>61</sup> Japan was in turn orientalisising the female Korean. The traditional dress depicted in the postcard worn by a Korean woman defined her as a Japanese colonial subject and may have appealed to male colonisers' eyes. The sartorial tradition became subject to Japanese colonial power in this context. Postcards bearing problematic and gendered images of Korean women along with their traditional dress were consumed widely during the colonial period and the inherent colonial discourse pervaded society without them even realising the discursive nature of the images on sartorial tradition.



Figure 3.34. 'Imperial Pavilion', Photograph (Source: author's photograph taken from London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham Archives and Local History Centre)

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<sup>61</sup> These types of representation commonly appeared in photographs and postcards, as they appealed to Western eyes. Also, a great deal of souvenirs was produced during the Exhibition, often depicting a Japanese girl and a British boy in the theme of 'Anglo-Japanese Alliance'. See Tomoko Sato and Toshio Watanabe, ed. *Japan and Britain: An Aesthetic Dialogue 1850-1930*, 1991, p. 159.

## ***2.2. A Comparison: Japanese Clothing and Textiles at the Palace of Fine Arts in the 1910 Exhibition***

The previous case of Korean dress display is clearly contrasted to what Japan projected her sartorial culture as an artistic context at the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910. Japanese dress and textile-related objects were placed in ‘Building 26, Palace of Japanese and British Fine Arts’. In this way, Japanese clothing and textiles were well linked to a positive connotation of the aesthetic art objects displayed at the Palace of Fine Arts. The Japanese commission wished to regard their clothing and textile objects as art, transcending their seemingly mere status as commercial, traditional or old civilisation. The artistic status of Japanese dress and textile exhibits facilitated the distinction of the objects in terms of a category, as well as acting as a contrast to their colonial counterparts and showing different values and attitudes to them.

As noted in the official catalogue and fine arts catalogue, Japan highly valued the objects exhibited at the Palace of Fine Arts, described as the ‘gem of the Japanese division of the Exhibition’<sup>62</sup> and ‘treasures of the nation’.<sup>63</sup> Many of the objects were brought over from Japan for the first time and had never been seen in public before. Large and generous contributions from national and private collections were elicited from owners and custodians for the purpose of sympathy and friendship with Britain, the allied Empire.<sup>64</sup> Donald Richie also notes that the amount of art sent over was unprecedented and valuable, while Lawrence Binyon at the British Museum devoted a whole series in the *Saturday Review* to the opportunity to study ‘authentic masterpieces by rare artists, scarcely known in the West save by copies and forgeries.’<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxiv.

<sup>63</sup> Fine Arts Catalogue, Japan-British Exhibition 1910, 1910, p. xv.

<sup>64</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxiv.

<sup>65</sup> Donald Richie, *British Press*.

In the Japanese fine arts section, there were a greater number of works of art, including paintings and many specimens of ceramic, lacquer work, sculpture, architecture, metal work, textile and needlework, commencing with examples from the ninth century, and continuing through all the intervening periods to those of the present period.<sup>66</sup> According to the fine arts catalogue and the illustrated catalogue of Japanese old/modern fine arts, the Japanese section was divided into ‘Retrospective Works’ (Figure 3.35) and ‘Modern Works’ (Figure 3.36); and Japanese artworks were categorised respectively as shown in Table 3.3. Clothing and textile objects are included in the three categories bolded (Fabrics; Dyeing, Weaving, and Embroidery; Designs) in addition to the related objects and representations that can be found underlined in other categories.

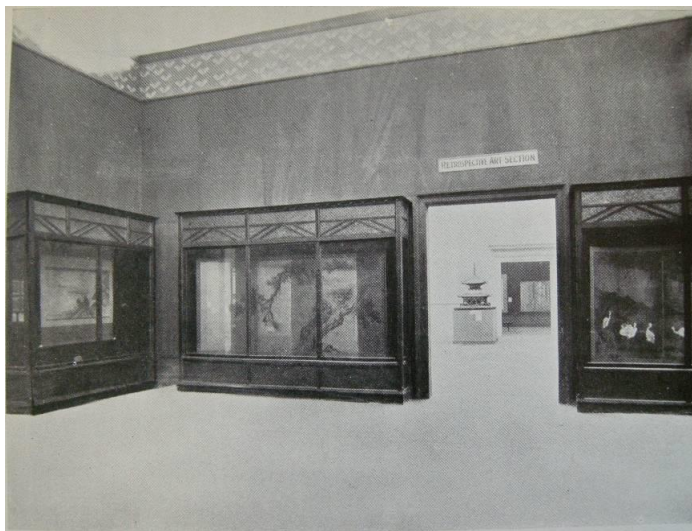


Figure 3.35. ‘Retrospective Art Section in the Japanese Art Gallery’ (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 139)



Figure 3.36. ‘Modern Art Section in the Japanese Art Gallery’ (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 161)

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<sup>66</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxiv.

Table 3.3. Categories of the Japanese Arts Section

<p>Fine Arts Catalogue, Derby and London: Bemrose &amp; Sons Limited, 1910 <sup>67</sup></p>	<p>An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, Tokyo: The Shimbi Shoin, 1910 <sup>68</sup></p>
<p><i>Retrospective Works:</i>  <u>Paintings and Drawings</u> (1-296)  <u>Sculpture</u> (297-317)          Models of Old Buildings (318-330)  <u>Works in Metal</u> (331-370B)          Lacquer Work (371-409)  <b>Fabrics</b> (410-432)</p>	<p><u>Paintings</u> (1-296)  <u>Sculptures</u> (297-317)          Models of Old Buildings (318-330)  <u>Metal Works</u> (331-370)          Lacquer Wares (371-409)  <b>Fabrics</b> (410-432)</p>
<p><i>Modern Works:</i>          Paintings and Drawings (1-48)          Bronze (49-59)          Wood-Carving and Wood-Inlaying (60-71)          Ivory (72-85)          Works in Metal (86-134)          Lacquer Work (135-152)          Pottery and Porcelain (153-177)          Cloisonné (178-198)  <b>Dyeing, Weaving, and Embroidery</b> (199-211)          Wood-Cut and Printing (212-218)  <b>Designs</b> (219-226)</p>	<p>An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Modern Fine Arts, Tokyo: The Shimbi Shoin, 1910 <sup>69</sup></p> <p><u>Japanese Paintings</u> (1-41)  <u>Western Paintings</u> (42-60)  <u>Sculptures</u> (61-101)  <b>Designs</b> (102-120)  <u>Wood-Cuts</u> (121-134)  <u>Pottery</u> (135-158)          Cloisonné (159-180)          Metal Works (181-221)  <b>Dyed Fabrics and Embroideries</b> (222-240)  <u>Lacquer Wares</u> (241-259)          Inlaid and Wood-Works (260-263)</p>

<sup>67</sup> Source: Fine Arts Catalogue, Japan-British Exhibition 1910, Derby and London: Bemrose & Sons, 1910, p. i (Contents page), 144-203. This catalogue does not include pictures of Japanese arts, while shows pictures of British arts throughout the pages. The order of lists is as shown in the catalogue. Also note the author's **bolded** and underlined lists are related to clothing and textile objects in the section.

<sup>68</sup> Source: An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, Displayed at the Japan-British Exhibition, London, 1910, compiled by the Office of the Imperial Japanese Government Commission to the Japan-British Exhibition, Tokyo: The Shimbi Shoin, 1910, pp. 1-78.

<sup>69</sup> Source: An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Modern Fine Arts, Displayed at the Japan-British Exhibition, London, 1910, compiled by the Office of the Imperial Japanese Government Commission to the Japan-British Exhibition, Tokyo: The Shimbi Shoin, 1910, pp. 1-11. In this section of 'Modern Works', there are slight differences of the categories and numbers between the two catalogues.

In the category of ‘Fabrics’ in the section ‘Retrospective Works’, according to the fine arts catalogue there were 72 items of clothing displayed:

- 410. [Title] Ancient Court Dresses (19 in number). [Lent by.] Prince Michizane Kujo
- 411-413. Hirao, Front Hanging Belt (3 in number). Prince Michizane Kujo
- 414. “No” Drama Robes (27 in number). Marquis Toshinari Ma[y]eda
- 415. “No” Drama Robes (5 in number). Marquis Nakahiro Ikeda
- 416-417. Garments (2 in number). Marquis Morishige Hosokawa
- 418-425. “No” Drama Robes (8 in number). Count Kozui Otani
- 426-430. Long-sleeved Garments (5 in number). Daimaru Drapery Store
- 431. Brocade Mandara. Jimbei Kawashima, Esq.
- 432. “No” Drama Robes (2 in number). Jimbei Kawashima, Esq.<sup>70</sup>

This includes the largest number of *No* drama robes, ancient court dresses, long-sleeved garments, etc., owned by Prince Kujo and other aristocrats, as well as the Daimaru Dry Goods Store, Tokyo. More details of each item can be found in an accompanying catalogue published in Japan, ‘An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts’, which also includes 10 pictures of selected clothes from the list.<sup>71</sup> For example, one of the detailed explanations in the illustrated catalogue reads as follows:

414. 27 “NO” DRAMA ROBES.

The splendid robes were handed from one generation of actors to another as was the case with the masks. They generally suggested the characters who wore them either by colour or design. Thus red was worn only by young women, scales by the dragon spirit, and white and gold by a goddess. These robes are given here.

Owned by Marquis Mayeda Toshinari. (See Pictures Nos. 253, 255.) [Figure 3.37]<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Fine Arts Catalogue, p. 181.

<sup>71</sup> See Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, pp. 75-78, and pictures numbers 253-262.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 75-76.



Figure 3.37. 'No Drama Robe' (Source: An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, 1910, picture number: 253)

The details and other explanations of the items noted in the catalogue suggested the value of the dress objects and a bit of the collection's background with various elite collectors in Japan. The status of clothing as art was consolidated in this way and readers of the catalogue and visitors would have appreciated the beauty of the Japanese traditional costume displayed in the art gallery. In contrast, this kind of representation of dress aesthetics is not found in the Korean costumes displayed in the Palace of the Orient, although the planned spectacle of the dress representation by the Japanese commission was rightfully expected in the 1910 Exhibition.

In the 'Designs' category of the 'Modern Works' section as recorded in the illustrated catalogue, various pattern design works for Japanese traditional fabrics, dyeing and screens were presented. Japan wanted to showcase the design textiles in this category, linking the aesthetics of painting and the development of the Japanese fabrics. The official reports notes: 'It has often been said that Japanese painting is essentially decorative, and that the composition, on the whole, is more or less in the nature of design. This feature is accredited by many as one of the chief reasons for the great progress made by the Japanese in designs for textile fabrics.'<sup>73</sup> Displaying the

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<sup>73</sup> Official Report, p. 187.

designs for patterns adapted for such traditional works as the *Yuzen* dyed fabrics by the Kyoto Design Association (Figure 3.38), for instance, this section seemed to project not only the beauty of Japanese textiles, but also their intention to show the progress of design, which can be seen as modern, but rooted in the regional tradition. With the curatorial attempt to link ‘modern’ design and ‘tradition’ in this section, the displayed Japanese clothing and textile objects in the gallery were then represented as a means of delivering Japanese beauty in terms of art, but also represented Japanese modern aesthetics as being rooted and developed from tradition. As a whole this strengthened the discourse of the status of art, which links the past and present. Clothing and textiles were part of this discourse, which could be the reason ‘modernised’ Japan wanted to hold the 1910 Exhibition.



Figure 3.38. ‘Design for *Yuzen* Dyeing (I), Takayama Yosokichi, Representative of the Kyoto Designing Association’ (Source: An Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Modern Fine Arts, 1910, picture number: 111)

Another noteworthy contrasting example is the Japanese armour, which was displayed in the ‘Retrospective’ art gallery (Figure 3.39). The ‘Metal Works’ category indeed consisted of ‘armours, helmets, face guards, stirrups, arrow heads, dirks, swords, and varied belongings of swords including tsuba’.<sup>74</sup> Regardless of the

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<sup>74</sup> See Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, pp. 47-66, detailing from ‘331. One



category, the Japanese commission carefully arranged the display, as the official report notes:

An excellent display was made in this section. It consisted among other things of exquisite pieces of armour by such masters as Myochin Munesuke, Myochin Sosatsu, Horai Munenaga, Myochin Yoshimichi, and Munemasa. Contribution for this section came from the Imperial Household Museum, Shinto shrines, and private treasures.<sup>75</sup>

If the clothing-related objects received the status of art in the gallery, the armour displayed in this section not only stressed the value of art, but further highlighted the militant nature of the Japanese Empire: ‘The exhibit of metal work bore testimony to the fact that Japan has always been a militant nation, and further that the high attainment and skill in the art of the metal worker found its most complete expression in the production of weapons of war’.<sup>76</sup> Overall, it can be said that the artistic treatment of Japanese clothing and textiles and related objects was carefully established as early as in the 1910 Exhibition, and the valued notion has been handed down until today and is practiced in many museums worldwide; however, this is not the case for Korean clothing and textiles due to, unlike the Japanese case, the inevitably different exhibition and collecting trajectory in history.

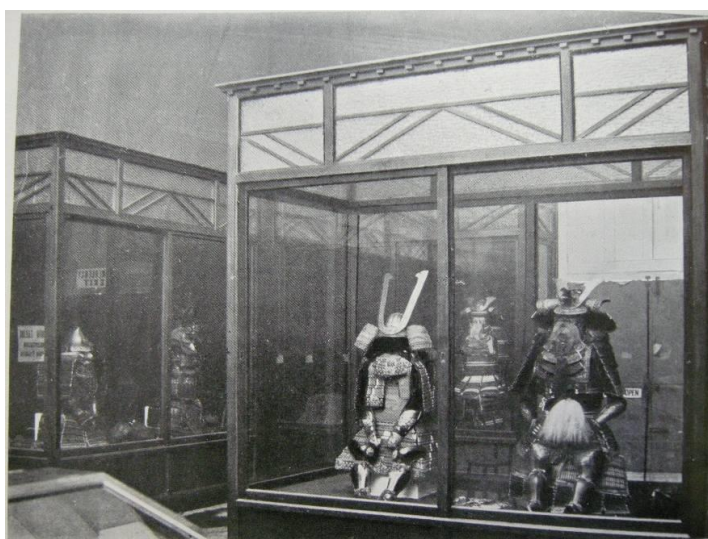


Figure 3.39. ‘Ancient Japanese Armour Display’ (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 152)

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Suit of Armour’ to ‘370. Tsuba’.

<sup>75</sup> Official Report, p. 179.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

### ***2.3. A Comparison: Display of Japanese Traditional and Western Dress at the Japanese Historical Palace in the 1910 Exhibition***

Despite Korean people's beginning of wearing Western-style clothing before 1910, Japan's projection of Korea's sartorial culture was only about traditional Korean clothing *hanbok*, excluding Western clothing worn by Koreans. This shows another stark contrast to that of Japan's display at the 1910 Exhibition. Japan projected its traditional dress, *kimono*, along with modern Western-style clothing in a particular way. This differentiated spectacle of Japanese sartorial representation lies in, and creates, a historical context.

Located near the main site of the Exhibition, Building 12 was the 'Japanese Historical Palace'. The palace led the way to the Exhibition, so most visitors would have viewed and learned what Japan wanted to portray in terms of its history. Indeed, the display in the palace was 'twelve brilliant tableaux representing, by the aid of life-size figures, various epochs of the twenty-five centuries which are covered by the history of Japan'.<sup>77</sup> In detail, the official catalogue records 'twelve historical tableaux representing the various epochs of the 2,500 years of the history of the Japanese Empire' as follows:

- 1.-The Period of Emperor Jimmu, earlier than 660 B.C. [Figure 3.40]
- 2.-The Nara Period, A.D. 710-784.
- 3.-The Heian Period, A.D. 784-986. [Figure 3.41]
- 4.- The Heian Period, A.D. 784-986.
- 5.-The Fujiwara Period, A.D. 986-1159.
- 6.-The Gempei Period, A.D. 1159-1219.
- 7.-The Kamakura Period, A.D. 1186-1333.
- 8.-The Ashikaga Period, A.D. 1338-1573.
- 9.-The Momoyama Period, A.D. 1583-1603.
- 10.-Tea Ceremony, the 16th Century. [Figure 3.42]
- 11.-The Tokugawa Period, A.D. 1603-1867. [Figure 3.43]
- 12.-The Present Day, A.D. 1868-. [Figures 3.44, 3.45, 3.46, 3.47]<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxii.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.



Figure 3.40. 'The Period of Emperor Jimmu, Earlier than 660 B.C.' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 196)



Figure 3.41. 'The Heian Period, 784-986 A.D.' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 197)

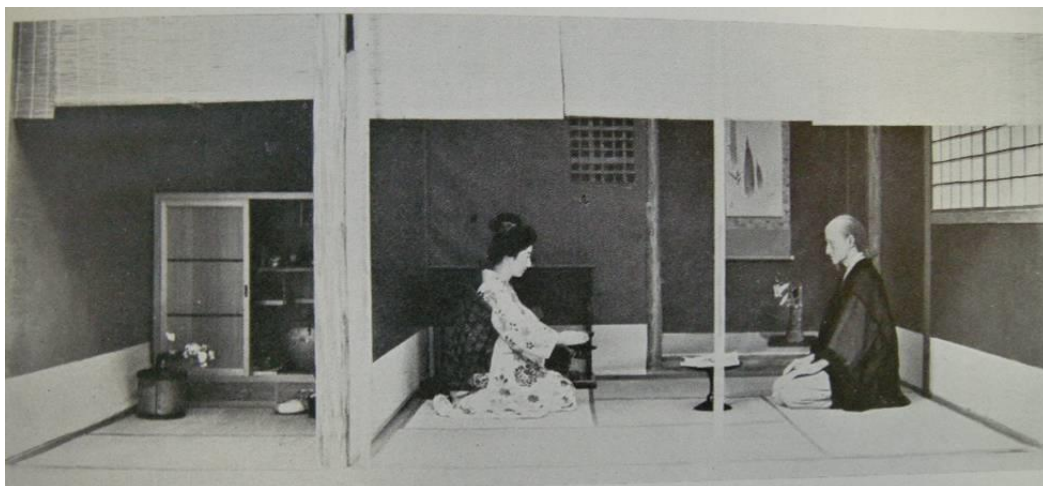


Figure 3.42. 'Tea Ceremony, Sixteenth Century' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 203)



Figure 3.43. 'Tokugawa Period, 1603-1867 A.D.' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 204)

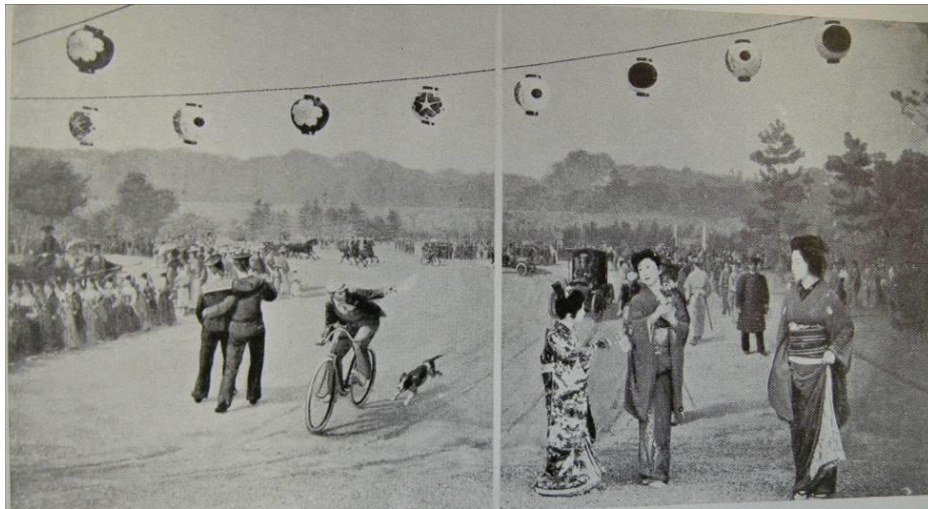


Figure 3.44. 'Japan of To-Day' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 205)



Figure 3.45. 'Japan of To-Day' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 205)

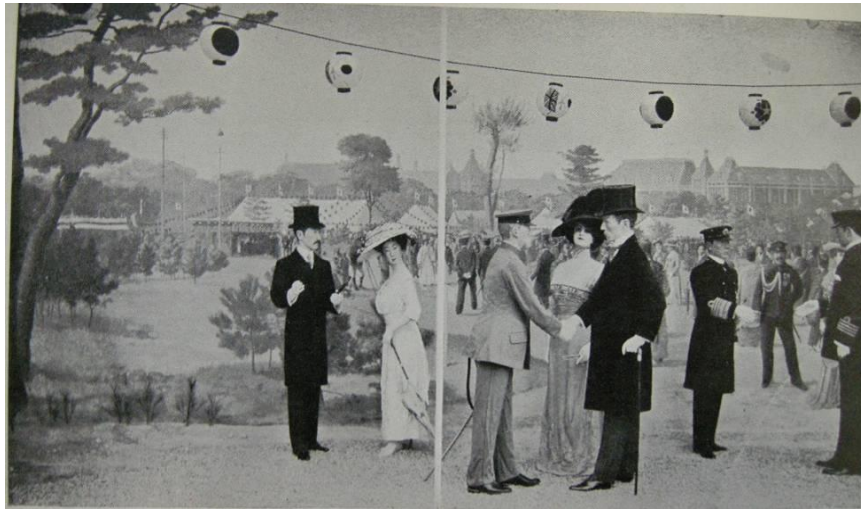


Figure 3.46. 'Japan of To-Day' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 206)

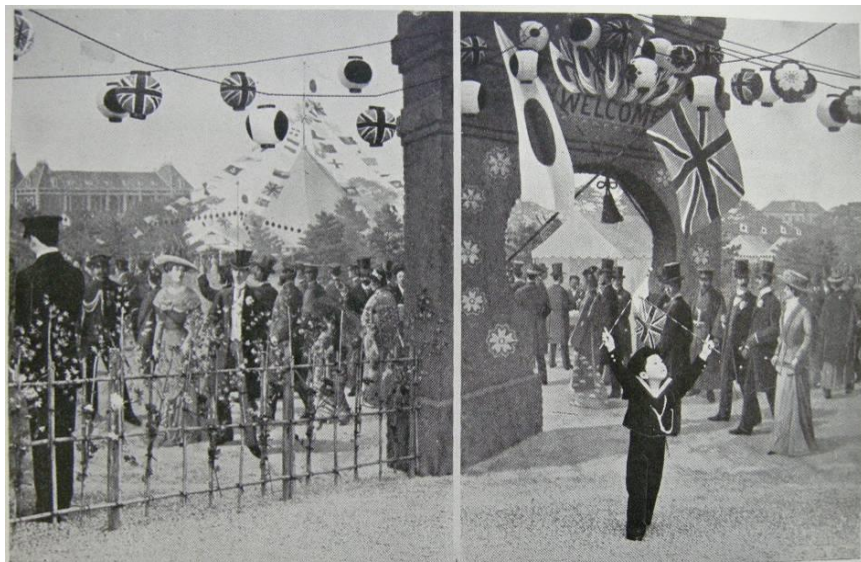


Figure 3.47. 'Japan of To-Day' (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 206)

These visual displays of tableaux illustrated the historiography and underpinned the historical discourse that Japan wished to project. Through the twelve tableaux narrating Japanese history, it stressed Japan's historicity, social development and current modernity. While Japan's old civilisation, values and traditions were projected (Figures 3.40, 3.41, 3.43) as well, including the tea ceremony in the sixteen century (Figure 3.42), its modernised status was continuously highlighted (Figures 3.44, 3.45, 3.46, 3.47). It was one of the aims of the Exhibition for Japan to introduce itself to the Western world through its past, recent present and projected future. The country wished to deliver an image of a culture that had not suddenly leapt from a state of

semi-barbarism to one of high civilisation in the middle of the nineteenth century, but that had always been progressive, and that the modernisation of Japan since 1868 was only the result of a natural progression. This was the message of the twelve illustrated tableaux, comprising of full-sized dioramas with wax figures dressed against elaborate backgrounds. Here, Japanese traditional costume and Western modern dress played a significant role in representing each culture, underlining its evolving history and civilisation through this development. In addition, the location of Building 12 was quite central, meaning people would have found it difficult to miss. Japanese commissioners carefully planned the location of the historical palace, highlighting the politics of the exhibitionary space. Overall, Japan looked to strengthen its imperial status and advocate its modernised power and legitimacy over its colonies.

In this historical context, when looking at dress representations in the visual discourse of the tableaux, each tableau showed the particular historical costume that Japanese elites and court people wore. In the twelfth tableau, however, the Present Day section featured a visible shift from traditional costume to Western-style costume (Figures 3.44, 3.45, 3.46, 3.47). Western-style uniforms or clothing are worn by Japanese men, whereas Japanese women appeared in traditional kimono (Figures 3.44, 3.45). This can be criticised, on the one hand, as a gendered perspective in which the Western-style men are linked to decision makers, power, progression and modernity, while the traditionally dressed women link to the opposite ideas. In this regard, it can be further argued that Japan presented itself as a masculine imperial modern power in contrast to the feminine, colonised, traditional Korea displayed in the other building at the Exhibition. On the other hand, if Japanese sartorial tradition was highly valued as in other cases, Japan may have wished to portray that its sartorial modernity of the Western style was derived from its traditional costume, underlining some kinds of link in its sartorial progress from the traditional style to the modern Western style.

Besides, Western clothing worn by the Japanese appeared in tandem with foreigners in their Western clothes (Figures 3.46, 3.47). According to the official

catalogue, the crowd includes ‘Japanese officers and civilians, British naval officers and English ladies’.<sup>79</sup> In the particular period [Japan of To-Day] of Japanese history narrated by the tableaux, Japan is represented as a contemporary modern state developed by an evolutionary process throughout its history. The kind of clothing displayed in these tableaux functioned as a means to convince viewers of how Japanese people had been modernised in their appearances. In this respect, the Western clothing referred to their progressive development and modernity, whereas the historical Japanese clothing was an old-fashioned style or the tradition, depending on viewers’ perspectives. As mentioned earlier, despite Korea having adopted Western dress prior to 1910, only traditional Korean dress was exhibited in the Korean pavilion by the Japanese committee, and the fact that Koreans dressed in Western style was not referred to anywhere visually in the Exhibition is noteworthy. In this way, the colonial status of Korea was reinforced by its traditional dress *hanbok* within the discursive exhibition space.

Furthermore, although it would not be necessary to situate the two forms of traditional and Western dress in stark contrast or binary opposition, it can be valid that the more Japanese traditional dress becomes contrasted and relegated, the clearer the message is achieved that the Japanese wearing of Western clothing signifies modernity. Indeed, many photographs of Japanese officers at the Exhibition Committee or participating at the related banquets in London show their Western-style attire (Figure 3.48). Japanese officers were the real examples at the Exhibition, proving that Japanese modernists dressed in Western clothing rather than traditional kimono. Visitors passing this building would have understood the development of Japanese history by glancing over the changes in how people dressed. Styles of dress represented the historical development of Japan, yet generated a dichotomy between traditional Japanese costume and modern Western clothes. A sartorial contradiction could be then created, with traditional Japanese clothing and textiles valued highly as artistic objects, yet

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<sup>79</sup> Official Catalogue, third edition, p. xxxii.

sometimes contrasted with Western dress and modernity as a symbol of the non-Western or tradition, showing the progress from old tradition to modern style.



Figure 3.48. ‘Luncheon in Honour of the Captain and Officers of His Imperial Japanese Majesty’s Cruiser “Ikoma”, 20 July 1910’ (Source: Official Report, 1911, p. 503)

#### ***2.4. Collecting and Museums, Folklore and Invented Sartorial Tradition***

Whilst the Japanese colonial power making sartorial tradition of Korea at the 1910 Exhibition, the formation of tradition in material culture was made possible through collecting practices in colonial Korea. Japanese authorities, collectors and scholars accumulated antiquities and collectable objects as ‘symbolic capital’, and those objects were often used for exhibitions and museum displays, reflecting ‘colonial knowledge’.<sup>80</sup> The collecting process under imperialism or colonialism has often been criticised for the ‘displacement of objects’ out of the original context.<sup>81</sup> In the Korean peninsula, Japan conducted these collecting practices in the name of archaeological

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<sup>80</sup> Kim Brandt, ‘Objects of Desire: Japanese Collectors and Colonial Korea’, 8/3, Winter 2000, pp. 711-746.

<sup>81</sup> Susan M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections*, 1992.



surveys, anthropological/ethnographic and folklore research into Joseon people and culture.

However, with regard to clothing and textile objects, it seems that there were no direct collecting practices during the colonial period. Korean costume was not considered valuable for antiquity, nor collectable material culture objects in museum-settings. Many Japanese dress objects and textile works, however, were collected and displayed through exhibitions and housed in museums, which legacy still remains until today. The Japanese clothing and textile objects exhibited in the 1910 Exhibition, in particular at the Palace of Fine Arts, were collections from the Japanese court, aristocrats and wealthy families – a result of their collecting tradition (see Table 3.3).<sup>82</sup> This collecting practice influences the field positively even in the present day, facilitating exhibitions like ‘Fashioning Kimono: Dress in Early Twentieth-Century Japan’, which was held at the Victoria and Albert Museum from 13 October 2005 to 1 May 2006, thanks to the ‘Montgomery Collection’ from Japan.<sup>83</sup> Also, the Kyoto Costume Institute has earned an international reputation in collecting and researching authentic samples and outstanding examples of Western clothing since its foundation in 1978 by the Wacoal Corporation.<sup>84</sup> These works can be said to be a result of Japan’s rich sartorial history of collecting of dress and textiles.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> For the detail of collectors on the exhibits, see Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Old Fine Arts, and Illustrated Catalogue of Japanese Modern Fine Arts.

<sup>83</sup> See the accompanied book catalogue: Annie Van Assche, ed. *Fashioning Kimono: Dress and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan*, 2005. The Montgomery Collection dates roughly from the 1860s to the early 1950s – the last few years of the Edo period, all of the Meiji and Taishō periods, and the first twenty-five years of the Shōwa period.

<sup>84</sup> Akiko Fukai, ed. *Fashion: A History from the 18th to the 20th Century* (The Collection of the Kyoto Costume Institute), 2002. The Kyoto Costume Institute’s collection ranges from the 17th century to the present day, holding 12,000 items of clothing and 16,000 documents.

<sup>85</sup> The difference between traditional Japanese and Korean dress in terms of commercial aspects today is that while Japanese kimono is sold in department stores in Japan at high prices, Korean *hanbok* can be found in market stores rather than department stores at relatively lower prices. This also can be said to be due to the different historical trajectory

Unlike the Japan's sartorial tradition trajectory, Korea's was decided by the hands of the Japanese administration after they took over. Compared to other Korean antiquities, *hanbok* was not appropriate as 'symbolic capital' or collectable material for museums under the Japanese regime.<sup>86</sup> As their sartorial tradition was not valued as much as other collected artefacts by the Japanese during the colonial period, what colonial subjects wore in daily life and as a rite of passage sat on the periphery among everyday objects. In other words, Korean costume was treated as folklore rather than art. Japanese folklorist, Imamura Tomoe's (今村 鞆, 1870–1943, lived in Joseon from 1908 to 1943) book *Joseon pungsokjip* [朝鮮風俗集, Joseon Folklore Collections], published in 1914, included a chapter on 'Joseon people's costume'.<sup>87</sup> According to Ju Yeong-ha, Japanese folklorists' study under the Japanese Government-General of Korea was influential in allowing the regime to understand Joseon people and culture, and to rule the colony.<sup>88</sup> Yet, there are problems in that the folklore or tradition studied and framed in a certain way still impinges upon what Koreans may think of their folk tradition, with the 'Joseon colony's folk tradition' regarded as 'Korean folk tradition' until today.<sup>89</sup>

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of treating traditional costumes; one making its own way and the other directed by a colonial legacy.

<sup>86</sup> Cha Mun-seong, *Geundae bangmulgwan, geu hyeongseonggwa byeoncheon gwajeong: bangmulhakgwa bangnamhoeui yeonghyange ttareun seogu, ilbon, hanguk bigyo* [Modern Museum, Its Formation and Transition: Comparison between the West, Japan and Korea by Influences of Museology and Exposition], 2008.; Kim In-deok, *Singminjisidae geundae gonggan gunnipbangmulgwan* [Modern Space of National Museums in the Colonial Period], 2007.

<sup>87</sup> Ju Yeong-ha, 'Joseonineui mipunggwa pungsokgyohwa, Imamura Tomoe-eui "Joseon Pungsokjip" yeongu' [Edification of Joseon People's Custom and Folklore, A Study on Imamura Tomoe's 'Joseon Folklore Collections'], in Ju Yeong-ha, Im Gyeong-taek, and Nam Geun-u, *Jeguk ilboni geurin Joseon minsok* [Joseon Folklore drawn by the Imperial Japan], pp. 73-75.; Imamura Tomoe, *Joseon Pungsokjip* [Joseon Folklore Collections], 1914.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63-102.

<sup>89</sup> Ju Yeong-ha, Im Gyeong-taek, and Nam Geun-u, *Jeguk ilboni geurin Joseon minsok*

In this regard, Korean sartorial tradition formed during the colonial era has affected values of traditional dress and the current category of museum-settings. In South Korea today, traditional costume *hanbok* is housed in the National Folk Museum of Korea (국립민속박물관) rather than the National Museum of Korea (국립중앙박물관). The latter museum is known as the flagship museum of Korean history and art in South Korea, established in 1945. Its collections are largely based on Korea's first museum, the Imperial Household Museum (제실박물관 or 이왕가박물관), established in 1908, and the Government-General Museum (조선총독부박물관), in 1915. But, in its archaeology, history and fine arts sections, Korean costume is not included. Instead, traditional *hanbok* is collected in the former museum established in 1945, following on from the Korean Folk Crafts Museum (조선민족미술관) in 1924, led by Yanagi Sōetsu (柳宗悦, or Yanagi Muneyoshi, 1889–1961), to illustrate the traditional life of the Korean people. Through three permanent exhibition halls – the ‘History of Korean People’, the ‘Korean Way of Life’ and the ‘Life Cycle of the Koreans’ – the National Folk Museum of Korea displays a range of Korean costumes related to history, sartorial life and rites of passage (Figure 3.49). Korean clothing and textiles are also collected and displayed in other private and university museums after the colonial period; about ten of which exist in Seoul, including the Museum of Korean Embroidery (한국자수박물관), Ewha Womans University Museum (이화여자대학교박물관), Sookmyung Women's University Museum (숙명여자대학교박물관) and Seok Juseon Memorial Museum of Dankook University (단국대학교석주선기념 박물관), to name a few notable museums in the field.<sup>90</sup>

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[Joseon Folklore drawn by the Imperial Japan], 2006, p. 9.

<sup>90</sup> An In-hui and Pak Sin-ui, ‘Bangmulgwan boksikjeonsimul haeseoge gwanhan nyeongu: Gungnimminsokbangmulgwan joseonsidae saryeboksigeul jungsimeuro’ [A Case Study on Interpretation of Costume Objects of Museum – Centring on Joseon Dynasty Family Rite Costume in the National Folk Museum of Korea], 16/2, 2010, pp. 312-323. Among them, an important one is the Seok Juseon Memorial Museum of Dankook University, established by a dress scholar, Seok Ju-seon (石宙善, 1911–1996)’s donation of 3,365 items of Korean



Figure 3.49. Korean Costume Display at the National Folk Museum of Korea (Source: Author's photograph at the National Folk Museum of Korea)

Thus, it can be said that it was Japanese colonial establishments who categorised Korean costume as folklore rather than fine arts during the colonial period, in contrast to how Japan treated its own clothing and textile objects and sartorial culture in exhibitionary space such as the 1910 Exhibition. The colonial regime's collecting practice resulted in numerous archaeological excavations of ancient Korean artefacts, which were later placed in museums representing the material culture and fine arts tradition of Korea,<sup>91</sup> but the exclusion of Korean dress affected the formation of

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clothing and textile objects to the University in 1981, and other collections mainly consist of excavated costumes from the Joseon period.

<sup>91</sup> For details of the introduction and development of building museums across colonial Korea, see Choe Seok-yeong, *Hanguk bangmulgwon nyeoksa 100nyeon: jindan & daean* [100 Years of Korean Museum History: Diagnosis & Alternatives], 2008.

sartorial tradition. The notion of material culture collections was often used to support the historical link between Japan and Korea and to further the legitimacy of Japan's colonisation of Korea.<sup>92</sup> Costumes were mere objects of folklore studies that helped the Japanese to understand the colony. Based on collecting practices, archaeological research and ethnographic surveys, museums were built across the peninsula – colonial institutions that acted as an exhibitionary apparatus for displaying excavated Korean material culture – however, these excluded dress objects, which were dealt with by Japanese folklorists distributing colonial discourse, thus inventing tradition of Korean dress in their own ends.

### ***2.5. A Nuanced Reading of Dress Practice as Colonial Modernity***

Showcasing Japan's achievement of new governance in public displays and exhibiting traditional Korean objects through exhibitions were something modern to Korean people to date. As Terence Ranger pointed out, in colonial Africa, the invented traditions imported from Europe not only provided whites with models of command but also offered many Africans models of 'modern' behaviour.<sup>93</sup> It can be then plausible that in some colonial contexts the relations between the traditional and the modern do not necessarily involve displacement or exclusiveness, but invite much more nuanced interpretations. Tradition and modernity are contrasted but are also connected in subtle ways, which can be understood in the framework of 'colonial modernity' in East Asia. This in turn links to postcolonial readings of traditions of non-Western dress. Constructed sartorial traditions can now be read in multiple ways and are not necessarily confined to the colonial shadow of the oppressor. This section tries to conduct alternative readings on sartorial practice of Koreans that was produced and portrayed through photographic images by the Japanese in relation to exhibition occasions. It questions to what extent the portrayals of sartorial culture by the Japanese can be decoded into nuances of Korean people's dress practice at that time.

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<sup>92</sup> Choe Seok-yeong, *Hanguk Geundaewi Bangnamhoe*.

<sup>93</sup> Terence Ranger, 'Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa', p. 212.

To apply an alternative reading, photographic images accompanied by the aforementioned exhibitions that the Japanese carefully organised can be a useful site. This is because those images well contain colonial intentions when they were published and circulated alongside the openings of the exhibitions. In advertising exhibitions created by the Japanese administration through various images such as picture postcards or photographs, a stereotypical juxtaposition lies in Korean visitors dressed in traditional *hanbok* against the Western style of the exhibition buildings that the Japanese built (Figure 3.50). The colonial power's discourse projected the dichotomy between the coloniser's modern edifices and the colonised subjects' traditional costumes, by which Japan was constructing a sartorial tradition of colonial subjects as being opposite of modernity. This view then can be deconstructed, begging the question of whether one can read sartorial practice of traditional *hanbok* in alternative ways, overcoming the colonial discourse on the sartorial tradition. That is, alternative accounts interrogate Japan's production of colonial vision and look for whether there are any nuances present or a crack among the colonial power and its representations.



Figure 3.50. Korean visitors in front of the Reference Art Palace (참고관, *Chamgogwan*), Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 (Source: <http://blog.naver.com/zoesu/30109961731>, Accessed on 19 January 2011)

Despite the inherent colonialism in the exhibitionary space, Korean people who visited the exhibitions and museums may have experienced modern displays and modern things in the modern exhibitionary places. They experienced a modern lifestyle of enjoying leisure time, as Terence Ranger calls the ‘modern behaviour’ of the colonised.<sup>94</sup> This kind of new modern experience gradually provided Korean people with the sense of ‘modern subjectivity’.<sup>95</sup> In this way, Koreans were not necessarily passive subjects who simply bowed to colonial control in the Japanese discursive space. Such a nuanced viewpoint can also offer insight into the interpretation of Korean people’s attire.

Looking back the Figure 3.50, the Korean visitors’ attire in *hanbok* can be read as appropriate costume for the spectators on a day out to the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915. To enjoy and look around the Exhibition as a modern-style leisure activity, the Koreans would have dressed up in well prepared *hanbok* dresses, rather than wearing everyday plain *hanbok* clothes. Depending on one’s social class, gender, identity and even personal taste, one may have selected a Korean-style day out dress before coming to the Exhibition. Some may not have possessed any Western clothing in their wardrobes, but would have paid attention to their *hanbok* style in the morning to enjoy the day out. In this regard, we can now understand that many men’s attire in the picture wearing a traditional Korean overcoat (*durumagi*) with either a traditional hat (*gat*) or a Western-style hat was perhaps their best attempt for the day out, on the outing day that the photograph was taken. Here, one can view the Koreans’ sartorial practice beyond any colonial agenda that may have been underlay.

In addition, Figure 3.51 further proves to show how different groups of people wore their dress on the visit according to their social class and gender. Visitors queued to enter the 1915 Exhibition, and depending on their status, gender and taste, they

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Kim Jin-gyun and Jeong Geun-sik, ed. *Geundaejuchewa Singminji Gyuyulgwollyeok* [Modern Subjects and Colonial Disciplinary Power], 1997.

dressed for the occasion. Korean clothing may well represent the wearer's identity. The people in the rickshaw in the central entrance way seem VIP visitors or wealthier ones than the others waiting in the queue on the right side; the former group's outing attire appears finer than the latter group's photographed as well.



Figure 3.51. Visitors at the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 (Source: The City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 2002, p. 104)

Although modern-style leisure time emerged during the colonial Korea, people's dress style for the leisure activity may not have changed at the same time. In dress practice during the colonial modern era, choices between *hanbok* and *yangbok* still remained to the individual and were based on the time, place and occasion, as is the case for what people wear today. Despite the colonial discourse may have put *hanbok* as an opposite of modernity through exhibitions and related images, Korean people's sartorial practice between *hanbok* and *yangbok* was up to their choices depending on their social identities and tastes.

Taking another example from the Joseon Exhibition of 1929, this is to find another nuanced understanding of sartorial practice in Korea that changed after 14 years, but also to uncover Japan's production of colonial vision in a nuanced situation from two photographic images that can be called as a crack between the colonial



power and representations at the same Exhibition background.<sup>96</sup> While the colonial discursive images tended to project mainly traditional *hanbok* attire against modern Western exhibition buildings, various styles can be found against the backdrop of the modern exhibition constructions in 1929. This not only reveals the colonial discourse in the selected images, but also requires more nuanced interpretations of the reality of Korean dress practice at that time.

Figure 3.52 shows modern-style exhibition buildings along with visitors at the Joseon Exhibition of 1929. Three Korean women in *hanbok* attire are found on the front left, while Korean men in their *hanbok* outer robe (*durumagi*) can be seen on the far right. Figure 3.53 also shows the same building background but seemingly more visitors who are dressed in a Western style, as well as traditional Japanese attire can also be seen. Given that the two images taken from the same Exhibition and the buildings were for the Japanese cities participated in the 1929 Exhibition, the selection of different groups of visitors against the same background seems to have been carefully calculated by the Japanese administration. As many Japanese people in Gyeongseong also visited the Exhibition, Figure 3.53 may have been recorded or used for the promotion of the Exhibition to the Japanese residents in Korea. In this context, one can critically question how the traditional Japanese appearance was portrayed or viewed by the colonial administration or the Japanese people, as compared to the colonial representation of Korean traditional attire at large, which was usually framed as the old-fashioned versus the modern style of exhibition surroundings. Here, one can further points out that the former image captures less numbers of Korean visitors, thus

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<sup>96</sup> To clarify, this reading by using the photos of 14 years of period separation is not to juxtapose those images and to contrast the colonial representations in the 1915 Exhibition with any sartorial reality in the 1929 Exhibition, nor to trace any dress change between the years. Rather, the analyses are separate in each Exhibition, and in the case of 1929 Exhibition, the ‘crack between the colonial power and representations’ refers to the given opportunity that two photographs are found in showing different people in different attire but having same Exhibition building background of 1929, which allows a further nuanced investigation.

emphasising the spectacle of the Japanese exhibition buildings, whereas the latter image shows large numbers of Japanese visitors spectating at the site, thus stressing the success of the Exhibition or enticing more future visitors to the fair.



Figure 3.52. Visitors around the Exhibition Buildings for Japanese Cities, Joseon Exhibition of 1929 (Source: <http://blog.naver.com/zoesu/30109961731>, Accessed on 19 January 2011)



Figure 3.53. Visitors around the Exhibition Buildings for Japanese Cities, Joseon Exhibition of 1929 (Source: The City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 2002, p. 107)

As for the reality of Korean dress practice in 1929 at the site, we need to take a closer look at Figure 3.52. There are men in Western-style suits and Panama hats at the front centre right. Although not identifiable, the Western-style men could be either Japanese or Korean gentlemen visiting the Exhibition place. The Exhibition had been advertised earlier through the print media, with the newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* [朝鮮日報] reporting on 8 June 1929 that countryfolk would visit the 1929 Exhibition in Seoul and on the way they would look on the ‘modern girl’ and ‘modern boy’, as these modern figures were on people’s lips all the time.<sup>97</sup> While the Japanese deliberately presented the Koreans in *hanbok* and therefore looking traditional, this did not correspond to reality entirely. In fact, around the Exhibition year of 1929, there were male and female Koreans who dressed themselves in modern styles either using Western-style garment or reformed Korean-style dress; they were known as ‘modern boys’ and ‘modern girls’, and would stroll through city streets and public spaces such as the Exhibition place.<sup>98</sup>

Those modern-style Koreans visited the Exhibition. On the opening week Sunday, the Sunday Cartoon in *Chosun Ilbo*, 15 September 1929, satirically points out that the ‘well-turned-out ladies and gentlemen’ took their leisure time in the children’s play park at the Exhibition, so their entrance fee, 30 *jeon*, would not be wasted (Figure 3.54).<sup>99</sup> The illustration shows that references to well-dressed men and women would mean Western-style suits with a top hat, vest and necktie for men, and a Korean-style woman in a *hanbok* dress, respectively. Refined styles at this time in Korean society

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<sup>97</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 8 June 1929, Saturday, p. 3: ‘博覽會狂, 都會風景(4), 漫文漫畫’, ‘이번 박람회에 서울을 가면 [...] ‘모-던꼴’인가 ‘모던뽀이’인가 하도 떠드니 그것도 구경하여야 하겠다.’

<sup>98</sup> Further discussion on modern boys, modern girls and their dress and fashion practices during the colonial period will be examined later in Chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>99</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 15 September 1929, Sunday, p. 3: ‘博覽會 兒童國에 禮服匠이 萬歲! 日曜漫畫’, ‘박람회에서 내세울 것은 아동국 (兒童國)이랄수도 잇는 바 이 나라는 개국(開國)하는 첫날부터 어른들이 점령(占領)하야서 아희들은 울고 도라서는 모양! 레복입은 신사와 숙녀들이 괴차, 비행기를 타고서 소리소리 지르며 깃버하는 풀만 본다면 박람회 입장료 삼십전은 과희 빗싸지 안투군. 박람회에서는 레복장이 만세이다.’

seemed not to be confined to the Western-style; the Korean-style was also regarded as fashionable, especially for women. Thus, the sartorial tradition or representation that the Japanese intended to construct was different from Koreans' modern dress practices around this time. With the coexistence of *hanbok* and *yangbok* dress styles, sartorial tradition and modernity in a colonial modern context may require a much more nuanced approach from a postcolonial stance. This will open up multiple interpretations and uncover sartorial reality, offering a better understanding of what Korean people wore and how they fashioned themselves, which will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5.

