

1960년대의 네루 스타일 - 미국 남성복식에 미친 인도복식의 영향 -

김혜경

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Nehru Style in the Sixties: Indian Influence on American Men's Fashion

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Abstract

1960년대와 70년대 초기 미국은 인도의 음악, 철학, 종교, 복식 등, 다양한 문화 양식에 관하여 강한 관심을 나타냈고, 이는 청년층의 반문화적 행동유행에 의해 시작되어 전반적인 사회계층으로 확산된 문화현상의 한 예로 설명되었다. 이에, 본 논문은 *Gentlemen's Quarterly*와 *Sears and Roebuck Co. Catalogue*를 이용하여 수집된 자료를 내용분석법으로 처리하여 미국 남성복에 나타난 인도복식의 영향과 사회계층별 차이점에 관한 실증적인 연구를 시도하였다.

연구결과에 따르면, 이 시기의 미국 남성복식에 보여진 인도의 영향은 주로 네루 스타일의 복식(Nehru jacket/suit, Nehru collar, Nehru hat)과 Indian sandal과 jewelry, tie-dye와 madras로 의복, 직물, 악세서리 등 다양하게 나타났다. 그러나, 인도복식으로부터 받은 영향의 내용과 정도는 사회계층에 따라 그 차이가 뚜렷하여, 중류층에서는 제한된 종류의 스타일이 단기간 동안 채택되었으나, 상류층에서는 다양한 스타일이 비교적 오랜 기간 동안 지속되었던 것으로 밝혀졌다. 이러한 결과는 중류층의 남성복식이 새롭고 비관습적인 스타일의 채택에 대하여 보수적인 양상을 띠는 것으로 해석된다. 더불어, 인도복식의 영향이 1968년을 절정으로 나타남으로서 이 시기의 사회변화가 복식에도 그대로 반영되고 있음을 보여주고 있다.

Key words: Nehru style, 1960's, American men's fashion, Indian influence;
네루 스타일, 1960년대, 미국남성복식, 인도복식의 영향

I. Introduction

Our social inheritance is modified by the changes that occur in the social and cultural

environment, and each historical period leaves its visual evidence in the fashion of the times. For this reason, the social and cultural environment in which people live is crucial in analyzing fashion process. One of the features of America in the 1960's was a widespread fascination with Indian culture. The adoption of Indian philosophy, religion and clothing in America has already been

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identified as a key element of the counter-culture by earlier writers. The countercultural youth in the sixties turned to what they considered as a more natural way of life, often manifested in an interest in Eastern culture, including Indian costume styles(Nunn, 1984).

Some costume historians(Kemper, 1977; Bernard, 1978; Black and Garland, 1980; Russell, 1983) asserted that the spread of Indian influence through American culture followed a "trickle-up" diffusion pattern, beginning at the grass-roots level among young people and eventually reaching elite, high-status populations. However, the author indicated that the Indian styles were appeared widely in American women's clothing in all social classes in the late sixties(Kim, 1998).

Therefore, the purpose of this paper was to examine the Indian influence as it appeared in American men's fashion sources and to determine whether there were any differences between high fashion and mainstream fashion in their expression of Indian styles.

II. Literature Review

The social and cultural change in the sixties embraced everything new from clothing to politics(O'Neill, 1971). The cultural transformation which had altered the Western social structure was often reported as the work of countercultural youth. It was widely known that youth in this period was experimenting with alternatives in social mores, in living arrangement, in politics, in values and religion, and also in dress(Glock and Bellah, 1976). They developed their own style in dress and other activities. Some writers noted that the countercultural youth in the sixties were often seen dressed in costumes borrowed from oriental culture, including the ones from India(Horn, 1975; Nunn, 1984; Roszak, 1969; Kim, 1997).

Furthermore, some costume historians(Ewing, 1974; Dorner, 1974; Kemper, 1977; and Lurie, 1981) indicated that the mainstream fashions of the sixties were associated with the youth counterculture in many ways. According to Kemper(1977), the young expressed their rejection of society through creating their own fashions and had a considerable influence on the world of fashion by the end of the sixties. Also, Lurie(1981) discussed that ethnic costume styles adapted from oriental cultures became high fashion temporarily during the late sixties and early seventies.

