A Study on the Costume of The Korean-Chinese Women in Yanbian, China —Focusing on 1990's—

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Abstract

This study is to analyze Korean-Chinese women's Costume in Yanbian with factors such as reform, opening-up, economic growth, change of social values, development of technology, more education opportunities and influence of mass media. It divides the 1990's into two halves. Photos, interview, observation and relevant literature were used for this study.

Even though economy grew rapidly, they needed to purchase daily goods other than clothes. In a way that they preferred practicality, it showed somewhat it was still developing. The trend in the first half of the 1990's was characterized: first, Synthetic or artificial fibers and ready-made suits were popular; second, there still remained the men's style; third, they wore Tanrikoo(彈力榜), Tisingkoo(穩型榜), Jiaotakoo(腳踏榜) because of its properties of activeness and comfort; fourth, shoulders looked more prominent with pads as they were used in Chungsanfoo(中山殿); fifth, clothes in grey and dark blue was in fashion; sixth, they wore hand-made knit vests and sweaters and often mountain-climbing gears for its light and warm quality; seventh, along with opening-up, various materials and colorful clothes were in style, which satisfied women's desire for beauty. They decorated Hanbok(韓服), using sleeves with colors, golden ornaments, flower patterns embroidery, materials of different color in collar and tie and dyes of sleeves and skirts.

In the first half of the 1990's when the opening-up was beginning, there were diverse styles and colors in fashion, yet not close to good quality.

As the economy grew, the second half of the 1990's was characterized by good palate, individuality, favouritism on foreign goods, rapid change of fashion. For instance, fur coat and woolen fabric were favored. Economic growth led to abundance of cloth, dyes and decorative materials. In addition, people possessed more clothing and it was possible for them to wear both Hanbok and wedding dress in wedding ceremony.

People placed their standards on competency and financial ability rather than ideology. Worship disappeared and individuality arose. Therefore, apparel functioned not only as protection but as suits with aesthetic purpose. This resulted in introduction of bold style, imitation of western countries and extension of use of Hanbok.

With the help of mass media, transportation, telecommunication, contact with Korean company and civilians, Korean and western cultures, through Korea, were accepted.

Change in structure of economic status caused excessive spendings and more educational opportunities that enabled people to accept foreign culture quickly.

Values moved onto new, beautiful and better characteristics, it was possible to have suits ready-made due to improvement of mass production and cotten, wool, linen, silk became popular owing to technology.

New technology, the bases of mass consumption, increased possession of clothing and accelerated change

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of fashion.

In summary, women's Costume in Yanbian were affected by the factors in economy, politics, culture contact as well as change of society and technology.

Key words: Chinese, Yanbian, Korean-Chinese Women, Costume, 1990's

I. Preface

Costume(服飾), of which history has begun at the appearing of mankind, varies depending on nations and has continuously changed through ages. A lot of changes have been made in costume even though those changes were a little different from each other in terms of the changing speed and costume style. It was politics, economy, society and culture of each age that determined certain costume styles and changed the existing ones. Therefore, especially at the age when a wide range of changes occur; political systems and social structures change, technology and economy develop, and new trends of ideology and arts emerge; new verification and understanding of the costume needs to be made based on these various aspects of social changes.

This paper is to study Korean-Chinese women's costume in Yanbian(延邊) which has changed under the new social, cultural background followed by the social reform and opening-up in 1990's. It analyzes the costume with factors such as economic growth, changes of social values, development of technology, more educational opportunities and influence of mass media. The 1990's divides the 1990's into two halves; first half and second half. Photos,

interview, observation and relevant documents were used for this study.

II. Study of Documents

As China carried out the opening-up policy and Chinese has made rapid growth, a lot of careful studies about Chinese costume has been conducted.

Some studies conducted in the Yanbian are rather simple but very realistic. Otherwise, studies in other countries are more detailed.

The studies made within Yanbian are as follows; the study on the beauty of Yanbian costume during the period from their immigration to China to the early step of opening-up¹, the comparative study on the Korean-Chinese women's favors towards colors², and the study on Korean-Chinese women's costume changing and developing under the disharmonization between new culture and old one³. Besides, there is a study about Yanbian women's costume in ethnographical view⁴.

The studies in other country(Korea) are as the followings; the study on the costume of the period from the immigration of Korean-Chinese people to Yanbian to the early time of opening -up in 1993⁵⁾, the study on dress for wedding⁶⁾ and the study on the analysis of influence of foreign culture on their costume⁷⁾.

¹ Hai Long Jin, Korea-China Seminar for Academical Exchange, (Costume & Culture Institute, 1996).

² Kuan Xiong Jin, Korea-China Seminar for Academical Exchange, (Costume & Culture Institute, 1996).

³ Mei Hua Cai, Korea-China Seminar for Academical Exchange, (Costume & Culture Institute, 1996).

⁴ Kyung Hwi Park, Korean-Chinese's Food, Clothing, Shelter and Living Customs (Japmoondang, 1994).