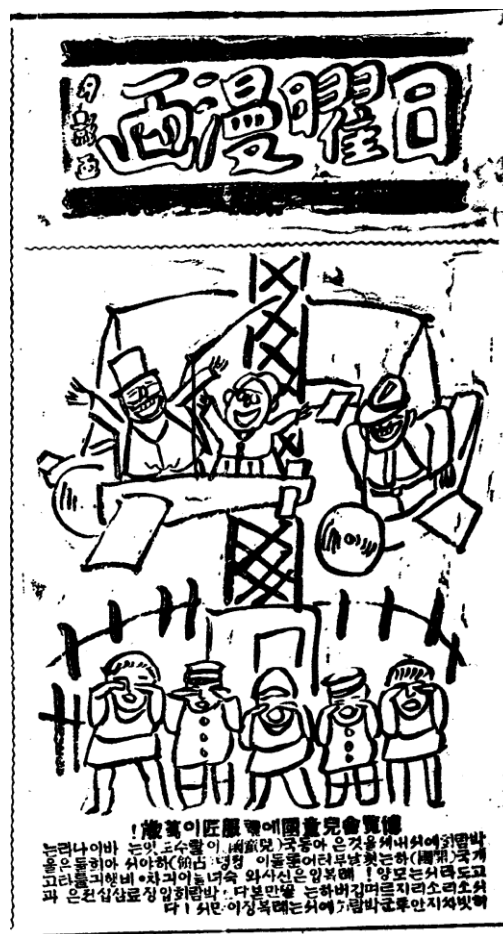


Figure 3.54. ‘Well-dressed Figures’ Hurray at the Children’s Play Park in the Exhibition’ [博覽會 兒童國에 禮服匠이 萬歲!], ‘Sunday Cartoon’ [日曜漫畫] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 15 September 1929, Sunday, p. 3)

## **CHAPTER 4. Conditions of Modern Dress and Fashion through *Hanbok* and *Yangbok*: Production–Mediation–Consumption**

Taking a unitary perspective on Korean dress and fashion of the colonial period seems to hinder any nuanced conception of sartorial development from the past to modern times, resulting in a historical discontinuity between the traditional and the modern, which entails the stereotype of rupture between traditional *hanbok* and modern *yangbok* in Korea. Eurocentric notions of fashion discourse have also limited dynamic discussions of fashion in Western and non-Western forms of dress. Overcoming the simple dichotomy between *hanbok* and *yangbok* as pre-modern/non-Western versus modern/Western in discussing ‘modern fashion’ in colonial modern Korea, which has obscured multifaceted and intricate nature of the country’s fashion and its emergence with two forms of dress, it is necessary to approach Korea’s sartorial practice of dress and fashion in a more nuanced and systematic way.

To examine the conditions of modern dress and fashion emerged in Korea, this chapter brings in the framework of production–mediation–consumption, praxis that traces emerging local modernities in an interrelated way, within which exploring the organic dress and fashion practice in colonial modern Korea can be beneficial. The concept of modernity has changed in the academic field and is not fixed, but rather can be varied through different paths of cultures and societies. Similarly, Western-oriented fashion discourse can be open to discussions of other non-Western forms of fashion alongside their local settings. In this respect, the key regional specificity of Korean modern dress and fashion lies in their ‘colonial modernity’ in terms of a postcolonial perspective. It intends to uncover more delicate and related processes of dress and fashion practice within Korea’s experience of colonial domination and emerging modernity in sartorial culture. In other words, it explores particular local Korean cases, wherein vernacular colonial modernity was reflected in dress and fashion through

specific sartorial practice and culture, to which Japanese, Korean and Western powers and influences all contributed.

Concerning the chapter question as for seeking non-Western local Korean cases of nuanced dress and fashion practice in relation to *hanbok* and *yangbok*, this chapter explores an alternative understanding of subtle and peculiar sartorial realities of colonial modern Korea in three parts, through the lens of conditions of modern dress and fashion in production, mediation and consumption.

Engaging with sartorial cases of *hanbok* in parallel with *yangbok* in all the three areas, the first section on production will examine what modern changes emerged and local specificities were entailed in the mode of dress production both in the fields of *hanbok* and *yangbok*, detailing particular cases taken from the colonial modern society of Korea. In the second section on mediation, it will explore how ideas of fashion and fashion trends and information were spread through the media such as newspapers and films and by the fashion-conscious people, tracing the cases of Korean fashion disseminated and realised both in *yangbok* and *hanbok*. The last section on consumption will investigate in what nuanced ways dress and fashion consumption between the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok* were represented and discoursed through the medium of advertisements, then examine how one can view modern individuals' fashion consumption and their consumer/stroller engagement with the city space as a consumption place.

## **1. Production: Modern Changes of Making *Hanbok* and *Yangbok***

With regard to dress production in the emergence of modern fashion in Korea, this section examines emerging local modernities and changing modes of dress production in *hanbok* and *yangbok* during the colonial period, when Korea moved into capitalistic society under the Japanese regime. It examines how colonial modern conditions and development in the area of production brought about changes of dress and fashion

practice in the society, and what local specificities were parts of the new mode of production in colonial Korea.

In particular, this section will examine a series of production-related issues: change of textile production and market availability in relation to *hanbok* through colonial modern settings; Japanese influence on the white Korean clothes and changing awareness of the colour use in *hanbok*; emergence of the sewing machine in Korea and its use for dress production and particular meanings to Korean women; object-based examination of *hanbok* tracing sartorial modernities in Korean context; and as for production of Western clothing, emergence and local particularities of men's *yangbok* and tailor shops, as well as of women's *yangjang*, object details, dressmaking and modern school education.

### ***1.1. Modern Development of Textiles and Increased Availability for Hanbok***

Traditional textile manufacturing in Korea had been done by hand in the home until the late nineteenth century, and began to be modernised when the 'Weaving Department' (織造國, *Jikjoguk*) was established in 1884 as a result of Ji Seok-yeong's (池錫永, 1855–1935) proposal to the Joseon government to import the modern mechanical loom in 1882.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the modernisation of the traditional handicraft manufacturing of Korean textiles did not take place at once, because imported fabric became increasingly widely used in Korea following the Open Port era by its lower prices, possible due to the machine-produced. For instance, until 1894 cotton textiles used in Korea were mostly imported from Britain, then it became half British and half Japanese cotton textiles between 1895 and 1904, and after 1905 Japanese ones replaced the use of British ones in Korea.<sup>2</sup> Gwon Tae-eok states that while Western capital and commodities

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<sup>1</sup> See *Gojong sillok* [高宗實錄, The Anal of King Gojong] Vol. 19, 19th Year [권19, 고종19년], 23 August 1882.

<sup>2</sup> Ihwayeojadaehakgyo hangugyeoseongsa pyeonchanwiwonhoe [Ewha Womans University's Korean Women's History Publication Committee], *Hanguk yeoseongsa II* [Korean Women's

encroached on the traditional economic structure of agricultural and cottage industry over the period, the Korean textile industry was among the most heavily affected by the foreign powers. At the same time, however, the modernisation of this industry in Korea can be said to have emerged relatively earlier than other sectors.<sup>3</sup> In fact, in the late 1890s, modern-style Korean textile factories began to be established, such as the ‘Great Joseon Ramie Spinning Company’ (大朝鮮苧麻製絲會社, *Daejoseon jeoma jesa hoesa*), arguably Korea’s first joint stock venture in 1897, the ‘Weaving Industrious Working Place’ (織造勤業場, *Jikjo geunupjang*) in 1898 and the ‘Hansang Spinning Joint Investment Company’ (漢上紡績股本會社, *Hansang bangjeok gobon hoesa*) in 1899.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the Japanese rule, according to Gwon Tae-eok the colonial exploitation policy impacted Korea by making the country a source of supply of food and raw materials and a sales market for Japanese goods and for exportation of Japanese capital.<sup>5</sup> While textile and fibre resources – rice was also an issue – were significant concerns for the colonial administration with the inflow of competitively priced Japanese cotton cloth, he argues that ‘colonial specificity’ was found in the spinning and weaving sectors in rural Korea in terms of textile production.<sup>6</sup> Korean cotton textiles remained survived due to their durable quality – they were manufactured in a traditional handicraft way, rather than mass-produced like Japanese cotton cloth with lower sale prices – and Korean silk, ramie and hemp textiles were particularly competitive due to their resilience and unique tactile feel. This unique

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History II], 1972, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> See Gwon Tae-eok, ‘Gyeongseong jingnyujusikhoesai seollipgwa gyeongyeong’ [Establishment and Management of Gyeongseong Textile Company Ltd.], Vol. 6, 1980, pp.297-322.; Gwon Tae-eok, *Hangukgeundae myeoneopsa yeongu* [A Study of Korean Modern Cotton Industry History], 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Go Bu-ja, *Uri saenghwal*, p. 95.

<sup>5</sup> See Gwon Tae-eok, ‘Iljesigiui nongchon jingmureop’ [Rural Textile Industry during the Japanese Reign], Vol. 19, 1988, pp. 505-568.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



quality was thanks to improved traditional manufacturing techniques and the quality of the raw material cultivated in Korea.<sup>7</sup> Table 4.1 shows the amount of production of the three kinds of textiles manufactured in rural Korea; here, the ‘ramie and hemp fabrics’ and ‘silk fabrics’ were produced relatively steadily and in an increasing manner, while the production of ‘cotton fabrics’ fluctuated.<sup>8</sup>

Table 4.1. The Progress of the Amount of Textiles Production in Rural Korea [농가 직물 생산액의推移] (Unit: 1,000 won [千圓]) (Source: Gwon Tae-eok, 1988, p. 565)

	Cotton Fabric [綿布]	Ramie and Hemp Fabric [苧麻布]	Silk Fabric [絹布]
1928	9,256.9	10,444.8	2,948.6
1929	8,892.7	9,061.7	3,167.0
1931	4,145.5	3,512.7	1,612.9
1932	5,694.1	5,879.8	3,100.9
1933	6,154.9	7,024.2	3,523.6
1934	6,513.4	7,139.4	4,877.9
1935	7,062.7	7,123.1	5,266.5
1936	5,927.1	7,035.7	267.2

Nevertheless, in response to the growing market power of the Japanese, nationalist elites and capitalists began to support large-scale Korean textile manufacturing in city areas. Notably, it was ‘Gyeongseong Textile Manufacture Incorporated’ (京城紡織株式會社, *Gyeongseong Bangjik Jusikhoesa*) that was established by Korean capital, spending one million won in 1919; this business still exists today. After hearing that about 27 million won was spent yearly on Japanese cotton cloth, the founder Kim Seong-su (金性洙, 1891–1955), who studied in Waseda

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 527-568.

<sup>8</sup> Based on the figures originally from *Governor-General of Korea Statistical Yearbook* [朝鮮總督府統計年報], which shows the data from 1928 when ‘wide width [大幅]’ and ‘narrow width [小幅]’ of textiles production were recorded separately, the figures were collected from the ‘narrow width’ section as rural production was still manufactured in that way by the traditional, yet improved, loom. See Ibid., pp. 564-566.

University in Tokyo and ran Boseong College (普成專門學校, current Korea University, 高麗大學校) and Dong-A Ilbo (東亞日報) during the 1920s and 1930s in Korea, prepared the capital fund according to the ‘one man one stock’ policy, rather than asking for the money from a handful of wealthy people, in the hope of the company becoming a national manufacturer.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the national ethos, the company adopted Japanese weaving machinery in the first factory in Yeongdeungpo, Seoul, and began producing Korean cotton cloth in 1923 to protect the Korean cotton market from Japan’s dominance in the sector; in addition, only Joseon people were employed by the company. Producing 38,652 rolls of cotton cloth in 1923 – a 4% of the market share – it increased this by five times (199,351 rolls and 12%) in 1929. It was later equipped with 896 weaving machines and an extra 25,600 spinning machines in 1937, increasing their share to 15%. They expanded to Manchuria in 1939, with the company becoming one of the four mass-producing modern textile manufactures along with other Japanese companies during the colonial period (Figure 4.1).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See the history section of the company’s homepage ([www.kyungbang.co.kr](http://www.kyungbang.co.kr)). Lee Yeong-hun, in *Sindonga* [新東亞], Vol. 626, November 2011, pp. 562-565, also comments that the company and the entrepreneur in Korean economic history have been assessed and debated in different ways within the national discourse and the business practice under the colonial administration in four notable studies: Jo Gi-jun, *Hangukgieopgasa* [A History of Korean Entrepreneurs], 1973.; Kim Yong-seop, ‘Hanmal, iljehai jijuje: Sarye 4; Gobu gimssigau jijugyeongyeong gwa jabonjeonhwan’ [The Agro-managerial System of the Kim Family in Gobu under Japanese Domination – Their Management Capital Formation], No. 19, 1978, pp. 65-135.; Carter J. Eckert, *Offspring of Empire: The Koch’ang Kims and the Colonial Origins of Korean Capitalism, 1876-1945*, 1991.; Ju Ik-jong, *Daegun-ui cheokhu: Ilje ha-ui gyeongseong bangjik gwa gim seongsu, gim nyeonsu* [Patrolling of the Large Force: Gyeongseong Textiles Company and Kim Seong-su, Kim Yeon-su during the Japanese Regime], 2008.

<sup>10</sup> See Pak Sang-ha, ‘Hangukgieop seongjangsa’ [Development History of Korean Enterprise], *Asia Gyeongje*, 4 July 2012, ([www.asiae.co.kr](http://www.asiae.co.kr)).

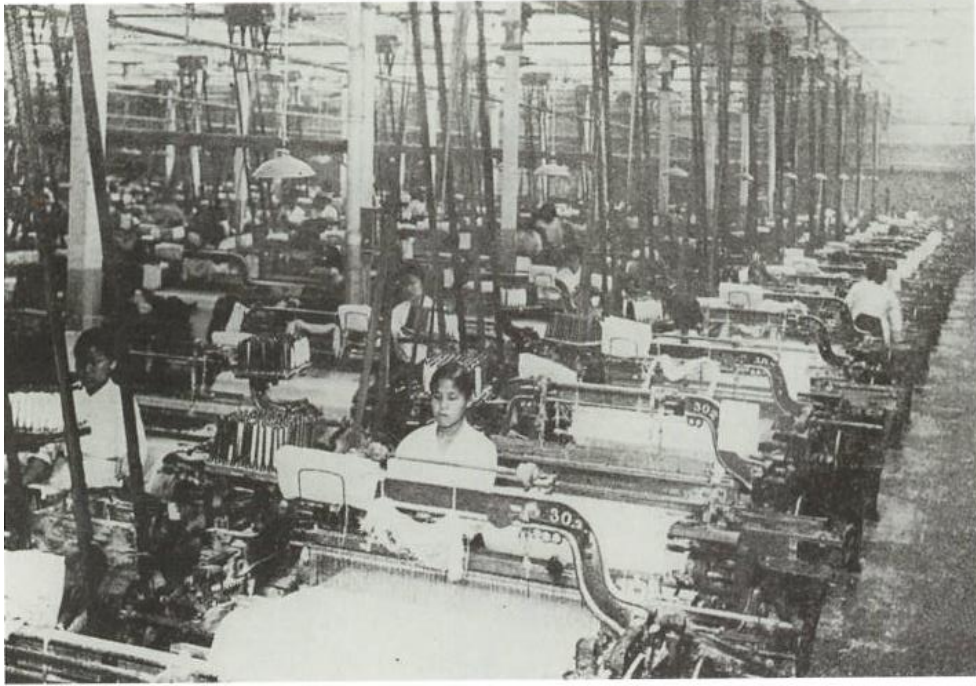


Figure 4.1. The Working Scene at the Gyeongseong Textile Manufacture Incorporated (Source: The City History Compilation Committee of Seoul, 2002, p. 111)

Naturally, modern machinery production of textiles provided an increasing supply of various textiles from Korea, Japan and the West at varied prices, which affected people's choice of fabrics and dress making in colonial Korea. For instance, an article featured in *Chosun Ilbo*, September 1928, shows 'This Year's Autumn Prices' [今年가을物價] and highlights a '10% decline of textile prices' [포목은 일할저락] in the title (Figure 4.2). The kinds of textiles shown vary, with as many as 32 different fabrics, from silks and satins to linen and cotton to ramie and hemp textiles.<sup>11</sup> This variety of fabrics indicates that Koreans were given many options in their selection of textiles for making *hanbok* at that time. Among the fabrics used for traditional clothing, 'silk cloth' [명주] and 'ramie cloth' [모시] were priced according to their quality – 'Special' [特], 'High' [上], 'Medium' [中] and 'Low' [下]. This

<sup>11</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 September 1928, Saturday, p. 3: 'This Year's Autumn Prices' [今年가을物價], '화생주, 생고사, 화문준주사, 무문준주사, 순인, 화순인, 숙고사, 순인하부다이, 디폭하부다이, 숙수, 국사, 주향라, 삼팔, 명주, 모사, 세루, 동양목, 옥양목, 광목, 서양사, 목물란사, 목모사, 내공옥양목, 광목내공, 문화견, 인조보석단, 인조향라하부다이, 오매양직, 서양라단, 일본라단, 한양사, 모시'



Japanese textiles became a tempting commodity to needy Korean consumers or people wanting to be economical on household expenses. Provided the increased availability of fabrics for making *hanbok*, Korean dress was being made in a variety of styles based on varied styles of textiles. This gradually expanded the sartorial choice when certain styles of fabrics became in fashion.

### ***1.2. Politics of Coloured Clothes from the White***

Other than the ample provision of textiles, it is also known that colonial administration interfered in Koreans' daily dress practice in terms of colour. The long-standing use of the colour white in everyday people's *hanbok* – other than the favoured use of colourful *hanbok* for women and children, upper class people, and in celebratory or festive occasions as examined in Chapter 2 – was frowned upon with the 'prohibition of white clothes but recommendation of coloured clothes' [백의 금지, 색의 권장] (Figure 4.3). Initially, the campaign for the use of coloured clothes was in line with the reforming of traditional *hanbok*; an article appeared in *Daehan maeil sinbo* (大韓每日申報), March 1908, which recommended men's and women's clothes being a dark black colour for the sake of convenience.<sup>12</sup> In the early 1920s, colour use was discussed in two ways, with Joseon elites looking at the disadvantages of white clothes and the Japanese Government-General of Korea stressing wearing coloured clothes for the improvement of living conditions.<sup>13</sup> In the 1930s, the campaign for coloured

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<sup>12</sup> *Daehan maeil sinbo* (大韓每日申報), 17 March 1908: '경편한 이익을 좇아 남녀 의복을 심흑색(深黑色)으로 할 것'

<sup>13</sup> With regard to the Joseon elites' discussion on the matter, for instance, Na Hye-seok (羅蕙錫, 1896-1948) addressed in *Dong-A Ilbo* that white Joseon clothes looked sad when it was raining, stained easily and were difficult to care for ('婦人衣服改良問題, 金元周兄의 意見에 對하여' *Dong-A Ilbo* (東亞日報), 30 September 1921). For further discussion on the discourse of white clothes, see So Hyeon-suk, 'Geundaeui yeolmanggwa ilsang saenghwarui singminhwa – iljesigi saenghwalgaeseonundonggwa jendeojeongchireul jungsimeuro' [Aspirations to the Modern and Colonisation of Everyday Life – Focusing on Life Improvement Movement during the Colonial Period and the Gender Politics], in Lee Sang-rok and Lee Yu-jae, ed. *Ilsangsaro boneun hanguk geunhyeondaesa* [Korean Modern

clothes and against white clothes became a concrete policy of the colonial administration, along with a campaign to improve farm life in the country (농촌진흥운동). Upon examination, this has been seen as ‘colonial control over docile bodies of Joseon people through clothes’.<sup>14</sup>



Figure 4.3. Campaign for ‘Coloured Clothes’ and against ‘White Clothes’, 1920s, Dongrae in Busan (Source: Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 65)

The argument for the colonial campaign appeared in newspapers and was often based on modern measurements and scientific evidence, such as ‘Joseon people’s yearly laundry time of 1,338,619,916 hours is due to the white clothes’.<sup>15</sup> Jo Hui-jin’s further investigation can be summarised as ambivalent that the policy was enforced in two ways, ‘inducement’ and ‘compulsion’.<sup>16</sup> To promote colours, there was subsidy for the poor and the public for dyeing, and related centres or lessons and lectures were introduced widely, while wearing white clothes was prohibited in public places such as

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and Contemporary History Seeing Through Everyday Life History], 2006, p. 122.

<sup>14</sup> See Gong Je-uk, ‘Uiboktongjewa gungmin mandeulgi’ [Controlling the Clothing and Making the Nation], in Gong Je-uk and Jeong Geun-sik, ed. *Singminjiui ilsang, Jibaewa gyunnyeol* [Daily Life of Colonies, Domination and Crack], 2006, pp. 136-165.

<sup>15</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 4 October 1934: ‘조선인의 1년간 세탁하는 시간 1,338,619,916시간 흰옷입은 탓이라오.’

<sup>16</sup> See Jo Hui-jin, ‘Singminjisigi saekbokhwa jeongchaegui jeongae yangsangwa chui’ [Development and Change of Wearing-Coloured-Clothes Policy in Colonial Period], Vol. 16, 2010, pp. 681-729.

schools and markets and if worn, it was fined or deliberately stained with ink by force.<sup>17</sup>

The campaign was seen both as the colonial authorities' minimising the time and labour that the Koreans spent on washing white *hanbok*, and as desecration of the traditional symbol of colour white, and promotion of Japanese dyeing pigments in colouring the clothes.<sup>18</sup> It was also found that Koreans tenaciously resisted the policy with anti-colonial emotion, and city areas were less affected than the rural Korea with different colonial administrations wielded.<sup>19</sup> Throughout the course, with regard to the colour use in clothing, it can be said that Korean's traditional use and awareness of white colour began to change, and take on dark black colour through modern ways of chemical pigment dyeing either voluntarily or as induced or forced. Japanese colonial politics served as one of the momentum to a different colour scheme of *hanbok*. The use of colour white in daily lives of Korean people became a contested field where its traditional use, symbolic meaning, constructed image as the white-clad folk, Japanese political and economic interests and Korean reactions to them collided and competed as a particular Korean context.

### ***1.3. Advent of Sewing Machines as a Modern Way of Making Hanbok and Yangbok, and Meanings to Women at Home***

Another significant moment in the transition into modern ways of producing clothing was the use of sewing machines in Korea. Patented in 1846 by American Elias Howe, promoted in Britain by William Thomas and improved by Isaac Merritt Singer, the sewing machine had a gradual and significant impact on the production of garments in

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 694-714.

<sup>18</sup> This will be further discussed in the 'Consumption' section in this chapter later.

<sup>19</sup> The article, 'Carry Out the Living Innovation' [生活革新을 斷行], in *Dong-A Ilbo* [東亞日報], 7 December 1937, shows the campaign should be more actively conducted in cities than villages.

both commercial and domestic spheres.<sup>20</sup> For instance, straightforward seaming, which had averaged at about 35 stitches a minute by hand, was sped up thirty-fold through automation, and the production of simple garments such as mantles, hosiery and underwear increased by 500% in Britain.<sup>21</sup> When the workable sewing machine was popularised, Singer's design was further branded worldwide and the Singer sewing machine became an 'object of desire' in many households.<sup>22</sup> Gordon states that when the sewing machine – intricately connected as it was with the global development of capitalism – came to Japan in the early to mid-twentieth century, it impacted not only manners of dress, but also patterns of daily life, class structure and the role of women. This new sewing object was closely entwined with the emergence and ascendance of the middle class, the female consumer and the professional home manager as a defining element of Japanese modernity.<sup>23</sup>

Likewise, in colonial Korea, the sewing machine also brought modern transformation of daily life – especially for women – as an efficient new tool of production, a source of income earning and an object of consumer desire. Along with the sewing machine, there were training centres and classes opened to teach Koreans how to use the modern tool in making clothing and textiles. For example, an article featured in *Dong-A Ilbo*, May 1927, introduces the 'Seodaemun Sewing Embroidery Institute' [西大門 裁縫刺繡院], with photographs of class scenes and embroidery work (Figure 4.4).<sup>24</sup> The chief manager of the institute, Seo Byeong-ui (서병의), claims in the article that housewives can help the home economy by making *yangbok* at home, as the price of *yangbok* would be 70 *won* to buy, but making it at home will save the cost of labour about 30 *won*.<sup>25</sup> The traditional practice of women's sewing

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<sup>20</sup> Christopher Breward. *Fashion*, p. 54.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Adrian Forty, *Objects of Desire: Design and Society Since 1750*, 1986.

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Gordon, *Fabricating Consumers: The Sewing Machine in Modern Japan*, 2012.

<sup>24</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 21 May 1927, p. 5: 'Teaching Children's Western-style Clothes and Embroidery Techniques' [아동양복과 자수법을 교수].

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.: '양복을 집에서 만든다하면 양복값세 절반은 경제가될것입니다. 칠십원짜리



*hanbok* by hand at home then grew to make not only *hanbok* but also *yangbok* using sewing machines at home. The school even lent the machine to the Korean students depending on their financial circumstances, unlike the other school in the town, ‘Hwanggeumjeong’ [황금덩], the students of which were mostly Japanese women.<sup>26</sup> There were four courses in the Seodaemun Sewing Embroidery Institute: ‘Machine-sewing General Class Two Months’ [機械裁縫 普通科二個月], ‘Machine-sewing Advanced Class Three Months’ [機械裁縫高等科 三個月], ‘Embroidery Class Three Months’ [刺繡科三個月] and ‘Research Course Three Months Machine-sewing Class’ [研究科三個月機械裁縫科], and the curriculum was designed to help housewives make *hanbok* and *yangbok* and to further instruct professional women who intended to earn money using their sewing machine skills.<sup>27</sup>

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양복이 면 삼십여원은 공전으로 드러가는것이니 현금빈한 우리의 살림에 잇서서 가댁의 주부 가 양복을 스스로 짓는다하면 우리 경제가 얼마나 나아질는지 모르 겠습니다.’

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.: ‘시내에 황금덩 서대문밖두군데잇는데 황금덩은 일본사람을 중심으로하고 서대문밖 계는 조선사람을 중심으로합니다. [...] 방금황금덩 학교에는 만원인데 거기는 재봉틀을 빌려주지아니하고 여기는 개학한지 한달밖에아니됨으로 학생은 십여인에불과한바 조선 사람의 생활당도를 따라 재봉틀을 무료로 빌려주어 학습 케합니다.’

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.: ‘가댁주부의 필요한 조선복 양복의 재봉법을 가르키며 또는 직업생활을 하려는 부인의 편의를 도읍기 위하여 하는 것’



machine or hand, and she acknowledges that machine sewing is far more efficient.<sup>30</sup> Since losing her husband, she has begun working and sewing has become a rather dry task, a means of earning a living for her family, rather than a passion and a work of love for her household.<sup>31</sup> Working hard, she earns about one *won* daily, yet she worries machine-sewing work is decreasing because people give the work to men over women, as male seamstresses are thought to be better at machine-sewing.<sup>32</sup> The sewing machine brought about financial opportunity and increased efficiency in one sense to women, but it also created competition in the form of male workers in the production of clothes, such as tailors. The traditional gendered workforce and mode of production began to change with the rise of sewing machines arrived in Korea.

On the other hand, the sewing machine became a valuable object to a household, with the poor economic conditions during the colonial period. There were increasing news reports in newspapers regarding fraud cases and theft of sewing machines. For instance, an article in the *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper, titled ‘A Thief of a Sewing Machine’ [裁縫機盜賊], reports a burglary crime where 27-year-old Kim Yeon-hang (김연항) was caught stealing a sewing machine worth 140 *won* from Min Ok-geun’s (민옥근) house on 22 September 1930.<sup>33</sup> The pricey object was a status symbol for the

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바누질품파리를 계속하야 [...] 원래 바누질 암잔히 잘하기로 이름이 잇섯슴으로’  
<sup>30</sup> Ibid.: ‘기계로 박어지어달라는 것은 기계로 손으로 지어달라는 것은 손으로 한다는데 손으로 하는것보다는 기계로 하는 것이 훨씬 능률이 낫답니다.’

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.: ‘그때의 바누질과 지금의 바누질은 하는 심정과 취미에 잇서서 큰차이가 잇답니다. 그 전에는 여하히 괴로워도 괴로운 그 반면에 자미와 정열이 잇섯스니 사랑하는 남편 또는 귀여운 자녀 혹은 친뎡형뎡이가이 옷을 넘으리라하는 생각에 [...] 그러나 지금에 품파리 바누질에 잇서서는 이것을하면 돈이 몇십전 생긴다는 외에는’

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.: ‘놀지안코 해야 하로 근근히 일원내외의 수입이 잇고 [...] 근래에 와서는 틀일이 점점 덜들어오게 되는듯한데 그리유를 물어보면 틀일은 암만해도 녀자보다 남자가 낫다고 남자에게 가지고 간다고들 합니다 [...] 그 부인은 일종의 불안을 호소하얏 습니다.’

<sup>33</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 24 September 1930, p. 3: ‘A Thief of a Sewing Machine’ [裁縫機盜賊], ‘남대문통 오정목 사는 김연항 (金演恒, 二七)은 이십이일 오후 시내 방산정 (芳山町) 사번지 민옥근 (閔玉根)의 집에 침입하야 재봉틀 시가 일백사십원짜리

households able to own one, and a much-desired modern object that was mainly handled by women at home. Figure 4.5 is a photograph showing a ‘Scene of *Seokcheon* Lee Won-gu’s House’ [石泉李元求 住宅現狀]. Judging by his pen-name, a seemingly middle class man’s household features a thatched-roofed house, the man and his wife in the centre, four sons near the front and four daughters in the back, and livestock, which may show some degree of wealth. In this traditional house scene, we can find four framed images – likely assorted family photographs – hanging on the wall in a tilted manner under the roof, and clothes of the boy standing in the centre are a Western-style shirt and trousers, all of which indicates a transitional phase into a more modern style. Above all, we can find a sewing machine placed in front of the housewife, next to the boy in the Western garb, and she crosses her left arm under the body of the machine, expressing her possession of affinity with the object; this implies that the sewing machine is her most valuable object as a modern necessity for the home economy.



Figure 4.5. ‘A Scene of *Seokcheon* Lee Won-gu’s House’ [石泉李元求住宅現狀]

(Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010645655/>, accessed via <http://pre1945korea.blogspot.com>, courtesy of Guven Peter Witteveen, on 20 October 2011)

Indeed, the advent of sewing machines in Korea was related to a shift in the mode of gendered production, modern education and economic activity, and the meaning of a sewing object to women at home. Approaching women's sewing from a cultural perspective, in Barbara Burman's seminal book *The Culture of Sewing*, she argues that not only have the skills involved in home dressmaking been overlooked and marginalised due to their association with women and the home, but the impact home dressmaking had on women's lives and broader socioeconomic structures also have been largely ignored.<sup>34</sup> In an age of relative affluence and mass production, she points out that it is easy to forget that just over a generation ago, young girls from middle- and working-class backgrounds in European and American societies were routinely taught to sew as a practical necessity. Likewise, to Korean women sewing skills constituted an ideal reflection of refined womanhood, and it is worth noting how home dressmakers negotiated and experienced modern developments such as the sewing machine so as to meet a wide variety of needs and aspirations. In this sense, home dressmakers were active producers within family economies rather than merely passive female consumers. They were individuals with complex agendas expressed through their roles as wives, mothers and workers in their own right at home and further shaped by changing ideologies of femininity and class in their society during Korea's colonial modern period.

#### ***1.4. Hanbok Objects Reflecting Local Hybrid Modernities***

Eventually the various textiles available in the market and the use of colours and the sewing machine impacted on Korean dress materially in terms of production over the colonial period. To examine these traces of modernity as represented in actual *hanbok*

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<sup>34</sup> Barbara Burman. ed. *The Culture of Sewing: Gender, Consumption and Home Dressmaking*, Oxford: Berg, 1999.

objects, I conducted an object-based examination on the early twentieth-century *hanbok* collection at Sungkyunkwan University (성균관대학교), loaned by Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School (대전성모여자고등학교). Almost three hundred men's and women's *hanbok* objects were originally collected in the Seoul and Daejeon areas prior to the 1990s and donated to the School, then later loaned to the department of Fashion Design at the University for research.<sup>35</sup> Among the objects in the collection, various empirical details of the *hanbok* from the colonial period are clearly modern changes to the clothes.

It is evident that various textiles and colours were used in making *hanbok* during the colonial period. Figure 4.6 features some selections of women's *hanbok* jackets (*jeogori*) from the 1930s and 1940s, made in a varied range of colours and textiles such as silk (brocade), cotton (calico), hemp (linen), synthetic silk (rayon), etc. Among them, one *jeogori* exemplifies the use of Japanese textiles, made in habutai (はふたえ, 羽二重, a thin, soft and durable Japanese silk), patterned with peony (Figure 4.7). Cho Woo-hyun and Hasegawa Lisa also address that the Japanese influence on *hanbok* can

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<sup>35</sup> Supported by the Anglo-Korean Society Post-Graduate Bursary, I was able to do fieldwork research at the University in Seoul. The loaned collection at Sungkyunkwan University can be significant empirical evidence for the study of twentieth-century *hanbok*, comparing to other *hanbok* collections in universities and museums in Korea. Notably, the aforementioned collection at Seok Juseon Memorial Museum of Dankook University largely holds excavated costumes of the Joseon period, and the National Folk Museum of Korea also has its limited scope for my research. On the other hand, the sheer number of *hanbok* objects and accessibility to the collection enabled me to trace empirical details of the Korean clothes as for my research topic, as well as the collection served as quantitative data to the postgraduate research group at the Department. Based on the collection, object-focused papers have been produced as follows: Park Chun-sun, Cho Woo-hyun, Lee Ho-jung, 'Geundaeihu yeoja jeogori silmurui saekchaewa baesaeye gwanhan nyeongu' [Colour Selection and Arrangement in Relics of Women's *Jeogori* in Modern Korea], 59/2, February 2009, pp. 1-17.; Park Na-na, Cho Woo-hyun, 'Geundaeihu yeojajeogori bongjebangbeobui teukjinggwa byeonhwayoin' [Characteristics of the Sewing Methods Used for Women's *Jeogori*, and the Factors of their Changes in Modern Times], 60/7, August 2010, pp. 88-102; An Hyun-joo, Cho Woo-hyun, 'Geundae yeojahanbok yumurui munnyangyeongu' [A Study of Patterns of Women's Jackets in Modern Korea], 60/10, December 2010, pp. 100-117.

be found in its use of different pattern styles that Korean dress had not previously used, with some local adaptations such as a preference for flower patterns over stripes and large sized patterns.<sup>36</sup> With the increased availability of various fabrics, *hanbok* came in a variety of textiles, thus new colours and patterns emerged in Korean dress during the colonial period, as did certain favoured choices according to Korean tastes.<sup>37</sup>



Figure 4.6. Various Women's *Jeogori* in the 1930s and 1940s (Source: Author's photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

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<sup>36</sup> Cho Woo-hyun and Hasegawa Lisa, 'Japji sinnyeoseongeul tonghae bon 1920-1930nyeondae hanguk yeoseongboksik' [Korean Women's Dress in the 1920s-1930s Seen Through the Magazine *Sinnyeoseong*], in *Dangukdaehakgyo dongyanghagyeonguso, Modeollaipeu eonparedeu - 2,30nyeondae ilsangmunhwa* [Modern Life on Parade - Everyday Life Culture in the 1920s and 30s], 2008, pp. 135-147.

<sup>37</sup> For varied patterns used in this collection of *hanbok*, see An Hyun-joo, Cho Woo-hyun, 'Geundae yeojahanbok yumurui' pp. 100-117.



Figure 4.7. A Woman's *Jeogori* made of Habutai (Source: Author's photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

Another modern touch can be found in the use of a sewing machine in making *hanbok*. Figure 4.8 indicates that the armhole seam of the *jeogori* is stitched using a sewing machine rather than by hand sewing. As the seam line in which the bodice and the sleeve meet requires durability, the sewing machine stitch was used. Also, given the unique characteristics of the straight line of the armhole – unlike the rounded armhole of the Western clothes – the straight sewing stitch was useful as a way to attach the two parts of the *jeogori*.<sup>38</sup> Yet, for other rounded seam lines, the traditional method of hand sewing is in evidence. This shows that both two sewing methods were employed in making of *hanbok* at that time, rather than one simply replacing the other with the introduction of the sewing machine.

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<sup>38</sup> For different sewing methods used in this collection of *hanbok*, see Park Na-na, Cho Woo-hyun, 'Geundaeihu yeojajeogori bongjebangbeobui', pp. 88-102.





Figure 4.8. Strait Machine Sewing Stitch used in Armhole Seam of a Woman's *Jeogori* (Source: Author's photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

The structure of *hanbok* was also modernised during this period. The waist line of the women's skirt (*chima*) changed into a vest-style (Figure 4.9). Compared with the previous strap-style, fastening the skirt above the breast by the straps, this modernised version allowed a woman to hang the skirt on her shoulders, and was thus regarded as more convenient. Further, the vest-style waist was detachable, so that only the necessary part was washed rather than laundering all the panels of long and wide *chima*. The reform of the women's *hanbok* is known to have been initiated by Western missionaries and in women's modern schools, so the change in Korean dress features not only the hybridity of the traditional and the Western forms of dress materially, but as Lee Yeong-a explains, also mentally relates to Korean wearer's change of consciousness on relationship between dress and body and notions of convenience in improved modern life style, influenced by Western ideas.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lee Yeong-a discusses about changes of body consciousness from the traditional to the



Figure 4.9. The Change of the Waist of Women's Skirt, from a Strap-style (left) to a Vest-style (right), and a Detachable Vest-style Waist Part (above) (Source: Reproduction of author's photographs from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

With dress as an aesthetic medium for the expression of ideas, identity, desires and social strata, *hanbok* reflected a sense of hybrid modernity in its varying individual designs and forms during the colonial period. Figure 4.10 features a woman's blue overcoat (*durumagi*) lined in red with a yellow print. The use of bright colour combinations like here of the exterior cloth and the lining – blue and red – can be also

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modern throughout the early twentieth century, and the Western modernity influenced on the body discourses. See Lee Yeong-a, *Yukcheui tansaeng – mom, geu ane saegyeojin geundaewi jaguk* [The Birth of the Body – Trace of the Modern Inscribed within the Body], 2008.

found in the colours of the ceremonial Korean costume, in pursuit of *yin* and *yang* and symbolic harmony. Yet, the lining of this *durumagi* shows rather an unfamiliar new method of dyeing using yellow ink printing, for which the fabric was probably imported goods from Japan or elsewhere. Thus, keeping with the traditional colour combinations and form, this Korean dress also features a modern twist or alteration to its inner lining, projecting the wearer's taste as well as a kind of hybrid modernity in the sartorial object.



Figure 4.10. Woman's blue *durumagi* lining in red dyeing, inscribed with the owner, 'Yi Haeng-ja' (이행자) (Source: Author's photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

Also, the wearer's identity is inscribed in Korean, '이행자' (Yi Haeng-ja), stitched by a sewing machine above the geometric designs of the inner pocket. With the use of the Western-style inner pocket in a form of hybrid modernity, the machine stitched name clearly shows who owns the *durumagi*, signifying the value of clothing and appearance as a means of demonstrating one's status and identity to others in the

developing capitalistic society of Korea. Judging from the quality of the fabric and the dyeing of the lining, the owner would have been a fashion-conscious figure from an affluent background, with the modern techniques and the modernised version of *hanbok* aesthetics used.

As for men, Figure 4.11 shows a black *durumagi* with a greyish brown lining. Compared with the woman's *durumagi*, this male *durumagi* uses rather a sober colour, which could have been due to the aforementioned Japanese campaign for the use of coloured clothes instead of white clothes, in which dark blue or black colours were often recommended. On the other hand, this colour combination could be seen as the owner's or maker's pursuit of the Western style, because the use of black cotton means the coat would resemble the colour of a Western man's suit at the time. In this sense, the Western-style influence on menswear's use of colour can be seen – achromatic colours such as black and grey were initiated during this period – reflecting gendered colour preference when compared to women's more bright colour use.



Figure 4.11. Man's black *durumagi* lining in greyish brown, labelled with the tailor shop,

‘Sinhan lasa’ (신한 라사) (Source: Author’s photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary’s Girls’ High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

Finished with the Western technique of bias bindings at the edges of the clothes by a tailor’s hands, the *durumagi* features a maker’s label, ‘신한 라사’ (Sinhan Tailor Shop), attached next to the Western-style inner pocket. Like the female *durumagi*, the male *durumagi* also shows a mixed use of traditional Korean forms of dress and Western-style details, in an example of hybrid modernity. Furthermore, as it was made at a tailor shop for the customer, we can see that the shift from dress production at home by women to the commercial arena with professionals, which is another modern transformation in the production sphere. In addition, it tells us that the tailors made not only Western clothing but also Korean clothing at their shops; this means both *yangbok* and *hanbok* – not exclusive of each other – were made in the Western-style tailor shop over the transitional period.

### ***1.5. Yangbok in Tailor Shops, and Emergence and Making of Women’s Yangjang***

Men’s Western suit (*yangbok*) was tailor-made in tailor shops and ‘Jeongjaok’ (丁子屋) is known as the first tailor shop in Korea, established by the Japanese in 1906. Importing the Western style for men’s new appearance, the Western suit was not merely a symbol of modern Western material culture in Korea. Other than Western diplomats and missionaries’ wearing of *yangbok*, it was pro-Japanese Koreans who began to dress in the Western suits at the turn of the twentieth-century Korea. This initially led that ‘donning a Western suit was more of a political than a fashion statement’.<sup>40</sup> It evinced that the wearer was on the side of modernity and Westernisation, yet this was often regarded and linked to the wearer’s pro-Japanese stance in the colonial Korean context. Such anti-Japanese sentiment of the *yangbok*, however, was gradually assuaged and the Western suit became accepted as modern

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<sup>40</sup> The Korea Society, *Missionary Photography in Korea: Encountering the West through Christianity*, 2009, p. 106.

elite men's attire due to the increased use of *yangbok* by Korean independence leaders and modernists – especially by the March First Movement in 1919, as a turning point of the perception change on the *yangbok* – and through modern male schools during the 1910s.<sup>41</sup>

By the 1920s and 30s, Western-style men's clothing then became a 'sign of affluence and an indicator that the wearer was involved in the new, modern economy', as *yangbok* suits were worn mainly by 'teachers, bank officials and clerical workers of all kinds – in short, by the growing but still very small, modern professional middle class'.<sup>42</sup> The number of tailor shops (about 30–40 shops in the mid-1910s) then increased during the 1920s and many Joseon Korean tailors emerged through the *yangbok* education centres (6 in Seoul, 1 in Gaeseong and 1 in Incheon during the 1920s), culminating the establishment of Gyeongseong Yangbok Institute (京城洋服研究會) in 1922 and Hanseong Yangbok Tailors Association (漢城洋服商組合) – only by Koreans – in 1927.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Yu Hye-yeong addresses that many independence leaders and activists' wearing of the Western suit throughout the March First Movement changed Koreans' awareness of *yangbok*, not necessarily as the pro-Japanese modern, but also as the modern for Korean independence. See Yu Hye-yeong, '1910nyeondae paesyeron' [Fashion of the 1910s], in Geum Gi-suk, et al. *Hyeondaepaesyeron 100nyeong* [100 Years of Modern Fashion], 2006, p. 76.

<sup>42</sup> The Korea Society, *Missionary Photography*, p. 106.

<sup>43</sup> Geum Gi-suk, et al., *Hyeondaepaesyeron 100nyeong*, pp. 75, 95.



Figure 4.12. Western-style Tailor Shop, Seoul, 1925 (Source: Mission Photograph Collection, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 107)

Figure 4.12 shows a Western-style tailor shop on Jongno Street in downtown Seoul in 1925. Jongno was the main business street of Seoul (Gyeongseong) during the colonial period, and many tailor shops ran their business in the area and some of them still remain today. Compared with a man in the Western style at the door of the shop, two Korean rickshaw men are shown wearing Korean clothing – somewhat modified style of the man on the left, wearing a Western-style undershirt with a *jeogori* made of transparent and striped material – along with Western-style hats. They seem to wait for the customer who could probably afford to order his expensive tailor-made suit in the shop.

When the male students' school uniforms changed to *yangbok* style around the late 1910s, the affordability of the new clothing was not a small matter even to the students' families who were well off to send their children to the modern schools. In Figure 4.13, the group of male students in Yonhi College (延禧專門學校) in 1914–15

wore *durumagi* as *hanbok*-style uniforms, and later changed to *yangbok*-style uniforms in 1918, with the high stand collar and five buttons bearing a college emblem at front. The increased number of tailor shops run by Joseon Korean tailors then came to be an alternative solution for the matter of the *yangbok* uniform expenses. As Lee Gyeong-ju – a third-generation tailor at Chongro Tailor’s (종로양복점) since 1916 – recalls, good price and service was offered by Korean tailors to Joseon students, keeping competitive power from many other Japanese tailor shops, and this in turn affected the growth of Korean tailor shops and ensuing dissemination of *yangbok* throughout the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>44</sup>



Figure 4.13. Students of Yonhi College in 1914–15 (left) and the *Yangbok* Uniform in 1918 (right) (Source: Geum Gi-suk, et al., 2006, p. 77)

While many tailor shops were making solid Western-style *yangbok*, some hybrid traits can be found along with refraction by the Japanese in the production of *yangbok*. For instance, this men’s waistcoat is well cut and made in a classic way having four slash pockets, but features five textile-covered buttons at the centre (Figure 4.14). The

<sup>44</sup> See *Dong-A Ilbo*, 11 October 2009: The founder of Chongro Tailor’s (종로양복점), Lee Du-yong (李斗鎔, 1882–1942) opened the shop near Bosingak (普信閣) pavilion in Jongno, 1916, and it flourished in the 1930s with nearly 100 staff working. In 1942, Lee Hae-ju (李海注, 1916–1996) succeeded to his father’s business for 54 years, and currently his third son, Lee Gyeong-ju (李景柱, 1945–), runs the tailor shop since 1968.



waistcoat was an important component of gentlemen's traditional suit ensemble, consisting of the jacket and trousers, and this was in turn adapted to the Korean-style waistcoat (*joggi*) as examined earlier. The wooden hanger further features the tailor's brand, 'Chojiya' or 'Jeongjaok' [丁子屋], indicating where the waistcoat was made. In Figure 4.15, the Japanese tailor's advertisement in the April 1924 newspaper introduces Western fashion terms and trendy styles, such as 'ready-made' [내디-메이드], 'Savile Row suits' [세비로], 'raincoat' [레이코투] and 'inverness cloak' [인바네스], yet the Japanese's influence can be also noticeable in the terms used, including 'tsumeeri' [쭈메에리, high stand collar *yangbok*, often used for student uniforms].



Figure 4.14. A Waistcoat on a Hanger, inscribed with the Tailor's '丁子屋', c. 1920–30s (Source: Seoul Museum of History, 2014, p. 99)



Figure 4.15. Advertisement of Chojiya/Jeongjaok Tailor's (丁子屋) (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 6 April 1924, Sunday, p. 3)

Moreover, Figure 4.16 demonstrates that Korean-style detail was employed as a new design to *yangbok* coat, thus creating a hybrid style. The advertised Western-type winter overcoat applied Korean *durumagi* to its design, resulting in the widened sleeves and broadened bodice and length. The model is then illustrated with *hanbok* attire of the hat (*gat*), trousers (*baji*) and shoes, with a tobacco pipe in the hand. Such a mixed style was indeed underlined with the title of ‘special overcoat for Joseon-use’ [朝鮮用特厚地オ-バ]. Priced with eight *won* eighty *jeon*, this mixed-style overcoat would have been suitable for some Korean men who wanted to keep his *hanbok* attire, yet began to try on *yangbok* style in the winter season of 1934, allowing little resistance for the new trial. This coat is thus representative of the transitional state in the mode of men’s *yangbok* production.



Figure 4.16. Advertisement of 'Special Overcoat for Joseon-use' [朝鮮用特厚地オーバ] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 11 December 1934, Tuesday, p. 4)

Women's Western-style clothes (*yangjang*, to distinguish from men's *yangbok*) was directly imported to Korea, and the Western-style look, new material, techniques and detail were all came along with the dress itself. Figure 4.17 shows a Gibson-style printed silk two-piece dress, collected in Korea 1905–10. Due to the limited information, it is unclear whether this dress was worn by a Western or Korean woman. Yet, this collection of the Korea Museum of Modern Costume (한국현대의상박물관) illustrates details of the favoured Gibson-style of the early twentieth century, which certainly encountered with Korean women in the society during the time. The pleated shoulders give the volume to the upper body of the wearer; and the high neck design and cuffs made of the lace and ribbon are typical of the Gibson Girl style, which was in fashion during the 1900–10s. The long skirt, tucked in the waist and ending above the ankle, is also made of the same printed silk fabric and finished with the plating detail in the hemline. The detail image shows the plating technique – the fabric tapes sewn together in a crossed shape at the hem – and the detail of the skirt design, as the

lace covering is attached over the cut-out, completed with the fabric tabs sewn with the buttons in a diagonal line. Not only the new Western-style clothing was impressed by Korean women, the sewing techniques and details of the Western dress were also influential.



Figure 4.17. Gibson-style Two-piece Dress and the Skirt Detail with a Plating Technique, 1905–10 (Source: The Korea Museum of Modern Costume, Shin Heisoon, 2008, pp. 22-23)

When Art Deco style was in vogue during the 1920s and 30s in the West, the trendy style was also introduced to Korea in the form of Western dress. The remaining Western-style *yangjang* at the Korea Museum of Modern Costume's collection reflects this overseas style. In Figure 4.18, the dress on the left is titled a 'Leopard Chiffon

Flapper Dress' in 1920. The so-called 'flapper dress' was popular to the new woman of the 1920s, who was known as a 'flapper girl' dressed in shorter clothes than before with short, boyish hairstyle during the Jazz Age.<sup>45</sup> The dress indeed features those traits such as loose fit with a tubular silhouette, made of black chiffon fabric and decorated with silver leopard pattern beads on the top and centre, attached with fringes in the skirt part. The picture on the right also shows the Art Deco style of a dot printed loose fit three-piece ensemble with the geometric line design on the top centre part.