The impact of youth counterculture in the sixties and early seventies on the rest of the American society has been characterized as social confusion in many facets of culture, including costume. Kemper(1977, p. 148) suggested that revolution in dress in the sixties originated with the young and "percolated upward" into high society. Black and Garland(1980, p. 263) recognized that in the sixties fashion was invented by "the very young element of society" and it was connected to other segments of population by sophisticated communication. Bernard(1978), in her book, *Fashion in the 60's*, discussed that the culture of the hippies beginning around 1968 "triggered off" new fashion trend and had a strong influence on British designers as well.

However, the earlier study on American women's fashion in the sixties by the author(Kim, 1998) proved that all different social groups—the youth subculture, upper-class, and mainstream people—contributed to the establishment of Indian-influenced fashion to a certain extent during the sixties and early seventies. It will be interesting to see how the extent of the Indian influence differs between men's high and mainstream fashion.

III. Method

Fashion magazines and mail order catalogs were used to track the appearance of Indian styles in men's fashion from 1960 to 1975. Three criteria determined the selection of periodicals for mainstream and high fashion: First, the periodicals should contain a large amount of information covering the time period. Second, each periodical should be among the most highly circulated for a specific social class. Finally, each periodical should be recognized as directed to a specific social class. *Gentlemen's Quarterly* was chosen to be used as the sources of data for high fashion; *Sears and Roebuck Co. Catalogue* for the middle class mass market, the mainstream fashion. "High fashion"

refers to those styles accepted by a small group of people of recognized taste and authority (Anspach, 1967; Klapp, 1969; Rosencrantz, 1972; Troxell and Stone, 1981). High fashion styles are generally introduced, produced, and sold in small quantities and at relatively high prices. "Mainstream fashion" refers to those styles accepted by mainstream society.

A combined method of content analysis and frequency seriation was used to analyze the data. The frequency of appearance of Indian styles was counted with predetermined categories. The unit of analysis was a single costume style with a verbal reference and/or a visual representation pertinent to Indian influence in men's dress in every issue from 1960 to 1975. The frequency was plotted against a time line representing the period. The pattern of the influence was summarized to its frequency and duration (Table 1). The numerical analysis of each year is displayed in Fig. 1.

Table 1. The frequency and duration of Indian styles

Styles	High Fashion frequency(duration)	Mainstream Fashion frequency(duration)
Indian Sandal	4 (1960-61)	0
Madras	56 (1960-72)	9 (1963-66)
Nehru Collar	16 (1967-68)	1 (1969)
Nehru Jacket/Suit	32 (1967-68)	0
Nehru Hat	8 (1968)	0
Indian Shirt	1 (1968)	0
Tie-Dye	3 (1970-72)	0
Total	120	10

IV. Results and Discussion

The results of the study were incorporated from the total 130 items classified by style categories over the 16-year period. Out of this data, 120 items were obtained from *Gentlemen's Quarterly* and 10 items from *Sears and Roebuck Co. Catalogue*. As shown in Table 1, Indian influence was appeared in a variety of clothing items, including dress, accessories, and fabrics. A total of seven Indian styles were found in men's fashion. These Indian styles were Nehru jacket/suit, Nehru collar, Indian jewelry, Indian sandal, Nehru hat, madras, and tie-dye. The result of the content analysis indicated that the high fashion source showed more variety of Indian styles and more frequently than the mainstream fashion source. Most Indian styles found in the

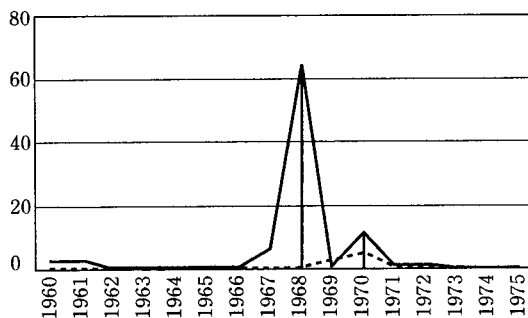


Fig. 1. Seriation of total frequency of Indian styles

high fashion source were not appeared in the mainstream fashion source. Madras and Nehru collar style were the only two styles shown in both high and mainstream fashion sources.

1. Indian styles appeared in high fashion sources

All of the seven Indian styles listed above were found in men's high fashion source (Table 1). Madras and Nehru jacket/suit were the most frequent styles appearing in men's high fashion source. Most styles in men's high fashion source appeared after 1967 except for two styles, Indian sandal and madras. Among them, Nehru styles—Nehru jacket/suit, hat, collar were the most popular styles which appeared for a short period from 1967 to 1968.

As shown in Fig. 1, the Indian styles were mainly appeared between the time period of 1967 and 1972. The Indian styles stopped appearing in men's fashion after 1973. The overall peak of Indian influence appeared in 1968. The peak shown in 1968 can be attributed to the wide acceptance of the Nehru styles. This result may be directly related to the Indian-oriented youth countercultural behavior which emerged during the same period.

The Indian styles unique to only a high fashion source were Indian embroidery, jewelry, sandal, and Nehru jacket/suit and Nehru hat. Nehru jacket is a man's slightly fitted and single-breasted jacket with a band collar. The term, Nehru, was derived from the Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru suit consists of high-collared Indian-type jacket and matching tight trousers (Fig. 2). According to *Fairchild's Dictionary of Fashion*, Nehru jacket was adapted in the late 1960's from the type of coat worn by Indian maharajahs. It was reported in the *Gentlemen's Quarterly* (February 1968, p. 98) that a

Nehru suit was first introduced in 1967 by Feruch, a Paris designer. According to this source, the Nehru style was the only Indian-influenced style borrowed from Europe. De Marly (1985) suggested another theory, in which Nehru suit became popular after the film, 'The Guru', came out in 1968. Jason McClosky in his article, "The men's fashion revolt: Aquarius Rising" (*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, March 1970, pp. 106–145), discussed the sixties men's fashion and suggested another theory on the adoption of the Nehru style. In this article, the Nehru style started on Carnaby Street in England in 1964 and later in 1968 it was picked up from the young and then translated by Oleg Cassini from the psychedelic and Indian extreme to the tailored mean. He pointed out the Nehru style as "the most interesting and briefest fashion phenomenon" of the sixties (*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, March 1970, p. 117). The Nehru style was considered to be a fad rather than a fashion since it was popular only for a short period.

Nehru collar denotes a neckline which has a



Fig. 2. Nehru suit (*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, Feb. 1968, p. 99)

standing band collar(Fig. 2). Nehru collar is similar to a Chinese collar or mandarin collar, which is distinguished by the squared edges of the front opening. In this period, Nehru collar was shown widely in the men's wear such as coats, shirts, jackets, sweaters, raincoats, and cardigans, including also Nehru jackets and Nehru suits. Nehru hat(Fig. 3) was often seen worn with Nehru jackets and coats. It was made of various fabrics, especially of printed silk, and it resembled in appearance the U.S. Navy hat. It has been a symbol of the National Congress Party of India.



Fig. 3. Nehru hat by Oleg Cassini(*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, Oct. 1968, p. 32)

Indian jewelry was either imported from India or made in the United States with Indian-influenced designs. In India, men also wear jewelry such as a necklace of beads, often with a heavy pendant(MARG, March 1970, p. 43). A necklace was found in this study as Indian jewelry(Fig. 4).