Figure 4.18. Leopard Chiffon Flapper Dress, 1920 (left), Loose Fit Three-piece Ensemble, 1925 (right) (Source: The Korea Museum of Modern Costume, Shin Heisoon, 2008, pp. 26-27)

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<sup>45</sup> For more detail, see Geum Gi-suk, et al., *Hyeondaepaesyeon 100nyeon*, pp. 88-92.

The production of women's Western-style attire was often made outside Korea, and the style and detail were directly imported to Korea by the wearer. For instance, Figure 4.19 shows a fur muffler from the Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School collection at Sungkyunkwan University. Worn by an affluent landlady during the 1930-40s, this fur muffler was one of the distinct fashion items among the wealthy and fashionable women in Korea then. The label detail proves it was 'Designed by Salon Furs' that was located in 'Chung King Arcade, Kowloon, Hong Kong' that time. As few places known for making women's Western attire within Korea, many of them were produced outside and came into Korea by the wearers or some specialised tradesmen and shops dealt with imported goods.



Figure 4.19. Fur Muffler made in 'Salon Furs', Hong Kong, 1930-40s (Source: Author's photograph from the Collection of Daejeon Saint Mary's Girls' High School at Sungkyunkwan University)

It was in 1938 when Choe Gyeong-ja (崔敬子, 1911-2010) opened a dressmaking school in Hamheung that is known as the first institution in Korea to educate in making women's Western clothing – still remains today as Kookje School of Fashion Design (국제패션디자인학원) – following her opening of the first

women's boutique, Eunjwaok (銀座屋), in Hamheung city, 1937 (Figure 4.20).<sup>46</sup> The school and her life-long education has been regarded as the groundwork for the emergence of fashion designers in Korea during the 1950s, establishing Korean Fashion Designers Association in 1955 (Daehan Boksik Yeonuhoe 대한복식연우회 in 1955, later Daehan Boksik Designer Hyeophoe 대한복식디자이너협회 in 1961). During the colonial period, the school started with 13 students and soon prospered with about 100 students before 1945, and it provided Western dressmaking techniques that Mrs Choe had learned at Ochanomizu (お茶の水) School in Tokyo for about three years from 1933 during her study-abroad in Japan until 1937.<sup>47</sup> In the picture, we can find many of the women students dressed in *hanbok*, but including Choe Gyeong-ja (circled in the centre) there are some dressed in *yangbok* and Japanese *kimono*, too, reflecting the mixed attire of women's dress in the late 1930s.



Figure 4.20. Hamheung Dressmaking School (함흥 양재학원), established in March 1938 (Source: Choe Gyeong-ja, 1999, p. 13)

<sup>46</sup> Choe Gyeong-ja, *Choe Gyeong-ja wa hamkkehan fashion chilsipnyeon* [Seventy Years of Fashion with Choe Gyeong-ja], 1999, pp. 9-13.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Other than the school and female students who professionally learned the skills, probably as the first generation of women who pursued their careers as Western dress makers or designers, did sewing and dressmaking as part of the women's school curriculums also provide another mode of production in *yangbok* making. Mrs Choe recalls that her first Western dressmaking was a 'low waist one-piece dress' in 1929 at her Wonsan Lucy Women's School (元山樓氏女學校).<sup>48</sup> Figure 4.21 is a scene of the exhibition for students' works of Western-style uniforms and dresses hung on the wall, and hooded capes on the table, taken at Pyongyang Public Women's High Normal School (平壤公立女子高等普通學校). Two students in *hanbok* are posed with seemingly two Korean teachers dressed in *hanbok* and a Japanese teacher in *kimono*.



Figure 4.21. Exhibition of Dressmaking at Pyongyang Public Women's High Normal School (平壤公立女子高等普通學校) (Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2010645655/>, accessed via <http://pre1945korea.blogspot.com>, courtesy of Guven Peter Witteveen, on 20 October 2011)

Throughout the colonial period, women's high school curriculums included 'Sewing and Fancywork' (재봉 및 수예) of 10 hours per week (compared with 6

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.



hours of Japanese, 2 hours of Korean and Chinese characters, among total 13 subjects of 31 hours per week) in 1910–1919; 7 hours of ‘Sewing and Fancywork’ (Japanese 8, Korean and Chinese characters 3, among total 12 subjects of 31 hours) in 1919–1931; 4 hours of ‘Sewing’ (재봉) (Japanese 6, Korean 2, among total 16 subject of 32 hours) in 1931–1945.<sup>49</sup> This demonstrates a significant amount of time devoted to women’s sewing skills as a school subject: about 32% of weekly time in 1910–1919, 23% in 1919–1931 and 13% in 1931–1945. While this reflects the colonial administration’s interests on women’s education throughout the different policy periods, Korean women’s traditional sewing practice at home was transferred to and carried on through modern schooling. Thus educated women in colonial Korea became accustomed to modern sewing techniques, capable of modifying *hanbok*, as well as making *yangbok*, in which the gendered division of sartorial production was consolidated.

## **2. Mediation: Fashion in *Yangbok* and *Hanbok* Spread through Media and Modern Fashionable Figures**

Fashion as a social trait was mediated through print media that emerged in the late nineteenth century in Korea. The first newspaper was *Hanseong Sunbo* (漢城旬報), published in 1883 by an envoy, Park Yeong-hyo (朴泳孝, 1861–1939), after his visit to Japan under the court bureau, *Bakmunguk* (博文局). In 1886, *Hanseong Jubo* (漢城周報) was published not only in Chinese characters, but also with Korean articles, so that it was able to reach a larger readership. During the colonial period, the publication was controlled by Japan, and Governor-General of Korea published *Maeil Sinbo* (每日申報) as a colonial bulletin. A significant number of newspapers and magazines were published and subsequently discontinued, reflecting the publisher’s

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<sup>49</sup> Lee Hye-yeong [이혜영], et al., *Hanguk geundae hakgyogyoyuk 100nyeonsa yeongu (II): Iljesidaewi hakgyogyoyuk [A Study on 100 Years History of Modern School Education in Korea (II): School Education during the Colonial Period]*, 1997, pp. 164-172.

interests and various readerships under Japanese colonial rule. For example, after the March First Movement in 1919, three newspapers – *Chosun Ilbo* (朝鮮日報), *Dong-A Ilbo* (東亞日報) and *Sisa Sinmun* (時事新聞) – and a good deal of magazines were launched under Japan’s cultural policy from the 1920s, including *Sinnyeoseong* (新女性), which was published between 1923 and 1934 as a new commercial women’s magazine.<sup>50</sup>

Daily and seasonal news about new fashions and textiles presented in the newspapers enticed people, increasing consumer demand and mediating fashion among the Koreans in general. In particular, this section first explores how the fashion reports, appeared in the autumn 1934 *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper as a case study, introduced new fashions each season to people, taking Korean consumers into consideration through not only Western-style *yangbok* but also concerning Korean-style *hanbok*. It then examines how Western ideas of fashion came into Korea and were disseminated through the media, Western film stars and Korean fashion-conscious modern individuals. Lastly, it further traces how spread of fashion with *hanbok* was realised through the media of newspapers and Korean films, with a particular Korean case of women’s fashion; to argue that modern fashion in Korea was materialised not only with Western-style *yangbok*, but also with Korean-style *hanbok*.

### ***2.1. A Series of Fashion Reports in the Dong-A Ilbo, Autumn 1934***

The *Dong-A Ilbo* published a series of four fashion articles between August and September in 1934. Beginning in the autumn season in late August, the newspaper featured a series of fashion articles. Figure 4.22 is a section introducing the new fall fashion from Paris, and it appeared in the newspaper on 22 August 1934. The section ‘Home’ [家庭] in the *Dong-A Ilbo* began writing about fashion (or trend, 유행, *yuhaeng*) in 1924, and even introduced Paris fashion during the 1930s. Under the

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<sup>50</sup> For more detail, see Cha Bae-geun, et al. *Uri sinmun 100nyeon* [Our Newspaper 100 Years], 2001.

section ‘Buin’ [부인, Madame], the title reads: ‘New Fall Fashion (the first episode); Women’s yangbok; Complicated style; Purplish brown colour; Rough woven fabric to come.’<sup>51</sup> Beginning with a comment on the colour of women’s yangbok, the article differentiates the complexion and physique of ‘oriental people’ [동양인종] including Koreans from that of Western women, advising Koreans to use ‘black, white and dark blue colours’ to avoid choosing the wrong colour for yangbok.<sup>52</sup> The internalised racial differentiation was noted in this article, with the Korean writer suggesting alternatives and the best colours for Korean readers, which shows they were aware of the different traits of clothing chosen by wearers, and tried to find the best suitable fit for Korean people rather than just imitating the fashion from the West.



Figure 4.22. ‘New Fall Fashion (first)’ [새가을의 유행, 其一], ‘Women’s Western Clothing’ [부인양복] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 22 August 1934, Thursday [Wednesday], p. 6)

<sup>51</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 22 August 1934, Thursday [Wednesday], p. 6: ‘부인: 새가을의 유행 (其一); 부인양복; 스타일은 복잡; 빛갈은 자갈색; 감은 거칠게 짠 것이 나옴’

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘서양부인들은 빛갈이한고로 아모빛이나 조화가되며 아모러한 첨단적 빛을 입드라도 흥해보이지가 아니합니다. 그러나 우리동양인종은 빛이 누른 동시에 체격이 못하므로 특별히 빛에 대하여 주의하지 아니하면 마음먹고 해입은 옷이 실패에 돌아가기 쉬운일입니다. 동양사람은 실패없는 빛을 입으려면 검은빛, 흰빛 또진남빛이면 제일 무난이라할수있습니다.’

In the article, the first section is titled ‘Colour’ [빛갈], reporting the colours that will be in fashion, such as ‘purplish brown, dark green and black’. It continues, stating that ‘roughly inter-woven fabric mixed with two or three colours will come, and this type of new Western material would give much influence to Joseon clothes’.<sup>53</sup> The writer also shows a preference for ‘white and black’ colours due to their practicality and propriety. Western textile trend not only influenced Joseon Korean clothes in terms of material, but also the colour code of white and black used by Koreans during this time matched the imported Western colour scheme, reflecting a sense of modernity in Korea of that time.

In the following section, ‘Style’ [스타일], the article describes the new style of women’s *yangbok* as being a ‘rather complicated style with many lines but similar length as previous and sleeves with complex lines’; it then goes on to stress the ‘importance of one’s body fit to the Western clothes’, warning fashion followers against chasing Western fashion blindly.<sup>54</sup> It shows the modern awareness of fashion in Korea at that time, with people already trying to adopt Western-style fashion discretely, rather than just copying and being fashion victims.

The last section of ‘Sample’ [견본] introduces three styles of women’s *yangbok*, which are illustrated in the article. It describes the first sample on the right, highlighting the ‘detailed decoration shifted from the front to the back, which will be

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.: ‘빛갈: 이번가을에는 자갈색 짙은녹색 검은빛이 유행될터이러는데 한빛으로 고정하야 잇지아니하고 二, 三색을 합하야 두세가지빛으로 볼수잇게 좃으며 곱게짤다는이보다 곱칠게짤 양복지가 나오리러는데 우리 조선옷에도 만은영향이 잇을것입니다. 검은빛과 흰빛은 나이좀먹은이나 좀 젊은이나 누구에게나 맞는빛으로 아올리는 빛입니다. 그뿐아니라 검은빛은 어떠한때나 어떠한 장소를 물론하고 예의를 일치아니하는 빛이오 부속품에도 조화가 잘되는 빛이라 할수잇습니다. 양복게에 잇어서도 흑백색을 섞어서 만든 옷은 누구나 보든지 조흔 색채라 할수잇습니다.’

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.: ‘스타일: 이번가을의 양복스타일은 좀복잡하여졌고 선이 만허졌으며 기력 이는 전이 나 다름없고 소매에 좀복잡한선이 잇다고합니다. 아모리 유행복이요 최첨단을 취한다 고 하더라도 자기몸에맞지아니하는 유행이라면 아모소용없는것이요 유행에만 주의를 하게되면 양복과 몸이 따로 다니는감이 잇습니다.’

in fashion in Paris’, the middle, ‘less changed style of two-piece dress for working women’ and the left, ‘one-piece clothes for common women’.<sup>55</sup> Forecasting the new season’s Western style through the newspaper, fashion news was imported to Korea directly from the West or via Japan. While the section ‘Madame’ [부인, *Buin*] is printed with an illustration of a traditional-style woman in *hanbok* – a *jeogori* jacket and *chima* skirt with a *teageuk* mark fan – leaning on a pillar in the background of a wind-bell hanging from the eaves, the juxtaposed sample illustrations of three Western-style women seem to act as a stark contrast. The article concludes by stating that ‘it will introduce later women’s accessories and the fall season’s Joseon clothes [조선옷].’<sup>56</sup> As the promised article on the ‘Joseon clothes’ – mainly introducing new season’s fabric for women’s *hanbok* skirts – was reported later as the fourth in the series (and the ‘women’s accessories’ as the third article), this line indicates that Joseon Korean-style clothes was also treated as a separate field of the fashion report, demonstrating that fashion in Korea was understood and practiced not only with Western-style clothing *yangbok*, but also with the Korean *hanbok*. Here, the *hanbok* was not necessarily ‘traditional’ to Korean consumers, but rather a continuing and contemporaneous form of dress that Korean people regarded it as an existing domain of attire, along with the other new genre of the Western style.

In the second article of the series, gentlemen’s Western clothing was introduced with the title, ‘New Fall Fashion’ [새가을의 유행], on 23 August 1934 (Figure 4.23). With the title ‘Having returned again; The style of the ten years ago; Brown colour, no

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.: ‘견본: 그림에 보이는 세가지 양복을이번가을에 유행으로 소개합니다. 一호는 이번가을에 파리에서 유행될 야회복으로 전에는 앞가슴에 만흔힘을 썼지마는 지금은 가슴에보다 잔등이에 만흔 장식을하기에 힘쓰게 되었습니다. 소매도 아직우리가 보지못하던것이요 뒤잔등이 내논것을 보면 활팽복을 입은것같이 보이나 이야회복이 이번가을에 파리에서 최첨단을 밝을것입니다. 二호는 재래에 있던 ‘투피스’복으로 직업부인이 만히 입는것인 데 만흔변화가 없습니다. 三호는 보통부인옷으로 원피스인 데 누구기 입던지 얇단하다 할 수 있습니다.’

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.: ‘부인들의 장신구나 가을철의 조선옷은 차차로 소개하합니다.’

big difference of fabric’,<sup>57</sup> the article illustrates two gentlemen’s single-breasted and double-breasted suits, respectively, along with three sections of writing on ‘Style’ [스타일], ‘Colour and Fabric’ [빛·감] and ‘Price’ [가격].



Figure 4.23. ‘New Fall Fashion (second)’ [새가을의 유행, 其二], ‘Gentlemen’s Western Clothing’ [신사양복] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 23 August 1934, Thursday, p. 8)

Suggesting a seasonal dress change into a ‘neat suit’ as an introductory comment,<sup>58</sup> the article starts with the section ‘Style’ [스타일], reporting that the style of the ten years ago has returned and is in fashion, thus items from ten years ago can be worn again.<sup>59</sup> Thus it is worth noting that, like the Western fashion cycle, the 1920s men’s suit style came back into fashion in the 1930s. The fashion report on 1934’s autumn season proves the repeat of the fashion style in Korea – one of the key features of the modern fashion cycle – probably following the Western trend. In other words,

<sup>57</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 23 August 1934, Thursday, p. 8: ‘부인: 새가을의 유행 (其二); 신사양복; 또 다시 돌아왔다; 십년전 스타일; 빛같은 갈색, 감은대차없다’

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘찌는듯하든더위가 저내가고 산들산들한 첫가을에 신사 여러분께서 얹전한 양복을 입으실때가 도라왔습니다.’

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘스타일: 스타일은 십여년전에 유행하든스타일이 다시유행하기 시작하였다 니 십년전에 유행에 떠러져 못입으시든것 잇으면 마춤입으시기 조케되었습니다.’

we can assume that the Western fashion style and cycle were prevalent in 1920s and 1930s Korean society. Indeed, the article reports changes of suit style, such as ‘collar part, length of jacket and waistcoat, and width of trousers’.<sup>60</sup> In this part of the section, young male students wearing ‘wide trousers’ are said to be less common and the report anticipates that the style will disappear.<sup>61</sup> Male youths were one of the groups of people in colonial Korea whose style and fashion were paid attention to and reflected Western trends and cycles.

In the section ‘Colour and Fabric’ [빛·감], the colour trend is predicted to be ‘similar to that of the women’s, dominated by brown and green colours’; and the fabric is predicted to go ‘thicker in suits’ and ‘thinner in overcoats’, which was the opposite from the current style.<sup>62</sup> This reveals that changes of colour and fabric in menswear were related to womenswear and men’s fashion constantly changed too. The section also states that ‘whereas Western people prefer stripes as they dislike simple colours, our Koreans regard stripes as vulgar, so wearing stripes was rarely seen, yet in this autumn season, the times would not allow it, hence you would wear striped jackets and solid colour trousers after all’.<sup>63</sup> This line implies that there was a division between Western and Korean tastes and preferences in their dress practices, but that the Western fashion would have power to ensure people’s style stayed with the spirit of the times, similarly to the forceful magic of fashion today.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.: ‘수년래 “에리”접는것은 비단이 길게 내려오든것이 차차짧게 되어 단초 물식이던 것이 셋식되엇고 옷게고리 기력에도 차차길어가는반면에 족기는 짧어 간답니다.’

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.: ‘청년학생들이 통넓은바지를 입고휘적어리는것 보기힘드더니 이번가을에는 형적을 감초게된답니다.’

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.: ‘빛·감: 빛같은 부인양복과 거의같은경향이 잇습니다. 갈색과 녹색이아죽 전성시대요 재래는 양복감이 얇고 외투가 두텁더니 금년부터는 반대로 양복이 두터운감이요 외투가 얇은감이 유행된답니다.’

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.: ‘서양사람들은 단순한 빛을 실희하는고로 줄친옷을 잘입습니다마는 우리 조선에서는 줄친옷을 한층 천하게 생각하는고로 줄친옷입는 것을 별로히 볼수없엇으나아마 이번가을부터는 시대가 허락하게아니하여 기어히 줄친저고리에 순색바지를 입게되실 것입니다.’

In terms of ‘Price’ [가격] at the end of the article, a suit is shown to cost ‘from 33 *won* to 43 *won*’, similarly to the previous year, despite the ‘10% increase of fabric cost’; and this figure was surveyed by the ‘Hwashin Department Store’ [和信百貨店].<sup>64</sup> The price of one gentlemen’s suit at 33–43 *won* would have been expensive for modernised Korean men at that time. In terms of consumer prices in 1934, Mun Il-pyeong’s (文一平, 1888–1939) diary provides us with useful insight for the comparison.<sup>65</sup> He was a modern elite man and a nationalistic Korean historian and journalist and worked as an advisory editor at the *Chosun Ilbo*. During the time he was working at the *Chosun Ilbo* he wrote his diary, which details consumer prices of the time through his daily life. His monthly salary was ‘90 *won*’<sup>66</sup> and an end-of-the-year bonus was ‘180 *won*’.<sup>67</sup> He spent his income on things such as: ‘daughter’s daily hospital bill (1 *won* 45 *jeon*)’,<sup>68</sup> a ‘desk cloth (1 *won* 80 *jeon*)’,<sup>69</sup> a ‘fountain pen (4 *won* 20 *jeon*) and a bottle of ink (28 *jeon*)’,<sup>70</sup> ‘woollen underwear for upper and lower

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.: ‘가격: 갑으로말하면 작년이나 별차이가 없으나 갑으로는 一할쯤올담으되 양복값에는 별영향이 없답니다. 한벌에 三十三圓부터 四十三圓까지 지을수 잇답니다. (和信百貨店調査)’

<sup>65</sup> Mun Il-pyeong, *Mun Il-pyeong 1934 nyeon: Sikminji sidae han jisikineui ilgi* [Mun Il-pyeong in 1934: an Intellectual’s Diary during the Colonial Era], trans. by Yi Han-su, 2008.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p.108: ‘7월 26일 (음 6월 15일) 목요일: 봉급일이다. 90원 중 60원이 손에 들어왔는데 고리채권자에게 거의 다 빼앗겨 집에 돌아오니 남은 것은 몇 십원에 불과했다. 앞으로 생활비 부족을 어떻게 헤쳐 나갈지 걱정이다.’

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p.163: ‘12월 24일 (음 11월 18일) 월요일: 사장실에 갔더니 어제 이미 연말 상여금 20할을 지급했다고 한다. 나는 68원 가지불을 공제하고 나니 남은 것은 112원에 불과했다. 그중에서 또 춘해의 선물 조로 5원, 석송 위로연 조로 1원 몇십전을 공제하니 실제 남은 것은 107원 몇 십전이였다. 쌀값 50원, 쇠고기값 30원을 선급하고 그 밖에 전등, 수도 값, “중앙일보” 대금 등 소소한 용도를 지급했다.’

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p.53: ‘3월 16일 (음 2월 2일) 금요일: 혜경이가 부민의원 7호실에 입원했다. 병실은 2층 햇빛이 잘 드는 곳에 있다. 일본 여자 두 명이 이미 병실 내에 입원하고 있었다. 가습기를 설치하고 식대를 포함해 하루 입원료는 1원 45전이다.’

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.46: ‘3월 2일 (음 1월 17일) 금요일: 책상보가 더러워지고 낡아 새 것으로 갈았다. 값은 1원 80전이다.’

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p.63: ‘4월 6일 (음 2월 23일) 금요일: 밤에 만년필 한 자루를 4원 20전,



body (6 *won* 40 *jeon*),<sup>71</sup> a ‘pair of shoes (9 *won*) and a suit (10 *won*)’.<sup>72</sup> The price of the suit from the Hwashin Department Store (33–43 *won*) is more expensive than what Mun paid for his suit (10 *won*). Thus, a different price range was established depending on the market and purchasing place, and department stores would have been the place for higher prices. Yet, despite the high price of men’s suits reported in the article, there would have been some male customers who could afford that price. Mun Il-pyeong expresses regret for his ‘extravagant spending on food and entertainment at the end of the year as almost 30 *won*,’<sup>73</sup> and we can assume that there would have been other fashion-conscious men who invested a similar amount of money into their appearance. Like today, for the modern male consumers in colonial Korea, it was a matter of values whether to spend their money on clothing and adornment or alcohol and entertainment.

The third topic of the series was published in the section ‘Home’ (家庭) on 31 August 1934 (Figure 4.24). Under the series title ‘New Fall Fashion’ [새가을의 유행], the article features ‘Women’s Accessories’ [부인장신구] with the headline ‘Little difference to last year; Handbag, gloves and necktie; Sharp contrast in light and shade is in fashion’,<sup>74</sup> introducing the fashion items of the ‘handbag’ [핸드백], ‘gloves’ [장갑] and ‘necktie’ [넥타이]. Starting with the opening comment, this indeed reflects people’s anxiousness to follow fashion at the time, as well as to find economical ways to do so, reading ‘Regarding accessories this new autumn, you do not have to worry too much whether or not you fall behind the fashion. You shall have no problem in

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잉크 한 병을 28전에 샀다.’

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p.164: ‘12월 26일 (음 11월 20일) 수요일: 모직 내의 상하 두 벌은 6원 40전이다.’

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p.90: ‘6월 7일 (음 4월 26일) 목요일: 구두 한 켤레를 샀다. 값은 9원이다. 양복 값을 선금으로 냈는데 10원이다.’

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p.164: ‘12월 26일 (음 11월 20일) 수요일: 근래 나의 음식값 낭비로 인해 우춘(관). 대련(관). 원흥(루)에서 먹은 음식값이 거의 30원이고, 상원(식당)은 2개월간 38원이다. [...] 오늘 저녁에 또 조시언 씨와 함께 원흥 · 상원 · 매옥 등 음식점에서 술을 마시고 형편없이 취해 돌아왔다. 이미 밤 2시였다.’

<sup>74</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 31 August 1934, Friday, p. 6: ‘家庭: 새가을의 유행 (其三); 부인장신구; 작년과 차이없는; 핸드백, 장갑, 넥타이; 모다 명암이 뚜렷한것이 유행’

using the same one you used last year, but I will briefly introduce something special.’<sup>75</sup> The fashion report played as a means of informing and circulating fashion news, yet also provided alternative ways for Koreans to respond to coming fashions.

Figure 4.24. ‘New Fall Fashion (third)’ [새가을의 유행, 其三], ‘Women’s Accessories’ [부인장신구] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 31 August 1934, Friday, p. 6)

Presenting a handbag, the article accounts for how the times changed and the new need for a women’s handbag: ‘In the past we lived without one, but nowadays the handbag seems to have become a necessity as one cannot go out without it. Whereas previously, holding a pouch attached to a waistband put under the skirt, one used to take money from the pouch lifting the skirt without hesitation in front of people, now one may need to bring a handkerchief, tissue and purse, as well as cosmetics, in going

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.: ‘새가을 장신구에 대하여 유행에 떠러지거나 아니하였나하는 걱정은 과히하시지안흐 서도 될뜻합니다. 작년에 쓰시든것 그대로 쓰신대도 망발될듯하지 아니하나 좀특색잇 는것을 잠간소개 하겟읍니다.’

out, thus inevitably it is natural one cannot go out without the handbag.’<sup>76</sup> The arrival of the new handbag – along with Western-style clothes – replaced the traditional use of the pouch, and this also led to a change in women’s bodily manner in relation to clothing. In adopting a new appearance, Koreans were putting aside the old ways dressing and learning a new demeanour and the practicality that Western clothing provided. In this process, fashion functioned as a social stimulus, as a way which people embraced modernity through the clothed body, either autonomously or anxiously. The writer of the article seems to show sympathy for the state of fashion in the handbag and blindly seeking out fashion: ‘With any handbag, once we have one and use it until it is worn out, we can make no fuss about whatever fashion comes in, but concerning ourselves and looking to others, we may want to own a nice and well-shaped handbag, thus we tend to seek a right one in fashion.’<sup>77</sup> The article then reports that fashionable handbags come in ‘green and brown colours’ of lighter hues, making them ‘similar to the trendy colour of men’s suits’, and shape-wise they are ‘bigger and round’ compared to last year and ‘one attached with a string’ is in fashion as it had been since the spring.<sup>78</sup>

The article also introduces the ‘gloves’ [장갑], reading ‘It is not yet so cold that the gloves would not be needed, but just to introduce the shape or design of gloves has changed a bit, as shown in the photograph.’<sup>79</sup> In the photograph featured in the article,

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.: ‘옛날에는 없어도사랏건만 이제는 없이는 외출못할만큼 핸드백은 필요품이 된듯합니다. 그전에는치마밑에 주머니단 허리띠띠고거침없이 사람앞에서 치마를 들치고 돈을 꺼내든것이 이제는 외출할 때 반드시 손수건, 휴지, 지갑은가져야 하겟고 따라서 화장품도가져하하겟으니 불가불 핸드백 없이는 외출못하는 것이 당연한일일것입니다.’

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.: ‘아모 주머니라도 하나 가졌거든 해질때까지 가졌으면 유행이니무엇이니 차질것도 없 지마는 그래도체재를보느라니 모양잇는 핸드백을 갖게되고 따라서 해마다 유행도 찾게 됩니다.’

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.: ‘이번 가을에는 빛같은 명색(明色)에 가까운 록색(綠色)과 갈색인듯한데 양복으로부터 모도가 록색 갈색이 유행인듯합니다. 작년보다는 좀큰것 같고 둥근 것도 잇는데 끈달린 것은 봄부터 그대로 계속되는듯합니다.’

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.: ‘장갑은 아직 칩지안흐니 그다지 필요품은 아니나 사진에 보시는 대로 좀

we can see the design of the glove, which has coloured line decorations on the back of the hand and further design on the wrist section. Unlike the illustrations in the previous two articles, this uses a photographic image. Using the modern method of photographic representation of fashion product images was already employed, visually facilitating the mediation between the fashion and readers of the newspaper this time.

The ‘necktie’ [넥타이] is the last item explored in the article. It reports that, similarly to the previous year, the necktie used ‘sharp contrasts in light and shade’ and as for colour, ‘brown’ was prime, and one with ‘red, green and yellow on a background of black’ would come into fashion.<sup>80</sup> A man’s necktie is featured in the women’s section and under the article title ‘Women’s Accessories’ [부인장신구]. Like they do today, women were probably largely in charge of purchasing the family’s clothing. While men’s suits would mostly have been made in tailor shops with the male consumer physically attending for a fitting, women would often have purchased men’s accessories, like neckties. Besides, as the necktie was relatively cheaper than any other men’s accessories,<sup>81</sup> women would often select the style or design of the item. Here the taste and style did not express who male wearers really were, but rather who female consumers longed for them to be. The fashion article in the print media thus facilitated women developing their style and taste in the consumption of fashion.

The fourth and last fashion report of the series in the *Dong-A Ilbo*, ‘Women’s Skirt Fabric’ [부인치마감], was issued and published on 4 September 1934 (Figure 4.25). As mentioned earlier, this section introduces Joseon Korean women’s *hanbok* fashion in fabrics, by reporting what trend of fabric was to new women in Korea in

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모양이 달리 진것만은 소개합니다.’

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.: ‘넥타이는 작년보다 과히 다르지는 아니하나 명암(明暗)이 뚜렷하게 드러난 것을 일반이 요구하는 경향이보입니다. 빛같은 역시 갈색이 전성시오 검정 바탕에 적색,록색, 황색을 나타낸 것이 점점 유행되리라고합니다.’

<sup>81</sup> In the article, the price of the accessories was listed at the end by the survey from ‘Hwashin sanghoe’ (和信商會); handbag (2 won – 20 won), gloves (40 jeon – 3 won) and necktie (30 jeon – 3 won): ‘가격은 핸드백 二圓 – 二十圓, 장갑 四十錢 – 三圓, 넥타이 三十錢 – 三圓 으로 되어잇습니다. (和信商會調查)’ (Ibid.)

terms of the pattern and colour of the new textiles. The section is headlined ‘Intricate patterns go away; Simple and quiet one; Newly launched ‘*Swaelmoeseu* [셀모-스]’ this autumn’, heading the trends succinctly.<sup>82</sup> It observes new women’s (신여성) new choice of fabric, and claims the shift is a trend: ‘For a while intricate patterns and complex colours have been in fashion, but now by looking generally at new women [신여성]’s choices, there is a tendency to choose big patterns and simple, quiet tones from among the complicated one as much as possible’.<sup>83</sup> This demonstrates that the ‘new women’ in Korea were the key group to pay attention to in terms of fashion trend, and they dressed in *hanbok* as well. The style and fashion of the new women’s *hanbok* was mainly about the pattern and colour of the fabrics, of which the *hanbok* was made fashionably.

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<sup>82</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 4 September 1934, Tuesday, p. 6: ‘家庭: 새가을의 유행 (其四); 부인 치마감; 복잡한 문이가 없어지고; 단순하고 점잔 은것; 이가을에 처음나오는 셀모-스’

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘한동안 복잡한 문이와 난잡한 색채가 유행되었드니 이제는 일반 신여성 되신 분의 선택법을 보면 될수잇는대로 문이가 크고 빛은 복잡한중에도 단순한것 즉점잔은 빛을 택하는경향입니다.’

한국의 보자기 문화와 남자의 색재가 유행되었다. 이제는 양복의 정장, 셔츠, 넥타이, 선배로 보인 양복은 대개 문이 크고 빛은 대동소이하다. 남자의 정장은 대동소이하다. 남자의 정장은 대동소이하다. 남자의 정장은 대동소이하다.

## 새 가을의 유행

감마치인부  
복잡한 문의가 없애지고  
단순하고 짐작은 든 것

이 가을에 처음 나오는 셸모스

家庭



크레데신 三圓六十錢—七圓四十錢  
폴렌 四圓二十錢—七圓五十錢  
팬시울 四圓二十錢—九圓七十五錢  
울퀸 一圓五十錢  
데칼리온으로 되어 있습니다.  
(白麗會店員談)

이 가을에 처음 나오는 셸모스  
크레데신 三圓六十錢—七圓四十錢  
폴렌 四圓二十錢—七圓五十錢  
팬시울 四圓二十錢—九圓七十五錢  
울퀸 一圓五十錢  
데칼리온으로 되어 있습니다.  
(白麗會店員談)

Figure 4.25. ‘New Fall Fashion (fourth)’ [새 가을의 유행, 其四], ‘Women’s Skirt Fabric’ [부인치마감] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 4 September 1934, Tuesday, p. 6)

The article then predicts new fabric products in fashion such as ‘*Swaelmoeseu* (셸모-스, probably *Shell Moss*)’, ‘*Ulkwin* (울퀸, *Wool Queen*)’ and ‘*Paensiul* (팬시울, *Fancy Wool*)’ following their product or brand names.<sup>84</sup> The Western woollen textiles with their Western names seemed to reassure Koreans of the fashionability of the material, as well as their practicality compared with other traditional Korean fabrics. Naturally, the use and care of the new, unfamiliar cloth needed more attention, as the article asks readers to ‘acquire a further understanding or a common knowledge on the quality of the new fabrics’.<sup>85</sup> In this way, the fashion report played a role in

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.: ‘금년 유행에 이채를 보일것은 “셸모-스”와 “울퀸”일것입니다. “셸모-스”는 이번가을에 비로소 처음나오는것인데 문이는 대동소이하나 빛은 장미색과 옥색이라던 가자색과 금색등의 양색으로 대단이 고상한 옷감이 유행될것입니다. 종내만히 소비되는 털세루는 작년가을부터 그다시 수용이 못되고 남자소용에 불과하며 이번가을부터는 모양있고 실용적인 “팬시울”이 더욱 수용될것입니다.’

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.: ‘그외에 어느옷감을 물론하고입으리샤는 여러분께서 품질에대한 상식을 좀더 가져 주셨으면 조kert읍니다.’

enlightening people on the adoption and use of the Western material, as well as mediating between the new Western fashion textiles and Korean *hanbok* styles.

Next the report mentions colour. It clearly acknowledges personal preferences, agreeing that ‘it cannot be said which one is a good colour’ – this implies that individual consumers’ tastes in colour had already developed – however it does also anticipate that ‘green, brown and purple would be common fashion colours and the cloth woven with noble Western colours would be fluttered in the street this autumn’.<sup>86</sup> Due to the nature of the fashion report, it observed the trends and the preferences of the masses depending on individual styles at the time inside Korea, as well as predicting or reporting what will be in fashion influenced by the outside world. The article finally closes by listing the prices of ‘6 representative new textiles’ for making a piece of *hanbok* skirt, ranging from 3 *won* 60 *jeon* to 29 *won* as surveyed by ‘Baeksanghoe’ [白商會].<sup>87</sup> Presenting the new season fabrics, the report details all the prices of the foreign names of the material. In other words, it is worth noting that those fabrics were in use for home dress making, and women’s selection of a certain design and colour of the fabric was significant, since it would impact on fashion within society, while in turn often being influenced by outside trends. Here the mass-produced textile consumption and domestic production of clothing were closely interrelated with fashion across Korea and the outer world.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.: ‘빛같은 어느것이 조타고 일정할수도 없고 사람사람에 따라 다른것니까 무엇이라고 고정 할수도 없는일이나 일반 유행빛으로는 록, 갈, 자색을 비롯하여 고상한양색으로 섞어짠것이 금년가을에 길거리에서 휘날릴것입니다.’

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.: ‘가격은 대표적인 것 몇종류 알니겠습니다. (치마한감을 표준으로합니다.) 켈모-스한필(육마반) 二九,〇〇; 푸린트크랩(치마한감) 四원五十전 - 七원五十전; 크레데션 三원六十전 - 七원四十원[전]; 폴넨크레 四원二十전 - 七원五十전; 팬시울 四원二十전 - 九원七十五전; 울킨 一九원五十전, 대강 이상으로 되어 있습니다. (白商會店員談)’

## ***2.2. Spread of Fashion in Western Style: Newspapers, Film Stars and the Modern Boy and Girl***

Focusing on Western-style fashion, it was able to spread widely and quickly with the emergence of print and mass media during the colonial modern period. It was one of the new cultural phenomena often associated with Western modernity. According to Hong Seon-pyo, new visual images arrived in Korea via the mechanical visual reproduction of the print media, representing the new Western culture and modernity, and by which people experienced the modern material world visually in their daily lives.<sup>88</sup> Figure 4.26 shows a photo article from *Chosun Ilbo* (25 May 1930) that features leg mannequins displayed in shops in France. The exposed body part would have been sensational to Korean readers, but also the idea of fashion in relation to stockings and women's accessories was visually disseminated to Korea effectively. Those photo articles in daily newspapers were able to catch the Korean readers' interest and the Western fashion images permeated Korean society in everyday life.

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<sup>88</sup> Hong Seon-pyo [홍선표], 'Geundaejeok ilsanggwa pungsogui jingjo: hanguk gaehwagi inswae misulgwa sinmunmul imiji' [Modern Daily Life and the Signs of Customs: Print Arts and the Image of New Material Culture during the Open Port Era of Korea], in Hong Seon-pyo, et al. *Geundaeui cheot gyeongheom: gaehwagi ilsang munhwareul jungsimeuro* [The First Experience of the Modern: Based on the Daily Culture of the Open Port Era], 2006. pp. 17-53. For the theoretical background of this argument, see Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, 1968.





Figure 4.26. ‘The Mannequin of Legs’ [다리의 ‘마네킹’] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 25 May 1930, Sunday, p. 5)

Newspapers also delivered international fashion trends and clothing-related news to Korean people, through which Western fashion ideas became influential. For instance, an article in the *Chosun Ilbo* (20 October 1933) was titled ‘European Fashion Trend’ and introduced the new autumn season’s fashion as it had appeared in London and Paris (Figure 4.27). The article makes forecasts and details European fashion news, stating that the ‘blouse would be in big fashion in the coming autumn season’, ‘knitwear would be most popular as the autumn season goes’ and ‘bold colour appears in woollen cloth’, etc.<sup>89</sup> Another newspaper article (*Chosun Ilbo*, 1 August 1935) reported ‘how much percentage-wise would American working women spend on clothing’ and stated that ‘a 21-year-old working woman from New York, who received 25 dollars in a weekly salary, spent 225 dollars on clothing from her yearly salary of

<sup>89</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 20 October 1933, Friday, p. 1: ‘올가을에는 레년과 달라 “부라우스”가 대류행입니다. 가을이 깊혀갈수록 가장 인기있는것은 역시 편물입니다. 모직물에는 대담한 색채가 보입니다.’

1,200 dollar' (Figure 4.28).<sup>90</sup> This Western, European and American fashion-related news and information provided Korean people with the new ideas of fashion appeared in the Western countries, and probably due to their newness and strong visual impact Korean people unwittingly absorbed the Western-oriented fashion influence.

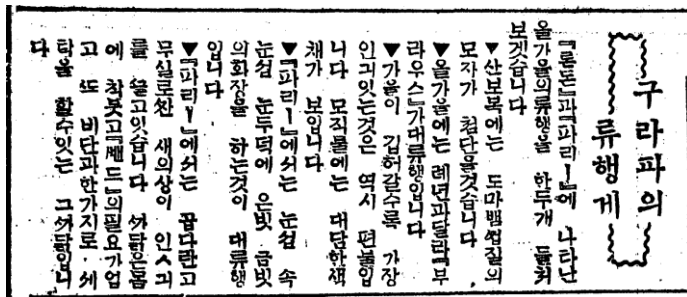


Figure 4.27. 'European Fashion Trend' [구라과의 유행계] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, Special issue, 20 October 1933, Friday, p. 1)

Figure 4.28. 'Earning the Money to Spend on Clothing' [버튼돈은 옷으로], 'International News' [해외 뉴스] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 1 August 1935, Thursday, p. 3)

Since the Japan's cultural policy from the 1920s, Korean people became more exposed to Western culture, and fashion diffusion from the West came to be inevitable. Fashion-wise, film was one of the most influential subjects and media. Newspapers often featured Western film stars. For instance, Figure 4.29 shows French actresses who have not been yet introduced to Korea, and the title asks 'Who is Prettier?' to elicit interest in the featured female stars. This indicates that people were interested in films and stars, but also that Western style and fashion came into Korea through the influence of stars and the media.

<sup>90</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 1 August 1935, Thursday, p. 3: '미국의 직업 녀성은 봉급의 몇할을 옷값으로 쓰는가? 를 살펴보면 [...] 주급(週給) 二十五딸라를 맞는 이십일세의 직업녀성의 일년간 의상비는 [...] 일년총수입 일천이백딸라에서 이백이십오딸라가 의상비라하니'



Figure 4.29. ‘Who is Prettier?’ [누가 엽분가?] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, Special issue, 21 November 1933, Tuesday, p. 4)

As such, the media gave pride of place to images and discussions of Western films and film stars, and came into Koreans’ everyday lives playing a significant role in the popularisation of Western culture in general and new Western-style appearance in particular. An article by Lee Seo-gu (李瑞求) in the magazine *Byeolgeongon* (別乾坤) in September 1929 shows how popular Western stars were. Stars were addressed by name and images of them were widely circulated in public and in private:

This youngster, the girl is so splendidly stylish. She looks like Colleen Moore [코-린 무아]. [...] There would be hardly any rooms in youngsters’ and girls’ halls of residence where posters of the faces of actresses from motion pictures would not be hanging on the walls.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Lee Seo-gu (李瑞求), ‘Jazz of Gyeongseong, Seoul Taste and Seoul Sentiment’ [京城의 짜쓰, 서울맛·서울情調], *Byeolgeongon* [別乾坤], No. 23, September 1929, p. 34: ‘이 애- 고놈의 계집애 참 멋드러 간다. 코-린무아 가튼데가 잇는데. [...] 활동사진 여배우의 얼굴이 어느 젊은 애 宿숨치고 안이 부튼 집이 몇집이나 되겠는가.’ Colleen Moore (1899–1988) was an American film actress and one of the most fashionable stars of the silent film era.

A satire that appeared in the *Chosun Ilbo* on 7 February 1928 clearly points out the relationship between fashion and film in Korea at that time (Figure 4.30):

Fashion today – moreover various fashions in Joseon, motion pictures have huge power. [...] Fashion impacts easily than the sphere of mind. Harold Lloyd’s round and thick glasses became fashion to young people in Joseon, [...] Appearing in the American Wild West action film, cowboy’s leather trousers brought flared trousers to Joseon youth.<sup>92</sup>

When Harold Lloyd (1893–1971)’s 1917 short comedy film, ‘Over the Fence’, appeared in colonial Korea, his stylish glasses and straw hat became fashionable in the capital city, Gyeongseong (currently Seoul). As illustrated in the satire, the ‘modern boy’ (모던보이) was at the vanguard of this fashion, wearing glasses, straw hats and flared trousers on the Seoul streets. The fashion-conscious men known as ‘modern boy’ adopted fashions quickly, influenced by films and other Western culture media, and this drew social attention – often of a critically sort – during the 1920s and 30s.

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<sup>92</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 7 February 1928, Tuesday, p. 3: ‘현대의 여러가지 유행(流行)은 – 더구나 도선의 여러가지 유행에는 활동사진이 큰 힘을 가지고 있다. [...] 유행은 그 정신 방면의 그것보담도 껍 쉽사리 되는 것이다. ‘하롤드, 로이드’의 대모테 안경이 도선의 젊은 사람의 유행이 되었고, [...] 미국 서부활극(西部活劇)에 나아오는 ‘카-보이’의 가죽바지가 도선청년에게 나팔바지를 입혀주었다.’



Figure 4.30. ‘Modern Boy’s Stroll’ [모 – 던 보이들의散歩], ‘A View on the Street (2)’ [街上所見 (2)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 7 February 1928, Tuesday, p. 3)

For women too, the extravagant character of female fashion was also distinctive and caused social criticism, and it too originated from Western actresses and the film industry. Another satire in the *Chosun Ilbo*, 19 January 1932, makes a comment about fashion, Hollywood actresses and modern girls in Seoul (Figure 4.31):

Various fashions in last year of 1931 were so speedy that turned around the world once in a split second. Given the news that New York girls or film actresses in Hollywood wearing the sleepwear so called ‘Pyjamas’ came out to streets in the broad light of day, soon already, in the smallest and cursed poor city, Seoul, I saw an obtrusive girl, dressed in the similar sleepwear without much difference, was walking with a slight limp through thatched houses.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 19 January 1932, Tuesday, p. 4: ‘지난 一九三一年의 여러가지 유행은 매우 “스피드”적이어서 눈깜짝할 사이에 세계를 한박회식 도랐다. “파자마”라는 침의를 미국 뉴욕쪽 아니 헐리웃드의 활동녀 배우들이 입고 대낮에 길거리를 나왔다는 “뉴스”를 바더볼때에 벌써 세계에서 제일적이고 저주바든 가엾은 도시인 “서울”에도 그와 조금도 다를 것 업는 침의를 입고 초가집 틈박우니로 흐느적거리고 다니는 왜장녀를 보았다.’

As noted in the title, the ‘modern girl’ (모던걸) was a fashion-conscious woman in colonial modern Korea, distinctive in her appearance and reacting to Western fashion influences actively and quickly. As early adapters of fashion, their appearances were often contrasted with less modernised surroundings such as the thatched houses. Those fashionable men and women were a kind of spectacle in the city, Gyeongseong. Although their cutting-edge fashion would not have been widely accepted by the public initially, the Western-style fashion influences arrived in Korea through the print and mass media, and on the bodies of modern fashionable figures of men and women in Korea.



Figure 4.31. ‘Modern Girl of The Third Period, Modern Girl’s Demonstration Parade in 1932’ [모걸 第三期, 一九三二年 모걸시위행렬] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 19 January 1932, Tuesday, p. 4)

### ***2.3. Spread of Fashion in Korean Style: Women's Hanbok in the Newspaper and Korean Film***

Other than the Western-style fashion, this section pays attention to tracing the fashion in Korean style that is with wearing of the *hanbok*. It is noteworthy that the modern fashionable figures – especially for women than men – also wore *hanbok* as a means of fashionable attire. Spread of fashion in *hanbok* can be found in the newspapers. Similar to the aforementioned fashion articles, the *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper featured a series of three fashion articles in September 1933, which yet further offers a more nuanced and multifaceted scene on the matter.

The three articles were titled in order: ‘Women’s Fabric to Come into Fashion/Vogue in Autumn Season’ [가을철 유행될 부인네 옷감] on 1 September; ‘Men’s *Yangbok*/Western Suits to Come into Fashion/Vogue in Autumn Season’ [가을철 유행될 남자 양복] on 2 September; and ‘Men and Women’s Accessories to Come into Fashion/Vogue in Autumn Season’ [가을철에 유행될 남녀 장신구] on 3 September 1933.<sup>94</sup> Along with the term ‘to come into fashion/vogue’ or ‘to become a trend’ [유행될], the series articles had a joint headline ‘Fashion Show’ [패션·쇼오] at the top of the articles.<sup>95</sup> The terms, ‘fashion’ (패션) and ‘*yuhaeng*’ (유행, 流行, trend), were used together and interchangeably in this respect, meaning a new style to come among people.

Moreover, two terms set in the same text were used in referring to both *hanbok* and *yangbok*; the above article on 1 September 1933 reported women’s autumn fashion/trend by specifically referring to *hanbok* and its fabric, while one *Dong-A Ilbo* article on 30 January 1934 – titled ‘Spring’s New Fashion’ [봄의 뉴-패션], ‘New Trendy Skirts’ [새로 유행하는 스커트] – conveyed the news on *yangbok*, a new style of women’s wear from Paris.<sup>96</sup> The ‘fashion’ was a loanword and noun derived

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<sup>94</sup> See *Dong-A Ilbo*, Friday, 1; Saturday, 2; Sunday, 3 September 1933, p. 6, respectively.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> See *Dong-A Ilbo*, Tuesday, 30 January 1934, p. 6.

from English, whereas the ‘*yuhaeng*’ was an existing noun that was also easily utilised in a verb form with variable contexts of the Korean language, meaning ‘to become a trend’, or ‘to come into fashion/vogue’. The current nuances and possible difference between ‘fashion’ and ‘*yuhaeng*’ used in contemporary Korean society as a social terminology seem not to have been delicately developed yet during the time.

Focusing on the contents of the articles, we can understand what Koreans actually meant of ‘fashion’ and ‘*yuhaeng*’ at that time. Given those terms referring to ‘new sartorial things to become popular among the people who take care of their appearances’, it is clear that women’s fashion/trend was about carefully selecting new fabric for their *hanbok* and Western-style accessories such as handbags and shoes, while men’s fashion/trend was about new details of *yangbok* or Western suits along with their Western-style accessories such as hats, neckties and dress shirts, judging from a reading of the titles and contents in the articles.

In specific, we can take a closer look at the first article of women’s fashion or trend (Figure 4.32). New textiles for making women’s *hanbok* were paid attention to in the areas of the ‘kinds of fabric’ [가음], ‘colour’ [빛갈], ‘print or pattern of the fabric’ [푸린트] and ‘striped pattern’ [띠사인].<sup>97</sup> Like the aforementioned article (see the Figure 4.25), these details were important matters in purchasing new material for fashionable women’s *hanbok*. Especially, as for the ‘print or pattern of the fabric’, the section calls ‘modern women’ [현대여성들] highlighting the changes of the detail in the new printed or patterned textiles; saying the ‘classical images’, ‘geometric or designed patterns of printing’ or ‘patterns only formed by lines or circles’ will replace the previous ‘flower patterns’ and ‘small and little images’.<sup>98</sup> In the photographic

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<sup>97</sup> See *Dong-A Ilbo*, Friday, 1 September 1933, p. 6.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘푸린트는 지금까지 꽃문의나 자줄그레한 그림모양을 많이취하든것과는 전연달리 고전적(古典的) 그림이나 기하학적(幾何學的) 또는 의장화한 모양의 푸린팅을 현대여성들은 좋아할것입니다. 혹시는 선(線)이라는지 원(圓)으로만 형성시켜만든 그림의 옷감이 유행될것입니다.’





*jeogori* and *chima* will be copied by the housewives.<sup>101</sup> Comparing to the intellectuals' *jeogori* getting longer, the article predicts the cafe waitress's *jeogori* will be getting shorter while the *chima* getting longer, influenced by the 'Yankee girl' [양키 껌]'s lengthened and dragging clothes.<sup>102</sup> This indicates that women's fashionable *hanbok* styles were formulated by the different length and use of colour and fabric in the jacket (*jeogori*) and skirt (*chima*), which were imitated across different groups of Korean women and further influenced by Western styles.

The women's *hanbok*-style fashion was then completed with Western-style accessories. Figure 4.33 shows the third article in the *Dong-A Ilbo* on 3 September 1933: 'Men and Women's Accessories to Come into Fashion/Vouge in Autumn Season' [가을철에 유행될 남녀 장신구]. Juxtaposed with the photographic image of new season's accessories, the article first introduces women's accessories in the 'handbag' [핸드백] and 'women's shoes' [여자구두]; reporting the lesser striped pattern and simpler shape in the handbag will become popular, while milk colour and laced shoes will come into fashion.<sup>103</sup> Further, the article comments that a difference will be noticed between the 'working women' [직업부인] and 'intellectuals' [인테리] that wearing shoes made similar to the sports shoes is prevalent among the former group, but less observed in the latter group.<sup>104</sup> Following the different *hanbok* clothes styles donned by different groups of Korean women, the article suggests that different styles of Western accessories were used accordingly, forming an ensemble to fit each woman's identity or location of social position.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid.: '아래위같이 입든 유행은 인제는 여급(女給)이나 기생들에게로 흘러가서 이번 가을부터는 확연히 갈려질것 입니다.'

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.: '인테리 층은 조고리가 점점 길어질것이고 여급층은 조고리가 점점 더 짧아지고 치마가 몹시 길어집니다. 마치 양키 껌들의 웃이한없이 질어지고 끌리는 것을 여급층에서는 더많이 모방하리라봅니다.'

<sup>103</sup> See *Dong-A Ilbo*, Sunday, 3 September 1933, p. 6.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.: '혹시 스폴츠 구두비슷이지어서 신는것이 직업부인간에는 많이 잇지만 인테리외에는 별로적습니다.'



Figure 4.33. ‘Men and Women’s Accessories to Come into Fashion/Vogue in Autumn Season’ [가을철에 유행될 남녀 장신구], ‘Fashion Show’ [패션·쇼오] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 3 September 1933, Sunday, p. 6)

While women’s mixed use of *hanbok* clothes and Western accessories was mediated through the newspaper, men’s fashion seems to have been circulated in Western style of *yangbok* only, by comparison. In the above article, introducing men’s Western-style accessories in the ‘men’s hat’ [남자모자] and ‘necktie and dress shirt’ [넥타이와 와이사스], it can be noted that men’s fedora hat became a trend in which the height of the hat got elevated to make the wearer appear taller, while the brim got narrower to make the wearer’s face look bigger.<sup>105</sup> We can find that the hat accessory was used to facilitate the pursued men’s image that time, and it may not be same as the current ideal image of Korean men as looking taller but with smaller faces. Those men’s accessories were completed with men’s Western suits, *yangbok*, as reported in the article of the *Dong-A Ilbo* on 2 September 1933 (Figure 4.34). It starts with stating the big change of men’s fashion: ‘By getting tired of the weak-looking and smart style

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.: ‘모자는 중절모자가 가장 많습니다. 좀 달려진것은 모자춤이 훨씬 높아지고 챙이 좁아진 것입니다. 양복의 디자인으로 키가 커보게하자는것 마찬가지로 모자도 높게해서 키를 커보게 하자는 심산입니다. 챙은 좁게 하는 이유가 얼굴이 커보이려는 것입니다.’

that became a trend generally after the First World War, from now on manly style near barbarism will be welcomed'.<sup>106</sup> Reflecting the macho style of men's Western fashion in the interwar period, the article introduces new trends in *yangbok* through the 'shape' [모양], 'colour' [빛깔] and 'fabric' [가슴].<sup>107</sup> Despite men's *hanbok* style was not circulated through the series of the articles, it is noteworthy that Korean terms of men's *hanbok* were used in referring to the details of the suit; for example, reading 'jeogori (jacket)'s shoulders getting wider' [저고리 어깨가 훔신넓고], 'front git (lapel) opened wider' [앞깃이 넓게 벌어지고] and 'joggi (waistcoat)'s length rather getting shorter' [조끼는 기리가 오히려 짧어지고].<sup>108</sup>

패션쇼 쇼쇼쇼

가을철 유행될 남자 양복

여름이 지나가니 전부터 패셔너블한 후예 나타나는 옷  
 빛깔은 밝게 사람의 눈길을 끈다  
 이 가을에 유행될 신사숙녀들의 옷과 장식(入裝飾)을  
 은어 피켓을 가 빛깔 피셔인 모양 감여라 거지들 추방라  
 해서 알아 보면 대개 아래와 같습니다.

길의 선은 굵게 빛깔은 회색과 갈색.  
 건강하게 보려는 것이 세계적인 경향

진중보다 기리로 중직질을 환영  
 합니다. 까탈은 키가 적은 조신남  
 자들이 핏선이 가 키보다 높 하자  
 는 것이요. 피셔인도  
 는 것이요. 피셔인도  
 는 것이요. 피셔인도

이 가을에 유행될 남자들의  
 대체로 세계 대전후에 유행된  
 옛은 약해되고 스마트한 스타일일  
 일에는 실증을 내게되고 지금부터는  
 야만에 가까운 남성적인 스타일을  
 환영합니다.

양복모양으로 보면 저고리 어깨  
 꺾기 훨씬 넓고 앞깃이 넓게 벌어  
 지고 저고리깃이 훨씬 크하고  
 옷저고리 앞자락은 풍분하게 돌아  
 간 것이 많이 유행됩니다.  
 조끼는 기리가 오히려 짧아지  
 고 앞이 좁아졌습니다.  
 아래바지는 가늘어 넓은 것은  
 오히려 시대에 불어집니다. 밑  
 이오 아래 바지만 넓어집니다.  
 어떤 가을부터 화려하여 갈수록  
 는 것은 피셔인입니다. 추태에는 피  
 셔인 남는 순순한 빛깔을 좋아했  
 는데 가을부터는 단색보다 피셔  
 인 것은 것으로 피셔인도 가로

고회색이던 전은 회색 바탕  
 에 흰회색을 굳게 하는 것이  
 나다. 심을 밝고 키크고 커다  
 게 하지 않고 잘도 조미하게 하  
 는 것을 합니다.

빛깔은 회색이 단인 우세를 보  
 입니다. 그 다음은 갈색입니다. 서  
 양서는 갈색이 많아 유행되지만  
 모양인에게는 역시 회색이 조  
 되는 것으로 갈색은 덜 환영됩니다.  
 그리고 가을에는 패셔너블한 이 약  
 하게 쪼이는 패턴이 바지에 빛깔을  
 이 대체로 강하지 않고 신명나게  
 을 입게 합니다. 역시 울리부가  
 금색은 유행되지도 않습니다.

가슴: 가슴은 우아테트와 트림트가  
 제일 많을 것이요. 우아테트는 양복  
 지를 여의고 한꺼 바이 없는데

문 問 顧 庭 家  
 七年間 그리 消息을 드 十七  
 〇 찾아가

Figure 4.34. 'Men's Yangbok/Western Suits to Come into Fashion/Vogue in Autumn Season' [가을철 유행될 남자 양복], 'Fashion Show' [패션쇼·쇼쇼] (Source: *Dong-A Ilbo*, 2 September 1933, Saturday, p. 6)

<sup>106</sup> *Dong-A Ilbo*, 2 September 1933, Saturday, p. 6: '대체로 세계 대전후에 유행되었던 약해되고 스마트한 스타일일에는 실증을 내게되고 지금부터는 야만에 가까운 남성적인 스타일을 환영합니다.'

<sup>107</sup> See *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

Another important media that spread fashion of *hanbok* style was the Korean film. Since the first Korean film ‘Faithful Vengeance’ (義理的仇討) was launched in 1919 as a form of kino-drama, silent films soon emerged highlighting the nationwide big hit of ‘Arirang’ (아리랑) in 1926, along with the openings of popular cinemas such as Danseongsa (단성사, 1907), Umigwan (우미관, 1915) and Joseon Cinema (조선극장, 1922), and it was succeeded by sound films with the first of its kind, ‘Chunhyangjeon’ (春香傳) in 1935.<sup>109</sup> Focusing on a sound film ‘Sweet Dream’ (迷夢), it was made in 1936, directed by Yang Ju-nam (梁柱南, 1912–?) as the sixth production of Gyeongseong Film Studio (京城撮影所) who produced the first sound film, and is known as the oldest remaining sound film in Korea, restored by Korean Film Archive (한국영상자료원) in 2006. The film delivers the mid-1930s of Gyeongseong scenes and critically reflects a new woman or wealthy leisured lady’s seemingly dissipated life or her pursuing of free love, which ended up with the woman’s tragic suicide.

Mun Ye-bong (文藝峰, 1917–1999), a favoured film star during the 1930s, played the heroine Ae-sun, a housewife who neglects to care for her family after an argument with her husband, Seon-yong. Once left the home, abandoning her daughter Jeong-hui, she stays with her lover Chang-geon at a hotel, whom she met in a department store shopping. Ae-sun later finds that Chang-geon is not a local rich man but a mere laundry man, and she calls for the police against him with suspicion of robbery at the hotel. Ae-sun then follows her new favourite male dancer to the train station by a cab, but on the way the cab hits her daughter Jeong-hui. Lying down on the bed beside the injured daughter, Ae-sun finally commits suicide at the hospital and she is found by her grieving husband.

Put the critical theme on Ae-sun aside, it is plausible that the leading actress’s style was important in making the film and she was representative of the criticised

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<sup>109</sup> For more detail, see Kim Jong-won [김종원] and Jeong Jung-heon [정중헌], *Uri yeonghwa 100nyeon* [Our Film 100 Years], 2001, pp. 16-215.

figure of new women. They pursued modern fashion during the time as fashion-conscious selves, while one of their characters sought after free love often by deserting the traditional female role in Korean society that came under social criticism. This protagonist as a new woman is then indeed portrayed as wearing well-fitted *hanbok*; paying attention to her make-up; going shopping in a department store and buying an expensive *yangbok* dress priced thirty *won* refusing a cheaper one of sixteen *won*; trimming her hair at a modern beauty salon and taking care of her new hairstyle (Figure 4.35). In the captured images of the film, the last image shows the heroine's wearing of Western-style dressing gown when she came out of the bed while staying at the hotel with Chang-geon. Thus, the modern woman's style was mainly represented through *hanbok*, and *yangbok* was also part of her fashion consumption, along with other modern ways of her beautification. Circulation of such a film portraying new woman's fashionable appearance pervaded many women in Korean society, who in turn pursued and imitated the modern fashionable images of the female star.



Figure 4.35. Ae-sun’s Style, Captured Images of the Film, ‘Sweet Dream’ (迷夢), 1936 (Source: Korean Film Archive)

With regard to men’s style, it is also notable that Ae-sun’s husband Seon-yong’s style is shown as mixed, compared to the lover Chang-geon’s style. While Chang-geon is always wearing *yangbok* suit (a man in two images in Figure 4.35), Seon-yong who can be seen as relatively conservative is dressed in *hanbok* (*jeogori*, *baji* and *joggi*) at home, but in *yangbok* (three-piece suit with a bow tie and a fedora hat) at his work (Figure 4.36). The modern men’s wearing of either *hanbok* or *yangbok* was represented by concerning the characters in the film, and in Seon-yong’s case, he normally wore

*hanbok* at home (there is a scene he smokes while drinking beer at home dressed in *yangbok*), but always dressed up in *yangbok* when he went to his office work. Unlike the man's case, the modern woman was represented as normally wearing *hanbok* both in and out of home, yet her shopping of *yangbok* and wearing Western-style gown at the hotel means not only *yangbok* but also *hanbok* alike were used as fashionable clothes by modern women in Korea during the time. Spread of fashion through the medium of the Korean film then stimulated new women's fashion in wearing both Korean-style *hanbok* and Western-style *yangbok*, not excluding one or the other. Anna König states that 'the language of fashion becomes a mediator, a conduit that sorts new visual ideas into categories that are familiar and aesthetically digestible'.<sup>110</sup> Styles portrayed in the film reflected contemporaneous fashion, but it further carried out creating fashion images of Korean women who aptly employed *hanbok* and *yangbok* as a modern look.



Figure 4.36. Seon-yong's Style, Captured Images of the Film, 'Sweet Dream' (迷夢), 1936 (Source: Korean Film Archive)

<sup>110</sup> Anna König, 'Sex and the City in the British Fashion Press', in Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun, ed. *The Fashion Reader*, 2007, p. 300.



### **3. Consumption: *Hanbok* and *Yangbok*, Colour and Modern Women in Advertisements, Conspicuous Consumption and City Space**

The spread of fashion led modern consumption of dress and fashion in colonial Korea. With the prevalence of new print media and popular culture such as the film in the 1920s and 1930s, the modern age of popular fashion culture was promoted far and wide with informative print materials and alluring mass media and images, along with the emergence of modern city space. This section particularly examines nuances of consumption in relation to discourses of *yangbok* and *hanbok* styles; bleaching and dyeing commodities for *hanbok* colour; and representations of modern women's consumer identity by examining advertising materials produced and circulated in colonial Korea. This is then followed by a discussion on women's fashion as more than mere conspicuous consumption, and modern male and female individuals' encounter with modern city Gyeongseong as consumption space.

Investigation into advertisements can offer many insights into and nuanced readings of fashion consumption, such as relationships between producers and potential consumer/customers, psychology and ideology behind the capitalism of production, semiotic analysis on advertising images and texts, cultural representations and gender problems. Western or Korean dress styles represented in the advertisements were an important vehicle for the identification and promulgation of notions of local modernities and fashions in Korea. Advertising as a modern means promoted new modes of consumption within Korea, intermingled with Japan, its colonial and modern power, and the Western modern culture, which were a quintessential aspect of the emergent local modernities in Korea. Advertising was also dependent on the development of commodities and print media as an industrialised means of mass communication between the producers and consumers along with the modernisation of Korea. Throughout the transitional period, Korea began appropriating new styles of advertisements and distribution for consumption, mainly influenced by the Japanese

administration.<sup>111</sup> This was inextricably linked to Japan's colonising and intermediating role of Western modernity in Korea, through which Japan also imposed their ideas of modernity. With the prevalence of the new print media, advertisements featured in newspapers, magazines, posters and other leaflet forms permeated through Korean consumers' daily lives more closely, shaping their choices and ideas of dress and fashion consumption.

New styles and fashion were a prominent feature in articles and advertisements and give us an understanding of how certain dress styles were represented and fashions were diffused. Circulation of the print media depicting Western-style dress and fashion had an impact on Korean people's understanding of and familiarity with the modern Western-style clothes, and later facilitated the adoption of the Western styles in Korea. The two types of available dress, *hanbok* and *yangbok*, were often depicted differently or ambivalently in advertisements. Comparison between the two will be decoded, suggesting a Western-centric fashion discourse praised the new style of Western dress. Visual representations of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in advertisements seem to have generated an imbalance of preference between the two, problematic relations of colonial subjects and gendered images depending on who commissioned the advertisements. However, some fashion discourses in advertisements also reflected ambivalence and ironies of sartorial modernity regarding *yangbok* and *hanbok*, addressing the colonial discourse on the one hand and autonomous fashion discourse on the other. Thus alternative readings can be also attempted to better understand Korean consumers during the period, which can be framed as nuanced colonial modernity in Korea.

New dresses and styles were offered to the wider public through not only various printed materials, but also through the modern city emerged in colonial Korea.

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<sup>111</sup> For more detail, see Ma Jeong-mi, 'Hanguk geundae inswae gwanggoreul tonghae bon geundaeseonggwa ilsangseong' [Modernity and Everydayness Examined through Korean Modern Print Advertisements], in Busan Modern History Museum, *Gwanggo, geurigo ilsang 1876-1945* [Advertisement and Daily Life 1876-1945], 2004, pp. 210-223.

Together with the visual material, new spatial engagement with displayed goods in the city streets were able to spread ideas about innovative and varied modes of appearance styles more quickly and effectively than before, increasing the production and consumption of modern fashion under the new capitalist society. Although the main objective of those modern means of consumption was to sell goods to people, they also served to attract future clients, providing information and fantasy about new things and trends. This to some extent generated a social anxiety of consumption, as well as conspicuous consumption, which resulted in social differentiation among the groups of Korean people at that time. Modern city Gyeongseong (Seoul) then became a place for anonymous individuals' projection of their identities through dress, and for emulation and consumption of fashion through sartorial gazes and department stores. Yet the consumption and fashion practice can be further examined in a positive light, and the nuanced view allows us to understand both *yangbok* and *hanbok* were employed in the fashion consumption of colonial modern Korea.

### ***3.1. Advertisements as Discourses of Old and New***

With Western dress and clothing-related products as commodities presented in advertisements and coming into Korea with the flow of Western goods, the advertisements provided Korean people with information about new things and new ways of dressing. This would have been rather unfamiliar and shocking at first, but soon it familiarised and was accepted as being enlightened and modern. Indeed, as Wilson notes, Western fashionable goods permeated advertisements under the emerging capitalist enterprise and were linked to consumption:

Because the origins and rise of fashion were so closely linked with the development of mercantile capitalism, economic explanations of the fashion phenomenon have always been popular. It was easy to believe that the function of fashion stemmed from capitalism's need for perpetual expansion, which encouraged consumption.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p.49.

The new clothing-related commodities were not only the benefits of modern convenience that became objects of modern desire, but they also constructed a discourse of tradition and modernity in advertisements, replacing the old and traditional with the new and contemporary. The latest modern products in advertising claimed to sweep away their older counterparts. For instance, the electric iron advertisement states ‘Farewell to Old Style of Laundering’ [舊式洗濯과는 永別] and advocated the use of the modern electric iron (Figure 4.37). The older irons used charcoal, which was inconvenient for controlling the heat level needs for different new clothing materials. Discourses in advertisements favoured new, modern things, marginalising old versions in the realm of dress practice. This provided modern choices in the lifestyles of Koreans at the level of daily life, particularly in preparing clothing, either in a traditional way or a modern way. Modern Western clothes then required a modern style of clothing care, which was only possible with the modern iron, due to the varied new fabrics used for the Western clothes.



Figure 4.37. Electric Iron Advertisement, *Mael Sinbo*, 24 July 1940 (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 93)

Advertising was used to force a change in dress practices. The discursive text promoted a modern style and new ideas of modernity, such as in the case of the ‘Waltham’ watch (Figure 4.38). The advertisement features a man in Korean traditional costume, wearing a hat (*gat*), overcoat (*durumagi*), trousers (*baji*) and shoes – a slightly erroneous depiction, probably due to the Western advertiser’s limited

observation or misunderstanding of *hanbok*. And it juxtaposes him with the modern good, a watch, overlapping with a railway and station – a reference to one of the already modernised places in Korea.<sup>113</sup> With the copy ‘Awakening to the call of civilization’ in the advertisement text, the Waltham watch represents the civilised modern time system and declares that the watch should be used for the new mode of time keeping. Meanwhile, the man in Korean costume tries to grasp the civilised time of the watch – showing the old version to be eager for the new – making the old-style Korean attire an opponent of modernity.

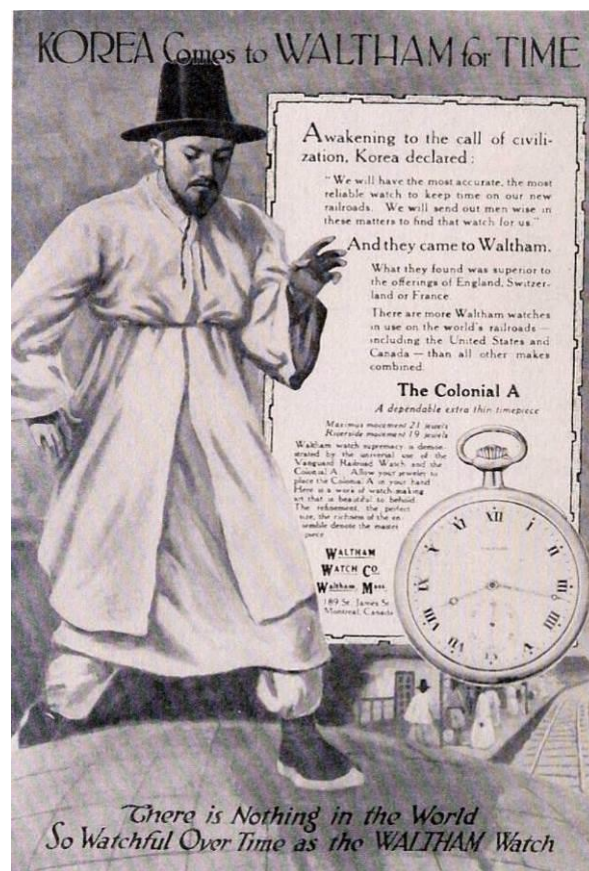


Figure 4.38. Waltham Watch Advertisement, 1917 (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 37)

Similarly, the other watch advertisement, the ‘Longines’ advertisement, depicts its watch as the face of a figure wearing a Western-style uniform rather than a

<sup>113</sup> The first railway in Korea was built in 1899, between Jemulpo and Noryangjin, by a Japanese company.

traditional Korean costume next to a train (Figure 4.39). The figure holds the sign signifying control of time or train time tables, alluding to the colonial subjects under Japanese control. As a whole, the watch-faced figure wearing the Western uniform appears to represent the new times and the new modernity. Taking a semiotic approach, these two cases seemed to result in the discourse signifying the Korean costume as old and worth abandoning and the Western costume as new and worth embracing.<sup>114</sup> Within the sartorial discourse on the relationship between *hanbok* and *yangbok*, their unequal relationship may have generated pressure to be transformed from the old to the new.



Figure 4.39. Longines Watch Advertisement, Colonial period (Source: Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 33)

### ***3.2. Changed Meanings of Lye and Dye Products for Hanbok Colour***

It is questionable whether a commodity for dress colour had different meanings through advertisements in the Open Port era versus the colonial period. In other words, there seems a difference when Korea initiated a modernisation project with Western influence before the colonisation, and during the time modernising Korea subsequently came under the Japanese colonialism. This section examines how the meaning of bleaching or dyeing goods changed under the new regime, and to what extent the

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<sup>114</sup> See Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2001, pp. 74-106.

advertisements reflected Korean costume's colour practice and symbolism according to the Japanese colonial economy.

Following the discussion on the Japanese campaign of coloured clothes and the prohibition of white clothes mentioned earlier, advertisements on colour pigments can be further examined. Traditionally, Korean costume *hanbok* used prime colours based on *yin* and *yang* and the conception of *ohaeng*. Bright colour combinations were regarded as auspicious as one of the characteristics of *hanbok*, as well as commoners mainly used white colour in their daily dress – mostly made of unbleached cotton cloth or bleached silk – for economic reasons and practicality. This resulted in many Westerners initially describing Koreans as ‘the white-clad folk’, but also some colourful Korean costumes were well recorded in colour illustrations and prints by careful Western observers as examined earlier.<sup>115</sup>

Throughout the Open Port era, Western modern commodities for bleaching clothes, such as the British BM & Co.'s lye or sodium hydroxide, came into Korea and were advertised in the newspaper, *Hwangseong Sinmun*, on 30 January 1902 (Figure 4.40). Korean people embraced this modern Western-style method for keeping *hanbok* white. The advertised Western material was consumed well as it helped bleaching of the *hanbok* conveniently compared to the traditional way, and reflected Korean people's wide use of white colour at the time.

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<sup>115</sup> For instance, as for colour woodcut prints, see Elizabeth Keith, *Old Korea: the Land of Morning Calm*, 1946.



Figure 4.40. British BM & Co, Lye Advertisement, *Hwangseong Sinmun*, 30 January 1902 (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 67)

However, throughout the colonial period, the Japanese authorities prohibited the wearing of white through the aforementioned campaigns. It was argued that white gets dirty easily and looks impure and unsanitary when this occurs. The white colour was addressed as a symbol of the uncivilised for Korea, and the Japanese introduced black colour, claiming that it fitted well with the time of enlightenment and was symbolic of the civilised. Consequently, relevant advertisements of Japanese dyeing pigments came to be more prevalent.<sup>116</sup> Yet, it is noteworthy that Japanese advertisements for dyeing methods and pigments already existed before the annexation of 1910, and one can be found in *Hanseong Jubo* on 31 June 1886, titled ‘An Advertisement for Daily Dyeing Methods Teaching’ [일상 염색법 전수 광고]<sup>117</sup>, as well as an advertisement in the newspaper, *Mansebo*, on 12 June 1907 in Figure 4.41. Paradoxically, the tone of the

<sup>116</sup> For more detail, see Busan Modern History Museum, *Gwanggo, geurigo ilsang 1876-1945* [Advertisement and Daily Life 1876-1945], 2004, pp. 20-25.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.



advertisements lies in that the Japanese products would help well the Korean people's dyeing practice that was part of the sartorial culture, rather than one should be prohibited. Behind the colonial and arbitrary colour symbolism by the Japanese administration after 1910, it is said that the hidden intention was to sell dyeing products more widely in colonial Korea and make a great deal of economic profit under the colonial capitalism.<sup>118</sup>

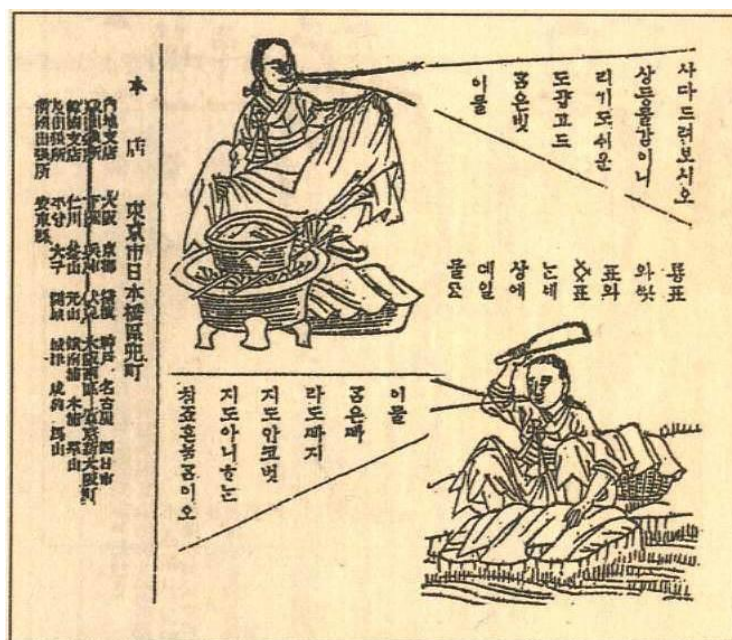


Figure 4.41. Dyeing Pigments Advertisement, *Mansebo*, 12 June 1907 (Source: Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 69)

Thus, the meaning of the colour white and dyeing practice for coloured *hanbok* changed over time by the Japanese's interest, and the lye and dye pigments in advertisements mirrored the politics of the colour symbolism. As Arjun Appadurai points out, 'commodities like persons have social values' and in this case, we can see how those commodities related to dress colour reflected different social values under the changed colonial regime and circumstances.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup> See Jo Hui-jin, 'Singminjisigi saekbokhwa jeongchaegui jeongae yangsangwa chui' [Development and Change of Wearing-Coloured-Clothes Policy in Colonial Period], Vol. 16, 2010, pp. 681-729.

<sup>119</sup> Arjun Appadurai, ed. *Social Life of Things*, p. 3.

### ***3.3. Representations of Modern Women in Advertisements***

Advertisements construct modes of fashion consumption. The role of the advertisement is to entice consumers to buy new fashion commodities. It was the ‘modern boy’ (모던 보이) and ‘modern girl’ (모던 걸) or ‘new woman’ (신여성), who were the centre of the modern dress consumption and led fashion during the colonial period of Korea, especially in the 1920s and 1930s. Here, advertisements and consumption can be seen as an active way of creating and differentiating a consumer’s identity. The production of various goods ultimately creates a preference for certain goods, and leads to the consumption of fashionable goods. Within this process in colonial Korea, the ‘modern boy’ and ‘modern girl’ figures emerged and played an important role in fashion and modern identities. They drew attention to their new modern styles of dressing, wearing Western suits and dresses, shoes, hats, watches and accessories – also, note that ‘new woman’ was represented as dressed in refined Korean *hanbok* style as well as the Western *yangbok* style. It was completely different appearance from long standing local Korean styles of dressing.

Bringing a discussion of modern fashion and consumption in the West, identity is involved in the playing out of individual and social forces in the city space. From within a psychoanalytic perspective, Wilson states that ‘we may view the fashionable dress of the Western world as one means whereby an always fragmentary self is glued together into the semblance of a unified identity’.<sup>120</sup> She argues that ‘identity becomes a special kind of problem in modernity’, and like Simmel notes, ‘fashion speaks a tension between the crowd and the individual at every stage in the development of the nineteenth and twentieth century metropolis’.<sup>121</sup> The industrial period and modernity produced ‘fragmentation, dislocation’, and this created a vision of ‘totalitarian’ societies where people were forced to be identically in uniform. However, paradoxically, Western modernity has also created the individual in a new way, and this

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<sup>120</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p. 11.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

is another ‘paradox’ that fashion expresses well, according to Wilson.<sup>122</sup> This is because the way in which we dress may ‘assuage that fear by stabilising our individual identity, and connecting us with our social group’.<sup>123</sup>

Newspapers and magazines produced many articles and illustrations of new fashion identities, discussing their role as a leader in the creation of new Western-style fashion. At the same time they were often criticised in a sarcastic way, because they were considered to be against the existing ethos of Confucian modesty and to cause social anxiety in others by attempting to emulate them. This had been described as the nature of fashion diffusion and consumption, with Veblen and Marx critically commenting the consumption is a passive action ‘in which commodities with already-existing meanings are consumed by individuals who are in turn conceived as having pre-existing needs and desires’.<sup>124</sup> Fashion followers could have been seen as fashion victims by this account, and their consumption perhaps regarded as inappropriate – as ‘conspicuous consumption’ – in colonial Korean society. For instance, the previous Figure 4.21 shows an illustration with an article that highlights fashion details for the conspicuous modern girl. This was a representation of a fashionable new woman in a modern time, inducing anxiety in others and the need to follow, while simultaneously being a cynical and exaggerated illustration of her unfamiliar new fashion.<sup>125</sup>

Women were an important target audience for advertisements. Female consumers were important for fashion, demanding fashionable goods such as Western suits, shoes, handbags, parasols, cosmetics and beauty products. Among these, cosmetics were the most popular, because they were more affordable than other fashion goods. As Western films and images came into Korea, the standard of the beauty began to transform to fit with Western, white beauty and white powder became the vogue. For example, Figure

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>124</sup> Malcolm Barnard, *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, 2007, p. 334.

<sup>125</sup> Further discussion on modern girl’s fashion and social views will be examined in the following Chapter 5.

4.42 shows ‘Bak Family’s Powder’ (박가분, 朴家粉, *Bakga bun*), one of the most popular white powders among others: *Jangga bun* (장가분), *Seoga bun* (서가분), and *Gurabu baekbun* (구라부백분). Figure 4.43 features the ‘Gurabu baekbun’ (クラブ白粉, 구라부백분, Club Powder) advertisement as it appeared in the magazine, *Sin Gajeong* (新家庭, New Home) in April 1934. This illustrates a woman in a Western-style evening dress alongside the copy, which reinforces the idealised notion of women’s beauty with the Western style and white make-up in the 1930s.



Figure 4.42. Bak Family’s Powder’s (박가분, 朴家粉) Leaflet Advertisement and the Product, Colonial period (Source: Kim Yeong-jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 117)



Figure 4.43. Club Powder’s (クラブ白粉, 구라부백분) Advertisement in *Sin Gajeong* (新家庭), April 1934 (Source: Magazine Museum Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 126)

Women were not only the consumers – they were also reproduced either the image of ‘traditional’ beauty or that of ‘new women’ wearing *hanbok* or *yangbok*, resulting in gendered consumption. For instance, medicine companies were significant advertisers at that time, and their advertisements explain medical complaints and employ women models either in traditional costume or in Western dress. Modern scientific medicine became available for various women’s illnesses that were once treated rather obscurely. The female model in traditional Korean *hanbok* in Figure 4.44 may signify the traditional women’s illness and pre-modern treatment. Thanks to the new modern medicine, she can be healed. The Korean costume here brings sympathy to the traditional female figure. On the other hand, another interpretation can be given that the ‘new woman’ consumer dressed in Korean traditional *hanbok* in the advertisement takes the new drug, ‘Jungjangtang’, and her illness can be cured in a modern way. As this advertisement was presented in the women’s magazine, *Sin Yeoseong* (신여성, New Woman), we can view the female model as the reader of the magazine, that is the new woman. In this context, the female consumer, new woman’s traditional *hanbok* style can be free from any negative connotation, thus ambivalent readings can be possible on the ‘traditional’ Korean women’s *hanbok* attire.

In Figure 4.45, another female model was employed – the first Korean female aviator, Lee Jeong-hui (李貞喜, 1910–?) – dressed in a Western-style flight suit. The advertisement gives hope of progressive cures to the readers, and the prospect of modern medicine with the new woman modelled in a Western style, implying a modern and scientific cure for the disease. Hence, the representations of Korean women dressed in either a traditional or Western style may communicate different nuances to the consumers. Encoding and decoding the actual messages in the advertisements was then subject to the producers and consumers of the medical products.



Figure 4.44. ‘Jungjangtang’ Medicine Advertisement in *Sin Yeoseong*, June 1931 (Source: Magazine Museum Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 57)



Figure 4.45. ‘Myeongjimo’ Medicine Advertisement in *Joseon Jungang Ilbo*, 6 December 1935 (Source: Newspaper Museum Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 58)

Female models also appeared in alcohol advertisements. To advertise Sapporo Asahi beer, Figure 4.46 depicts a female figure in Western dress revealing her arms, holding a golf club and wearing a jewelled ring, while Figure 4.47 shows a woman bearing her full arms, dressed in a green sleeveless one-piece dress with a dot printed scarf and a large red belt, as if she is a bar lady against a background of alcohol. These images represented the ‘modern girl’ in Western garb at that time, who consumed alcohol in an open space, unlike the traditional women in Korea. The posters would have been alluring images to male viewers, as well as certain modern women who wished to emulate the image of new femininity.



Figure 4.46. ‘Sapporo Asahi Beer’ Advertisement, Colonial period (Source: Kim Yeong-Jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 82)

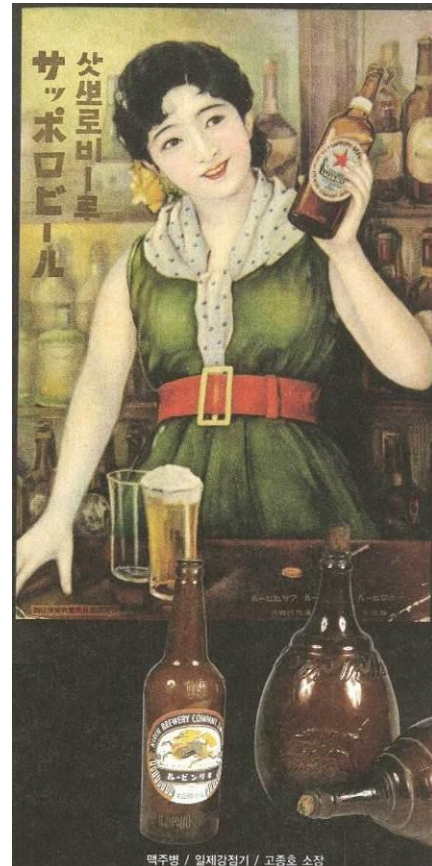


Figure 4.47. ‘Sapporo Beer’ Advertisement, Colonial period (Source: Kim Yeong-Jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 65)

On the other hand, the advertisements were often directly imported from Japan with a translated inscription of their beer brand names, and the women in the posters were then not necessarily Koreans nor represented the ideal of Korean modern women. As the Japanese company was behind the production and circulation of those images, they not only affected consumption of the product but also disseminated the image of ‘modern girl’ in the colonised countries in East Asia. The idealised modern girl image in East Asia under the Japanese imperialism then seemed not to reflect an existing reality of local contexts to certain extent, like during the interwar years of 1919–37 China, ‘renditions of the sexy Modern Girl icon’ acted out ‘imaginary social scenes connoted Shanghai’s economic primacy and fantasy, high-society fashions’, according

to Tani Barlow.<sup>126</sup> In Japan, Barbara Sato also comments that the ‘images of the Modern Girl burst on the scene around the world in the midst of the consumerism boom’, while ‘the “modern” that identified the Modern Girl clearly was inconsistent with prevalent female norms’.<sup>127</sup> The images of modern girl appeared in the Korea’s advertising sphere seemed to be transnational across the 1920s and 30s East Asia in a sense that the Japanese’s provision of idealised female images permeated, enticing male and female consumers, but also echoed the emerging modern consumer culture in colonial Korea where realities of Korean womanhood was faced by often constructed femininity of modern girls of the time.

Besides, on the one hand, both Figures 4.46 and 4.47 can be criticised as problematic gendered images, with the women’s representation perhaps sexually charged in a modern way of looking – also found in China and Japan as emergent during the time – and aimed at luring male consumers to gaze on the female body. This visual analysis based on gender criticism certainly highlights one aspect of the text. However, on the other hand, taking account of fashion studies, if we look at those women’s consumption as positive initiated by active female agency, and thus read the advertisements in a different way, the female subjects in the posters can be understood as enjoying their leisure time with drinks, dressed in Western style, and a new kind of modern women consumers. This stresses that the view can go beyond the mere perception of the male dominant power and consumption market and the subsequent male-centred interpretation. Such a reading then invites us to step towards challenging ‘the myth of a fixed definition of femininity’ in colonial modern Korea.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Tani E. Barlow, ‘Buying In Advertising and the Sexy Modern Girl Icon in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s’, in The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, ed. *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*, 2008, pp. 288-289.

<sup>127</sup> Barbara Sato, ‘Contesting Consumerisms in Mass Women’s Magazines’, in The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group, ed. *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*, 2008, p. 284.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.



Further, bringing the concept of the *flânerie*, Ruth Iskin's study of 'The *Flâneuse* in French Fin-de-Siècle Posters' makes a robust case for the liberating pleasures of consumption, whilst reminding that shopping and *flânerie* were not identical: rather shopping provided 'the socially sanctioned context for respectable women's *flânerie*'.<sup>129</sup> The illustrated billboard in the Paris city space, often featuring a female consumer, appealed directly to the woman out shopping. Iskin argues that these arresting, ubiquitous images conferred new agency on the female consumer, who was free to make choices of her own, which were no longer merely expressions of her husband's wealth. Thus, those seemingly gendered images replace an 'ideology of confinement with an ideology of consumption'.<sup>130</sup>

Advertising models became important to marketing strategies. For example, a modern girl and modern star, Choi Seung-hee (崔承喜, 1911–1969), appears in the advertisements of a well-known Japanese seasoning, *Ajinomoto* (味の素), in Figure 4.48. In the advertisement that appeared in the magazine *Sin Gajeong* (新家庭, New Home), she is wearing a Western-style home dress and represented as a modern-style house wife. Being a modern dancer who studied in Japan, a new woman and a fashion icon, Choi Seung-hee was a highly acclaimed model during the colonial period.

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<sup>129</sup> Ruth Iskin, 'The *Flâneuse* in French Fin-de-Siècle Posters: Advertising Images of Modern Women in Paris', in Aruna D'Souza and Tom McDonough, ed. *The Invisible Flâneuse?: Gender, Public Space, and Visual Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, 2006, pp. 114-115.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p.124.



Figure 4.48. ‘Ajinomodo’ Advertisement, *Sin Gajeong*, September 1936 (Source: Magazine Museum Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p.78)

As a dancer, she was also represented as a modern dancer in modern dance costume with her signature modern short hairstyle (Figure 4.49). At the same time, as an artist who sought after Korean and Asian traditional forms of dance, she was at times depicted wearing traditional or Asian-style dance costume (Figure 4.50). In a non-Western sphere, the Western-style modern appearance and the non-Western traditional look alike were strategically chosen and both pursued in certain contexts, and modern individuals had interchangeable styles in the transitional state of the colonial modern period. In addition, like Choi Seung-hee, male and female popular stars in various modern styles appeared in advertisements and built up a celebrity position, appealing as a selling point to the readership, and symbolising the modern culture of consumerism in Korea.



Figure 4.49. Choi Seung-hee's Dance Performance Leaflet, 22 October 1932 in Japan (Source: Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 191)



Figure 4.50. Choi Seung-hee's Dance Performance Poster, Colonial period (Source: Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 191)

### ***3.4. Women's Fashion beyond Conspicuous Consumption and Flâneurs in the Modern City Gyeongseong***

Sin Myeong-jik states that under the colonial capitalist regime, the expanding phenomenon of shop windows displaying their wares rarely failed to entice Korean consumers to purchase, but for them it also gave rise to both desire and anxiety about the goods they wanted to consume.<sup>131</sup> Colonial economic hardship did not seem to limit new women's sense of themselves or their irascible taste for beauty and fashion. New women's earnings led to a certain degree of consumption by women, only further stoking their greater interest in new commodities and stylish goods rather than daily necessities. The expanding media provided women with ever more information on the latest styles and trends. Advertisers, too, used the press – newspapers and magazines alike – to maintain customers' attention year round, seeking to increase consumption during each fashion season, thereby establishing colonial Korea's modern fashion.

<sup>131</sup> Sin Myeong-jik, *Modern boy, gyeongseongeul geonilda* [Modern Boy, Walking in Gyeongseong], 2003, pp. 281.

Modern women came more and more to seek out jobs because those who were ‘fascinated with display cases at department stores, wanting to taste the full flavour of Western food and to distinguish good and bad foreign-made fabrics for skirts’ realised that ‘economic independence can be the only weapon in women’s liberation.’<sup>132</sup> Consequently, in the 1930s the spread of consumer culture, increasing liberalism and decreasingly zealous radical socialism all created the context for the joining of women’s economic independence and modern consumption with the norms of liberal society.<sup>133</sup>

Apparent distinctions in fashion in colonial modern Korea are analogous to the conspicuous consumption of Veblen’s observations of the US society in the 1890s, particularly that of the city of Chicago.<sup>134</sup> In his account, the main activity of the leisure class was conspicuous consumption, defined as the use of money or other resources to evince a higher social status than that of others. The primary economic contribution of the leisure class was waste; that is, they contributed nothing productive. Following this line of reasoning, ‘conspicuous leisure’ was further understood as the additional time given to certain pursuits that achieved higher status. Veblen’s analysis suggested the further subjugation of women through the display of housewives as trophies to demonstrate men’s success. Wives were not allowed to take outside professions. Her lassitude and lifestyle of conspicuous leisure and consumption was vaunted as proof of his status, and her profligate spending only further buttressed his claims to status.

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<sup>132</sup> Jeong Sun-jeong (정순정), ‘Schoolgirls’ Character in the Present Time’ [당세 여학생 기질], *Sindonga* [新東亞], December 1932, p. 93, in Kim Gyeong-il, *Yeoseongui geundae*, pp. 364-365: ‘백화점의 진열장에 심취할 줄 알고 양요리의 미감을 깨달을 수 있고 박래품(舶來品) 치마감의 호부(好否)를 감상할 줄 알면서부터 돈이 필요하게된 신여성들은 경제적 독립이 여성 해방에 유일한 무기’

<sup>133</sup> Kim Gyeong-il, *Yeoseongui geundae*, p. 364.

<sup>134</sup> Thorstein Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure*, 1899.

The coffee shop at the Chosun Hotel (조선호텔) was one spot in the city where people taking advantage of their leisure time went to display their classy appearance (Figure 4.51).<sup>135</sup> Their conspicuous consumption stood out in an unflattering light against the backdrop of the immiseration of many in colonial Joseon Korea. Yet these impressive members of the leisure class initiated modern fashion in colonial Korea and, as such, were among the country's moderns. Women dressed in Western styles – for example, the one wrapped up in a fox fur muffler with a cap over her short hair holding a hand bag as the famous dancer Choi Seung-hee, seen in the foreground of the picture – played a significant role in mediating Western-style fashion during the colonial period. She then was not simply a trophy affording her husband the opportunity to exhibit his status, but probably had some leisure time in style at the modern place, the coffee shop in the hotel.



Figure 4.51. The Coffee Shop at Chosun Hotel, with Choi Seung-hee in the Foreground, 1930s (Source: Jo I-dam and Pak Tae-won, 2005, p. 203)

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<sup>135</sup> Chosun Hotel, built in Sogong-dong in 1914, is reputedly the first Western-style hotel to appear during the colonial period, and it housed the first Western-style restaurants and coffee shops: see Jo I-dam and Pak Tae-won, *Gubossiwa deobuleo gyeongseongeul gada* [Walking to Gyeongseong along with Mr Gubo], 2005, p. 203.

Veblen's account exposed the excess in the consumption of fashion, but his examination of changes in style and dress is limited. Nor does the agency and pleasure of Koreans in sartorial practice come through. In Veblen's reckoning, the plurality of the voices observed above is obscured if not entirely erased. Wilson has also claimed that for Veblen the 'stylistic oddities of fashion were futile', and in his archetypal world 'there was no place for the irrational or the non-utilitarian', reducing 'all culture to kitsch' and seeing 'leisure as absurd in itself'.<sup>136</sup> Veblen's analysis is thus 'oversimplified and over-deterministic', granting 'no role to contradiction', nor to the possibilities of pleasure and agency in cultural matters, including fashion.<sup>137</sup> As such, the case of colonial Korean women's fashion challenges the constrained perspective developed from observations of an American city in the 1890s; their ability to use fashion to inhabit and exhibit new identities pushes beyond the limits of Veblen's analysis.

Such colonial Korean women's fashion was not then limited to Western style. Use of *hanbok* and mixed style with Korean clothes and Western accessories were also considered as pursuing women's fashion in colonial Korea. In a newspaper article (Figure 4.52), a husband complains about his wife taking three hours to get ready to go to the cinema. Replying to her husband's nagging, she states that she needs to be more meticulous in applying her make-up for their night out to the darker place like the theatre that would illuminate her face shinily.<sup>138</sup> She enjoys the long hours of preparation – pleasure of fashioning herself – before going out, whether she is seen on their way to the cinema or during the film. Looking at his pocket watch, the man has the air of a modern boy, with his suit and hat. The woman fiddles with her hair, sitting in front of the mirror at the dressing table, wearing what appears to be a Western-style undergarment. For her make-up, she needs several basins of water, and all her make-up

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<sup>136</sup> Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 28 September 1928, p. 3: '깜깜한데를 갈수록 화장을 더 잘해야 환하게 얼굴이 나타나지요'

cases are visible around her on the floor. Her silk stockings and bag are also laid on the floor, and her modernised *hanbok* jacket and skirt are hanging nearby. Put the article's sarcastic take on the wife's excessive adornment aside, her self-fashioning was a genuinely pleasurable means for the modern woman to project her style and taste – and her identity – as well as she could. Going out for leisure with her husband was her chance to be consumed by the anonymity of countless urban gazes. Fashion was communication as well as a mediator between individual and collective, enabling people to publicly take up their identities in the city.