Tie-dye, or bandhana, fabrics represent one of the oldest Indian techniques(Jayakar and Irwin, 1956). It was made by folding fabric and tying at intervals, then immersing it in dye and unfolding

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Fig. 4. Beads from India(*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, Dec. 1968—Jan. 1969, p. 154)

to reveal irregular motifs(*Fairchild's Dictionary of Fashion*). The name, 'bandhana', is derived from Hindu, 'bandhnu', meaning a method of tie-dyeing. Various kinds of fabrics were tie-dyed including velvet and silk as well as suede in this period. Indian sandal and madras were the two styles appeared in the early part of the sixties. Indian sandals were made of the water buffalo leather and worn by both men and women in hot regions of India. It consists of a sole held on to the foot by thongs over the first toe(Fig. 5). Madras produced in India is "a fine cotton, hand-loomed in a variety of striped, checked, or plaided patterns in the Madras section of India" (*Fairchild's Dictionary of Fashion*).

Indian vegetable dyes bleed when washed. This



Fig. 5. Indian Sandal(*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, May 1961, p. 117)

effect was called "bleeding madras".

Similar domestic fabrics produced to imitate Indian madras as well as the imported genuine madras fabrics were found(Fig. 6).

2. Indian Styles Appeared in Mainstream Fashion Sources



Fig. 6. Madras(*Gentlemen's Quarterly*, May 1960, p. 44)

As shown in Table 1, Indian influence in men's mainstream fashion was limited to only two styles— madras and Nehru collar. Also, the number of Indian styles were very minimal for the entire period as shown in Fig 1. Madras was found to be a rather popular item in mainstream fashion source and it appeared for many years, 1963–66. On the contrary, Nehru collar appeared shortly only in 1969. This suggests a fad, rather than a true fashion. As a whole, it was interesting to note that very few Indian–influenced items were found from the Sears and Roebuck Catalogues. This result was possibly due to the particular characteristics of these mail order catalogs, which generally known to have conservative and traditional styles rather than up–to–the–minute kinds. Another reason can come from the small number of issues published per year. Therefore, the direct comparison of the frequency of each Indian style from different social classes was avoided.

Differences were also found among the styles appeared in high and mainstream fashion sources in terms of the degree of elaboration and the price. The styles shown in high fashion were more elaborate and highly priced. On the other hand, the same styles shown in mainstream fashion were distinguished by their low prices.

This may be related to the characteristics of the mail order catalog, in which the relatively low price is an important selling point to the mainstream consumers.

Different ways and degrees of cultural authenticity were observed in high and mainstream fashion in incorporating the Indian styles into contemporary American culture. Some of the Indian styles, such as Indian jewelry, sandal and hat, appeared in high fashion source were very similar or identical to the original Indian styles.

Though, all of the Indian styles appeared in mainstream fashion sources were transformed in form and meaning. For example, the Nehru collar style in mainstream fashion source was adapted in the night gown, instead of in the form of outerwear as it was intended to be used originally.

V. Conclusions

Though the Indian influence on fashion in the sixties and the early seventies was often ascribed solely to youth counterculture, it is evident that different social groups— high and mainstream social classes, responded to the appeal of Indian culture in different ways. First, the Indian styles appeared in high fashion source showed in a greater variety, more frequently, and for a longer period than those in mainstream fashion source. Second, the styles shown in high fashion were more elaborate and highly priced, whereas the same styles shown in mainstream fashion were characterized by their low price. Finally, the degree of cultural authenticity varied between them in incorporating Indian costume styles into the contemporary American fashion. The styles found in mainstream fashion were more considerably and substantially transformed in form and meaning.

In addition, the results of the study indicated that the appearance of Indian styles in American fashion in high and mainstream social classes supported the idea that fashion change during this period accompanied a concurrent change of social environment. These new, unconventional styles reflected the social disturbance or confusion of the sixties which altered the lifestyles of individuals across many social strata. The time of strong influence of youth counterculture and its interest in Indian culture was shown in the United States in the sixties and early seventies, with its climax

around late sixties. This corresponded to the time of maximum popularity of Indian influences observed in American culture in general, from 1967 to 1972. Furthermore, this study supported the belief that the American fashion of different social classes in the sixties reflected the contemporary social movements, often considered solely as a countercultural phenomenon. It is essential that we understand the diversity of that period, and not conjecture the Indian influence only as a universal fashion phenomenon of youth counterculture.

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