Figure 4.52. 'A Man and Wife' [사나희와 녀편네] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 28 September 1928, Friday, p. 3)

The capital city of Gyeongseong became the place where modern consumption of fashion took place and through which modern individuals projected their new identities in dress, further experiencing the modern space of the city from their leisure activities. As with the Chosun Hotel, commercial and cultural spaces in Gyeongseong came into existence and functioned as spaces for the consumption, observation and emulation of fashion. People exhibited their new styles, being seen by others of the same and the opposite gender, across varied social strata, to attract imitation and allow emulation.

In this space, modern boys and modern girls dressed in new styles walked around the city and were seen by many others in town, adding the spectacular character of the city. They were modern figures, strolling the new spaces of the metropolis. Indeed, they were *flâneurs* in a Korean context, a modern individual for whom Charles Baudelaire had developed the term to describe their perambulations around the Paris of the late nineteenth century.<sup>139</sup> Walter Benjamin further described the *flâneur* as the quintessential modern urban spectator, who observed the life of the city during their seemingly aimless strolls around town.<sup>140</sup> The modern boy himself was something of a dandy, a figure whose physical appearance, refined language and leisure-time activities had been a common and defining element of late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century London.<sup>141</sup> These Western archetypes can be drawn on by style-conscious modern individuals in the 1920s and 30s Gyeongseong, a phenomenon of modernity in colonial Korea.

In his semi-autobiographical novel, *Soseolga Gubossiui Iril* (소설가 구보씨의 일일, Novelist Mr Gubo's One Day), Pak Tae-won (朴泰遠, 1909–1986) presented the city life of Gyeongseong in 1934 through a day in the life of the main character, Mr Gubo.<sup>142</sup> Born in Gyeongseong, Pak Tae-won had graduated from Gyeongseong Jeil High Normal School (경성제일고등보통학교) and had studied in Japan until 1931. He was a modern man who dressed in a double-breasted suit with a tie and wore

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<sup>139</sup> Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. and ed. by Jonathan Mayne, 1964, pp. 1-34.

<sup>140</sup> Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, 1999, pp. 3-26, 871-884.

<sup>141</sup> See Thomas Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, 1987.

<sup>142</sup> The novel was serialised in *Joseon Jungang Ilbo* (조선중앙일보, 1931–1937) between 1 August and 19 September 1934. It was written according to the method of 'modernology' (考現學), a compound word formed from 'modern' and 'archaeology'. The method attempted to record and study modern social phenomena: see Jo I-dam and Pak Tae-won, *Gubossiwa*, pp. 145, 187. This book is used among the many edited versions of the novel for the source. For studies of Pak Tae-won and his work, see Kim Heung-sik and Bang Min-ho, et al. ed. *Pak Taewon munhak yeongueui jaeinsik* [New Understanding of Studies on Pak Tae-won's Literature], 2010.



round-shaped glasses with his peculiar modern hairstyle. He is seen in Figure 4.53 along with his friends and contemporaries, poet Yi Sang (李箱, 1910–1937) and novelist Jeong In-taek (鄭人澤, 1909–1952). Mr Gubo recounts his day strolling through the capital as a *flâneur* in Gyeongseong, visiting places such as Jongno (종로) area, Hwashin Department Store (화신백화점), Gyeongseong Station (경성역), Chosun Hotel (조선호텔) and various cafes and streets, as well as taking a tram towards Dongdaemun (동대문) and mentioning places of leisure such as Changgyeongwon (창경원) and Wolmido (월미도).<sup>143</sup>



Figure 4.53. Pak Tae-won in a Double-breasted Suit (centre) and Friends (Source: Jo I-dam and Pak Tae-won, 2005, p. 152)

Gubo was not alone in strolling the city as a *flâneur*. Others – women, including café waitresses with whom Gubo encountered – took to wandering the city streets in the novel. Janet Wolff has asserted that ‘women’s experience of modernity’ has been excluded from the public sphere; studies of modernity have equated ‘the modern with the public’ and have emphasised the male *flâneur* of the nineteenth-century metropolis exclusively.<sup>144</sup> In Gyeongseong in the 1920s and 30s, both the modern boy and the modern girl were *flâneurs*, strollers of the city who witnessed the spectacle of

<sup>143</sup> Jo I-dam and Pak Tae-won, *Gubossiya*, pp. 147-270.

<sup>144</sup> Janet Wolff, ‘The Invisible *Flâneuse*: Women and the Literature of Modernity’, 2/3, 1985, pp. 37-46.

modernity in colonial Korea. They watched and, in watching, experienced the modern city while walking anonymously among the city and its inhabitants. At the same time they created the modernity, their new styles and appearance on view during their fleeting encounters with passers-by. Gubo's one day stroll through Gyeongseong in Pak Tae-won's modernological writings and the photographed people around the Gyeongseong's famous department store in Figure 4.54 show that modern women as *flâneuses* were a normal presence on the city streets. Writing in *Byeolgeongon* (別乾坤) in September 1929, Lee Seo-gu even wrote describing women's changed 'walking styles' in the Jongno street. It was, he continued, a 'revolution', and he praised the seventeen- and eighteen-year-old girls whose gait proceeded from the thigh unlike that of old-fashioned girls who walked from below the knees.<sup>145</sup>



Figure 4.54. Mitsukoshi Department Store (三越百貨店), Keijo (Gyeongseong) (Source: Seoul Museum of History, 2014, p. 104)

<sup>145</sup> *Byeolgeongon* [別乾坤], No. 23, September 1929, p. 33, Lee Seo-gu (李瑞求), 'Jazz of Gyeongseong, Seoul Taste, Seoul Sentiment' [京城의 짜쓰, 서울맛·서울情調]: '제일 첫 재 눈에 띄우는 것은 처녀들의 步調이다. 한마디로 표현하라면 "계집애들 거름 거리가 여간 멋지지 안타"는 것이다. [...] 鍾路 네거리에 나서서 17,8세의 꽃가 튼 불근 당귀를 보라. 얼마나 그 거름거리에 혁명이 이러났는가. 전일의 처녀들은 무릎 아래로만 거렸었다. 그러나 지금의 처녀들은 넓적다리에서부터 전진을 한다. 그러함으로 거름마다 멋진 "타입"이 표현된다.'

As much as Mr Gubo and other nameless women strolled through the city, many Koreans also experienced modern settings of the urban area. Figure 4.55 shows a guide map of Gyeongseong published in 1929 in which all the new landmarks of the city are marked, along with advertisements of major companies, products and restaurants indexed in the margins. Among them, the Jingogae (진고개) area at the foot of Mt Namsan was designated as a district for Japanese residents since 1885, thereafter the area was referred to as Bonjeong (本町, Honmachi in Japanese), and became the commercial centre serving the Japanese.<sup>146</sup> During the colonial period, Bonjeong came to be known as the ‘Ginza of Gyeongseong’ and flourished as the place to go for luxury goods and services, attracting not only Japanese but also Korean consumers to the area, which grew as the epicentre in the spread of new products, lifestyles and fashions.<sup>147</sup>

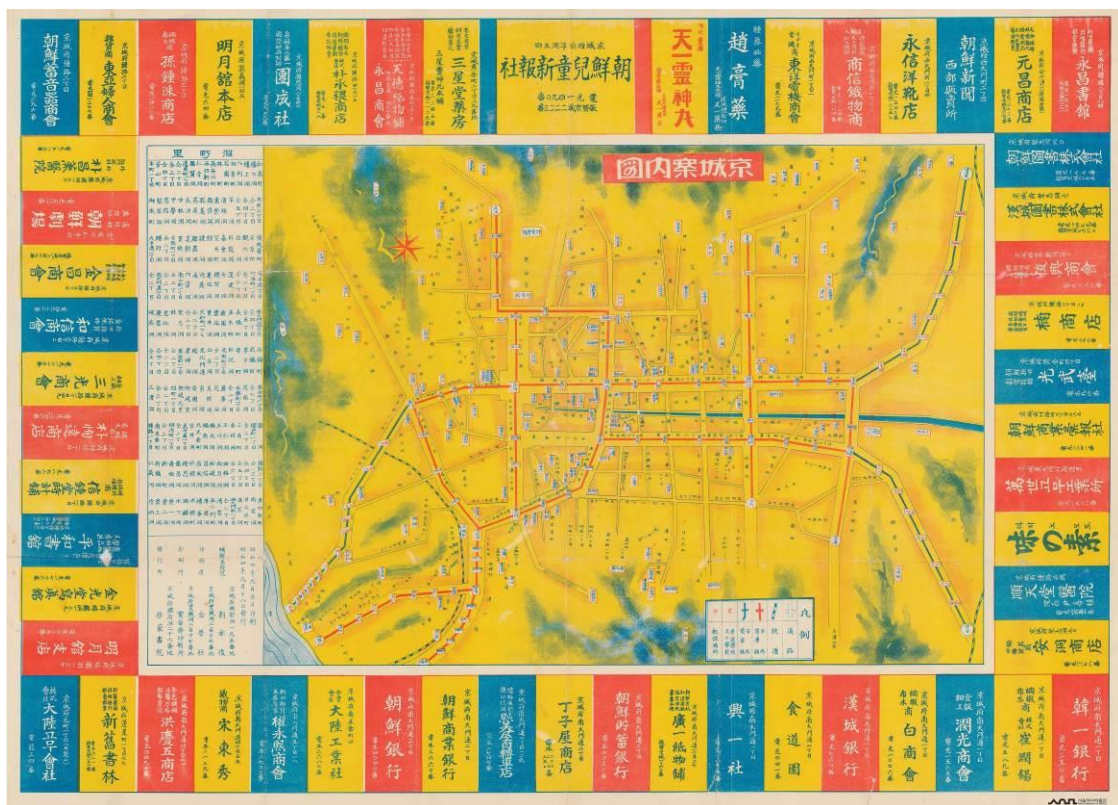


Figure 4.55. Guide Map of Gyeongseong, 1929 (Source: Donated by Kim Yeong-jun, Seoul Museum of History, 2014, p. 101)

<sup>146</sup> Seoul Museum of History, *History of Seoul: Places and Memories*, 2014, p. 104.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

Located in this centre of Gyeongseong, department stores became the focal place of consumption. Also, as part of the city spectacles, these modern mega stores came to be one of the main places for city onlookers' visiting, as well as welcoming actual consumers. Early adapters and fashion-conscious people such as modern boys and girls, new women and students hung around the department stores, consumed and engaged with new modern goods, and experienced the modern space and service. Fashion designer Nora Noh (노라노, 盧明子, 1928-) recalls in her biography that her mother bought her an organdie one-piece dress at a department store, since she was so jealous of her sister's organdie dress that cut it with scissors, and with this reason it is a memorable dress to her as she wore it on special days during her childhood, shown in the family photograph (Figure 4.56).<sup>148</sup>



Figure 4.56. Family Photograph of Nora Noh Dressed in an Organdie One-piece with Lace Collar (standing in the back next to her father on the right), c. 1937 (Source: Nora Noh, 2007, p. 21)

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<sup>148</sup> Nora Noh, *Nora Noh, Yeoljeongeul design hada* [Nora Noh, Designing the Passion], 2007, pp. 20-21.

Such attracting consumption places of department stores were initially invested and run by Japanese capitalists. For example, several department stores were built by the Japanese: Chojiya (丁子屋) in 1921, Minakayi (三中井) in 1922, Hiroda (平田) in 1926, Mitsukoshi (三越) in 1930 near the Bonjeong area.<sup>149</sup> In reaction to these Japanese-sponsored department stores, Korean capitalist Park Heung-sik (朴興植, 1903–1994) formed a department store Hwashin (和信) in 1931, Jongno area, and it appealed to Korean consumers by using a modern way of marketing such as year-end bargain sales and promotion events with free bonus gifts (Figure 4.57).



Figure 4.57. Year-End Sale Poster of Hwashin Department Store (和信百貨店) (Source: Kim Young-Jun Collection, Busan Modern History Museum, 2004, p. 110)

Not only selling *hanbok*-related fashionable goods, Hwashin Department Store often provided people with its new season's fashion goods alongside prices, as examined in the aforementioned articles in the newspapers. This included not only

<sup>149</sup> See Gang Sim-ho, *Daejungjeok gamsuseongui tansaeng* [The Rise of Popular Sensitivity], 2005, pp. 50-54.

Western-style clothes and accessories but also new and quite international textiles for *hanbok* dress. Those brand-new and traded goods were always displayed in the show windows of the department stores, and objects of desire enticed general people and consumers into new fashion. Although it seemed inevitable that modern consumer goods gradually replaced Korean style and Western style became taking the position with transitional traces, the modern fashion displayed through department stores and trendy people strolled and formed through the city space did not entirely exclude the existence of *hanbok*. And this is the point where a nuanced understanding takes place, grasping multifaceted meanings of fashion consumption away from the dichotomous view in either *yangbok* or *hanbok*.

## **CHAPTER 5. Modern Women and Men in *Yangbok* and *Hanbok*: Identities through Dress and Fashion, Class and Gender**

Koreans' concerns about what to wear during the colonial, modern period arose at a time when *yangbok* was becoming more available while the shapes and material of *hanbok* were changing and modernised. Modern men and women considered their new clothing and style in terms of the perceived modernity of their dress practice; at the same time, these members of emerging modernists dressed to impress according to newly imported Western-style *yangbok* and/or refined Korean-style *hanbok*. Yet, existing stereotypical views on dress and fashion practice of such modernists as modern boy, modern girl and new woman during colonial Korea lacks meaningful and multiple accounts for their relationship with sartorial experiences in terms of emerging modernity in colonial Korea.

Exploring nuanced relationships that modern people had with clothing thus requires looking at some of the complex ways in which dress and fashion were bound up with identity, how it was constructed through them while they also helped construct class and gender. This complex relationship was particularly observed between the individual and the anonymous collective in the city, itself a stage for sartorial display. Tensions, contradictions and ambiguity became visible in colonial Korea, heightened by ongoing social changes witnessed in the emerging modern, urban existence of the time. The tumultuous conditions of the country at the time can be best characterised as the 'colonial modern'; that is, modern Japan's colonial rule and Korea's autonomous modernity, along with Western modern influence, were dependently manifest or, paradoxically, played out through each other.

Regarding the chapter question of seeking nuanced and multiple relations amongst modern male and female individuals and their dress and fashion practices articulated through *hanbok* and *yangbok* in terms of identity, class and gender during

the colonial modern period of Korea, this chapter approaches the subject in three parts.

In the first section, based on readings of satirical articles in the newspaper, it will examine how modern women and their fashion in *hanbok* and *yangbok* were critically viewed by the patriarchal society, which echoed nuances of the political and gendered standards of the time. The second section, following the analysis of the satires, will investigate what social criticisms were laid on modern men and their new appearances, reflecting changing socio-economic milieu of the period in terms of class, masculinity and relationship with women. In the last section, it will explore other sources that afford a consideration of everyday life in colonial modern Korea and lead to a rather more positive approach to discussions of various socio-cultural relations between dress, fashion and modern male and female Koreans. This consideration of the everyday helps providing nuanced explanations and multifaceted meanings on sartorial practice of modern Koreans as a reflection of colonial modernity in Korea.

## **1. Sarcastic Criticism of Modern Women's New Appearance**

Fashion in early twentieth-century Korea is a subject concerned with personal adornment and the practice of dress in new styles. Figures such as the 'new woman', the 'modern girl' and the 'modern boy' were considered fashion-conscious individuals who dressed in a conspicuously modern style – mainly with *yangbok*, but also with *hanbok* as this thesis argues – and were at the forefront of fashion during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>1</sup> They were not only educated men and women through modern schooling or study-abroad equipped with modern mind, but distinctive individuals in terms of clothing and fashion, and they proved integral to the emergence of modernity in Korea.

Their comportment, dress and adornment were the first signs that differentiated

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed comparison of the phenomenon of 'new woman' in Korea with that in Japan, see Kim Gyeong-il, *Yeoseongui geundae*, pp. 17-33. On the 'modern girl' and 'modern boy', see Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, pp. 308-337.



them from other Koreans. It was through their new styles that they expressed themselves and their identities as social, economic, cultural, gendered and classed individuals; identities that expressed values that were quite distinct to older Korean values. This distinction often led to tension, sometimes expressed as envy on others' part or simply as excessive attention cast in their direction. Such social tension led to criticism – sometimes scurrilous, sometimes sarcastic – in the press of these fashionable individuals' obtrusive appearance. Among the publications chiding their modern fashion, the coverage of the newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* (朝鮮日報) was representative.<sup>2</sup>

By carefully reading texts and images of satirical articles from the newspaper, this section focuses on what kind of social criticism modern women received on their new appearances in *hanbok* and *yangbok* styles and what they reflected the time and society of Korea in a nuanced way, such as modern fashion's crass materialism, male gaze or ambivalence on female images and women's dependence on men's wealth.

### **1.1. Marxist Criticism on Modern Girl's Fashion**

Starting with women's fashion, one acerbic comment on the modern girl's fashion – dressed in refined *hanbok* and wearing a Western-style wristwatch and ring – appeared in the newspaper *Chosun Ilbo* on 5 February 1928 (Figure 5.1). The commentary alongside the image declares that:

As shown in the figure, the adornment practices of girl students, these so-called new women, have grown intense these days, a fact that can often be seen on the tram. Golden wristwatches and bejewelled rings: without these two items, modern women would be ashamed. Therefore the most appropriate place to show off them is on the tram.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The satirical articles selected from *Chosun Ilbo* were mostly composed by Seokyeong An Seok-ju (夕影 安碩柱, 1901–1950), a consistent and prolific contributor to the newspaper from 1928 to the mid-1930s.

<sup>3</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 February 1928, p. 3: ‘이 그림과 가티 녀학생 기타 소위 신녀성들의

To emphasise their brazen display of their adornments, the illustration was framed in a top-bottom manner, exaggerating the hands and arms, and watches and rings of the girls. No one in the image was seated on the tram; instead everyone stood and flaunted their accessories. The line of women appeared to be endless, implying that their fashion was imitative, ridiculously repetitive and seemingly ubiquitous. There was also more flesh on display than would have not been deemed acceptable in earlier times, with the girls' shortened skirts and rolled-up sleeves revealing the girls' arms and legs.

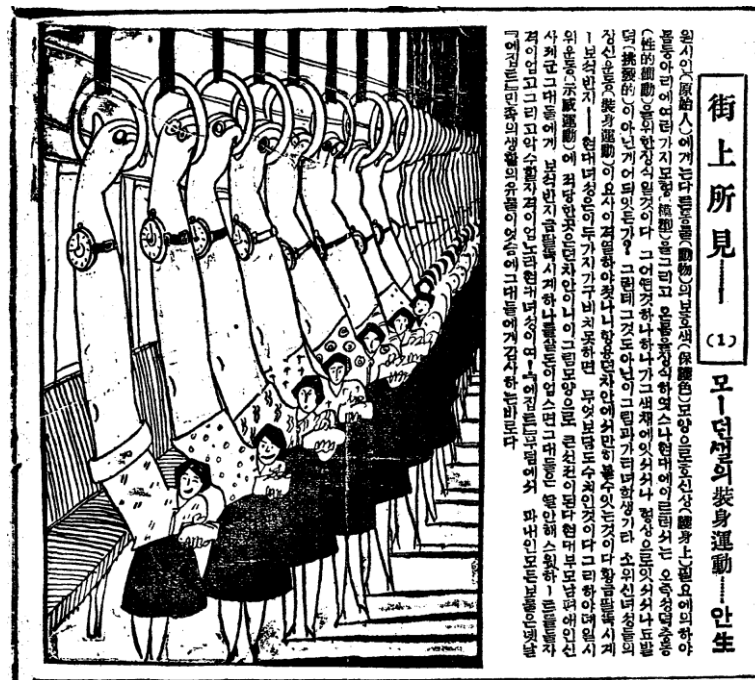


Figure 5.1. ‘The Modern Girl’s Body Adornment Campaign’ [모-던걸의裝身運動], ‘A View on the Street (1)’ [街上所見 (1)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 February 1928, Sunday, p. 3)

The golden wristwatch was an object of considerable desire in vogue among female students during the late 1920s and 1930s, and its ownership and display in public was common among the class of educated women. At the same time, it was an item which elicited critical commentary for its extravagance, for its suggestion of zealous consumerism and for the indulgence in the products of Western fashion. In the December 1927 edition of *Byeolgeongon* (別乾坤) magazine, this very matter played a

장신운동(裝身運動)이 요사이 격렬하여 졌나니, 항용 던차안에서만 볼 수 잇는 것이다. 황금 팔뚝시계-보석반지-현대 녀성은 이 두가지가 구비치 못하면 무엇보담도 수치인 것이다. 그리하여 데일 시위운동(示威 運動)에 적당한 곳은 던차 안이니'

prominent role in Yang Baek-hwa (梁白華)’s critique of ‘A Female Student and a Gold Watch’ [女學生과 金時計].<sup>4</sup>

The author described the fashion for gold watches among school girls and their intransigence for not sitting on the tram. They tended to stand instead and hold the safety straps in order to better be able to exhibit their watches. One of the girls the author met on the tram was the daughter of the author’s neighbour, and the magazine article explained how the student acquired the watch despite her modest background. As most of her classmates wore such a watch, the girl had pestered her mother to buy her the watch. Her mother relented and the girl then owned the much-desired commodity thanks to her mother taking on a debt to placate her daughter. When it was revealed by her father, she barely kept her 18K gold watch, the author questioned whether schoolgirls had a right to such expensive fashion accessories, pointing out the imbalance in economic circumstances that such fashionable consumption indicated. While school was the modern girl’s educational establishment, it was also the place where girls were learning to discern what was in fashion and how to emulate the stylishness of other fashion-conscious students.

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<sup>4</sup> *Byeolgeongon*, December 1927, pp. 78-79: ‘요새 女學生들은 빈자리를 두고도 電車 뺨취에 걸터안기를 실혀한다. 그 理由는 곱게 대리여 입은 “스커트”가 無慘히 구길 念慮도 잇겠지마는 그보다도 一層重要的 理由가 잇스니 曰 雪白한 팔독에 동인 18金腕卷時計 때문이다. [...] 그러면 어쩌케 그것을 남의 눈에 보여줄 수가 잇슬가? 그리자면 安閑히 안저 잇서서는 안된다. 서잇서야 한다. [...] 우리 이웃 구석집에 남들이 부르기를 金五衛將이라는 나히 한 50여세 되는 家僧가 있다. 그 아들은 어느 洋靴店에 職工으로 다니며, 딸은 市内 某女學校에 다니는데 이우에 말한 그 女學生이 즉 그 딸이다. 그 집의 生活은 金五衛將이 福德房에서 버는 매월 몇 圓의 잔돈과 아들의 月給 30여 圓으로 겨우 지내가는 터이니 넉넉지 못한 것은 말 아니 하야도 알 수 있다. [...] 나중에 드르니 그 女學生이 몇달 전부터 저의 父親과 오라비에게는 감히 말을 못하고 저의 어머니게 저의 學校의 同級生들은 金時計를 다 가졌스니 저도 사달라고 졸으며 저의 어머니는 졸리다 못하야 아들의 月給을 잔뜩 밋고 빗 20圓을 어디서 金五衛將이 모르케 時計를 사 주었는데 [...] 야단이 난 것인데 이 때문에 그 金時計는 함아하드면 마수어질번한 것을 어찌어찌하야 그냥 가지게 된 것이요, 이 金時計 까닭으로 그 집에 生活이 이즈막 대단히 어려워졌다 한다.’

Yang Baek-hwa drew attention to the dilemma – the fashionable article was regarded as a new symbol of class that stoked tension between different social strata, and one’s awe at another’s fashion heightened the sense of class differentiation in what was a relatively poor, capitalist-orientated economy. In Western Europe, socialists had long since looked at the fashion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as signs of distinctions between social classes, seeking to inspire a society-wide rejection of modern fashion for this very reason.<sup>5</sup> A similar tack was pursued by Marxist Koreans in the 1920s and 30s. They regarded the modern girl’s fashion as a ‘splendid, dissipated and conspicuous lifestyle’ that ‘represented the bourgeois class and the modern decadent group’s style’.<sup>6</sup> According to Sin Myeong-jik, the satirical illustrations of An Seok-yeong were indicative of such criticism.<sup>7</sup>

Another satire of An Seok-yeong, appearing under the title ‘A Peahen Spreading its Tail’ [꼬리 피는孔雀], considered a different scene. A modern girl splendidly dressed in a Western-style fur-trimmed coat, a tall-brimmed hat and short stockings was seen emerging from a thatched-roof house (Figure 5.2). Alongside this jarring image of a Western-style woman against the seemingly anachronistic background of the traditional house, the text reads:

Does one’s personality lie in one’s appearance? Does a woman’s beauty lie in her external adornment in glaring and loud colours? A woman in Western-style clothes coming out of dilapidated thatched-roof cottage on the verge of collapsing from the vibrations of cart-wheels passing by on the road! Wearing clothing that cost several times more than the price of her dwelling [...].<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Max von Boehn, *Fashionui yeoksa* (2) [The History of Fashion (2)], 2000 [1996], p. 374.

<sup>6</sup> Pak Yeong-hui (박영희) and Choe Hak-song (최학송), et al. ‘Great Discussion on Modern Girl and Modern Boy’ [모-던걸 모-던뻬-이 대논평], *Byeolgeongon*, December 1927, pp. 114-120: ‘화사하며 유행하면서 호사로운 생활을 하는 유산자사회를 표상하는 유산자사회의 근대적 퇴폐군 들의 패션’

<sup>7</sup> Sin Myeong-jik, *Modern boy*, p. 94.

<sup>8</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1928, p. 5: ‘사람의 인격(人格)이 그 외화에 잇는가? 한

Criticism of the woman and those whom she represented lay in her flamboyant display of clothing and fashion at odds with her modest home. The text and the image together stressed the incongruity of people’s aspirations on the one hand, and the colonial economic situation on the other. In the anonymous city the woman’s accoutrements would evince her identity as a new woman, but the simplicity, even poverty, of her home demonstrated her as yet unfulfilled attainment of a modern female identity.



Figure 5.2. ‘Peahen spreading a tail’ [꼬리 피는孔雀], ‘A View on the Street (3)’ [街上所見(3)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1928, Thursday, p. 5)

Yet, women’s interest in fashion and their efforts to appear modern were not new, and one young woman could not be blamed for all women’s foibles. In this way, the satire can be read as more than censuring a singularly poorly chosen fashion. In the same day’s newspaper, for example, a picture and related articles appeared on the subject of women’s beauty and fashion alongside a public announcement concerning

여성(女性)의 미(美)가 그 란사(亂射)되는 색채(色彩)로 거죽을 꾸미는 데에 잇는가? 길로 지나가는 수레박회의 울림에도 쓸어질 듯한 다-허무러진 초가집에서 나아오는 양장(洋裝)한 여자! 자기가 살고 잇는 그 집갑보다도 몇배나 되는 그 옷을 입고 굶주린 사람들의 누덕이때가 이 모진 바람에 날리어 찌저져 헤터지는 이 서울의 거리를 건일 때에 그는 모-든 것이 초개(草芥)가터 보힐 것이다. 공작(孔雀)이여! 쇠창살 속에 화려한 저 꼬리를 피여 만족하는 동물원 창살의 공작이여 달은 창살 속에서 울부짖는 새소리를 듯느냐?

enrolment at a girls' school (Figure 5.3). This coverage comprised: an image of a Western woman in a gymnastic pose under the title 'Beauty Treatment Method in Vogue in Europe and America (2)'; an article on feminine beauty entitled 'Introduction to the beauty secrets of the new spring (9)' which further asserted that women should 'take time to read if you want to a beautiful face' and one on 'methods helping make eyebrows beautiful'; and another article giving 'Admission Information for Each Women's School: Sookmyung Women's School'.<sup>9</sup> As the very pages of the newspapers made clear, women were encouraged to take up Western ways of adorning themselves, and they were further keen to do so. They were also given the opportunity to undertake modern schooling. Interest in new fashions was already prevalent among women, and male criticism of the matter was problematic inasmuch as it solely concerned women's yearning for fashion. Satires such as the one just mentioned were, however, more than a critic of fashion and gender; they were also a social criticism revealing the contradictions between the consumption of fashion and economic livelihood in the colonial setting of early twentieth-century Korea.



Figure 5.3. 'Beauty Treatment Method in Vogue in Europe and America (2)' [歐美에서 流行하는 美容法 (2)] and other articles (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1928, Thursday, p. 3)

<sup>9</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1928, p. 3: '歐美에서 流行하는 美容法 (2)'; '新春을 當하야 美容秘法 紹介 (九), 아름다운 얼굴을 소유하고 심푼이는 입으라, 四, 눈섭의 美를 돕는 법'; and '각여학교 입학안내, 숙명여고보'

The extravagant consumption of fashion was thus considered a social problem. With changes to the rigid class structure of pre-colonial Korean society, certain traditional codes of dress no longer signified Korean social classes as they once had. Consequently, fashion as social imitation and as a hallmark of distinction became both more individualistic and more competitive. In the West, this development attracted the attention of Marxist critics, who inveighed against the ‘utilitarian outrage’ and the wastefulness, frivolity, impracticality and vanity of modern fashion.<sup>10</sup> The American economist-sociologist Thorstein Veblen was a notable proponent of this view, and his 1899 book *The Theory of the Leisure Class* asserted that fashion was ‘class-based capitalism’s principal channel of conspicuous consumption and waste’.<sup>11</sup> Veblen argued that it was conspicuous waste in the practice of dress and accoutrement that accounted for the change in fashion, especially in the anonymous crowd of cities. He further vilified fashion’s frivolous changeability from season to season as well as the invidiousness and fickleness it precipitated. The social discord caused by new fashions became the subject of satire and ridicule in Korea as it had in the West, and it was women as consumers of fashion who bore the brunt of this criticism.



Figure 5.4. ‘The Age of Fur’ [털시대], ‘Streetscape’ [街頭風景] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 24 November 1932, Thursday, p. 4)

<sup>10</sup> Fred Davis, ‘Antifashion: The Vicissitudes of Negation’, in Malcolm Barnard, ed. *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, 2007, p. 89.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Figure 5.4 depicts the craze among women for fur mufflers. The illustration states:

Winter has come. It is time for urban women to get hairy. Fox fur, dog hair, cow hair, any fur is favoured and worn around the neck by women emerging into the street. If snakes had hair, would women even wrap snake fur around their necks?<sup>12</sup>

Fashion in this disapproving portrayal was an unnatural phenomenon that caused animosity and was improper, according to the Marxist critique of fashion's crass materialism. The increasing demand for fox fur ushered in a boom in fox hunting throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, with newspaper articles often reporting accidents arising from the hunt. One such accident was an explosion caused by poor control of gunpowder, another result of the misuse of hunting drugs.<sup>13</sup> The high cost of fox fur was no deterrent, though, and women zealous for modern fashion were keen to follow the trend for fox fur mufflers.<sup>14</sup> Figure 5.4 shows this through its image of woman after woman wearing what appeared to be nearly the same fox fur mufflers paired with variously patterned Western-style coats and shoes. The ubiquity of this fashion among fashionable women was thus emphasised and, to a certain extent, exaggerated. The satire nonetheless expressed popular emotions concerning the excesses of women's consumption in 'The Age of Fur', further intimating the paradox of women's new status in a country under the yolk of the colonial economy.

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<sup>12</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 24 November 1932, p. 4: '겨울이 왔다. 도회의 녀성이 털보가 되는 때다. 여호텔, 개털, 쇠털, 털이면 조타고 목에다 두르고 길로 나온다. 구렁이도 털이 잇다면 구렁이 가죽도 목에다 둘렀슬가.'

<sup>13</sup> A recent article by Kim Yeong-cheol (김영철) in *Chosun Ilbo*, 12 December 2011, p. A37, reported an increase in articles concerning fox hunting in Joseon Korea: see the *Chosun Ilbo* articles on 'male and juvenile casualties from fox hunting explosives' (1 February 1926, 2 December 1926, and 18 February 1927); and 'other casualties or serious injuries related to fox hunting' (1 April 1925, 1 February 1927, and 7 January 1931).

<sup>14</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 25 October 1933, provided details on the cost of fox fur: 'Fox fur mufflers priced over forty and fifty *won*', with 'the most valuable silver fox fur costs around 1,000 *won* (one bag of rice costing seventeen *won* at the time) and fake fox fur costs around ten and a few *won*.'



## 1.2. Male Gaze on Women's New Appearance

Marxist criticism of women's fashion included a gendered analysis, mostly made by elite Korean men. Women's sexuality and the exposure of women's bodies through fashion were often stressed and made sense of through these men's perspectives, with their gendered discourse and imagery disseminated through printed media such as newspapers. Figure 5.5, for example, shows one such gendered depiction. Under the caption 'If the Age of Women's Propaganda Comes' [女性宣傳時代가 오면], the cartoon's commentary continues:

Let's demonstrate physical beauty! If this is the cry of contemporary people, modern girl's clothes will be very much simplified when 'the age of women's propaganda' arrives. It will be exceptionally scandalous and disgraceful looking at them but economically beneficial because a bit of thread and a reel of synthetic silk could succeed three generations, so that this is one of the convenient and advantageous lifestyles – before long, would modern girls not take the lead in widely promoting a protest campaign for clothing austerity?<sup>15</sup>

The criticism drew attention to modern girls' scant clothing as a cause of surprise and even consternation to more conventional people, while sardonically praising the items of clothing for their economic sense – they contained far more cloth than was needed to fulfil their function. Judged merely by the textual commentary, the satirical take pursued a line of criticism concerning the profligate economics of women's fashion. The juxtaposition of the image, however, gave pride of place to the male gaze on women's bodies, exposed through flesh-bearing clothes that left little to a man's imagination.

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<sup>15</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 14 January 1930, p. 5: '육체미(肉體美)를 발휘하자! 이것이 현대인의 부르지즘이라면 만약 "여성 푸로파 칸다-시대"가 오면 모던-걸들의 옷이 몹시 간략해지겠다. 불상에는 해피망측하나 경제상 매우 리로울 것이니 실 한 꾸레미와 인조견 할 필요면 삼대(三大)를 물릴수도 있겠으므로 이것이 간리한 생활방식에 하나 – 얼마 아니 잇스면 모던-걸들이 솔선하여 의복긴축시위운동을 장대히하게되지 안홀가?'

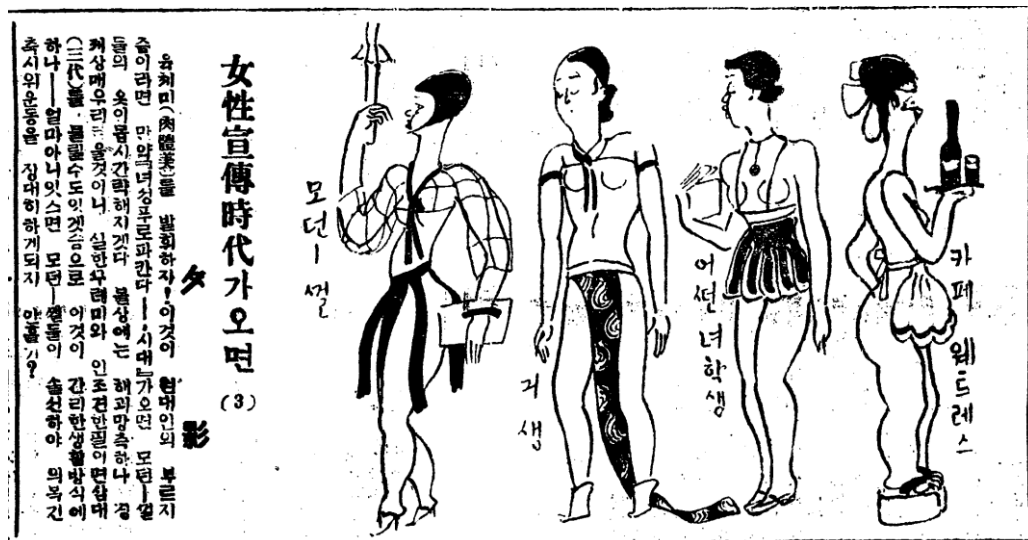


Figure 5.5. 'If the Age of Women's Propaganda Comes (3)' [女性宣傳時代가 오면 (3)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 14 January 1930, Tuesday, p. 5)

The illustration displays four representative female figures – a 'cafe waitress' [카페 웨트레스], a 'female student' [어떤 녀학생], an 'entertainer' or 'gisaeng' [기생] and a 'modern girl' [모던-걸], respectively, from right to left. The women are categorised into four groups whose appearances were considered both modern and libertine, due to the degree of bodily exposure permitted by their simple, modern clothing. The women's clothes are certainly exaggerated in the image to emphasise their exposed flesh. The women's bodies were revealed not only through Western-style clothes such as the apron and the pleated skirt of the waitress and student, but also through the *hanbok*-style clothes such as short and transparent *jeogori* and modified versions of *chima* or skirts worn by the entertainer and the modern girl. The provocation of female nudity came about through misshapen and otherwise altered Korean and Western-style clothing. The subjective setting of the illustration was licentious, animated by the erotically suggestive female figures; this setting, though, was clearly formed through the male author's projection of a female sexuality onto imagined bodies and clothing. New women's fashions, made in accordance with simpler modern styles that bared more skin than had been typical were belittled by male commentators. The satirical tone emerged through a certain portrayal of women's sexuality as witnessed through exposed female bodies. Beyond this, these satires failed

to appraise the new form of modernity exemplified in women's modern clothing.

Male-centred perspectives on women's bodies and clothing styles manifested themselves in the media. Female nudity in the media had already become quite widespread during the 1920s and 1930s. Western women's and Korean women's bodies were often exposed in popular imagery such as that in Figure 5.5, imagery in which the male gaze took pride of place. In fact, a piece of photo journalism appeared on the same page of *Chosun Ilbo* as the previous figure (Figure 5.6). This photographic piece demonstrated the availability of women's nude bodies as fodder for the male imagination. Along with the image satirically depicting the overexposure of women's bodies in modern women's fashion, the photo montage further asserted the primacy of the male perspective in popular representations of the female form. Bare, crossed legs formed the focal point of the image, and several women's faces comprised the image's night-time urban background. In the bottom, left-hand corner of the image can be seen a man staring fixedly outwards. Entitled 'The Scream of a City: The Night of a City is a Painful Dream' [都會의 絶叫: 都會의 밤은 괴로운 꿈자리], the article asserted that night in the city was dreadful and lustful, and that 'The urban night calls women out from small rooms and makes them dance in the streets. It makes them sell laughter. It makes them befoul their bodies.'<sup>16</sup> Both the image and the text impose on women a status as objects to be seen, subjects that are passive and in possession of limited selves. This piece of photojournalism and the satirical cartoon are, furthermore, both featured on page five of the newspaper, in its section for 'Housewives' [가정 부인]. This section of *Chosun Ilbo* sought to provide Korean women with useful information on looking after the home and other ostensibly female matters such as preventing colds and taking care of clothing. Such coverage gave an ambivalent status to women, one that reflected male-centred perspectives on women's lives while treating women as managers of the domestic sphere.

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<sup>16</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 14 January 1930, p. 5: '도회의 밤은 녀자를 골방에서 불러내여 길거리에서 춤을 추게한다. 우습을 팔게 한다. 육체를 더럽히게한다.'



Figure 5.6. ‘The Night of a City is a Painful Dream’ [都會의 밤은 괴로운 꿈자리], ‘The Scream of a City’ [都會의 絶叫] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 14 January 1930, Tuesday, p. 5)

Concerning the modern girl’s threadbare fashions, this male-centred vision became central and dominant. This gendered discourse on women’s bodies, women’s dress and women’s sexuality was then disseminated through newspapers. Its pervasiveness can further be seen in coverage of summertime sea-bathing. As a leisure activity only recently having become popular in Korea, bathing and otherwise playing at the seashore was not without its detractors.<sup>17</sup> For some the activity was seen as dangerous and the place itself as full of temptations. On Friday, 3 July 1931, an article in the ‘Madame’ [부인] section of *Chosun Ilbo* warned readers against sea-bathing. It counselled that ‘hot spring and summertime beach resorts are dangerous areas; moreover evil temptations exert themselves on women; do not send your precious children to this area of amusement; it is easy to fall prey to the decadence of physical

<sup>17</sup> The first public beaches opened in Busan in June 1913, Wonsan in June 1923 and Mokpo in July 1923: see Kim Myeong-Hwan (김명환), *Chosun Ilbo*, 6 June 2011, p. A29.

liberation during the summer season.’<sup>18</sup> The newspaper further reported that:

In the raving blue sea, it would be delightful to play in the salt water dressed in swimwear which does not need to be worn, yet weak-minded women are more likely to be tempted, worn down and enthralled by the power of nature and their own beauty.<sup>19</sup>

The license and danger of women’s swimwear were of more serious importance than the clothing’s suitability as modern leisure wear; patriarchal views of women’s attire dominated any other perspective.

At the same time, another article from *Chosun Ilbo* featured swimwear in a different way, drawing attention to the aesthetics and fashionability of swimwear while also broaching a discussion of the recent development of the fabrics used to produce swimwear (Figure 5.7). The title of the article from the ‘Home, Children’ [가정, 아동] section of 5 June 1933 aptly summarised the report: ‘The age of back-line beauty, The age of waist-line beauty; An expression of summer; This year’s swimsuit; Simple mono-colours, more complex patterns; Many new silhouettes on the way.’<sup>20</sup> Placed in the newspaper by the Hwashin Company [和信商會], the piece made use of the department store’s new season’s swimwear to emphasise its novelty. The attire had been made with a ‘band’ in the waist and featured a backing inspired by ‘America’, termed ‘waist-line beauty’ [요선미, 腰線美] and ‘back-line beauty’ [배선미, 背線美], respectively.<sup>21</sup> The article notably described the swimsuit’s ‘back-line

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<sup>18</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 3 July 1931, p. 5: ‘온천해수욕장피서지 위험한 지대, 더욱이 여자에게 유혹의 마수가 따른다. 귀한 자녀를 유원지대에 보내지 말라. 육체 해방의 계절 녀름에 타락키 쉽다.’

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘미치날뛰는 푸른바다에 입으나만아한 해수욕복을 입고서 물과 싸흐는 것이 통쾌 하겠지만 마음이 해한 녀자는 자연의 위력과 자기자신의 미에 도취하여 가지고 방탕하게 변하는 수가 만습니다.’

<sup>20</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 June 1933, p. 3: ‘배선미 시대, 요선미 시대; 여름의 표정, 금년의 해수욕복, 빗같은 단색 보다 복잡한 문이, 모양은 새로운 것이 만이 잇서’

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*: ‘새로운 모양을 보는 것은 상체를 높이 보이며 따라서 요선미(腰線美)를 훨씬 나타내기 위하여 대체로 “반도”를 대이게 되었고 반도도 작년에 비하여 좀 높게 되었습니다. 그리고 여기에는 “아메리카”의 조류를 받게되야 백어와 가튼



### 1.3. *Dependent Women on Men's Wealth*

Another conception of women who aimed to appear modern was one that saw them as parasitic on bourgeois men. Donning the latest modern style required substantial sums of money, and women from less affluent backgrounds who were able to dress in a modern manner were in many cases entertainers (*gisaeng*) or concubines. This presumption about women's means meant that fashionably modern women found the details of their expenses on fashion a subject of public scrutiny, as can be seen in the following article from *Chosun Ilbo* on 5 October 1930 (Figure 5.8). The commentary shows: 'As autumn arrives [...] will the paunchy landlord be full although the price of rice has fallen? "Hey! Is this year a good harvest? Please buy this and that for me. Let's go to Jingogae." She cajoles the paunchy man into going to a department store with her, hooking her arm in the man's.'<sup>22</sup> The illustration alongside the commentary depicts the scene: the fashionably modern woman, dressed in a coat and wristwatch on her right wrist, is clutching the fat gentleman's arm. Sporting a full suit, top hat and cane with a cigar hanging from his mouth, the man carries three packages over his left shoulder and one in his left hand, implying they had already been shopping. The woman, though, points to another department store and seems to be heading towards its entrance, with the man's legs and cane suggesting he is being led away according to her whims.

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<sup>22</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 October 1930, p. 5: '一九三〇년에 의로 첨단(尖端)시대도 가을이 왔스니 [...] 배불독이여 깃버하라 벼갓시 내럿다해도 그대는 곡간을 증축하고 뺨들뺨들한 뱃대기를 어루만지지 안는가? "여봐요! 올해는 풍년이죠? 나 그것도 사주고 저것도 사주어요. 우리 진고개로 가요" 겨드랭이에 백어가튼 팔뚝을 꺾고서 뚱뚱한 사나희를 백화점(百貨店)으로 낙구어드린다.'



Figure 5.8. 'Chilly and Lonely Autumnal Wind' [金風蕭瑟] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 5 October 1930, Sunday, p. 5)

To maintain her modern appearance, women would have needed to shop often, and enticing the attention of a wealthy bourgeois man was one way to acquire what they needed and fulfil their desires. In this way the fashionably modern woman came to be a possession of the rich man. Figure 5.9 made this point in its representation of an exaggeratedly large walking man along a city street with a comparatively miniature-sized woman. Both wore fur-trimmed coats with an air both wealthy and boastful. The text reads:

As shown in the picture, the poor doll following the man like the weight of a giant mountain – She would be the person whose supple body is subject to the pleasure of the man pulling her along. Alas – how beautiful the doll is and how stupendous the Satan they talk about?<sup>23</sup>

Modern women who afforded their ostentatious fashion expenses because of their acquaintance with wealthy men were regarded variously as the men's puppets or as their possessions.

<sup>23</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 10 February 1928, p. 5: '이 그림과 가티 태산(泰山) 덩이 가튼 사람을 딸아가는 가엾은 인형(人形) – 그는 온전히 유연(柔軟)한 몸동아리가 끌고가는 그 사람의 향락을 위하여 사로잡힌 사람일것이다. 아 – 얼마나 아름다운 인형이며 얼마나 그들이 말하는 위대한 “사탄”이라?'





Figure 5.9. ‘Stupendous Satan’ [위대한 ‘사탄’], ‘A View on the Street (4)’ [街上所見 (4)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 10 February 1928, Friday, p. 5)

Sin Myeong-jik has stated that bourgeois men were often depicted in satirical cartoons as obese, with plump bellies and short legs and were hyperbolically oversized, all of which made them appear affluent and stable.<sup>24</sup> Such portrayals, however, were not without their own criticism of bourgeois men in colonial Korea. In Figure 5.9, the giant of a man was indeed the ‘stupendous Satan’ [위대한 사탄] the title dubbed him. To present the man’s wealth even more unequivocally, he is shown smoking a cigar and wearing a hat and three-piece, fur-trimmed coat during the winter-season month of February. His tall, wide and triangular frame evinced his solid, stable and yet avaricious livelihood and lifestyle, in contrast to the thin, petit and fragile frame of the woman depending on him.

As these satirical portraits made clear, modern women and their fashion were unwelcome. When seen from a Marxist perspective critical of fashion’s materialism, such women’s excessive consumption and blind devotion to the latest fashions stood out starkly against the backdrop of colonial economic instability. What was more, the exposure of women’s bodies through new fashions elicited considerable public rebuke,

<sup>24</sup> Sin Myeong-jik, *Modern boy*, pp. 239-244.

even if such public admonishment emerged from a male-centred view of women's bodies and appearance. This gendered perspective further projected onto fashionable women and their style passivity and dependence on wealthy men, going so far as to view women as little more than the property of bourgeois men.

## **2. Modern Men's Attire and Criticism Reflecting Changing Society**

Depictions of modern men and their fashion in satirical form pursued a different tack in assessing men's changing positions in society. Through their work and the exigencies of earning a living, men in colonial Korea were, in some ways, more directly exposed to the economic conditions of the country than women. They bore the brunt of economic changes initiated by the colonial state in the name of modernisation. With land expropriated by Japanese authorities, traditional landowners were often dispossessed of their lands. Others, though, who worked closely with the Japanese, became powerful figures in economic and social terms. Newly emerged classes fell uncomfortably into a category between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, creating social and cultural tensions along axes such as that between the traditional and the modern. Portrayals of men's fashion in satire hinted at the conflicts of this fraught social milieu.

By another reading on men and their dress and fashion from satirical articles, this section pays attention to how those critical views on dressed men through their clothing and fashion practice reflected changing colonial modern society of Korea, including socio-economic tensions of class and financial matters through men's sartorial practice and shifting notions of male identity, masculinity and relationship with women at home.

### ***2.1. Class and Economic Tension through Men's Attire***

Figure 5.10 provides an example that distinguishes clearly between the classes of

colonial Korean society. Bearing the title ‘Early Summer Landscape’, it shows a strapping man working in a forge, complete with hammer in hand. He is sweating, from the work as well as the weather, and wearing nothing but shorts. Despite his labours, he stares out into the world outside his workshop. A couple passes, presumably on the way to a picnic. The lady wears a Western-style dress with a parasol in hand. With his arm in hers, the man wears a Western-style suit, complete with hat, and holds their picnic basket. The distinction between the two men becomes clearer with the text:

On the contrary, there is a group living helplessly soaked in sweat during their days of pleasure, holding a ‘hammer’ before a furnace. When they look through the window, this sweet scene of the youth, would not their forearms come alive with blood shivering in palpitation?<sup>25</sup>

The working-class man was clearly contrasted with the bourgeois man by means of their differing appearances in the satirical illustration. With the text seemingly sympathetic with the plight of the proletarian man, the class tension arising from the capitalist economy of the colonial setting becomes apparent.

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<sup>25</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 25 May 1930, p. 5: ‘이와 정반대로 용광노(鎔鑪) 압해서 “함마”를 잡고 이러한 향락의 시절을 속절없이 땀에 저러 지내는 무리가 있다. 그들은 창 넘어로 그 아름다운 청년들의 풍경을 볼 때에 피에 벽찬 팔뚝이 부르르 떨리지 안힐 수 잇슬가?’



Figure 5.10. 'Early Summer Landscape (4)' [初夏風景 (4)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 25 May 1930, Sunday, p. 5)

The poor economic condition of the country also distressed elite men wishing to keep their dignity in Western-style suits. Many who had received higher education in Korea or abroad already regularly made use of *yangbok* and were open to modern Western styles. Their modest salaries, however, did not meet their expectations, making it difficult to maintain a certain standard of Western-style appearance. Thus they searched shopping areas or purchased second-hand suits in junk shops as the need and occasion arose.

晚秋風景(一)  
影

# 古物商洋服

漫文漫



한글로 된 설명과 제목이 있는 만화 패널의 왼쪽 상단 부분. '古物商洋服'이라는 제목이 포함되어 있다.

한글로 된 설명과 제목이 있는 만화 패널의 오른쪽 상단 부분. '晚秋風景(一)'이라는 제목이 포함되어 있다.

한글로 된 설명과 제목이 있는 만화 패널의 왼쪽 하단 부분. '古物商洋服'이라는 제목이 포함되어 있다.

한글로 된 설명과 제목이 있는 만화 패널의 오른쪽 하단 부분. '晚秋風景(一)'이라는 제목이 포함되어 있다.

Figure 5.11. ‘A Western-style Suit in a Junk Shop’ [古物商洋服], ‘Landscape of Late Autumn (1)’ [晚秋風景 (1)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 20 October 1933, Friday, p. 2)

In Figure 5.11, a man dressed in a Western style looks at one jacket among several worn by mannequins. He appears to be thinking hard and hesitating, putting his hands in his pockets as if searching for money and realising he is short of cash. Alongside the image, the commentary put the man’s situation in the wider social context. With the title ‘A Western-style Suit in a Junk Shop’ [古物商洋服], the text expounds:

An intellectual, getting skinnier, finds a sunny place when it gets colder, fumbling in his dusty trouser pocket and pacing back and forth on the ‘asphalt’ pavement; this is a scene of the late autumn or early winter in 1933. [...] Despite all he knows, his situation is unbearable on a strike of the five viscera and the six entrails.

Despite being hungry, the suit must be clean; not only clean but colourful, stylish; it should be modern – why do they agonise over such tiny matters, what with their big heads able to see the bigger world? [...] His ‘smart’ outfit appears and disappears in their minds as they pass by, casting a pale shadow over the shop windows of tailors’ shops.

In his student days he had a splendid time spending seventy to eighty *won* intended for his tuition fees, getting extra money from his parents by writing ‘trick’ letters and dreaming of bright red lips of the cafe and sweet cocktails; it was a beautiful but embarrassed dream that would not come back again! Now, holding a note of ten or five *won* and going into a junk shop, he fiddles about with a *yangbok* without knowing which guy or which patient had worn it, yet despite it all he selects the best ‘smart’ one.

Once he goes out wearing the suit, his dream springs up again. A beautiful woman – a tango – a waltz; but, reeking of the smell of ‘naphthalene’ pervading the second-hand suit, he should feel sorrow. Especially if the suit is the one which he had pawned himself..... Taking a full account of himself, he becomes despondent and anxious but when he looks at lower class people, such as the men carrying chamber pots in the street, or up a high-rise building, he tells himself, ‘But I have knowledge’, ‘But I have the mind and generosity to lead you.’

Yes. The whole world secures the cultural benefits of your intellect. But why do you buy suits in junk shops and lurk around pubs? Winter is coming. You should be upset by the tears on the worn face of your wife, worn down by her worrying about preparing *kimchi* for the winter.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 20 October 1933, p. 2: ‘점점 메말러가는 인테리 날이 추어지니 양지쪽을 차저 몬지만 나는 양복바지 주머니를 주물럭거리고 “아스팔트”를 오락가락하는것도 一九三三년 느진가을 첫 겨울의 풍경이다. [...] 지식이 있어도 오장육부의 스트라이크 에는 견딜 수가 업는 것이다.’

‘배는 곱하도 양복은 깨끄시 깨끗만 아니라 빗갈, 스타일, 이것이 현대적이여야만 – 그들은 왜 큰 세계를 볼 머리통을 가지고도 극히 적은 이 점에 고민을 하는가. [...] 양복점 쇼 – 윈도우 – 에 엷은 그림자를 그리고 지나가는 그들의 머리 속에는 “스마 – 트”한 자기의 차림차림이 나타났다 꺼졌다.’

‘학생시대에 칠팔십원의 학비를 디려서 호기있게 지냈고 제 부형에게 “트릭크” 편지를 하여 돈을 타다가는 카페 – 의 새빨간 입술 달콤한 칵테일의 꿈을 꾸것도

The illustration remains a trenchant yet sympathetic view of the elite man and his precarious reality in the 1930s. The text and the image work together effectively to present the story of the poor men of the elite, emphasising the gap between their constrained economic means and their aspiring tastes and desires in the colonial setting. Achieving, not to mention maintaining, their ambitions was an arduous task, but they tried to keep their pride by arrogating an intellectual supremacy for themselves, fondly remembering their school days even if it could not bring them the money they needed to do their shopping in the second-hand shops.

Though they were paid little, intellectuals were in a relatively better position than the jobless. Yet even unemployed men often looked either like modern boys or elite men in their own suits. The so-called ‘lumpen’ (룸펜), hanging around the city and always on the hunt for work, became a social problem under the unsettled economic and labour structure of colonial Korea. Without any income, yet dressed in the Western style and enamoured of that style, they often went to cafes when they had a bit of money in their pockets. In such places they spent time in style. The pretentious manner of jobless men was the subject of caustic criticism in satires. Figure 5.12 is one such treatment. The commentary reads:

An unemployed man’s feelings would only be known to himself. [...]

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그것은 다시 오지 못할 아름답고도 북그러운 꿈! 지금은 돈 십원 돈 오원 한장을 들고 고물상(古物商)으로 고물상으로 그 어느 놈이 그 어느 병자가 입고 다니든 것인지도 모르는 양복을 만적거리면서도 그래도 그것이나마 “스마-트”한 것을 고르는 것이다.’

‘그것만 입고 나서면 그의 꿈은 다시 이러난다. 아름다운 여자 - 탕고 - 월스 그러치만 입은 양복에 배고 뺨 “나프타린” 내음새가 코를 찌를 때, 그는 비애를 느낄 것이다. 더구나 그 양복이 제가 전당 잡혔든 것이면..... 자기의 전모(全貌)를 차져보고 환멸과 불안을 느끼면서도 길바닥에서 높은 빨딩에서 똥통을 끌고 가는 등등의 하층인간을 볼 때 “그래도 나는 지식(智識)이 있다” “그래도 나는 너희들을 지도할 흉도(胸度)를 가졌다”.’

‘그렇타. 윈 세계는 그대들의 그 두뇌로써 문화의 은택을 받고 있다. 그러나 왜 지금 그대는 고물상에서 양복을 사입고 선술집을 기웃거리느냐. 겨울이 온다. 그대는 김장때문에도 안해의 그 여윈 얼굴에 눈물방울을 보면 얼마나 마음이 언짢으리.’

Indeed, living is a hate. [...] Anyway, living from day to day and from year to year, if he has ten *jeon*, he goes to a cafe. As it is hard to be sitting in a cafe all day along with only a cup of coffee, he wanders in the street. In this way he becomes lumpen dressed in *yangbok*. However, there are many people living an idle existence in the cafe. Jobless women and jobless men meet there and go out together to the dark side of the city.<sup>27</sup>

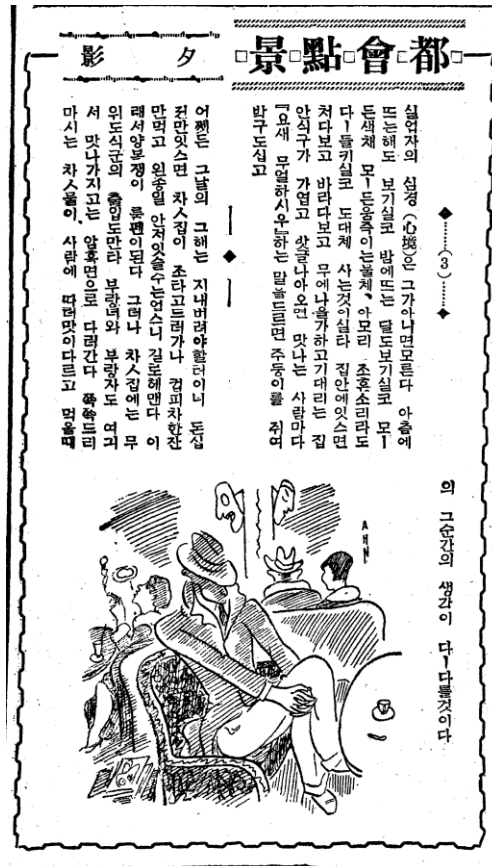


Figure 5.12. ‘Sketch of the City (3)’ [都會點景 (3)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1934, Friday, p. 3)

In the centre of the illustration a man sat in a chair with his head lowered, a cup, saucer and spoon on the table. He is a member of the lumpen proletariat, dressed in a Western suit complete with hat, necktie and coat with a stiff collar. Behind the man to

<sup>27</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 February 1934, p. 3: ‘실업자의 심경(心境) 은 그가 아니면 모른다. [...] 도대체 사는 것이 실타. [...] 어쨌든 그날의 그해는 지내버려야할터이니 돈 십전만 잇스면 찻집이 조타고 드러가나 컵피차 한잔만 먹고 원종일 안저잇슬 수는 업스니, 길로 헤맨다. 이래서 양복쟁이 룸펜이 된다. 그러나 찻집에는 무위도식군의 출입도 만타. 부랑녀와 부랑자도 여기서 맛나가지고는 암흑면으로 다러간다.’



the left sat a short-haired woman in Western-style dress smoking a cigarette, with another man and woman together behind him to the right. Incompetence or an inability to manage their finances was a great cause for concern and worry for men: their social position and their economic role demanded financial acumen and their modern *yangbok* style reflected their desire to fulfil expectations, even as the bleak economic situation of colonial Korea made their task more difficult.

## 2.2. Changing Masculinity and Identities of Men with Women

Men's status as husband and heads of household also changed during the time. Traditional men's roles and notions of masculinity shifted through an embrace of new ideas of 'free love' (자유 연애) and 'free marriage' (자유 결혼).<sup>28</sup> Wives no longer suffered their husbands' modest incomes in silence. New women raised their voices at home in contrast to traditional norms of housewives' conduct. Men's status as 'masculine' was weakened accordingly.



Figure 5.13. 'A Man and Wife (2)' [사나희와 녀편네 (2)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 21 September 1928, Friday, p. 3)

<sup>28</sup> For more detail, see Choe Hye-sil, *Sinnyeoseong deuleun mueotseul ggumggueotneunga* [What Did New Women Dream Of], 2000.

Figure 5.13 features a man dressed in a Western-style suit. All the pockets from his waistcoat and trousers were turned out, showing the man had no money left. A woman on the left appears to be a new woman, judging from her modernised *hanbok* jacket and quite short skirt. Her jacket (*jeogori*) features no traditional fastening strap (*goreum*) – replaced by a button – and her skirt (*chima*) is short, its length barely covering the knees. In short, she wore a *hanbok* style considerably changed and modernised from the traditional style, perhaps the fashion of the *hanbok* style that time. She also wears a wristwatch, one of the new women's most fashionable items at the time. The commentary reads:

Women often regard men as *hwasubun* [화수분, a mythical magic pot which does not run out of wealth]. [...] [She] tends to know that whenever she pinches a man, everything pours out of him, such as money, clothes, socks, shoes and whatever. Would guys need to go back home once their pockets are full and heavy from picking up even pebbles from the ground?<sup>29</sup>

The image accompanying the commentary shows the wife giving the husband a pinch on the cheek. The man's and woman's facial expressions, moreover, underscore the changing positions of men and women in the social hierarchy. It was not just in cafes that modern men could be pestered and bothered – even without money, men found this treatment at home as well. The modern man's financial impotence was the most common image of Korean men at the time.

Not only was the man in the Western-style white-collar disturbed and reminded of his financial precarity at home, but the working-class men encountered changing femininity and notions of womanhood at home, too. In Figure 5.14, a man dressed in a shirt, overalls and hard-hat stood and stared at his wife, while she lay on the floor,

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<sup>29</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 21 September 1928, p. 3: ‘녀자는 남자만 만나면 화수분으로 아는 수가 많다. [...] 사나회를 꼬집으면 꼬집는데 로 돈이고 옷이고 양말이고 구두고 무에고 다 나아오는 줄로만 안다. 사나회는 집에 도라갈 때에 길바닥의 조약돌이라도 주서서 호주머니가 묵직하거든 집에 드리가라?’

smoking and reading, dressed in modernised *hanbok*. The commentary tells the reader that:

When the husband comes home after working hard as a factory worker, a factory where toil and muck make him unable to see sunlight during his suffocating in the factory for ten to twelve hours; when he comes home there his wife lay with her body contorted, smoking in reading pointless books.<sup>30</sup>

The working-class man is shown in the Western-style working clothes, and it is clear from the satire that he is no exception in having to face women's changed attitudes at home.

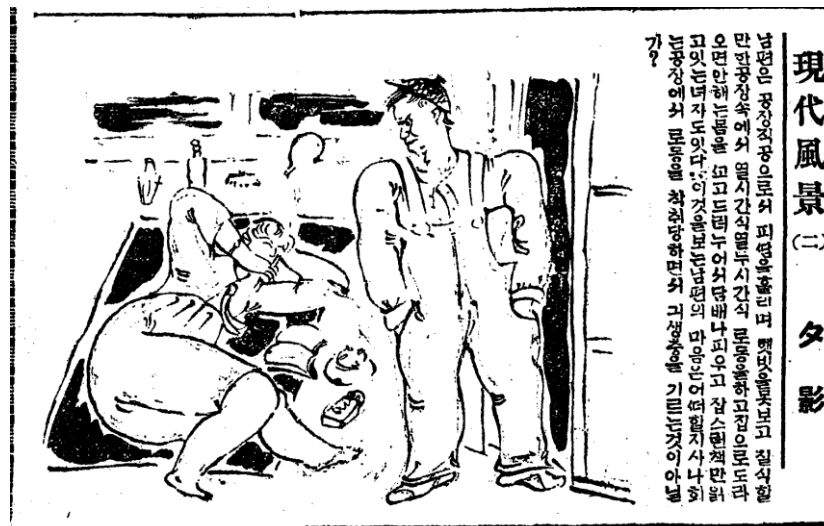


Figure 5.14. 'Contemporary Scene (2)' [現代風景 (2)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 March 1930, Sunday, p. 5)

Yet, older attitudes towards women's positions and roles did not vanish all at once, as is clear from Figure 5.15. In it a well-dressed man in a suit leads a woman with two children. This illustration was part of the same series that featured Figure 5.13. The commentary tells the reader that 'A scene like this picture from the street can often be seen and, in viewing it, it looks as if a husband from some household is

<sup>30</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 9 March 1930, p. 5: '남편은 공장직공으로서 피땀을 흘리며 햇빛을 못보고 질식할만한 공장속에서 열시간씩 열두시간씩 로동을 하고 집으로 도라오면 안해는 몸을 꼬고 드러누어서 담배나 피우고 잡스런 책만 읽고 있는 여자도 있다.'

heading to a station bringing a female servant with him, but in fact it is the sight of a man going out with his own wife for a stroll.<sup>31</sup> The rebuke of the man's intransigent attitude towards his wife becomes clearer in her attire.



Figure 5.15. ‘A Man and Wife (8)’ [사나희와 녀편네 (8)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 September 1928, Saturday, p. 4)

The wife wears the *jeogori* and *chima* of the traditional *hanbok* – unlike the new woman’s modern style *hanbok* in the Figure 5.13, supposedly at the same time period – and the long skirt covering her legs and falling to the ground indicates that her style is old-fashioned and declares her status as an ‘old-fashioned woman’ (구여성) rather than a ‘new woman’ (신여성). What is more, she holds a baby in her left hand and carries a picnic hamper in her right, with another child holding onto the mother. This image of the traditional housewife is in marked contrast to the image projected by the man, who – while treating the old-fashioned wife in a traditionally male-centred manner – fashionably wore a distinctively patterned suit with a banded hat, a cigar in his mouth, a cane in his right hand and his left hand in the pocket of his jacket. Here the man’s fashionable, modern appearance bears no relationship to his understanding

<sup>31</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 September 1928, p. 4: ‘길에서 이 그림과 가튼 꼴을 흔히 볼 수 있스니, 이것을 보아서는 어떤 집 서방님짜리가 계집하인을 덤울이고 덩거장을 향하여 나아가는 것 가트나 기실은 동부인으로 야외산보(野外散步)를 나아가는 꼴약선 이다.’

of his wife and her subservient status and duties.

Modern men's relationship with modern women under the rubric of 'free love' was often the subject of bald criticism on conservatives' part. Even the infidelity of rich professional men working in such occupations as medicine was a topic of some concern. Take Figure 5.16, 'The Decorous Doctor' [점잔은 의사], for example:

There is a decorous doctor who employed a matchmaker and chased after a maiden residing in a commoner's house. He was tempted to marry [the girl] by locking arms with her over one whole night; yet when breaking up, he patronisingly took credit for buying her ten *jeon*'s worth of 'tangerines' and then turning her away. Although this gentleman doctor has his own wife, son and daughter, he was driven by lust to live with a young maiden as if he dreamt of Faust at his age of forty [...].<sup>32</sup>

The commentary implies that the doctor is on the left of the accompanying illustration, walking in a modern manner with the lady wearing a Western-style coat with a shawl and high-heeled shoes. The doctor wears a Western-style coat lined with fur with a hat and striped trousers. Another middle-aged man is seen walking behind the couple. This single man looks embarrassed, dressed in a traditional *hanbok* style with a *durumagi* overcoat, a muffler around the neck and a hat. The different men's status is clear: one pursued 'free love' while the other appeared rather more conservative, all represented through their respective *yangbok* and *hanbok* style.

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<sup>32</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 30 November 1932, p. 4: '뚜쟁이를 노아 여염집에서 묵고 잇는 처녀를 피여다가 왼밤을 끼고 다니며 결혼을 하자고 발라 마치고, 헤여질 때 십전어치 "귤"을 사주어 돌려보내고는 못척 생색을 내인 점잔은 어떤 의사 한 분이 계시다. 이 의사 량반은 본부인이 계시고 아들딸도 잇는 터에 나희 사십에 파우스트의 꿈을 꾸엇든지 어린 처녀를 데리고 사러볼 수심(獸心)이 동하야 [...]'



Figure 5.16. ‘Decorous Doctor’ [점잔은 의사], ‘The Phases of the Times’ [時代相] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 30 November 1932, Wednesday, p. 4)

Reflecting changing masculinity with fashion, younger modern men’s fashion-conscious behaviour received much attention as well. Often modern boys’ adornment in ostentatious styles and make-up seemed far removed from older practices. A satire titled ‘When the Year 1931 Comes’ [一九三一年이 오면] points to this perceived excess in modern boys’ adornment (Figure 5.17).



Figure 5.17. ‘When the Year 1931 Comes (6)’ [一九三一年이 오면 (6)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 November 1930, Saturday, p. 5)

A fashionably modern young man can be seen wearing a stylish suit with a hat, necktie and pocket handkerchief. The overly wide bottoms of his check-patterned trousers are suggestive of a woman's skirt. He wears a wristwatch rather than the pocket watch most gentlemen are more accustomed to wearing. He is doing up his make-up with a powder set, and his eyelashes and lips are drawn with a decidedly female air. Behind him, a modern girl in Western-style dress is shown in an inset with her curvy silhouette and charming manners clearly discernible. The commentary continues:

There is a man whose face is covered in powder as if he sank into rice flour and re-emerged. Even just hearing the sound of a woman's cough behind his back or the sound of a woman's pointed heels hitting the ground from a distance, it makes some guys straighten their clothes and adjust their neckties. Even so, in 1931 we would see a man doing his make-up openly in the street, holding a compact and patting his face with the 'powder'; how could we view the sight as his face would be sticky.<sup>33</sup>

When the modern boy emerged, keen to cultivate his beauty through make-up and fashion with an awareness of modern women's presence, it was far from the practices traditionally associated with the masculinity of Korean men. Older 'macho' attitudes began to bend before the rather feminine mannerisms and habits of modern men. Conservative men's views on new men's adornment were sceptical, sarcastic and, in the satire awaiting the arrival of 1931, ominous. For them, the rugged, irascible demeanour associated with established norms for masculine behaviour was still preferred. The satire thus reflected a transition in men's fashion and social views on masculinity in colonial Korea.

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<sup>33</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 29 November 1930, p. 5: '사나회의 얼굴이 떡가루 속에 파묻혔다 나아온 것 모양으로 분(粉)이 케케로 안젓는 께자가 있다. 등뒤에서 녀자의 기침소리만 드러도 멀리서 녀자의 뽀족한 구두 뒷굽치가 땅에 부딪치는 소리만 드러도 몸 매무시를 고치고 넥타이를 매만지는 축이 있다. 그러타면 一九三一年에는 버젓하게 길거리에서 사나회가 분갑을 들고서 "파우더"로 얼굴을 툭툭치게 될 터이니 얼굴이 지러서 어떠케 그 꼴을 볼지'

As seen thus far, modern men and their new styles were understood to reflect social and economic tensions, as well as differences between social classes. In the troubled economic situation of colonial Korea, typified by low pay and scarce jobs, modern men's pursuit of the fashion for suits was scarcely fulfilled. They were depicted searching through second-hand shops or as idle men frequenting cafes. Modern men's suits were thus portrayed in an ironic manner, representing the wearers' modern identities and style on the one hand, but their poor economic and financial status on the other. In the home, the changing relationship between husband and wife added to fashionable modern men's concerns. Their incomes did not grow with their ambitions and, while some old-fashioned women found themselves in marriages with men – even modern ones – who continued to treat them in a traditional manner, women's changing sense of their position and their duties further impinged on modern men. For the more conservative-minded, modern men's free love with modern women was improper, and these different views on changing society were distinguished by men's *yangbok* and *hanbok* attire. Further, modern boys' adornment and fashion appeared far removed from old masculine norms of conduct, and the satires presented above reflect these changes in men's identities.

### **3. Multifaceted Views on the Modern Fashionable Identities, Class and Gender**

The changing identities and appearance of modern women and men were the object of rather acerbic criticism. Through the sarcasm, fashionably modern individuals were seen as the troubled children of colonial Korean society; their very habits, clothing and demeanour brought gender discrepancies and class-based economic struggles to the fore. Yet the fashionable figures depicted in the satires very much captured the everyday lives of Koreans at the time. Both the texts and images of these satires, though, can be read against the grain in order to reconsider the relationship between



the modernity of these individuals and their new styles of dress and fashion. Views of everyday life mirror the quotidian problems and prevalent concerns of the day, and offer insight into the meaning of material life within colonial Korean society.<sup>34</sup> Put another way, the deeper structures of modern, capitalist and colonial society in Korea can be traced through the satires depicting common scenes from the lives of fashionable people.

Among the set-pieces of dress and society, another facet of the social commentary can also be found in these satires. Below, the satires are re-examined alongside other sources such as newspapers, magazines, collection and archival photographs, diaries and oral histories. The aim is to consider rather more benevolent, if still risible, contemporary understandings of the fashionable modern person in colonial Korea, again through the useful lens of everyday clothing and sartorial practice. That is, the critical stances taken in the satires treated above are but one view, and other, contrary and more constructive perspectives on the sartorial existences of modern women and men emerge through other sources, ones that lend themselves to nuanced analysis of modern identities, especially those of class and gender.

This section then explores what positive and constructive views can be found on modern male and female individuals' dress and fashion practices, reflecting the socio-cultural context of Korean society in nuanced and multifaceted ways; accounting for

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<sup>34</sup> See Braudel's and the Annales School's approach to understanding large-scale socio-economic structures through the level of everyday sartorial practice: Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, Fifteenth to Eighteenth centuries: The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*, trans. by Siân Reynolds, Vol. 1, 1981, pp. 266-333. In short, at the very deepest level of material life, there is at work a complex order, to which the assumptions, tendencies and unconscious pressures of economies, societies and civilizations all contribute. (p. 333). De Certeau develops a theoretical framework for analysing how the 'weak' make use of the 'strong' and create for themselves a sphere of autonomous action and self-determination within the constraints that are imposed on them: Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by Steven Randall, 1984, pp. 91-130. Also see Derek Schilling, 'Everyday Life and the Challenge to History in Postwar France: Braudel, Lefebvre, Certeau', 33/1, 2003, pp. 23-40.

modernities of schoolgirls, working women and their dress; positive light on female entertainer *gisaeng*; modern figures' fashion styles in *hanbok* and *yangbok*; modern male individual's ambiguous dress practice in *hanbok* and *yangbok*; expression of identity and class through *hanbok* and *yangbok* among the collective in the city.

### 3.1. Modern Dress of Schoolgirls and Working Women

Satires and newspaper articles were not unanimous in admonishing 'new women' and 'modern girls' for their new fashion sense. Figure 5.18, for example, took place in a bistro run by *Geunuhoe* (權友會) at the third 'Whole Joseon Girls' Schools' United Bazaar' (全朝鮮女學校聯合卍-ㅅㅈ-大會) at the 'Central Hall of the Young Women's Christian Association' (중앙기독교청년회관) in Gyeongseong on 17–18 January 1928.<sup>35</sup> School girls waited tables at a makeshift bistro in the bazaar and were depicted in a cheerful manner: two modern girls formed the centre of the image, their modernity signalled by their refined mannerisms, proud facial expressions, short hair, *hanbok* and *yangbok* styles, short skirts worn under the aprons tied at their waist and Western-style shoes. The male customers dressed in *yangbok* sitting in the foreground watched the girls as they served coffee and cake. The text describes the school girls-cum-waitresses as 'energetic and dashing beauties, with neat and clean stylish looks'.<sup>36</sup> The girls shown here were models of contemporary beauty and the apotheosis of modern education and modern institutions. With the modern girls helping out, the bazaar was a great success over its two day run. According to *Chosun Ilbo*, about 8,000 school girls from fourteen women's schools all over the country took part in the bazaar,

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<sup>35</sup> Whole Joseon Girls' Schools' United Bazaar Fair (全朝鮮女學校聯合卍-ㅅㅈ-大會) was co-hosted by the 'Young Women's Christian Association' (여자기독교청년회) and the Chosun Ilbo Newspaper Company. Through the fairs, *Geunuhoe* (權友會, active from 1927 to 1931), a national women's organisation, was opened in 1927 as a sister organisation of *Singanhoe* (新幹會, 1927–1931), a national independence movement organisation combined with the left and the right of Korean figures.

<sup>36</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 18 January 1928, p. 3: '근우회 림시식당(權友會 臨時食堂) 림시 "외트리스"인, 미쓰XX - 발끗트로 춤추며 주방(廚房)으로 사라진다. 근우회 림시식당 대번창, 대번창, 그리고 림시 "외트리스" - 대분주, 싹싹한 미(美) 끼끗한 맵시'

exhibiting over 1,000 of their own items, including textiles, embroideries and clothing. More than 40,000 attended the bazaar, including three female courtiers who purchased some of the students' wares on behalf of the Queen Dowager (Figure 5.19).<sup>37</sup>



Figure 5.18. 'An Opinion about the Bazaar' [An Opinion about the Bazaar], 'Geunuhoe Bistro' [Geunuhoe Bistro] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 18 January 1928, Wednesday, p. 3)



Figure 5.19. Stalls and Visitors at the Third Whole Joseon Girls' Schools' United Bazaar [全朝鮮女學校聯合An-sa-大會] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 19 January 1928, Thursday, p. 2)

<sup>37</sup> See the series of articles on page two of *Chosun Ilbo*, from 12 to 19 January 1928.

Another positive account of new women can be found in a satire from *Chosun Ilbo* on 21 November 1933. It states that the modern woman's changed views of the world around her benefitted from the dissemination of media in Joseon Korea (Figure 5.20). Under the title 'Women's World-view' [女性の 世界觀], the commentary declares:

A young woman with a frail body sits in the corner of a tram wearing a thin overcoat, a woman who may be at that age of thinking about the 'romance' of 'Romeo' and 'Juliet' or *Yi Doryeong* and *Chunhyang*. Does she not yet put on and then take off the string of worldly anxieties over her bright red heart – the small world? When a Joseon woman, who has briefly stayed in closed boudoirs, keeps up with the world news in newspapers or on the radio, she realises immediately that an event taking place in one corner of the earth makes a big wave affecting her, living on another part hanging from the earth.<sup>38</sup>

Due to the influence of mass media and increasing literacy among women, new women were no longer limited to the domestic sphere. They became subjects concerned about world affairs, such as at the time of the Great Depression of the late 1920s and early 1930s. Modern women's identities were symbolised with a Western-style shawl-collared coat and short hair. The new woman's image is seen in a flattering light, stressing that in these changing times women were modern individuals just as men were in Korea, capable of understanding and participating in public affairs in Korea and worldwide.

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<sup>38</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 21 November 1933, p. 3: '電車の 한 구통이에 열븐 外套를 두르고 안진 그 軟弱한 몸둥이를 가진 젊은 그 女子에게는 "로미오"와 "쥘렛"이나 李道令과 春香의 "로맨스"를 생각할 그 時期에 그는 벌써 世界的 不安의 한 끈을 셋빨간 하-트 - 그 조그만 世界안에 조려넛코 맛고 풀고 하지 안는가? 鎖閉한 閨房에 잇슨지 얼마안되는 朝鮮의 女性이 新聞으로 라디오로, 世界의 動態를 듯게 될 때에 그는 벌써 이 地球 한 모통이에 일이 그 地球에 매달여 사는 自己自身에도 큰 波動이 잇게 된 것을 깨닫게 된 것이다.'



Figure 5.20. ‘Women’s World-view’ [女性の 世界觀], ‘Riding a Brush Horse’ [筆馬를 타고] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 21 November 1933, Tuesday, p. 3)

New women had generally been raised in traditional domestic circumstances and later encountered public life and the wider world. According to Kim Gyeong-il, new women worked in the ‘public sector and liberal professions’ [공무 자유업] and sometimes in ‘commerce and transport’ [상업 교통업], though they formed a relatively small percentages of the workforce (0.8% and 4% in each occupation respectively). Most Korean women worked in ‘agriculture and fisheries’ [농수산업] (about 91%) during the colonial period.<sup>39</sup> From the mid-1920s, working new women

<sup>39</sup> Until the mid-1920s, the number of women in the workforce was about 3.3 million people; about 3.7 million in 1930; about 3 million in 1933 as a result of the economic depression; and 3.8 million in 1942, reflecting the influence of the wartime economy. In comparison, the number of men in the workforce was between 4.3 to 5 million until the mid-1920s; 5.2 million in 1930; 5.1 million in 1933; 5.3 million annually until 1937; about 5.1 million in 1939 and 1940 (showing the influence of wartime mobilisation); and about 5.5 million annually until 1942. The distribution of women in various industries in 1933 was: in agriculture and fisheries, 2,799,760 (91.1%); factories, 23,406 (0.8%); commerce and transport, 117,967 (3.8%); public and liberal professions, 21,073 (0.7%); and other sectors, 110,120 (3.6%). There were a total of 3,072,326 women in work, indicating that 30.9% of the total female population of 9,936,305 were in employment in 1933. Figures are based on the *Governor-General of Korea’s Statistical Yearbook* [조선총독부통계연보]: see Kim



architecture is made of steel frames and “glass” and, besides, department stores sell products seen from outside as advertisement. They make the “shop girl” stand as near the show window as possible.’<sup>43</sup> The cutting comment on the department store’s strategy of using the shop girl to attract custom aside, this satire presented new women firmly established in the public sphere, working in modern trades and very much visible by the general public. At the same time, though, Lee Gi-se (李基世) observed in *Samcheolli* (三千里) magazine in July 1935 that ‘new women who graduated from high school or daughters of decent families work in department stores these days to grab the chance of a good marriage, as is the case with more than one hundred saleswomen at Hwashin [화신, 和信] Department Store, and there are similar cases found at Mitsukoshi [미쓰코시, 三越] and Chojiya [조지야/정자옥, 丁子屋] Department Stores.’<sup>44</sup>

New types of jobs provided new women with various novel opportunities to earn a livelihood, to achieve individual independence and even to pursue a free marriage, all of which further allowed new women the ability to establish new lives and to give to their lives new meanings. In other words, unlike women working in more traditional industries, new women dressed themselves in a modern way to meet the demands of

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<sup>43</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 14 May 1934: ‘現代의 建築은 鐵骨과 “유리”로 더구나 百貨店은 宣傳으로 商品이 맞갓트로 보혀 야만 되도록 되어간다. 그리고 될 수 있는대로 “슌꼴”을 유리 壁 압헤 세운다.’ in Sin Myeong-jik, *Modern Boy*, p. 287.

<sup>44</sup> Lee Gi-se (李基世), ‘Men’s Symposium Commenting on Women’ [女性을 論評하는 男性座談會], *Samcheolli* [三千里], Vol. 7, No. 6, July 1935, pp. 110-111: ‘예전에는 얼굴 못생긴 여성들이 시집가기 틀렸스니까 직업 전선에 뛰어들든 경향이 잇섯지요. 그러나 지금은 얼굴이 어엽분 여성들이 제남편 골느기 위하여 다시 말하면 보담 더 조흔 결혼할 기회를 엿기 위하여 직업전선에 나서는 이가 만흔 듯해요. 그 실례로 가령 종로의 엿든 큰 백화점의 백여 명도 넘는 녀점원을 보아도 모다 고등녀학교 출신이 만코 또 점잔은 집안에 따님들이 만해요. 그리고 또 실제에 잇서 페파-트의 녀점원으로 나왔다가 조흔 곳에 시집간 이가 만커든요. 어엽분 이는 불과 삼사삭이 다가지 못하여서 결혼하여 간다하니까. 이러한 경황은 비단 화신(和信) 뿐 아니라 미쓰꼬시(三越)나 정자옥(丁子屋)이나 다 만천가지라 해요. 그러니까 지금 직업전선에 나서는 이는 네전과 달나 만드시 생활난 때문에 그리하는 것 갓지 안어요.’

new, public workplaces. Their way of dressing and adorning themselves appealed to their employers in modern occupations; at the same time, working modern women were obliged to personify the modernity that the job symbolised. Women taking to the exigencies of their modern jobs can be seen in Figure 5.21, which features shop girls dressed in Western-style uniforms as well as modern-style *hanbok*. Featured in magazine *Yeoseong* (女性) in March 1938, Figure 5.22 also portrayed modern women's new jobs using the general titles of the positions: 'guide girl' [가이드걸], 'bus girl' [빠스걸] and 'ticket girl' [틱켓걸]. In this illustration, working women are wearing different types of Western-style uniforms, fitting for each job. Figure 5.23, from an article with a photograph of a 'bus girl', describes the girl as an 'angel of Seoul' [서울의 천사], due to her excellent service in the face of hard working conditions. Working new women's identities were, thus constructed through dress and adornment, as well as through the demands of their new jobs in new kinds of work.



Figure 5.22. Women's New Jobs, *Yeoseong* (女性), March 1938 (Source: Kim Jin-song, 1999, p. 208)



Figure 5.23. A photo article on the 'bus girl', 'Camera Stroll' [캐메라散歩] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 17 July 1934, Tuesday, p. 2)



Modern women's appearance became more and more important and took on ever greater meaning, especially for those professionals who pursued careers in public, as well as those struggling against existing presumptions about femininity and women's roles in society. For career women, everyday clothing and adornment choices – what to buy and what to wear – were consciously part of their professional and personal strategising. Their economic role in the home would also have affected their dress and fashion sense, as in Figure 5.24. The illustration depicts a career woman's torment at the end of the year at having to choose how to spend her bonus, deciding between her desire for an overcoat and her family's needs and wants:

A career woman at the end of the year – when she heads home from work after receiving a bonus, her feet and mind are occupied and troubled: With this year's bonus, she may need to do her aged mother a favour as she asked for a fur-trimmed hemp inner *hanbok* jacket [털베적삼] due to her feeling a chill in her back; and her younger sibling still needs a pair of Western-style shoes, too, or even rubber shoes for going to school. In any event, all the members of her household would have counted on the little bonus in her purse. With this in mind, when passing by the clothing shop, she is troubled to think that she also wants to buy that overcoat with her yearly bonus.<sup>45</sup>

The image shows an advertisement declaring 'Overcoats – Women's Coats Big Year-end Sale' [오마 – 女子 外套 歲暮 大賣出], and a new woman dressed in a thick muffler in the Western manner passes by the clothing shop. She appeared concerned about her spending, weighing her self-adornment against the economics of her household. Her year-end bonus was not the auspicious occurrence it might have been,

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<sup>45</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 22 December 1928, p. 3: '직업부인의 세모 – 그가 상여금을 타가지고, 일터를 나와서 집으로 향할 때, 그는 거름과 마음이 함께 분주할 듯, “늙은 어머님이 이번 상여금에는 등이 춥다고 털베적삼을 사달라시었고, 동생은 학교를 가라도 구두는 커녕 고모신도 업서서 못간다니 그것도 사주어야하겠고... 엇쨌든 모-든 집안 사람은 조그만 돈 지갑속에든 몇푼의 상여금 때문에 마음을 조리고 잇스려...” 이러케 생각하며 양복가개를 지날 때 “해마다 상여금 탈 때는 저 외투를 사입으라고 했더니만...” 하며 속눈겨울터이지.'

as the title aptly asserts: ‘Distress at the End of the Year’ [歲暮苦].



Figure 5.24. ‘Career Woman’ [직업부인], ‘Distress at the End of the Year’ [歲暮苦] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 22 December 1928, Saturday, p. 3)

### 3.2. *Gisaeng* as the Modern Cultural Figure and Vanguard of Fashion

While new women such as schoolgirls and working women were dressing themselves in a modern way, it can be said that *gisaeng* were also modern women, being in a position to embrace new styles more actively than others, often leading to the creation of fashion trends and modern fashion in general. They traditionally served at court and among the aristocracy, and they continued to work and entertain during the colonial period. Their role, though, was gradually reconceived as a job in the new service sector during the 1920s and 1930s, speeded up by the growth of an urban consumer culture in cities such as Gyeongseong.<sup>46</sup> Despite the collapse of the old class system, *gisaeng* were still treated contemptuously. That said, they were often able to associate with new aristocrats, elites and cultural figures through their jobs. They adopted new ideas and Western styles early. Their work afforded them a certain facility in this over other women; *gisaeng* were able actively to embody modernity through their appearance and

<sup>46</sup> See Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, pp. 217-220.

lifestyle and seemingly the lower class functioned here to help them embrace the newness rather autonomously without minding other eyes and backbiting in the society.

It is well known that the first woman to cut her hair short was the *gisaeng* Gang Hyang-ran (강향란) or Gang Myeong-hwa (강명화).<sup>47</sup> The cutting of men's topknots had been compelled by law in 1895, but Korean women's haircutting took place spontaneously, with *gisaeng* at the forefront of the change in the early 1920s.

It is said that a *gisaeng* named Gang Hyang-ran suddenly cut her hair, changed into men's attire, and unhesitatingly went to politics lessons. [...] This world-bizarre occurrence should be inhumed in our society today as quickly as possible.<sup>48</sup>

As was clear from the comment made by Bu Chun-saeng (부춘생) in *Sisapyeongnon* (시사평론) in July 1922, the *gisaeng* was recognised as the trailblazer of social custom in this way, and was harshly criticised by conservatives and men as a result. With socialism prevailing among intellectuals in the 1920s, male elites often blamed *gisaeng* for changes in women's fashion, believing their conspicuous consumption and sexual appeal to be intensifying class struggle and social tension. For socialist elite women, though, women's haircutting was regarded as a symbol of women's liberation and gender equality. They thus supported it as an act against old ideas and male-dominated ideologies, and female leaders such as Heo Jeong-suk (허정숙), Ju Se-juk (주세죽), Sim Eun-suk (심은숙) and Gang Agnia (강아그니아) all took to cutting their hair short.<sup>49</sup> Against such a backdrop, progressive men and women more and

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<sup>47</sup> Gang Hyang-ran (강향란) was mentioned in 'One Who Did It First' [제일 먼저한 사람], *Byeolgeongon* [별건곤], January 1928. Gang Myeong-hwa (강명화) was named as the first in 'Joseon Elite Women's Short Hair Ferment – Making Chignon-haired Madams into Yankee Girls?' [조선지식여성은 단발재소요-트레머리마나님들의 양키-결화인가?], *Jogwang* [조광], June 1936, in Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, p. 178.

<sup>48</sup> Bu Chun-saeng [富春生], 'Earth Three Word' [土木言], *Sisapyeongnon* [시사평론], Vol. 1, No. 3, July 1922: '강향란이라는 기생이 돌연히 머리를 깎고 남복을 개착하고 업연히 정치 강습원에 통학중이라 한다. [...] 이러한 천괴의 물건은 우리 사회에서 일일이라도 조속히 매장해 버려야 될 것일'

<sup>49</sup> Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, pp. 178-181.

more followed the practice, and women's short hair became widely accepted as a modern custom, one with new 'convenience' and 'simplicity'.<sup>50</sup>

While *gisaeng* received either strident criticism from conservatives or favour from progressives, Kim Jin-song also appraised them as early adopters who brought modern and Western culture to Korea. When *gisaeng* women came to work in modern service jobs, they engaged with the Western equivalent of salon culture, with its tolerance of modern ideas and styles. They later became 'cafe madams, pop singers or actresses' on the cultural scene of Korea, associating with other male and female public figures.<sup>51</sup> An article in *Samcheolli* (三千里) in January 1937 served as a petition seeking the consent of the director of police affairs in Gyeongseong on the part of *gisaeng* women working as cafe madams, actresses and even the head of the literature department of a record company to open dance halls in Seoul as in cities in Japan and elsewhere (Figure 5.25).<sup>52</sup> Kim Jin-song described this as a notable cultural event in 1930s Gyeongseong: these definitively modern women were experienced in the daily life of the modern city and tried to bring modern urban culture to the wider public, in this way acting as initiators of popular culture in colonial Korea.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> For more on the debate about women's haircuts, see Kim Gyeong-il, *Yeoseongui geundae*, pp. 182-197.

<sup>51</sup> Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, p. 219.

<sup>52</sup> See 'Yi Seo-gu (李瑞求), et al. 'Let the Dance Hall Open in Seoul' [서울에 댄스홀을 許하라], *Samcheolli* [三千里], Vol. 9, No. 1, January 1937, pp. 162-166.

<sup>53</sup> Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, p. 222.



Figure 5.25. ‘Let the Dance Hall Open in Seoul’ [서울에 댄스홀을 허가하라], *Samcheolli* (三千里), January 1937 (Source: Kim Jin-song, 1999, p. 222)

As such, the clothing and styles worn by *gisaeng* can be seen constructively if viewed from this perspective (Figure 5.26). Fashion was not a collection of sartorial objects to make the *gisaeng* beautiful entertainers for men’s pleasure; it was instead an exploration of modernity, an adoption of the new, a modern statement by modern women inhabiting their subjectivities and selves. In the Figure 5.26, the *gisaeng* wears a Western-style coat and a fur muffler with leather gloves, along with a clutch bag in her hand; all of which can be understood as her active choice of modern statement of fashion at that time.



Figure 5.26. A *Gisaeng* Dressed in a Western Style, Late 1920s and Early 1930s (Source: Lee Gyeong-min, 2005, p. 51)

For instance, the clutch bag as an article of fashion accessories was caricatured on the right side of the woman in a ‘Sunday Cartoon’ [日曜漫畫] in *Chosun Ilbo* on 15 September 1929 (Figure 5.27). Under the title ‘Tomorrow’s Fashion’ [明日의 流行], the cartoon makes clear that the bag and parasol were established items of women’s fashion. Yet, the hyperbolic treatment of the satire on the fashion was there in the commentary, too:

As for fashion nowadays, essential items that need to be bigger become smaller, but what would be better if it were smaller and supplementary becomes through fashion bigger and more prevalent. Women’s handbags and ‘vanity cases’ [뽀니트케-스] will be bigger in this way in no time. As the modern girl moves well and often, bigger items should be useful and necessary.<sup>54</sup>

Modern fashion was forming in such a contested place of colonial Korea. Beyond the criticism of irrationality and whim of fashion goods, their size and shape, we can

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<sup>54</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 15 September 1929, p. 3: ‘요사히 류행이란 커져야하고 쓸모잇는 것은 조라들고 적을사록 좃코 쓸데업는것 만이 류행하며 딸아서 커지고 발달된다. 녀자의 손가방과 ‘뽀니트케-스’는 얼마잇지 안흐면 이러케 커질 듯. 모던꺼이 이사 잘하니까 커야 쓸모가 잇겠지.’

rethink the satire that the clutch bag was in fact one of the key fashion items for modern women that time, and the modern *gisaeng* holding the fashionable clutch bag in the picture indeed posed for her pride as the vanguard of the fashion.



Figure 5.27. ‘Tomorrow’s Fashion (2)’ [明日의 流行 (2)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 15 September 1929, Sunday, p. 3)

### 3.3. Constant Changes of Modern Fashion and Styles Discussed with Hanbok and Yangbok

The seemingly nonsensical changes to fashion and the unfamiliarity of new styles were the index of the modern girl and modern boy in catching people’s eye and the attention of the public as discussed in magazines. *Byeolgeongon*’s December 1927 edition in particular featured a wide-ranging discussion of the topic. Pak Yeong-hui (朴英熙) criticised the modern boy and girl as ‘the modern decadent group representing the bourgeois class’ [有産者社會의 近代的頹廢群]; Choe Hak-song (崔鶴松) declared them to be showing ‘the mood of fin-de-siècle decadence’ [세기말적의 퇴폐의 기분]; Seong Seo-in (城西人) viewed the modern girl as ‘the liberated modern woman’ [해방된 현대적 색시] who was at the same time a ‘rubber bag filled with contradictions’ [모순으로 틀어 채운 고무주머니]; Pak Pal-ryang (朴八陽) looked on the modern boy as ‘the fresh and new sense of world’ [清新한 感覺의 세계] and

as a ‘beautiful rainbow of the modern’ [아름다운 近代의 무지개]; and Yu Gwang-ryeol (柳光烈) advocated an ‘advanced modern consciousness’ [最近代意識] rather than ‘the new materialistic appearance’ [物質方面은 時體를 따른다] as the hallmark of the modern boy and girl.<sup>55</sup> The latter two commentators considered the modern girl and boy positively, and the former three admonished them according to socialist criteria. An Hui-jeong further argued that the views on the new women appearing in *Byeolgeongon* between 1926 and 1934 were problematically male-centred.<sup>56</sup> New women’s fashion was accordingly less likely to be measured positively and modern men’s fashion was likely to be neglected.

Modern women’s and men’s sense of their own self-fashioning warrants a reconsideration beyond contemporary critical and gendered judgements. Rather than simply pointing to deficiencies, analysis can go one step further and explore the plural of meanings and possibilities represented by modern fashion in the texts considered that time. Figure 5.28, for example, is a satire entitled ‘Tomorrow’s Fashion’ [明日의 流行] from *Chosun Ilbo* on 8 September 1929. It portrayed the fashion of *gisaeng*, modern girls and modern boys. From its three representative figures, it concluded that: first, *gisaeng*’s fringes had got longer to cover their eyebrows, their umbrellas had got smaller like pine mushrooms, their *jeogori* had been shortened and the line of the waistband of *chima* had descended; two, modern girls’ hair had got longer in the back, the front panels of *jeogori* had been shortened and the tops and bottoms of skirts had shortened and it had become popular to wear as many watches as possible to ensure the

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<sup>55</sup> See the articles under the heading ‘Big Remarks on the Modern Girl and Modern Boy’ [모던걸·모던뽀이 大論評], *Byeolgeongon* [별건곤], Vol. 10, December 1927: Pak Yeong-hui (朴英熙), ‘The Character of the So-called Modern Girl and Modern Boy from a Bourgeoisie Society’ [有産者社會의 所謂 ‘近代女’, ‘近代男’의 特徵], pp. 114-116; Choe Hak-song (崔鶴松), ‘The Symbol of Decadence’ [테카단의 象徴], pp. 118-120; Seong Seo-in (城西人), ‘Contemporary Modern Girl’ [現代的(모-던) 處女], pp. 117-118; Pak Pal-ryang (朴八陽), ‘A Little Feeling on the Modern Boy’ [모-던뽀이 寸感], p. 116; and Yu Gwang-ryeol (柳光烈), ‘What is the Modern?’ [모던이란 무엇이냐], pp. 112-113.

<sup>56</sup> An Hui-jeong, ‘Iljegangjeomgi byeolgeongone natanan sinnyeoseongnon’ [Discourses of New Women Featured in Byeolgeongon during the Colonial Period], 2011.



arms could not be seen; and third, modern boys had taken to wearing their hats pulled down so as to cover the face and trousers had got wider so boys wore their trousers like skirts.<sup>57</sup> Exaggeration aside, these changes in the cut of clothes and the way of wearing them, in accessories and in hair styles caught people's attention. Even as they mocked the fashionably modern, these satirical views demonstrated the influence of *gisaeng*, modern boys and modern girls, in animating cultural and social change. Fashion was the primary lens for viewing the spectacle of these modern individuals at the forefront of social change.



Figure 5.28. ‘Tomorrow’s Fashion (1)’ [明日의 流行 (一)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 8 September 1929, Sunday, p. 3)

<sup>57</sup> *Chosun Ilbo*, 8 September 1929, p. 3: ‘(1) 기생들의 압머리가 점점 눈섭으로 내려오는 고로 미구에 기생들의 눈을 못보겠고 또한 우산이 적어져 송이버섯만 해지고 저고리가 짜르고 치마허리가 내려가기만하니 얼마잇스면 길에나서도 이러한 기생을 보겠고 (2) 모던-결의 귀밧 머리가 이러케 기러지고 저고리 압섭과 치마의 아래위가 점점 조라드러 이러케 아름다운 부분을 내어노코 윈테 팔뚝시계를 조화하여 수만흔 팔뚝시계에 팔뚝이 파무처 그 고흔팔뚝을 볼수 업겟다 (3) 모던-뻘이들은 파륜 (破倫)이나 한사람 모양으로 모자 앞호로 얼굴을 가리고다니기 때문에 몇칠만 잇스면 얼굴을 볼수업고 바지통이 점점넓어지니 녀자와 반대로 치마가튼 바지를 두르고 다닐 모양.’

In fact, the seeming irrationality of fashion and its constant changes is a key aspect of modern fashion. That is, Korea was entering into an arena where change took place for its own sake. Elizabeth Wilson has famously stated that the key to modern fashion is the ‘rapid and continual changing of styles’.<sup>58</sup> Kim Jin-song also notes that when fashion is widely accepted, enjoyed for no other reason than being in vogue, then the mechanism of fashion is complete.<sup>59</sup> Figure 5.29 from the magazine *Jogwang* (朝光) in August 1937 exemplifies the Western fashion’s swift influence to Korea and the concept of changes in fashion for fashion’s sake. With the title ‘A Summer Night’s Sorrow’ [여름밤의 哀想], the photographic article features the model Pak Oe-seon (朴外仙) wearing a dress carefully draped over the breast and below the waist part – using a bias cut – evoking a fluid line and supple silhouette that was a worldwide trend in the late 1930s. The fashion image was to introduce and quickly circulate the new style of the summery dress. With the same year of 1937, one of the collections in the Korea Museum of Modern Costume (한국현대 의상 박물관) also shows a chiffon dress which used the same bias cut technique for the layered area of the skirt part, below the tucked waist of the dress (Figure 5.30). Since the French designer Madeleine Vionnet (1876–1975) set trends with her sensual gowns by introducing the bias method, cutting cloth diagonal to the grain of the fabric enabling it to cling to the body while moving with the wearer, she offered women a sleek, flattering and body-skimming look in the 1930s. The remaining dress and the model’s fashion photo shoot reflect the Western trend came to fashion in 1937 Korea, popularising the bias cut, too.

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<sup>58</sup> Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, p. 3.

<sup>59</sup> See Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, p. 170.



Figure 5.29. ‘A Summer Night’s Sorrow’ [여름밤의  
哀想], ‘The Model Miss Pak Oe-seon’ [모델 朴外仙  
嬢], *Jogwang* (朝光), August 1937 (Source: Kim Jin-  
song, 1999, p. 171)



Figure 5.30. Chiffon Layered Dress,  
1937 (Source: The Korea Museum of  
Modern Costume, 한국현대의상  
박물관, Shin Heisoon, 2008, p. 30)

The changeability of styles in popular fashion became a common topic for discussion in the 1930s. The magazine *Samcheolli* (三千里) featured a dialogue entitled ‘A Roundtable Talk to Find Contemporary Heroes of the Town’ [現代 長安豪傑 찾는 座談會], in November 1935. The article discussed ‘who are representative handsome men and beautiful women in Seoul’, and Yeo Un-hyeong (呂運亨, 1886–1947), director of *Jungang Ilbo* newspaper (中央日報), was one of the figures nominated in the article on account of his smart style and so-called ‘Kaiser moustache’ [카이젤 수염] (Figure 5.31).<sup>60</sup> The actress and cafe madam Bok Hye-suk

<sup>60</sup> See Baek Ak-seon-in (白樂仙人), et al. ‘A Roundtable Talk to Find Contemporary Heroes of the Town’ [現代 長安豪傑 찾는 座談會], *Samcheolli* [三千里], Vol. 7, No. 10, November 1935, pp. 82-101.

(卜惠淑, 1904–1982) commented on ‘Ladies’ and Gentlemen’s Style in the Town’ [長安 紳士淑女 스타일] in *Samcheolli* (三千里) in January 1937, reviewing the styles worn by various public figures from journalism, business (department stores, banking and industry in particular), film, music and literature.<sup>61</sup>



Figure 5.31. Yeo Un-hyeong in 1919 (Source: Photo courtesy of the Mongyang Mr Yeo Un-Hyeong Memorial Association [몽양 여운형 선생 기념사업회])

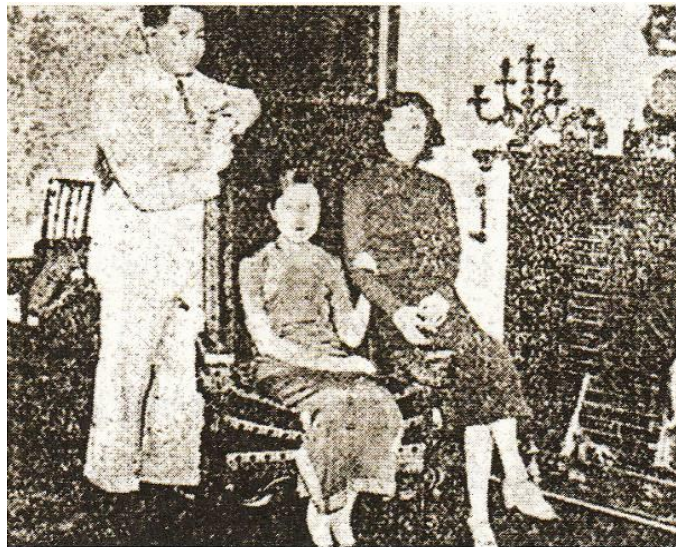


Figure 5.32. A Photograph from the ‘Review of Ladies’ and Gentlemen’s Style in the Town’ [長安 紳士淑女 스타일 漫評], *Samcheolli* (三千里), January 1937 (Source: Kim Jin-song, 1999, p. 174)

<sup>61</sup> Bok Hye-suk (卜惠淑) and Bok Myeon-gaek (覆面客), ‘Review of Ladies’ and Gentlemen’s Style in the Town’ [長安 紳士淑女 스타일 漫評], *Samcheolli* [三千里], Vol. 9, No. 1, January 1937, pp. 104-111.

With a photograph of a man and two women dressed in the latest fashions (Figure 5.32), the article featured fashionable figures from mid-1930s Korea and discussed their concern for style and fashion, indicating how modern fashion had settled into the city of Seoul, Gyeongseong. Many modern individuals experimented with Western styles and the new modern trends, but it is notable that the Korean *hanbok* style remained a respected and fashionable style. Regarding three female journalists from *Dong-A Ilbo*, Bok Hye-suk commented thus:

Hwang Sin-deok [黃信德] is best not to dress in Western garb. Kim Ja-hye [金慈惠] has a rather slim body close to the streamlined shape, so is better suited to dressing in Western garb. Choe Ui-sun [崔義順] is a born beauty and has a pretty gait and attractive appearance from behind, so she is suited to Western garb, as she is to the schoolgirl look, dressed in white *jeogori* and black *chima*, or she is even suited to the classical look of the lady wearing her hair in a bun with a long *hanbok* skirt trailing at the heel and finished in yellow shoes; she is probably the number one among women journalists to date!<sup>62</sup>

In addition to the Western style with *yangbok*, the *hanbok* look of the schoolgirl or the traditional lady were also fashionable, widespread and accepted, further demonstrating that during the transitional phase of fashion in Korea both Korean and Western clothing styles were employed in modern fashions.

Bok Hye-suk's also commented on the style of a male journalist at *Dong-A Ilbo*, Song Jin-u (송진우): 'If he were a bit taller, *yangbok* would suit him but wearing a Savile Row suit [세비로] with his round and flat shape does not seem chic; he would be better suited to Joseon garb [조선 옷], like the Jeolla-do *yangban* [전라도 양반]

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 106: '황신덕이는 양장(洋裝)하지 말 일 김자혜는 차라리 날신한 몸에 유선형(流線型) 소질이 있는 즉 아모쪼록 양장할 일 최의순이는 원체 바탕이 미인인데다가 거름거리 곱고 뒷맵시 고아서 양장도 어울리고 검정치마 흰저고리 바쳐 입으면 여학생풍으로도 어울리고 머리 쪽찌고 긴치마 발뒤꿈치에 질질 흘니며 노랑갓신 바쳐 신은 고전적(古典的) 아씨 되어도 어울리고, 아마 역대 부인기자 중 남버 원이야!'

style.’<sup>63</sup> Modern styles and fashion did not, then, preclude Korean dress. The latter, Joseon clothes *hanbok* and Jeolla-do *yangban* style in particular, also had a sense of fashionable modernity as recommend to the modern figures such as the journalist, Mr Song. Fashion during the colonial period was hybrid, a state in which Koreans sought out stylish clothing regardless of the distinction between *hanbok* and *yangbok*. This underscores the problematic view on the use of *hanbok* and *yangbok* as one riven between old and new, or traditional and modern. They were both worn interchangeably and creatively to present a sartorial modernity in colonial Korea.

### ***3.4. Modern Man’s Dress Practice in Hanbok and Yangbok: Yun Chi-ho’s Changing Identities and Styles***

The aforementioned Mr Song Jin-u’s style discussion in *yangbok* and *hanbok* hints at the multiplicity of modern men’s fashionable sartorial practice. A more detailed examination of one man’s dress practice will afford a better understanding of the modern male’s mixed use of *hanbok* and *yangbok* as nuanced sartorial modernity in colonial Korea. Elite men who studied abroad and had experience of Western culture were in a position to wear Western suits and had developed a taste for looking modern. This did not mean, though, that they abandoned wearing *hanbok* entirely. On different occasions and when they found themselves in different positions in relation to their peers, they chose to wear either *hanbok* or *yangbok*, and how they dressed expressed the wearers’ identities, social status or political stance at different times and in different settings. The diary and family photographs of Yun Chi-ho (尹致昊, 1864–1945) are illustrative.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 105: ‘송진우는 키가 조금만 더 컷더면 양복 입어도 그럴 듯 어울리겠는데 세비 로 입으면 둥굴넙적하여 씨-크 하지 못해, 차라리 조선 옷이 어울날 걸, 전라도 양반식 으로.’

<sup>64</sup> Yun Chi-ho’s diary has been edited and partly translated, with his photographs: see Kim Sang-tae, ed. *Yun Chiho ilgi 1916–1943: Han jisiginui naemyeonsegyereul tonghae bon singminjisigi* [Yun Chi-ho Diary 1916–1943: the Colonial Period Seen through the Inner World of an Intellectual], 2001. Yun Chi-ho’s diary was originally written in English and

Educated in a modern manner in Japan, in Shanghai where he was baptised into the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1887, and in the US at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee (1888–1891) and at Emory University in Georgia (1891–1893), he was a man with experience of Western culture. His Western-style appearance can be seen in Figure 5.33, a photograph taken while he was a student at Emory. Unable to return to Korea from the US because of political turmoil, he returned to Shanghai to teach in the Anglo-Chinese College, where he married a Chinese student, Ma Ae-bang (馬愛芳, 1871–1905), for love in 1894.<sup>65</sup> Figure 5.34 shows him and his children in 1902 at the time of his return to Korea to serve as magistrate in Wonsan. He wore *hanbok* attire, while his wife donned traditional Qing garb. Upon returning to Seoul and serving as Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs (1904–1906) in the government of the Korean Empire, Yun Chi-ho remarried, taking Baek Mae-ryeo (白梅麗, 1890–1943) as his wife in 1907 following his mother’s arrangements in 1907 (Ma Ae-bang had died in 1905). The photograph in Figure 5.35 has him in Western-style appearance in his official uniform of the Korean government, with his new wife (right) and mother (left) accompanying him and dressed in *hanbok*. Having been exposed to Korean, Japanese, Chinese and American culture in his early days, he was able to dress himself in a manner appropriate to his setting, mirroring changing social identities each time to his own advantage.



Figure 5.33. Yun Chi-ho as a Student at Emory University in 1892 (Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 3)

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published by The National Institute of Korean History (*Guksa Pyeonchan Wiwonhoe*) between 1973 and 1989, and this is used in this section, along with Kim Sang-tae’s book.

<sup>65</sup> Kim Sang-tae, *Yun Chiho*, pp. 634-636.



Figure 5.34. Yun Chi-ho's Family: His Wife Ma Ae-bang and Their Three Children in 1902 (Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 5)

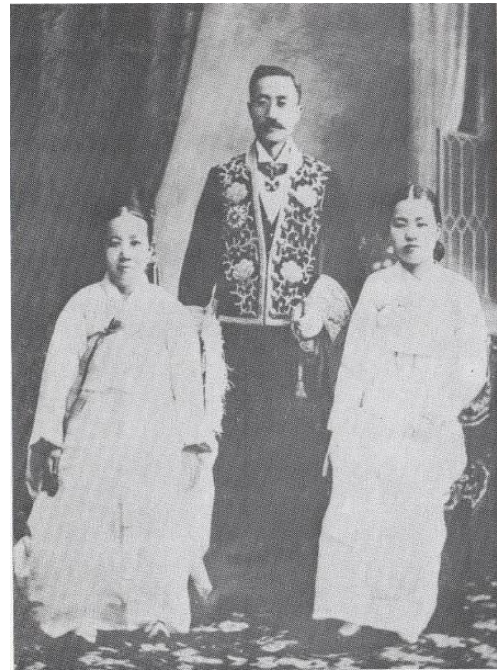


Figure 5.35. Yun Chi-ho, His Second Wife Baek Mae-ryeo and His Mother in 1907 (Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 6)

Demonstrating that clothing and social position were bound together, Yun Chi-ho dressed variously in *hanbok* and *yangbok* at different public occasions during the colonial period. At his sixtieth birthday celebration in 1924, he donned a *saekdong hanbok*, or Korean clothes with multi-coloured stripes. He can be seen standing holding a baby at the celebration, with other family members and children in *saekdong hanbok* (Figure 5.36). The *saekdong* was an appropriate and symbolic Korean article of clothing for the occasion, seen as auspicious for the longevity of the celebrant. He dressed in *yangbok*, though, when he needed modern formality. Yun Chi-ho was appointed president of the Joseon branch of the Institute of Pacific Relations (태평양문제연구회) in 1925 and attended the third Pan-Pacific Meeting (범태평양회의) alongside fellow members of the Institute in Kyoto in November 1929 (Figure 5.37). Standing in the centre, Yun Chi-ho wore a Western suit, as did Yu Eok-gyeom (俞億兼, 1896–1947), professor of Yunhee College (연희전문학교), on his left, and Song Jin-u (宋鎭禹, 1889–1945), director of *Dong-A Ilbo* (東亞日報), on his right. Next to him, Kim Hwal-ran (金活蘭, 1899–1970), professor at Ewha Womans College (이화여자전문학교) wore a modernised *hanbok* with a shorter skirt



and Western shoes rather than a complete suit in Western style. In the next photograph, Yun Chi-ho donned *hanbok* attire with *durumagi* at the meeting of the board of directors of Ewha Womans College in 1936, where he had been on the board since 1935 (Figure 5.38). To his left, Yang Ju-sam (梁柱三, 1879–1950), the superintendent of Joseon Methodist Church, was dressed in a Western suit, and further to his left, Kim Hwal-ran, vice-principal of the College, wore *hanbok* with a slightly longer skirt than the previous one. Other Korean and foreign members of the board were in Korean or Western-style attire.



Figure 5.36. Yun Chi-ho's Sixtieth Birthday Celebration with his Family in 1924 (Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 7)

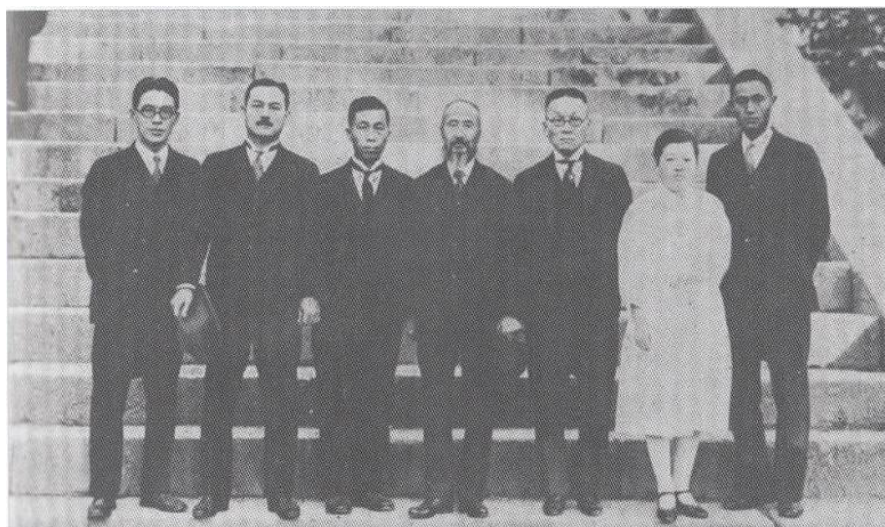


Figure 5.37. Yun Chi-ho and the Joseon Delegation to the Third Pan-Pacific Meeting in Kyoto, November 1929 (Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 11)



Figure 5.38. Yun Chi-ho and the Board of Directors of Ewha Womans College in 1936  
(Source: Kim Sang-tae, 2001, p. 13)

Yun Chi-ho's adaptability in both styles, wearing either *hanbok* or *yangbok* according to circumstance, shows how position and status were conveyed by the clothes. Wearing *hanbok* was not regarded as less respectable or deleterious to his status as modern. His diary affords us a view of his concern for issues of modern men's sartorial practice and any immoderate consumption on clothing. When he was invited to give a speech in the chapel at Songdo High School (송도고보) on 17 May 1920, Yun Chi-ho told the students that:

A man has four great problems to look after: first, the welfare of his soul; second, the education of his brain; third, the health of his body; fourth, the comfort of his clothes. With the first three problems satisfactorily solved the last one will take care of itself.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Yun Chi-ho, Yun Chi-ho's Diary [尹致昊 日記], 17 May 1920, Monday, Vol. 8, 74 [8卷 74], originally written in English, The National Institute of Korean History, 1973-1989. (cf. trans. by Kim Sang-tae, *Yun Chiho*, p. 175: '왔슨 씨의 초청으로 송도고보 채플 시간에 학생들에게 강연했다. 난 학생들에게 사람은 다음과 같은 네 가지 점에 유념해야 한다고 말했다. 즉 (1) 영혼의 안식, (2) 두뇌의 교육, (3) 신체의 건강, (4) 의복의 편안함 말이다. 앞의 세 문제가 만족스럽게 해결되면, 마지막 문제는 저절로 해결될 것이다.')

For him, taking care of one's appearance, yet in a moderate way not as a first concern, was not anything vulgar but one of the agenda that modern men like the educated students needed to consider. He then expressed his worry about the extravagant dress practices of city-dwellers in Joseon Korea, comparing them with Italians on the basis of his reading of a travelogue of Italy:

Goldsmith says in his Traveller about the Italians that 'Contrasted faults through all his manners reign, though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain; though grave, yet trifling....' How patly these lives express the condition of the Korean people today – especially of cities! The Korean is abnormally weak in putting on finer clothes than their warrant.<sup>67</sup>

Yun Chi-ho continued in recounting his wife's telling of another man's wife receiving of an expensive fur coat:

My wife tells me with evident envy that Dr. Koo Yung Sook gave his wife a fur coat worth ¥1,000 and ¥500 in cash to take a regular hot spring tour from place to place. I don't blame Koo for sending his wife to hot springs but I do think he was unwise to give her such an expensive fur coat when millions of poor Koreans have nothing to eat but grass roots in this dreadful winter.<sup>68</sup>

Known for a frugal existence despite his wealth, Yun Chi-ho's concern about clothing appeared to derive from his anxiety about the difficult economic situation of

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 17 May 1921, Tuesday, Vol. 8, 255 [8卷 255], (cf. Kim Sang-tae, *Yun Chiho*, p. 226: '골드스미스는 자신이 집필한 여행기에서 이탈리아인들에 대해 이런 말을 했다. "이탈리아인들 에게 널리 나타나는 결점은 가난하면서도 사치스럽고, 온순하면서도 허영심 많고, 진중하면서도 가볍다는 점이다." 이 구절은 조선인들의 현재 상황, 특히 도시인들의 상황을 아주 정확하게 표현하고 있다. 조선인들은 분에 넘치는 좋은 옷을 입는다는 점에서 더욱 유별나다.'))

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 23 January 1940, Tuesday, Vol. 11, 258 [11卷 258], (cf. Kim Sang-tae, *Yun Chiho*, p. 617: '구영숙 박사가 자기 부인에게 1천 원짜리 모피 코트를 사주고 철마다 온천 여행을 다니라며 현금 500원을 주었다고, 아내가 부럽다는 듯이 말했다. 난 구군이 자기 부인을 온천에 보내는 것에 대해선 탓할 생각이 없다. 하지만, 이 혹독한 겨울에 수백만 명의 가난한 조선인들이 풀뿌리 외엔 먹을 것이 없어서 고생하고 있는데도 불구하고, 그렇게 값비싼 모피코트를 자기 부인에게 선물한 건 현명치 못한 일이었다.'))

the country under the colonial capitalist system. Compared with expanding Japanese business, ‘Shoemaking is the only industry’, he wrote, ‘in which the Korean seems to hold his ground’.<sup>69</sup> His view on Korean industry did not seem opportune despite the patriotic efforts of Korean associations such as the Local Product Encouragement Association (土産獎勵會, *Tosanjangnyehoe*), and the Self-sufficiency and Self-help Association (自給自助會, *Jageupjajohoe*), whose object was to persuade Koreans to wear Korean clothing and textiles rather than products made abroad. ‘This is all right in spirit,’ he wrote, ‘but will surely fail because Korea has no industries supplying us with even necessities.’<sup>70</sup> In fact, Yun Chi-ho equivocated on the Japanese and his views were ambivalent when it came to commerce and politics:

Step in any of the porcelain stores in the town, you will find that nine-tenths of the wares are made in Japan; yet that the shape, size and colorings of the bowls, dishes etc. show the marks of a careful study, on the part of the Japanese manufacturers, of the taste, usages, financial standing, of the Koreans. In other words, the porcelain makers of Japan adopt their wares to the taste and sentiment and conditions of the Korean market. The result is ‘success’. The policy makers of Japan in general and the Government General in particular would do well to learn something from the porcelain makers.<sup>71</sup>

Hybrid usages and the negotiation between *hanbok* and *yangbok* was an intricate social matter beyond a mere stylistic preference. The clothing choices of some affluent and elite Korean men such as Yun Chi-ho not only indicated the wearer’s status and the significance of the social occasion; they also represented the idiosyncrasies of individuals’ thoughts, convictions and sensibilities concerning their colonised country and its economic lethargy. *Hyeseong* (혜성) magazine in December 1931 presented just such a nuanced understanding of the ironies of hybrid style, commenting on Yun Chi-ho’s clothing practices (Figure 5.39):

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 15 October 1919, Wednesday, Vol. 7, 397 [7卷 397].

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 1 March 1923, Thursday, Vol. 8, 355 [8卷 355].

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 8 July 1919, Tuesday, Vol. 7, 338 [7卷 338].

Mr Yun Chi-ho, who dresses in *yangbok* way more advanced than any other in Joseon, can be said to be a traitor of *yangbok*. He does not always dress in *yangbok*, but in Joseon clothes, and he even ties Joseon *daenim* [ankle bands] in trousers of his *yangbok*.<sup>72</sup>



Figure 5.39. A Caricature of Yun Chi-ho, *Hyeoseong* (혜성), December 1931 (Source: Kim Jin-song, 1999, p. 115)

### ***3.5. Between Individual and Collective: Yangbok and Hanbok in Fashion as an Expression of Identities and Class Distinction in the City***

Yun Chi-ho's note on Joseon city-dwellers' wearing of sumptuous garments evokes a sense of the state of style consciousness and style-conscious people in the city of the time. For the growing number of urbanites in the anonymous city, clothing was a means of showing off the wearer's status and projecting one's identity. As Bok Hye-suk's comment on city people made clear, the various styles featured in the media indicated how much society had changed and how fashion in modern times played a role as arbiter between the individual and the collective. The clothing people chose to

<sup>72</sup> *Hyeoseong* [혜성], Vol. 1, No. 9, December 1931, 'A Figure on the Street (1) – Mr Yun Chi-ho' [街頭에서 본 人物 (1) – 尹致昊氏]: '이 朝鮮에서 누구보다도 先進으로 洋服만 입었던 尹致昊氏는 洋服에 反逆老라 할까. 그는 언제나 洋服을 입지 않고 朝鮮옷만 입고 洋服바지에도 朝鮮 대님을 차고 다닌다.' in Kim Jin-song, *Hyeondaeseongui hyeongseong*, p. 115.

wear was a daily compromise between the demands of society and the individual's own desires.

Colonial Korea witnessed substantial change in the relations between individual and collective and, as Finkelstein has asserted, 'fashions are bonds that link individuals in a mutual act of conformity to social conventions.'<sup>73</sup> The tension between social structure and individual agency has been described succinctly by Simmel in his account of 'individuality and social forms'.<sup>74</sup> Simmel accorded fashion some degree of importance in modern society as a phenomenon which exhibits the 'contradictory desires for social imitation and individual differentiation'; fashion embraces not only the desire to imitate others and to express commonality, but also to express individuality.<sup>75</sup> In other words, while dress signals one's membership in particular communities and social strata and expresses shared values, ideas and lifestyles, at the same time people do not want to be seen as mere imitators, dressed monotonously in fashions identical to those of their contemporaries.<sup>76</sup> They seek a certain amount of subjective differentiation. In modernising Korea, people's dress and fashion practices, linked as they are both to the individual and to society, reflected the 'contradictory tendencies' Simmel observed in the late nineteenth-century Western city.<sup>77</sup>

Urbanites expressed themselves by dressing their bodies according to different fashions, and clothes in the modern city came further to allow people to reveal or obscure their identities just as they chose revealing or concealing clothes. Sennett and Finkelstein have examined the ways in which identity can be said to be 'immanent' in appearance and can, at the same time, be mistaken and disguised.<sup>78</sup> Entwistle has stated that such tension is felt particularly strongly in the modern city where, without

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<sup>73</sup> Joanne Finkelstein, *Fashioned Self*, p. 122.

<sup>74</sup> Georg Simmel, 'Fashion', 1971 [1904].

<sup>75</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, p. 114.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Georg Simmel, 'Fashion', 1971 [1904].

<sup>78</sup> Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*, 1977; Joanne Finkelstein, *Fashioned Self*.

established patterns for recognising others, people mingle with crowds of strangers and have only fleeting moments to impress one another.<sup>79</sup> Thus, according to Finkelstein,

When we encounter a stranger as initially mysterious and inaccessible, we refer to clothing styles and physical appearance, in the absence of any other means, as a reliable sign of identity. Clothing is frequently seen as symbolic of the individual's status and morality, whether actual or contrived.<sup>80</sup>

The space of the modernising city in colonial Gyeongseong would also have provided for such interaction and the negotiation of identities projected through clothing in the anonymous cityscape. Indeed, the magazine *Byeolgeongon* (別乾坤) featured a photomontage of various types of people on the streets of Gyeongseong in September 1929, from men to women and ranging from *yangbok* to *hanbok* styles (Figure 5.40). The note on the photograph highlighted both the diversity and anonymity of the city: 'In the streets of Gyeongseong there are all sorts of people judging by their styles of clothing. ... (Please forgive me for those who are featured in this photo page as I took pictures of them as soon as they appeared in sight on the street without greeting or introducing myself.)'<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, p. 112.

<sup>80</sup> Joanne Finkelstein, *Fashioned Self*, p. 128.

<sup>81</sup> *Byeolgeongon* [別乾坤], No. 23, September 1929, 'Exhibition of People on the Streets of Gyeongseong' [京城街頭 人物展覽]: '京城의 거리 거기에는 服色으로만 보아도 별별 인물이 다 나온다. ... (길거리에서 눈에 뜨이는 대로 인사도 通姓도 할 사이 업시 딸각딸각 찍어온 寫眞이니 여기에 박혀진 분은 용서하소서)...'



Figure 5.40. ‘Exhibition of People on the Streets of Gyeongseong’ [京城街頭人物展覽], *Byeolgeongon* (別乾坤), No. 23, September 1929 (Source: Geum Gi-suk, 2006, p. 97)

In the city, dress was indeed a useful means for distinguishing between different people, and doing so along class lines in particular. Individuals in colonial Korean cities conversed with each other about class through fashion, struggling with each other by means of dress. Simmel pointed to the social nature of clothing when he argued that ‘individuals are located within communities and their style of dress expresses this belonging’; and Entwistle further asked how fashion and dress articulate group identities and, in particular, how they are deployed in order to distinguish between classes and groups of people.<sup>82</sup> It was during the colonial period, following the fall of the Joseon dynasty, that modern Korea saw the rise of new classes. In the cauldron of the changing society of early twentieth-century Korea, status was of prime importance for individual adornment. It is of little surprise, then, that status came to be embodied in dress, fashion and comportment, at the same time that the body came to bear the mark of social status, as Bok Hye-suk’s commentary in the *Samcheolli*

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<sup>82</sup> Joanne Entwistle, *Fashioned Body*, p. 114.



magazine on various public figures about town showed. Pierre Bourdieu has examined the importance of the body as the bearer of status and distinction. In his analysis of class, status and power, the body holds a crucial place as the mediator of such information through inscriptions, tastes and practices, as what he refers to as ‘habitus’.<sup>83</sup> For Bourdieu, distinction is a battle for ‘economic, social and symbolic power’; acquiring distinction raises one’s social stakes.<sup>84</sup> In this light, the clothing that modern men and women in colonial Korea chose to wear was selected as part of their striving after distinction in the new social field of emerging strata. Their clothing is thus indispensable for reading social tension and the rise of new cultural modes and meanings.

The satire in Figure 5.41 depicts a modern woman’s dated attitude to leaving the house. She insisted on bringing her servants with her when she went out. The modern girl is identified by her Western attire; her fur-trimmed coat, clutch bag, stockings, high heels and short hair. Her social class is made clear through her lavish appearance and its contrast with that of her servants, a ‘maid-in-waiting’ [방심부름꾼], a ‘needlewoman’ [침모], a ‘chief kitchen maid’ [차집] and a ‘housemaid’ [안잠재기], all dressed in traditional *hanbok* style. The distinction between them could be clearly visible in public as they walked out of the house. The distinction was surely what the modern woman intended in differentiating her own appearance so markedly from that of her servants. While her modern style served to represent her class, her old-fashioned mentality concerning her entourage marked her as irony, reflecting the transitional state of the class system of modernising Korea, where ambivalent and contradictory traits – modern appearance, traditional mind-set – coexisted in the same individual.

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<sup>83</sup> See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. by Richard Nice, 1984; and ‘Structure, Habitus and Practice’, in *The Polity Reader in Social Theory*, 1994.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.



Figure 5.41. ‘If the Age of Women’s Propaganda Comes (5)’ [女性宣傳時代가 오면 (5)] (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 16 January 1930, Thursday, p. 5)

As with much else, class distinction as seen through dress was often related to economic power. The fashion industry instigated demand for new fashions, and this in turn kindled tensions among Koreans for whom differences in purchasing power were clearly apparent. Once resolved, new styles emerged, desires for new fashions grew – and were roused – and the incessant cycle of fashion arose. Among modern men, intellectuals and gentlemen generally preferred the Western-style *yangbok* as it seemed to achieve a modern look easily; while men’s refined *hanbok* attire was seen as the classical gentleman’s look, not necessarily pre-modern look though, in accord with the wearer’s social status and stance, as in the case of Yun Chi-ho. As shown in the satires discussed earlier, many elite men struggled to square their highly educated status with their constrained economic circumstances in colonial Korea. This aggravated educated men’s sartorial dilemma even further.

In the very gap between the desire for better clothing and the reality of immiseration, fashion stood in for class representation. In other words, those able to do so used sumptuous clothing to mark their affluence and their social class; their styles and clothing attracted the admiration of others – for their connotations of wealth as much as for anything else – and in this way others attempted to use fashion, too, to cultivate new identities and even improve their class and status. As Korea’s rigid class

system began to change with movement between classes becoming more and more possible, most people sought higher standing through clothing and comportment. In doing so, extravagant dress practices became grist for the mill of satirical comment. Criticism, though, does not appear to have hindered Koreans trying to achieve a better appearance within the changing social structure of the country, with many finding affordable ways to project their new identities and status.

Men who wore second-hand suits were, thus, pursuing an alternative, less impecunious way to maintain their senses of themselves – and their new, emergent identities – and to maintain the air of status regardless of where their poverty placed them in the colonial pecking order. Already-worn clothing was widely available; it was not just the wealthy with the ability to bear the expense who could acquire modern fashion. An advertisement for Songsan Store (松山商店) from *Chosun Ilbo* in May 1934 provides an insight into the market for ‘brand-new’ [新品] and ‘second-hand goods’ [中古品] (Figure 5.42). A new suit cost between eight and thirteen *won*, depending on quality, whereas a second-hand American-made jacket had a price between one *won* fifty *jeon* and two *won*. According to the advertisement, the shop displayed a ‘catalogue’ [가다로구進呈함] that customers could peruse in-store to find and order the clothing they wanted and could afford, either new or used. There was clearly a market for affordable fashion. Fashion was thus sustained through a diversified market.



Figure 5.42. Advertisement for Songsan Store (松山商店) (Source: *Chosun Ilbo*, 13 May 1934, Sunday, p. 1)

For men in *hanbok* attire, they also had a chance to use Western accessories and adapt modern fashion. In this case, rather hybrid style occurred by wearing men’s

*hanbok* – jacket (*jeogori*), trousers (*baji*) and overcoat (*durumagi*) – with a Western-style hat and shoes. Figure 5.43 features a Western hat shop in Jemulpo (Incheon) in about 1930, where a modern-style short haired gentleman appears to be carefully selecting his Panama hat, as for which one would suit him more and best. He is indeed wearing a *hanbok durumagi* as the outer robe and Western-style leather shoes under the *hanbok baji* fastened by the *daenim* (*hanbok* ankle bands). According to the photograph collection archive notes, it explains:

Western-style clothing served both as a political statement and a status symbol in 1930s Korea. The vast majority of Koreans continued to wear traditional clothing, but occasionally some ‘modern’ elements were added to the mix such as a Western-style hat. Western shoes were another prized addition, even more so than Western-style clothing in general. Men, in particular, were early adopters of Western shoes and hats. All the same, it was only after the Korean War that men attired in suits and other Western-style clothing came to outnumber those dressed in traditional Korean clothes.<sup>85</sup>

Men’s hybrid style in this way thus showed a transitional phase of men’s fashion during the colonial Korea, in which vernacular modern fashion evolved from keeping existing Korean costume into trying on the blended style, provided by negotiated affordability in Western hats, shoes and other modern accessories for Korean modern men.

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<sup>85</sup> The Korea Society, *Missionary Photography in Korea: Encountering the West through Christianity*, 2009, p. 108.



Figure 5.43. Western Hat Shop, Jemulpo, c. 1930 (Source: Mission Photograph Collection, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 109)

For women, most Western-style *yangjang* were tailor-made and generally too expensive for most. Women tended to purchase fashionable fabrics instead, and they made *hanbok* clothes at home. An oral history project interviewed by Im Hyeong-seon (임형선) who worked as beautician and hairdresser at Yeopju Beauty Salon (엽주 미용실), Jongno in Gyeongseong between 1937 and 1945 after her apprenticeship at Hwashin Beauty Salon (화신 미용부) between 1933 and 1935, observed these differences as they were manifested in the sartorial practices of Im Hyeong-seon and the salon's owner, O Yeop-ju (오엽주).<sup>86</sup> As Im Hyeong-seon noted, O Yeop-ju was a 'new woman', 'modern girl' and 'intellectual' who had been an 'actress in Songjuk

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<sup>86</sup> See Kim Mi-seon, ed. *Modeongeol, chijanghada* [*Modern Girl, Adorned*], 2008, pp. 3-146. The edited book features the oral history of three women: Im Hyeong-seon (임형선, 1920-), Lee Jong-su (이종수, 1927-) and Yang Chung-ja (양충자, 1925-).

Kinema (송죽키네마회사) in Japan’ and a ‘teacher in Pyeongyang’.<sup>87</sup> She was also known for being the first Korean woman to open a beauty salon in Joseon, the Hwashin Beauty Salon in the Hwashin Department Store in 1933. After a fire in the department store in January 1935, she reopened as the Yeopju Beauty Salon in 1937, her salon attracting the custom of many public figures, including actresses, other new women and members of the royal family.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, Im Hyeong-seon remembered the care and attention O Yeop-ju devoted to her luxurious style and dress practice, normally taking ‘two hours for her make-up’. With her ‘latest hairstyle’, she dressed in ‘*yangjang* tailor-made at a shop in Jeongdong (정동), rather than the usual boutiques, [her preferred shop] being an expensive one run by a merchant from the US who had many high-profile customers including missionaries and foreigners (Figure 5.44).<sup>89</sup>



Figure 5.44. Publicity Photograph for Yeopju Beauty Salon: O Yeop-ju (centre) and Im Hyeong-seon (second from left) (Source: Kim Mi-seon, 2008, p. 69)

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., pp. 50, 61, 83.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 84: ‘오 선생 화장시간이 보통 2시간이에요, 집에서 나올 때. 회장을 2시간 하나까 얼마나 공들여서 하겠어요. 화장시간을 많이 가지셨겠거든요. 미모에다가 화장술이 좋으니까, 배우생활까지 했으니까, 얼마나 화장을 잘 하겠어요. 그런데다가 머리까지 하고 옷은 보통 양장점에서 하지 않고 미국서 와 가지고 정동에 양장점하는 분이 있는데, 거기에는 선교사들, 외국사람도 많이 드나들고 비싸게 받는 대신에 고급손님이 많이 드나들었는데, 꼭 거기 가서 하셨거든요.’

Im Hyeong-seon also declared that ‘although she was poor she had to wear nice clothing as she worked in a public place’; she dressed in a ‘*hanbok* style of a short skirt with *jeogori*, with a preference for dark blue or violet colours’, which stood out from the ‘female students from Ewha School wearing white *jeogori* with black *chima*.’<sup>90</sup> In summer, she wore ‘white ramie fabric *jeogori* with *hanbok chima*’ and, in winter, took to ‘*durumagi*, for wearing *yangbok* was costly’.<sup>91</sup> She further noted that she began to ‘wear *yangjang* usually when she started teaching at her beauty school after liberation’, and that ‘*hanbok* was the most affordable thing during the colonial period, as *yangbok* needed to be tailor-made due to the lack of ready-made clothes available.’<sup>92</sup> By ‘buying the fabrics’ and making her own ‘home-made *hanbok* of *jeogori* and *chima*, often helped by her mother’s hand’ Im Hyeong-seon was able to maintain her fashionable appearance, and thus her status.<sup>93</sup> She found that her efforts were successful: ‘At the time wearing *hanbok* with white *jeogori* and black *chima*, it was chic and look as refined as a person wearing coloured *hanbok jeogori* and *chima* in having the same colour on top and bottom.’<sup>94</sup> Women were able, as Im Hyeong-seon’s story demonstrates, to make use of their senses of fashion to keep up their appearance, always in accord with their standing and their financial resources; there were ways to

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 88: ‘가난하니깐 옷을 해 입을 수는 없어도, 나오니깐 해 입어야지. 한복을 많이 해 입었지. 짧은 치마에 저고리지. 색깔 있는 거, 나와 다니는 사람들은 입었어요. 까든 치마에 흰 저고리 같은 거는 이대 학생들이 많이 입었지. 까든 치마에 흰저고리하고 머리는 히사시까미한다 그러지 않아? 트레머리를 히사시까미라고 그랬거든. 근데 나는 곤색 계통이라든지, 가지색을 좋아했어. 보라색으로 아래위를 한다든지, 곤색으로 아래위를 한다든지 해서 입고.’

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.: ‘여름 같은 때는 더우니까 모시[적삼]이라 그랬나? 흰 거는 어떤 치마에든지 어울리니까, 여름에는 모시[적삼] 거의 한 가지로 입고. 겨울에는 여러 가지로 입고, 두르메기입고. 오바니 뭐니 양복 입을래면 돈이 많이 드니까.’

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.: ‘양장은 거의 [해방 이후] 학교하면서 많이 입었어요. 한복이 일제 때는 돈이 안들잖아. 양복 같은 거는 맞춰야 되지 않아요? 기성복이 없을 때니까. 굉장히 비싸죠, 양장점에 가서 맞추는 거는.’

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.: ‘저고리하고 치마 집에서 해 입지. 감만 사면 집에서 어머니가 다 해주지 않아?’

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 90: ‘한복 입어도 검은 치마 흰 저고리 입을 땀데, 색깔로 아래위 같은 동색을 입는다든지 그러든 세련된 사람이지.’

achieve a fashionably modern, aspirational look, either by wearing expensive, bespoke *yangbok* or, alternatively, affordable, home-made *hanbok* styles.

The modernised *hanbok* style women wore proved to be longer lived than that of men. It held its fashionably modern appeal longer. Those fashionably modern individuals who wore the *hanbok* style were not necessarily seen as out-dated, un-modern or lacking in beauty. Im Hyeong-seon's wedding photograph shows that women, in fact, wore *hanbok* dress at Western-style weddings, and men dressed in Western-style suits with frock coats (Figure 5.45). Similarly with Im's wedding in 1941, Figure 5.46 illustrates that the bride in about 1920 was also wearing *hanbok* as a wedding dress along with a Western-style veil, while the bridegroom dressed in a formal Western-style suit. Traditional Korean wedding costume for a bride is more elaborated and colourful *hanbok* known as *wonsam* or *hwalot*, but the seemingly simple white *jeogori* and full *chima* served as a close approximation of a white Western-style wedding dress. The female *hanbok* adapted on such an important day of women's lives as the wedding means the validity of *hanbok* as fashionable attire, and bride's wearing *hanbok* dress was indeed in fashion during the colonial period as the two photographs show.



Figure 5.45. Im Hyeong-seon's Marriage to Pak Jun-yeong in 1941 (Source: Kim Mi-seon, 2008, p. 94)





Figure 5.46. A Cosmopolitan Christian Wedding, c. 1920 (Source: Mission Photograph Collection, The Korea Society, 2009, p. 93)

Understanding the wearing of *hanbok* and *yangbok* through the guise of the dichotomy between traditional and modern is incongruous to fashion practice in transitional Korea. Women's *hanbok* changed over time, adapted to suit modern tastes and contemporary needs (e.g. the practicality demanded of clothing by working women), showing a historical continuity in the use of traditional dress. Men's *hanbok*, on the other hand, witnessed relatively fewer changes in comparison, replaced by *yangbok* suits more widely in men's official public space. Women's continued use of *hanbok* forms arose out of the relative variety of options available, dressing in *hanbok* or *yangbok* styles according to their means. Due to the cost of *yangbok*, many Korean women continued to make their *hanbok* clothing at home while adopting different, modern fashionable fabrics and cuts. In other words, women faced less pressure to break decidedly with ongoing *hanbok* styles.

## **CHAPTER 6. Conclusion: The Birth of Modern Dress and Fashion in Colonial Modern Korea**

In Chapter 1, it provided the background of the research and set out to answer the main question: ‘How can one seek a nuanced understanding on sartorial transition between wearing *hanbok* and *yangbok* and local practice of modern dress and fashion emerged in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century of colonial modern Korea?’ To critically reinterpret the sartorial change and emergence of modern dress and fashion in Korea with a nuanced and postcolonial perspective, four sub-questions were formulated and a thematic approach in each chapter has been conducted to answer the questions. The below will summarise the investigation along with the findings from each of the four chapters, and generate concluding remarks on the thesis at the end.

### ***1. Sartorial Encounters and Nuanced Transition of Modern Dress Change during the Open Port Era and the Korean Empire***

Chapter 2 has been concerned with the beginning of the sartorial encounter between Korean and Western dress and the problem of the simple dichotomy in viewing the encounter and emergence of wearing Western dress in Korea. It questions ‘how one can view the early period of the sartorial transition and modernity emerging in a nuanced way throughout the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period’. This chapter has shown the nuanced shift of Korea’s dress practice between *hanbok* and *yangbok* in the context of Western encounters, court dress reform and emerging modernities as transitional characteristics. During the Open Port era and into the Korean Empire period, Korea’s trade and diplomatic relations entailed the inflow of Western material culture and interactions with foreigners in Western style. Encounters with Western clothing in line with modern ideas and the Korean enlightenment gradually modernised *hanbok* and dress practice in a particular Korean context. Prior studies on this early period of sartorial transition have characterised the issue as

dichotomous, as Korean's dressing either in *hanbok* or *yangbok* or a mere shift from *hanbok* to *yangbok*. However, this chapter has suggested a rethinking of such a linear view of sartorial change, to be replaced by a rounded perspective.

In the first section, it examined how Westerners perceived and recorded different cultures of Korean dress and its practice through their firsthand experiences, and what nuances and useful details can be found. Encounter records around the turn of the twentieth century have revealed more nuanced contacts between the two forms of dress, resulted in mutual records by each side. As shown in the earlier case by Captain Broughton in 1797, the sartorial interest by the Korean people in Busan area on the British sailor's woollen clothing was noted in the Western account as well as in the Korean account under King Jeongjo. Larger numbers of Western records produced than Korean ones have been often criticised due to their orientalist representations on Korea, such as the case of the product card by the Liebig Company. Yet, other than their intentional Eurocentric framework, Western records can be further categorised by 'accounts by contiguity' and 'firsthand accounts'.

While Western accounts by contiguity inevitably misunderstood Korea to some extent, firsthand accounts are useful sources for locating non-Korean author's detailed and sometimes discrepant – where nuances can be traced – descriptions. Such records are valuable in providing insights into forgotten stories, on how individuals' dress practices were detailed by Westerners and how they experienced new appearances and different cultures. They also provide counterevidence on what is 'known' and offer details of background circumstances rarely told, by comparative readings. Through the firsthand accounts of male and female authors such as Coulson, Weber, Lowell and Bishop, the early days of dress practice in Korea have been revealed, as have issues such as the actual varied colour use in *hanbok* and related accessories other than white and beyond the 'white-clad folk'; women's labour and wisdom on laundry and summer dress making; the maternal explanation for why women might bare their breasts under the short jacket; the colourful costumes and details in the royal procession; and the

foreign impression on the appearance of King Gojong and Queen Min. These firsthand accounts describing *hanbok* worn by Koreans provide nuanced information and particulars that can help in understanding Korean dress practice of the time and the surroundings in context, previously misrepresented or taken for granted with a dichotomous view. Acknowledging the prevailed critique of Orientalism, yet beyond that, those firsthand accounts open up further discussions on the nuanced sartorial change of Korean dress in the beginning era.

Secondly, concerning the emergence of Western-style dress worn by Koreans as part of the modern dress practice in Korea, it investigated what the gradual process of dress reform at court was as a noticeable shift into Western style, along with nuanced accounts for appearance change such as military and civil officials' uniform reform and personal motivation for the sartorial change. The first adoption of Western-style uniform took place in the reformed military unit 'Byeolgigun' in 1881, reflecting Korea's relation to her neighbouring powers. Such modernisation of military uniforms in Western style became well exhibited as an attraction to the crowd in Seoul area. Yet, while this unfamiliar appearance offered a sense of newness and Western modernity, such uniforms worn by the new police also generated antipathy due to their improper manners, as recorded in the Bishop's account.

While men's Western-style military uniforms were increasingly used for the soldiers and police, influencing people's views on the Western appearance, a series of edicts on court official's dress reform was issued between 1884 and 1900; the Gapsin dress reform of 1884, the Gabo dress reform of 1894, the Eulmi dress reform of 1895 and a decree of cutting topknots, costume elevation alongside the inauguration of the Korean Empire in 1897, and finally adopting Western-style uniforms in 1900. Such a development of edicts and their impact on sartorial change featured gradual, yet strained steps throughout the process. Simplification of the traditional *hanbok* uniform, such as introducing narrow-sleeve robes, was the key issue in the initial part of the modernisation project. Moreover, limiting men's choice of robe to simply one type of

*durumagi* had the implication of moving Korea from the rigid class structure. This involved political tensions between the factions and authorities because the reform order did not match with Neo-Confucian ideas and conservative views. Notably, the edict on cutting topknots in 1895 caused mass opposition, ultimately leaving the change up to individual choices.

While the uniform reform initiated from the court guided the male officials' dress change into the Western style, the case of Min Yeong-hwan's sartorial change between 1896 and 1897 demonstrates the nuances as an individual level of appearance change, subject to personal circumstances and motivation. Also, his diplomatic travel to Russia in 1896, detailing his experiences of Western modernity, brings about some balanced accounts on a Korean encounter with Western dress and modernity, in line with the aforementioned Western encounters with Korean dress and culture. Min left detailed notes on Russian dress practices on the coronation of Emperor Tsar Nicholas II, describing the royal couple, other countries' officials and his own Korean ceremonial dress. By examining the journal *Haecheonchubeom*, Min's attention to different costume culture has been noted, and discussion has been made of a possible reason for his appearance change – traditional *daeryebok* worn with the official hat hindered the Min's group from attending the actual ceremony inside the cathedral – to the Western style later, before his second diplomatic journey to Britain in 1897. Min's valuable account on the meeting of Western and Korean dress has granted some insight into the personal circumstances behind his dress change and provided a more nuanced perspective on the dress reform movement during the transitional period.

Thirdly, with regard to transitional traits of the sartorial encounters and dress change, the last section was to explore nuances and local modernities emerging around the new people in Korea, within the dress itself and through changing surroundings of the Korean Empire, until the colonial intervention in 1910. Against the idea of linear progress of modernity in Korean dress practice shifting from *hanbok* to *yangbok*, the multifaceted advent of modern dress practice before the colonial period has been

highlighted. Cross-dressing or Westerners' dressing in *hanbok* was found in the cases of Möllendorff, Bishop and missionaries such as the Underwood family. Increased encounters between Korean assistants and Western diplomats, missionaries and their families in foreign legation and mission areas helped closer understandings on both sartorial cultures, and facilitated Korean's awareness of Western clothing and change into modern ways of dress practice.

In contrast to men's dress reform, which was started by the officials, women's dress reform was carried out through modern schools, many of them benefitted from missionary works, and through the print media. Schoolgirls' uniforms became established with the *hanbok* form instead of *yangbok*, adapting the modernisation of women's *hanbok* clothes into the longer *jeogori* and shorter *chima*, as seen in the cases of Ewha and Sookmyung Schools. Women's dress reform movement was also assisted by the newspaper articles, discussing about the abolition of women's coverings and inconvenient aspects of *hanbok*. Once the coverings were discarded, Western accessories such as umbrellas and parasols came into use as an alternative, and women's mixed use of *hanbok*, *yangbok* and Western accessories began to emerge, as seen in the Imperial Lady Eom's dual appearance. Yet, unlike the men's case, modern sartorial change of women's dress mainly remained in using the form of *hanbok* but reformed its parts fitting to the modern lifestyle, such as the modernised *hanbok* jacket and the cut of sleeves worn by the Underwood family's Korean nanny.

The modernised change of *hanbok* then featured hybrid nature in which Western elements mixed with the Korean dress as a transitional state. Encountering with Western materials such as buttons and Western dress details such as pockets caused the hybrid form of Korean waistcoat *joggi*, and replaced the previous fastenings of *goreum*, as in the schoolboy's *durumagi* uniform. Further, such hybridity was found in the court officials' Western-style uniforms alongside the Korean-style decoration motifs. This was also examined as the Korean Empire's manifestation of the modern state and efforts to embody the national symbols in the new uniforms. Not only use of the

national flag, patterns of the national flower *mugunghwa* and pear blossoms were designed and employed in Min Chul-hun and Park Gi-jong's Western-style ceremonial *daeryebok* uniforms, as well as in military uniforms of Emperor Sunjong and Min Yeong-hwan, representing the visual authority of the new Korean state along with the identification of different civil and military official rankings.

Emerging modernities were found not only within the changing dress itself, but also related with the modern surroundings evolving around the Korean Empire period. Newly emerged infrastructures such as electric trams offered, other than the modern transportation service, a new space in which people could observe each other's mixed appearances of the time, facilitating Koreans' sartorial awareness and change into the new styles. New visual media such as photographic images of dressed people also began to be used as a means of representing and circulating one's own images by the will of the owner in some diplomatic contexts, or as a propaganda tool as in the case of the photograph depicting Emperor Sunjong's imperial progresses to north-west Korea. Such an image then allows readings of political implications as to Japan's protectoral legitimacy since 1905 or Korean nationalism against it on the one hand, yet on the other opens multiple interpretations on the Western-style modern appearances. It hints at tracing the actual use of officials' new Western uniforms, Korean people's possible response or changing attitudes on the new mode, and simultaneously capturing the nuanced state of one official's wearing of traditional costume *jobok* at the time.

To sum up, during the Open Port era, the beginning of the sartorial encounter between Korean and Western dress emerged through Westerners' contacts with Koreans, which left useful and detailed firsthand accounts that explain nuances and actual dress practices of Koreans that time. The early period of the sartorial transition including the emergence of wearing Western dress in Korea was first observed in military and civil officials' uniforms, as a result of the tortuous series of dress reform at the court. This reflected particular processes of modernisation in Korean male dress, along with the individual level of nuances in appearance change. Sartorial modernities

emerged throughout the Korean Empire period also bore the transitional traits and local modernities inherent in the specific context of Korea at the time, as in the Westerners' dressing of Korean clothing, women's dress reform, hybrid use of Western material with *hanbok* and modern Korean state symbols manifested in Western-style uniforms. Moreover, new conditions of the public transportation space for gazing each other's appearances and photographic images of dressed figures in Western style provided more possibilities of sartorial change in Korea, opening up multiple and nuanced interpretations. In this way, the problem of the simple dichotomy in viewing the encounter, emergence of sartorial change and related modernities in Korea has been reinterpreted, not as straightforward as considered hitherto but as much more nuanced.

***2. Colonial Display and Constructing Sartorial Tradition of Hanbok:  
The Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 and Other Exhibitionary Spaces,  
with Nuanced Readings***

Chapter 3 has sought to deconstruct the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* rendered merely as being opposite to modernity and part of colonial subjects during the colonial period. It questions 'how one can critically examine the Japanese power on display of Korean clothing and construction of Korean sartorial tradition through exhibitionary spaces, and further find a nuanced voice of traditional *hanbok* and its practice out of the colonial discourse but with a postcolonial stance'. Although Western dress came into Korea and people started wearing *yangbok* as part of the modernisation process as examined before, representations of Koreans by the new Japanese colonial regime did not convey this reality. In particular, the material and visual displays of Korean clothing represented in various exhibitions during the colonial period were biased or distorted, reflecting imperialist and colonial ethos or at least anthropological interests on the colonial subjects. Such was the case not only within Korea, but also in London to international audiences. Koreans wearing *hanbok*, not with *yangbok*, were mainly showcased, and displayed in a specific way under the colonial agenda. This affected



the notion of tradition in *hanbok* rather problematically, unlike the ways Japanese counterparts represented.

In the first section, engaging with the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910 as a main case study, it investigated how the Japanese authority displayed Korean clothing and textiles within colonial context of Korea at the 1910 Exhibition. This case was then compared with two previous exhibitions that had been organised differently out of the colonial context. Through the 1910 Japan-British Exhibition, it has been revealed that showing the legitimacy of Japanese colonisation and the developing states of the colonies were the main purpose of Building 23, the ‘Palace of the Orient/Japanese Colonization’, and that Korea was the part of this colonial projection. Even the official guide stated that ‘this attempt to portray Japan as a colonising power would not be complete if Korea were not represented’.<sup>1</sup>

Among other exhibits, clothing was deployed to represent a subjugated image that served the ethos of the Imperial alliance, and textile-related goods were also played out under this discourse. The Japanese organiser’s practice – the ways in which Korean clothing was displayed, the ethnographic representation of the colonial subjects, the changes to the title of the exhibition building and the way Korean artefacts were displayed and juxtaposed with propagating photographs – can all be attributed to the Japanese colonial agenda. Also, the selection and quality of the costume objects were relatively humble compared to the other clothing and textile exhibits at the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago and Exposition Universelle of 1900 in Paris, in which the Korean government represented itself outside the colonial context, thus resulting in higher degrees of quality and selection of the exhibits, despite some Western misunderstanding on Korea.

Secondly, the last section examined in which way sartorial tradition of *hanbok* was constructed by the Japanese through domestic exhibitions and related fields within

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<sup>1</sup> Official Guide, fifth edition, 1910, p. 46.

Korea, compared with Japan's own display of its sartorial culture at the very Exhibition of 1910. Such sartorial tradition of *hanbok* was then deconstructed by nuanced and alternative readings on Koreans' dress practice in context, with a postcolonial perspective of colonial modernity. Within the Korean peninsula, the Japanese regime continued to open exhibitions, such as the Gyeongseong Exhibition of 1907, the Joseon Industrial Exhibition of 1915 and Joseon Exhibition of 1929, to showcase its colonial legitimacy throughout the period. And the exhibitionary space and entailing colonial discourses influenced the formation of sartorial tradition in Korea, in which *hanbok* objects were often excluded and treated not as a high value of material culture or collectables.

When Korean dress was discussed in a context of modernity, the existing or traditional form of Korean dress *hanbok* became situated as an opponent to modernity – a somewhat passive and unfavourable position largely due to the subordinate image constructed in the colonial exhibition spaces. This was contrasted to the ways in which Japanese clothing and textiles were exhibited at the 1910 Exhibition. Japanese sartorial tradition was featured as a progression of old civilisation, imbued with aesthetics and historicity through the designated exhibition buildings of the 'Palace of Fine Arts' and the 'Japanese Historical Palace'.

On the other hand, the collecting practices in colonial Korea initiated by the Japanese resulted in the marginalisation of the value of *hanbok*. While there was a way that Japanese clothing and textiles were highly appreciated and respected, Korean traditional dress did not receive any similar treatment, and was not displayed through some exhibitions or collected for its value in museums during the period. The *hanbok* was omitted from the artistic space and instead displayed in an ethnographic context on mannequins or postcards, wherein it was represented as the costume of Japan's colonial subjects. Furthermore, through anthropological studies by the Japanese folklorists and their publications, the traditional *hanbok* was treated as a mere object of Joseon people's clothes in daily lives, and this impinged upon the formation of Korean

sartorial tradition as to the folk context. Today's South Korean museum collections and their practices on *hanbok* reflect this interrupted historical trajectory.

Yet, despite the constrained context of *hanbok*, used as it was in the colonial discourse of legitimacy and as a means of imperial propagandistic aims, uncovering the colonial practice cannot be a fuller understanding on the Korean costume and Korean people's dress practice during the period. This is a partial critique of Imperial Japan, revealing the oppressive hegemony of Japanese discursive power in the representations of Korean dress. Further, to reinstate the status of *hanbok* and better understand the meanings of Korean people's dress practice at that time, previously overlooked views on the material need to be reconsidered. A postcolonial perspective therefore offers alternative readings on the marginalised Korean *hanbok*, questioning how Korean people would have conducted their daily dress practices on certain occasions – such as visiting exhibitions – at that time, and speculating their dress practices much as we do today. As modernity progressed in colonial Korea and in dress practice, we can approach the sartorial tradition of this time – as not a long ago past, but as a near past – looking at similar dress practices of today. This helps generate a nuanced understanding of the matter, going beyond the tension between colonialism and nationalism, benefitted from the postcolonial framework of colonial modernity in Korea.

In this sense, stereotypical images that juxtapose the clothing of Korean visitors with the backdrop of the modern-style buildings at the exhibition space can be understood in fresh ways: expressions of wearers' identities and styles in *hanbok* or *yangbok* on a day out, rather than being positioned as pre-modern traditional *hanbok* against modern spectacular edifices. The closer reality of Korean people's sartorial practice can be approached in this nuanced way beyond the colonial notions of dress practice to what the Japanese administration wished to portray. The deconstruction of the previous colonial discourse lies in situating *hanbok* not as traditional as mere pre-modern state or opposite to the modern *yangbok*, but actively locating it as a

continuing form of dress – another style to *yangbok* – and daily sartorial practice in *hanbok* – even open to its fashionability – by the Korean visitors. As such, the sartorial tradition of Korea can recover its own status. Then, the location of *hanbok* on the periphery or the margin can be re-discussed within the dynamic – not static – context of tradition and modernity. Fashionably modern sartorial practice at the exhibitions was possible with traditional dress *hanbok*, thus *hanbok* and *yangbok* were not necessarily mutually exclusive in their discussions of modern dress and fashion in colonial Korea.

To sum up, upon the annexation of 1910, Japan opened an exhibition in London along with Britain, namely the ‘Japan-British Exhibition of 1910’, where Korean clothing and textiles were subject to Japan’s colonial projection of Korea alongside other colonies. The display and selection of Korean costume reflected Japanese colonialism, which sat in contrast to the previous two exhibitions Korea participated on its own initiative before 1910. In this process, the colonial depictions of Korean people dressed in traditional/existing clothing *hanbok* were not neutral and notions of tradition in relation to *hanbok* consequently became problematic – invented tradition of *hanbok* as opposed to modernity of *yangbok* or out of any other respected/artistic values – especially as seen through exhibitions, museum collecting and folklore studies that functioned as discursive practices which the Japanese administration carried out in the peninsula during the colonial period. In addition to uncovering the colonial discourse on the representation of Korean dress, the chapter also tried to go one step further by addressing the possibilities of other nuanced ways to reinterpret the traditional *hanbok* worn by Koreans set in the colonial exhibitionary space.

### ***3. Conditions of Modern Dress and Fashion through Hanbok and Yangbok: Production–Mediation–Consumption***

Chapter 4 has been to seek non-Western local Korean cases in response to the Western-centric fashion discourse, questioning ‘what can be an alternative understanding and

nuanced sartorial realities of modern dress and fashion materialised through the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in colonial modern Korea, taking a systematic framework of conditions of modern dress and fashion in production–mediation–consumption?’ This chapter has examined ‘colonial modern’ cases of dress and fashion through the spheres of production, mediation and consumption in the colonial Korean society. During the time period discussed, the economic, political, social and cultural system rapidly changed into a capitalist one under the Japan’s colonial regime with Western influences. This involved the rise of local modernities in dress and fashion practice with vernacular contexts.

In the first section, as for production, it examined what modern changes emerged and local specificities were entailed in the mode of dress production both in the fields of *hanbok* and *yangbok*, detailing particular cases taken from the colonial modern society of Korea. Regarding the production of *hanbok*, the modern production system for textiles emerged in colonial Korea. Since the Open Port era, trade with foreign countries had made cheaper textiles available in the market. While colonial exploitation undertook in raw materials for textiles, Korean cotton, silk, ramie and hemp had some strength in the market due to their local aesthetic and quality, which indicated the ‘colonial specificity’ in textile production during the period. Along with the Japanese market dominance, the Gyeongseong Textile Manufacture Incorporated as a modern Korean textile company was established in 1919, remaining in production until today. With its foundation of the national ethos, among others funded by the Japanese, the company competed with other manufacturers and maintained successful business throughout the colonial period. As a result, Koreans were able to buy various fabrics at different prices and qualities in the market. Western and Japanese textiles were also available at competitive prices, which supplied *hanbok* with wide variety of fabrics ever since the country opened the ports.

Japanese colonial policies also impacted on the white colour of *hanbok*. The authorities introduced the prohibition of white clothes, recommending coloured clothes

so as to modernise people's life style or to pursue for Japanese political and economic interests. Having struggled with the colour campaign through the strategies of 'inducement' and 'compulsion', Koreans' use of white colour began to change in an ambivalent way; resisting the campaign by keeping the white with anti-colonial sentiment and/or adapting to coloured clothes by using Japanese chemical dyeing methods, which reflected a particular colonial context of the contested field of colour white in Korea. In addition, the introduction of the sewing machine in Korea facilitated women's domestic production in a modern way. Relevant institutions were established to teach sewing machine techniques, and this assisted in women's economic independence at home and provided a semi-professional work place to some extent. The costly sewing machine became a symbol of a wealthy household, and regarded as a valuable modern possession and an object of desire.

All these changes in Korean dress were evident when examining the modern *hanbok* collection at Sungkyunkwan University. A variety of colours and various fabrics were used in *hanbok* during this period. Due to the abundance of Japanese textiles, their influence was found in *hanbok* through fabrics, colours and patterns. Also the sewing machine was employed in *hanbok* making, providing durability in seam lines along with traditional hand sewing techniques. Other modern traces were found in the collection, such as the modernised waist of the women's skirt and hybridity in its mixed use of new fabrics and colours, and details such as pockets. Also, the dress objects revealed stories about the wearers in terms of gender, status, identity and personal taste, as well as the maker's sewing practice at that time.

On the side of *yangbok* production, Korea faced the considerable emergence of tailor shops during the 1920s and 30s, wherein men's Western suits – initially associated with a political sentiment of its pro-Japanese stance rather than simply being as a symbol of Western modernity – were made and consumed. Korean tailors such as the Chongro Tailor's flourished with good service and price when male students' uniform changed into *yangbok* style from *durumagi*, which in turn brought

out the growth of Korean men's wearing *yangbok*. This Western-style male clothing then reflected some hybridity as a transitional trait that the name and design of the clothes bore mixed influences of Korean and Japanese elements into the Western style. As for women's Western clothes *yangjang*, it often directly came into Korea along with its Western-style details and techniques, as examined in the dress collection of the Korea Museum of Modern Costume as well as the fur muffler made in Hong Kong. While another mode of women's *yangjang* production within Korea was available by the dressmaking school in Hamheung, first opened of its kind in 1938 by Mrs Choe Gyeong-ja, women's modern school education also contributed to the production of *yangjang* as the sewing and dressmaking significantly comprised the female school curriculums during the colonial period.

Secondly as for mediation, it explored how ideas of fashion and fashion trends and information were spread through the media such as newspapers and films and by the fashion-conscious people, tracing the cases of Korean fashion disseminated and realised both in *yangbok* and *hanbok*. The emergence of a variety of modern print media played a key role in spreading fashion. As a case study, the four series of fashion reports in the *Dong-A Ilbo* from the autumn season of 1934 exemplified how new fashion trends and information of products were available and introduced to Korean people and potential customers. Western fashion influences were evident in their fashion reports, which detailed style, colour, fabric, price and issues to be careful of for Korean men and women, as well as new season's trends in fabrics for Korean *hanbok*, reflecting local modernities and vernacular considerations of Korean traits such as the skin colour and tastes.

Daily newspapers also played a role in fashion diffusion in a visual sense. Western fashion topics and stories were covered in the papers with accompanying photo images. European and American dress and fashion images and practices became influential to Koreans in this way, drawing Korean people's interest in the outside world's sartorial news. Film stars were significant leaders of fashion and spread new

Western styles, all of which was often disseminated through the newspapers as well. This was clearly noted in the satires, which commented on fashionable figures, namely the modern boys and modern girls. As they were fashion-conscious modern individuals who adopted new fashions more quickly than others, their appearances were often regarded as modern spectacles in the city despite some satirical criticism.

Spread of fashion in Korean-style *hanbok* was also observed as a particular Korean case. Fashion articles in the *Dong-A Ilbo* newspaper in September 1933 further revealed how women's fashion in *hanbok* was realised through choosing the best fabric – by the kinds of fabric, colour, print or pattern, striped pattern – among the textile trends available on the market. The article also featured some nuances of different styles preferred by the varied groups of Korean women, along with their mixed use of Western-style accessories such as handbags and shoes. Korean film as an important medium of distributing fashion also showcased the modern woman's fashionable style in *hanbok*, as well as shopping for *yangbok*, with modern ways of make-up and care of hairstyle, as examined in Ae-sun's style in the film 'Sweet Dream' of 1936.

Thirdly as for consumption, it investigated in what nuanced ways dress and fashion consumption between the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok* were represented and discoursed through the medium of advertisements, then examined how one can view modern individuals' fashion consumption and their consumer/stroller engagement with the city space as a consumption place. Examination of advertisements conveyed the links of consumption of fashion with representations of *hanbok* and *yangbok* in transitional and colonial modern settings of Korea.

The advertisement delivered a discourse distinguishing the old traditional from the new modern. The arrival of modern times and latest clothes of Western-style *yangbok* were often stressed as a new direction to head for, leaving the old times of traditional sartorial practice with *hanbok*. The colonial campaign on the coloured clothes against the white also impacted on the bleaching and dyeing goods, and this was reflected in the advertisements as well. In the Open Port era, the advertisement of



the British lye product echoed the Korean's adopting of modern Western bleaching methods. By the campaign during the colonial period, Japanese dyeing pigments became more prevalent in the advertisements, as coloured clothes became widely promoted; despite they had been in existence with different tones and nuances in advertisements before 1910. Changed meanings of the colour white and bleaching or dyeing practice for coloured *hanbok* alongside the related goods advertised indeed mirrored the shifted social values under the colonial regime and circumstances over the course.

Advertisements also created modern consumerism and consumer identities. Women were often represented in advertisements for cosmetics and medical products. Their styles in *hanbok* or *yangbok* varied in their representations, and its interpretation via the advertising texts can be given as ambivalent at commercial ends. The modern girl's image in the beer advertisements also conveyed possible gender criticism, but on the way around there was room for those women's pursuit of pleasure through fashion, allowing multiple interpretations. During this time, celebrity stars like Choi Seung-hee were often represented in advertisements, through which her modern style in *yangbok* could have attracted future consumers and guided them towards the modern style. Yet, in her artistic dance performance, Choi Seung-hee also projected herself in a traditional Asian form; non-Western and Western styles collided and interacted in this way, creating further nuances to the transitional state of colonial modern Korea.

While women's fashion consumption can be regarded as more than the conspicuous consumption, the concept initially derived from Veblen in the Western setting, Korean women's fashion consumption can also be understood beyond the limited view, as in mixed use of *hanbok*, *yangbok* and Western accessories along with women's autonomous agency on fashion. Also, in the city Gyeongseong as a place of consumption, fashion-conscious individuals such as the modern boys and modern girls in Korea were examined as *flâneurs*, following Baudelaire's idea, who strolled the city

space and consumed in various places including department stores, as described in Mr Gubo's one day story from Pak Tae-won's semi-autobiographical novel.

To sum up, this chapter has explored non-Western Korean cases of local modernities in dress and fashion through the lens of production, mediation and consumption. Throughout the interconnected conditions of those, the alternative understanding of modern dress and fashion in Korea has been approached by tracing their sartorial practices not only through *yangbok* but also with *hanbok* and their mixed use engaging with Western accessories, which challenges the Eurocentric notions of fashion conception. While emerged with Western clothing as fashion, use of *hanbok* was also part of modern fashion development in Korea. Vernacular modernities embedded in those sartorial practices conveyed nuanced issues of colonial modernity in Korean dress and fashion phenomena that were evolved in particular ways, reflecting the socio-cultural milieu of colonial Korea. The colonial modern state of Korea during the Japanese regime can thus be understood in an open and rounded way when approaching the emergence of modern fashion in Korea, in which Korean and Japanese impacts on modern dress and fashion can be assessed interrelatedly in conjunction with Western influences.

#### ***4. Modern Women and Men in Yangbok and Hanbok: Identities through Dress and Fashion, Class and Gender***

Chapter 5 has been to overcome the limited approach on the relations amongst dress, fashion and modern figures in terms of identity, class and gender, but pursuing protean and ambiguous nature of the link between the individual and the collective through their sartorial practices within particular background of Korea. It questions 'how one can explore more multiple relations among modern female, male individuals and their modern dress and fashion practices manifested through *hanbok* and *yangbok* in terms of identity, class and gender, engaging with social criticism to their new appearances and socio-economic, cultural contexts of colonial modern Korea of the time'.

In the first section, based on readings of satirical articles in the newspaper, it examined how modern women and their fashion in *hanbok* and *yangbok* were critically viewed by the patriarchal society, which echoed nuances of the political and gendered standards of the time. As the examined satires from the *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper demonstrated, the social responses to the modern girls and the decidedly modern appearance of new women elicited scepticism and scorn, although modern Koreans did indeed experiment with dress and fashion during the colonial period. The view was often based on a Marxist criticism of the decadence of consuming something as frivolous as clothing in the context of the colonial capitalist economy of Korea. These critiques also considered modern women's dress and fashion through a male gaze that was observed in the texts and images of the articles, from the sections of 'Housewives' or 'Madame' in the newspaper, while there was another possibility of focusing on the modern aesthetic and fashion, for instance, of the women's swimwear in the 'Home, Children' section. The gendered critiques further regarded women as necessarily dependent on men, in which it claimed less affluent women needed bourgeois men to financially maintain their latest fashion, becoming subject to the men's property.

In the second section, following the analysis of the satires, it investigated what social criticisms were laid on modern men and their new appearances, reflecting changing socio-economic milieu of the period in terms of class, masculinity and relationship with women. Modern men's appearance, somewhat unlike the women's case, came across in the satires as reflections of the class tensions between the bourgeoisie and the working classes, as seen in the two contrasting men dressed in the Western suit versus working shorts. Also, economic struggles men had to endure in the constrained colonial economy were well presented in the newspaper through suited men's snooping around second-hand shops or cafes. Men's changing identities at home were further depicted contrasting with the new women's emerging modern characters against the traditional role. While new women and old-fashioned women were differently projected by their *hanbok* styles, conservative or modern men with regard

to free love were also otherwise represented either in *hanbok* or *yangbok*. Modern boys' concerning of their adornment, make-up and fashion was then seen as changing masculinity, and it certainly provoked sarcastic commentary during the time.

In the last section, it explored other sources which afforded a consideration of everyday life in colonial modern Korea and led to a rather more positive approach to discussions of various socio-cultural relations between dress, fashion and modern male and female Koreans. This approach provided nuanced explanations and multifaceted meanings on sartorial practice of modern Koreans as a reflection of colonial modernity in Korea. While the substance and meaning of modern fashion and sartorial practice were previously obscured by Marxist, male-centred and conservative perspectives, this section focused its attention on the constructive side of modern dress and fashion as practised by modern Koreans.

Schoolgirls and working women's clothing and fashion were manifestations of the emerging modern sensibility and of modern work lives. Women's *yangbok* and *hanbok*-style modern attire emerged along with new kinds of jobs in the Korean society of the time. Amongst women's fashion, *gisaeng* – who was seen as cultural figures in the vanguard of modern sartorial practice – took a leading role in creating Korea's modern times. Both female and male, modern individuals' new styles began to be discussed in the magazine articles, wherein modern fashion's fickle changeability settled on not only *yangbok* forms but also *hanbok* styles, as discussed in Bok Hye-suk's review of ladies and gentlemen's style in the town from the *Samcheolli* magazine. As a modern man, in Yun Chi-ho's case, his *hanbok* and *yangbok* attire and ambivalent dress practice mirrored the shifting identities, sense of occasion and personal idiosyncrasies he wished to project in different circumstances.

Modern fashion in colonial Korea further manifested the sometimes uneasy, ambiguous relationship between the individual and collective. While fashion as a marker of identity, class and gender in the modern city was not unique to Korea, modern fashion's realisation in the country echoed Korea's peculiarities and particular

circumstances, as seen in the mixed use of *hanbok* and *yangbok* styles, traced in the newspaper articles and advertisement, street photographs and beautician Im Hyeong-seon's case. Fashion further laid bare the often equivocal and ironic aspects of colonial modernity in Korea, entailing different trajectories between men and women's embodiment of modern appearance through *hanbok* and *yangbok*. Modern dress and fashion practice in colonial Korea was all-embracing yet fractious in nuanced ways, emerging through the modern conditions of fashion system, while also solidifying fashion's presence in the city space in particular ways.

To sum up, only by reinterpreting some negative assessment and overcoming the simplistic, dichotomous view on *hanbok* and *yangbok* when approaching modern dress and fashion practice embodied through modern women and men in Korea, do the plurality, hybridity and ambivalence of clothing and fashion in *hanbok* and *yangbok* styles in colonial modern Korea become clear and meaningful, beyond the shadows of the satirical criticism. The relationship between modern individuals and their dress and fashion viewed and practiced among the collective in colonial Korea reveals the nuances and contradictions of wearing clothing – *hanbok* and *yangbok* – along with Western-style accessories that implicated one's self or social identities in the new structures of class and gender that colonial rule had, in part, inspired. Korean society during the time was then a quintessentially colonial as well as modern sphere where the modern boys, modern girls and new women projected their new fashions, receiving social criticism on the one hand, and reflecting facets of colonial modern condition of the time on the other. Their sartorial experiences in the changing society of Korea attest to the ironies of colonial modernity as well as to the importance of the dress and fashion as a contested site where this colonial modernity came into existence.

## ***5. A Nuanced Understanding on Sartorial Transition between Hanbok and Yangbok, and Local Practice of Modern Dress and Fashion in Colonial Modern Korea***

The four chapters have hitherto been explored to answer the main question of how to ‘seek a nuanced understanding on sartorial transition between wearing *hanbok* and *yangbok* and local practice of modern dress and fashion emerged in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century of colonial modern Korea’. The nuanced understanding, in particular, has been explored through the four themes: (1) the beginning of sartorial encounters between Korean and Western dress, its nuanced transition and modernities emerging through the Open Port era and the Korean Empire period; (2) the reassessment of the sartorial tradition of *hanbok* constructed as being opposite to modernity and part of colonial subjects by the Japanese power through exhibitionary spaces, to find a nuanced, postcolonial voice of traditional *hanbok* practice; (3) the alternative and systematic – through conditions of production, mediation and consumption – understanding on non-Western sartorial realities of modern dress and fashion in the forms of *hanbok* and *yangbok* during the colonial modern Korea; (4) the multiplicity of relations between modern male, female individuals and their dress and fashion practices in terms of identity, class and gender beyond the social criticism, but with the socio-economic and cultural milieu of the time. The main chapters have demonstrated how we can better approach on the sartorial transition between the two forms of Korean and Western dress emerged since the Open Port era and during the colonial period, tracing empirical Korean cases of local dress and fashion practices in vernacular contexts of the time, wherein they persistently argued that the sartorial shift in modern and colonial background of Korea needs to be seen as nuanced and multiple ways rather than a simplistic dichotomy, changing from *hanbok* to *yangbok*.

Encompassing and reflecting on the findings of the research, this final section tries to make concluding remarks on the overall thesis. The beginning of the thesis

questioned the existing stereotypical framework of the ‘dual ways of dressing from *hanbok* to *yangbok*’. This dichotomous framework raises the view that Korea’s modernisation of dress practice changed from *hanbok* to *yangbok* in a simple sense, however this kind of deterministic approach may lose the essence of the subtle and nuanced shift. When examining the early sartorial encounters of Korean and Western dress, the cases have shown that the shift was rather transitional or in a way that does not imply rupture or discontinuity between the two forms of dress in actual use and practice. Also, following chapters have exemplified the modern changes of Korean dress and fashion practice contained subtle nuances and tensions, which reflected a heterogeneous state of transition of society at that time. The particular transition found around the changes of dress practice in Korea was often contested and more complicated than a mere binary opposition between old and new types of *hanbok* and *yangbok*, the hitherto constructed view. Thus, such a framework of the dichotomous way of dressing from *hanbok* to *yangbok* is now proven to be inadequate in many cases of this study. Rather, choices of style were intertwined with the personal circumstances and further with the socio-economic and political surroundings of the time, resulting in the coexistence of *hanbok* and *yangbok* use and hybrid forms of dress to what Koreans creatively adapted.

The problematic notion of traditional *hanbok* has been challenged, as it was previously positioned as negative and opposite of modernity and modern *yangbok*. The disparagement of Korean sartorial tradition was not only due to the Western versus non-Western dichotomy; rather, it reflected the colonial power of the East over their colonised subjects. Japan depicted her non-Western sartorial tradition as superior, but imposed inferiority on other non-Western sartorial traditions. Through the exhibitionary spaces, the Japanese rendered Korean sartorial tradition inferior – a colonial ‘Other’ – but her tradition was highlighted with positive connotations. The problem lies in that double standards were applied to tradition and modernity between Japan and Korea. Traditional Korean clothing became inevitably subject to colonial

representation. While Japan's treatment of its own traditional dress showed that the traditional can be valuable as the historical foundation of the modern or the art form, Korea's traditional dress was derogated under the colonial discourse in which *hanbok* was constructed in a certain way of tradition, being as the signifier of colonial subjects or the object of folklore rather than arts. Thus, the concepts of the traditional and modern for *hanbok* were rather arbitrary under the Japanese hegemony, demanding for alternative interpretations.

In line with the influential postcolonial stance from Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*, the 'mythical figure of Europe' often regarded as being the 'original site of modernity' – here modern fashion – can be reassessed by exploring how it may be renewed both for and from the margins.<sup>2</sup> Further, regarding 'alternative modernities', Gaonkar states the idea of alternative modernities 'holds that modernity always unfolds within a specific cultural or civilizational context and that different starting points for the transition to modernity lead to different outcomes'.<sup>3</sup> Such an alternative standpoint provides useful grounds for discussion of modern fashion in colonial Korea, in which modernity – modernity in sartorial practice and modern fashion – can be in truth a richly multiplicitous concept, eliciting different outcomes out of the Eurocentric discourse.

Thus, the postcolonial framework on the constructed dress tradition alongside sartorial modernity concurs with the premise that the fabricated view of the non-Western traditional Korean clothing's lack of association with modernity has hindered from discussing modern fashion in Korea dynamically engaging with traditional form of dress *hanbok*. The preconceived view on the traditional *hanbok* has been questioned and tested in line with the postcolonial stance, as Hooks argues for 'marginality as a

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<sup>2</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, ed. *Alternative Modernities*, 2001, p. 17.



site of resistance'.<sup>4</sup> In recognition of modern fashion in colonial Korea, by this idea, marginalisation of non-Western dress *hanbok* seems to have taken place as a way of abandoning the seemingly backward sartorial tradition constructed through the colonial discourse. However, this very stereotype can be the site of postcolonial defiance in terms of viewing the Koreans' use of *hanbok* differently. Modern fashionable practice in Korean society was possible with traditional dress *hanbok* beyond the dichotomy, not as being mutually exclusive between traditional *hanbok* and modern *yangbok*. The relationship between traditional dress and modernity can thus be reconsidered, reunited and better understood in terms of alternative fashions in colonial modern Korea.

The emergence of modern fashion in Korea thus requires an alternative standpoint. The thesis argues that alternative modern fashion in Korea did not only begin with Western clothing, but was also realised with non-Western, Korean clothing. The binary opposition between traditional *hanbok* and modern *yangbok* has come under scrutiny when examining fashion in Korea with Western and non-Western forms of dress. Fashion is about new things and people's taking the new dress and style; in this sense, Western clothing as new thus becoming fashion was plausible. Existing *hanbok* began to be modernised, transformed into new modern styles, while simultaneously traditionalised in certain contexts. This was the point of nuances. That is, such as in the print media, while *hanbok* became often portrayed as traditional, there was constantly new *hanbok* produced and consumed, variously modernised versions of *hanbok* or hybrid designs of *hanbok* with Japanese and Western materials existed, trying to catch up new things and becoming fashion among the Koreans.

The category of *hanbok* can thus be invited and discussed as fashion in emerging modern Korean settings. The very dichotomy – whether it was made through colonial discourses in exhibitionary spaces or by social discourses in the media – often tended to forget, dismiss or disregard this nuance, and simply to posit only the Western clothing as modern and fashion, but *hanbok* as traditional and non-fashion. However,

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<sup>4</sup> Bell Hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, 1990.

as this study has substantiated, they are very much intermingled and interwoven in reality, making both *hanbok* and *yangbok* comprise modern fashion in Korea. Such an alternative understanding of fashion becomes further effective when the Western-centric conception of fashion gets problematic in non-Western backgrounds. In short, alternative understanding of modern fashion suitable for the Korean case lies in two-fold: dress itself as a substance of fashion, and condition that surrounded the fashion emerged in Korea. The condition of fashion was not only Western-specific, but modern conditions of fashion in non-Western Korean society existed and developed in a particular way, as in the production–mediation–consumption of Korean cases demonstrated. The dress itself showed that fashionable dress was also including the non-Western form of dress *hanbok*, other than the Western dress *yangbok*.

Following this line of thought, any attempt to explore the birth of modern fashion in Korea further involves looking at the meaning of fashion before the modern era. The thesis, in a sense, has enquired what fashion was in reality and which meanings of fashion were shared by the Korean people during the course, in terms of social phenomena and everyday cultural experiences in particular non-Western Korean contexts. It is considered that ‘traditional fashion’ existed until around the Joseon dynasty in the form of the non-Western style of Korean dress *hanbok*.<sup>5</sup> Unlike Western fashion with its frequent style change, use of *hanbok* by different social strata – causing some kind of fashion emulation within the classes in society – with seasonal dress changes and other aesthetic fashionability such as colours, patterns and fabrics used cannot be ignored in defining traditional Korean fashion. Since encountering Western-style dress and facing emergence of modernity in Korea, the country experienced gradual and nuanced sartorial transition in wearing clothing between *hanbok* and *yangbok*. In line with this, as fashion still lived by people’s desires and imitation of others and new stuff, modern fashion in Korea emerged with the modernising *hanbok* dress as well as with the new impetus of the *yangbok* dress, along

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<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Cho Woo-hyun, ‘Was There Fashion in Korean Dress, *Hanbok*?’, 2000.

with the surge of Western-style images and ideas of new fashion coming into Korea, through the modern settings of the society under the Japanese regime and influence. This then provided the site of fashion, in which all the transitional traits and hybrid use and practice occurred between the materiality of *hanbok* and *yangbok*.

Hybridity appeared on dress in an object form, as well as on style as *hanbok* and *yangbok* used in a mix-match way. It reflected ambivalence rather than polarisation, speaking to the blending or incorporation of disparate elements into one fusion. Further, hybridity as ‘creative adaptations’ in a postcolonial sense means that, rather than ‘one can freely choose whatever one likes from the offerings of modernity’ or being ‘simply a matter of adjusting the form or recoding the practice to soften the impact of modernity’; but it can be ‘the site a people “make” themselves modern, as opposed to being “made” modern by alien and impersonal forces, and where they give themselves an identity and a destiny’.<sup>6</sup> Hybridity as a transitional characteristic of modern dress and fashion in Korea was the dynamic result of Korean people’s active engagement with local modernities and vernacular translation of them into their sartorial practices.

With passivity giving way to relatively active perspectives on Korean dress and fashion, a reading of the *hanbok* represented in material and visual texts can allow freer interpretations; intrinsic cultural resistance comes out of restricted hegemonic representations and discourses. This is not necessarily something political or like any other forms of obvious resistance. But the so-called ‘humility of things’ – here, clothing on the body of Korean people – can initiate re-thinking of how ‘objects make people’ in a given context.<sup>7</sup> In other words, following this material culture perspective, dressed people in any representation may speak to their alternative voices on the subjects. Inscribed colonial and social vision in the visual and textual representations

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<sup>6</sup> Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, ed. *Alternative Modernities*, 2001, pp. 17-18.

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Miller, *Stuff*, 2010, p. 53.

can disclose ‘ambivalent meanings’ which is not intended by the power behind the camera and pen.<sup>8</sup>

The thesis has been attempted to re-evaluate the reality of Korean dress from a postcolonial stance, rising above the colonial complex. Although there is no denying that colonialism influenced Koreans’ dress practice, even permeated the everyday life as seen in the colour campaign, the attempt has been to acknowledge recorded facts in objects, images and texts as historical texts and simultaneously to read them critically and creatively beyond the colonial power, nationalistic narratives and in consideration of Western influences in a rounded way. This has offered a reconsideration of the status of traditional Korean dress, once distorted, but now restored to the premise that both *hanbok* and *yangbok* were in fact subject to modern dress and fashion practices among the Koreans during the colonial period.

The newness of the modern style of dress in *hanbok* and *yangbok* for modern Korean men and women evolved along with meaningful cultural nuances, reflecting the zeitgeist and societal change of the time. As the sartorial transition did not take place at once, we can also look at the seemingly marginalised or hidden fashion in changes of traditional dress. Embracing those changes and fashions of *hanbok*, the thesis has evidenced that fashion-conscious people adorned themselves with variously modified and modernised *hanbok*, too. This was more found in women’s cases, wherein women’s *hanbok* had more opportunities to be modernised and adapted to contemporary fashion styles, while men’s *hanbok* was often located as a classical style than men’s Western suits in their public space. Rather gendered realisation of *hanbok* practice between men and women was the case in the particular Korean society and context.

Through the conditions of modern dress and fashion in production, mediation and consumption, sartorial practices of Korean cases featured non-Western local

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<sup>8</sup> Christine Guth, ‘Charles Longfellow and Okakura Kakuzō: Cultural Cross-Dressing in the Colonial Context’, 2000, p. 606.

specificities beyond Eurocentric fashion ideas, reflecting vernacular Korean situations. The relations between modern male and female individuals and their dress and fashion practices within the collective have been examined as dynamic and interactive than stable, engaging with varied social criticisms of flaunting fashion on the one hand and rather positive and multifaceted implications of the linkage on the other hand. This attempt was to highlight social and cultural contexts of the relationship, rather than solely viewing dress objects in a disjointed context without actual wearers' engagement.

As for fashion-conscious modern individuals, they were important figures as leaders of modern fashion and consumer culture, especially emerging in the city space. Gyeongseong, the capital of colonial Korea, was the main site for the modern girls and modern boys, where they quickly assumed fashion consumption by embracing modernities and introducing new models of Western style, *hanbok* style and modern conceptions of gender roles, asserting themselves as cultural arbiters in the van of new era. Fashion was also propagated through the cityscape in places such as streets known for their clothing shops and department stores, other commercial centres and public transportation. Decidedly stylish, modern men and women consumed the spectacle of these public spaces while also playing their part in the spectacle and its modernity. Such places, however, resulted from the growth of the city and the development of its infrastructure under the colonial rule, while the nationalist narrative regarded this as colonial exploitation. The emerging modern city was designed according to Japanese colonial policy, whether or not it garnered any advantage for Korea. The city's emergence as a space for modernity and fashion went hand in hand with its subjugation to a foreign colonial power. This is the context for the ambivalence towards the Japanese and the colonial state, questioning whether the Japanese administration benefitted Koreans and their fashion in the process of the city development, or if imperial modernisation was undertaken solely for the sake of the colonial regime. Fashionable modernity and the sartorial practices of Koreans in the city reflected this paradox; fashion, it would seem, was not free of empire.

The colonial reality could not but affect Koreans' ever-changing fashion and sartorial practice. Yet the growth of the city under the Japanese rule was not alone in eliciting changes in Korean's clothing and comportment. Changes to the social structure and Western influences since the late nineteenth century affected the emergence of modern fashion in Korea as a whole. The heart of people's dress and fashion during the colonial period was less consciously driven by political agenda, though, and had much to do with personal preference, financial circumstances, surroundings of daily life and changing social conditions. People had an interest in what they wore that was not about nation and (anticolonial) national identity. The various motivations people had for dressing in ever-new and discretely modern fashions thus entailed numerous contradictions and ironies. Fashion was, then, an important tool with which Koreans actively projected their identities, consuming and being consumed by the modern public space of the city. Fashion thus played a pivotal role in the emerging relationship between the individual and collective in the modern city, and fashion is critical to efforts to understand the nuances of colonial modernity reflected in Korea, that is the particular Korean modernities generated from the local colonial settings.

The thesis also approached the colonial modernity as a postcolonial perspective as well as the particular Korean modernity of the time. Revealing the discrepancy between the Japanese discourse in the construction of the tradition of *hanbok* and the possibility of its sartorial modernity beyond their fabrication in colonial Korea, the study hinted at colonial modernity in Koreans' choices of attire between *hanbok* and *yangbok* as the postcolonial framework viewing the practice, moving beyond the dichotomous conceptions between tradition and modernity, and colonialism and nationalism. This framework has then offered alternative readings of modern sartorial practice of Koreans, engaging more with their daily and contemporary situations on the day of dressing. As we cannot avoid the notions of Japanese power when examining modernity and modern fashion, the framework of colonial modernity can provide

fruitful discussion on the nuanced development of Korean modernity in relation to dress and fashion practice, beyond the constructed view and dichotomy on *hanbok* and *yangbok* of the colonial era.

In overcoming the ‘binary constructions: imperialist repression versus national resistance, colonial exploitation versus national development, or Japanese culture versus Korean culture’, I have questioned the ‘disjunction between colonialism and modernity’ in discussing modern dress and fashion in Korea.<sup>9</sup> This was intended to bring out balanced meanings and multiple experiences of dress and fashion among the triangular powers and influences of Japan – Korea – the West; for instance, the modern style *hanbok* revealed the modernisation of traditional Korean style, but it had Japanese influences in the use of fabrics and patterns, as well as Western input in its sewing and pocket details. Traced the traits of local modernities in the production, mediation and consumption of Korean dress and fashion, they reflected the entanglement of the three powers varying in degree of subtlety.

In conclusion, the thesis has sought to complement the reductive approach on the transitional period of sartorial change and to propose more rounded and multiple perspectives on the emergence of modern dress and fashion in Korea. The subject needs to be re-contextualised in the light of the critical and reflective perspective of postcolonial studies. Heading towards the revisionist reading of this protean period, the focus has been on addressing multiplicities of the sartorial shift and multifaceted practices of the dress and fashion transition. In this regard, the historiography of sartorial transition in Korea during the colonial modern times can be better approached and contextualised in a balanced and nuanced way, rather than the simple dichotomy, accounting for what the underlying meanings and particular local practices were inherent in *hanbok* and *yangbok* that Koreans wore in their daily lives.

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<sup>9</sup> Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, ed. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 1999, p. 5.

The preconceived idea that modern fashion was only to do with Western clothing, while non-Western clothing *hanbok* polarised and taken as binary opposition against modern and fashion of *yangbok*, did not fit for the empirical cases from the Korean context. As for modern fashion in colonial modern Korea, I would argue that dress formed in fashion was not limited to the Western clothing, but modernised Korean clothes also constituted fashion during the time, entailing hybridity in the form and style, nuanced transition, and different trajectories between men and women's sartorial change. In short, stylish *hanbok* was also part of and played a significant role in modern fashion in the context of colonial modernity of Korea, cooperating with the Korean, Japanese and Western influences.

The birth of modern fashion in Korea then reflected modern ironies of the time. The sartorial transition between *hanbok* and *yangbok*, rather than from *hanbok* to *yangbok*, resulted in particular colonial modernity of dress and fashion practices within Korean society. The dichotomy between the two dress systems was rather nuanced, complicated and multifaceted in relation to local modernities, fashion in Korea and how they evolved in the colonial and modern settings of the society. Since the dawn of the enlightenment, and despite the seemingly decayed and gloomy period of the colonial era, modern fashion in Korea indeed materialised along with the vernacular modernisation of the traditional *hanbok*, and interacted, contended with the Western *yangbok*, across colonial and Western fashion discourses.



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