⁵ Soon Shim Kim, Study on Korean-Chinese Women's Costume (Thesis for Doctorate in Hanyang Univ., 1994).

⁶ Jin Goo Kim, and Soon Shim Kim, Study on Korean-Chinese Costume (1), Costume no. 20 (1993).

These studies are of great use for understanding the costume of Korean-Chinese people in Yanbian. With the help of these documents, this study is to examine the costumes in two periods of the 1990's, first and second half, for the items, colors, styles, and material. And it also examine how these has been affected by the factors like economic state, technological improvement, increased opportunity of education and mass media. The special clothes were excluded for this study.

Socal and Cultural Background in Yanbian in 1990's

The Korean-Chinese self-governing area is located in the east of Jilin province, where is the northeastern province of China. The area adjoins North Korea, sharing Duman River as a border in the south, and Russia in the northwest. From Fangzaou in Hunchun City, a village beside Duman River, one can get a view of China, Russia and North Korea at once. And the distances from this village to Russia Hatsan, North Korea Duman River City and East Sea are only 2 km, 5 km, 15 km each. Because of this good geographical and national reason, the village attracted attentions, called as "Three Main Places" for economical cooperation of Northeast Asia nations. Large volume of trades between China and Russia, China and North Korea took place in this village and many countries invested to this place.

Korean-Chinese people in Yanbian have experienced the way foreigners thought and behaved through the trade with other countries, the emergence of foreign companies, tourism and convention. Affected by these, people in Yanbian changed in many ways.

As they accepted various foreign culture, the old standards has lost its status. Therefore, they started to promote the liberty of individual, and granted the fact that economy would grow only if the basic instinct of human for interests could be secured.

During the period of "Great Cultural Revolution", people have forced women to follow the criterion only for men, resulting in the appearing of "Iron Girl", which means girls who wore blue Chungsanfoo(中山服) and worked as much as men did. This gave Chinese women a harmful effect on their spirit and health. However, after that, Chinese women came to realized their current status and became conscious of themselves as women.

The third industry has rapidly developed in Yanbian due to its geographical and international characteristics. Korean-Chinese women, who played a great part in developing it, could meet their desire for a sense of accomplishment.

In Yanji City, there were four big markets; Western, Eastern, Henan and Underground markets. 90% out of people working there were Korean-Chinese, and 95% of them were women. They broke the old customs and carried out business successfully. In 1993, 7,245 of Yanbian women, mostly Korean-Chinese women, have been to South Korea, North Korea, Russia, Japan, etc. and earned international trading profit of 26 million won.

Once they opened themselves to foreign countries, massive foreign information has flooded into them to the extent that nobody was able to stop it.

Mass media has very wide and strong transmitting effects and power. Today, broadcasting is one of the main channels for introducing new cultures of other countries. Especially, in spite of their difference in ideology, Korean culture spreaded widely in Yanbian. It's because of Korean mass media's some advantages of having no linguistic problem and being similar in

⁷ In Hee Jung, Formation of Cultural Surroundings and Influence of Foreign Culture Showed on Korean-Chinese Women's Costume in China, Costume no. 28 (1996).

^{*} Ying Lan Yu, Problems in Korean-Chinese Women's Economical Status of New Age, Yanbian Univ. Gazette (Social Science Ed.) no. 4 (1994) p.66.

cultural base. There were several ways to get Korean broadcasts: for example, direct reception using a radio, and television or movies. According to a survey on this, 52.7% out of all the respondents answered that they had listened to Korean radio program more than once and 46.1% of them were women⁹⁾. As much as radio broadcasting, Korean TV soap operas and movies also had great effects on them. "Jealousy", a Korean soap opera televised at the end of September, 1995, attracted their great attentions. "What is Love", another Korean soap opera broadcasted on CCTV1 on June, 1998, was so popular that there was a sharp decrease in the sale of departments in Yanbian. Even except Korean TV programs, Korean-Chinese in Yanbian were watching western movies on total 19 channels everyday.

In conclusion, Korean-Chinese in Yanbian then had great interests in foreign cultures newly introduced after the reform and opening -up. As a result, foreign social culture was being deep -rooted in Yanbian people, especially to the young. The most powerful foreign culture was the homogeneous culture of western one.

As shown in the above, all these social changes in 1990's made the costume change rapidly, and offered the possibility of co-existing of various new fashion styles in Yanbian.

IV Korean-Chinese Women's Costume in Yanbian in 1990's

1. First Half of 1990's

Rapid industrial development and economic growth in the first of 1990's resulted in the social changes even in the closed Chinese society, also affecting their costume. Women's fashion style at this time showed both of masculine and feminine trends. This is because the mannish style of "Great Culture Revolution"

has not been completely disappeared and Yanbian women have got more chances to work.

As for the upper garment, shoulders looked more prominent with pads like Chungsanfoo(中 山服). And Yanbian women favored somewhat dark colors such as grey and deep blue and put on two buttons at once. Jumper style was also preferred. They often made band or rubber string on the end of each sleeve to fasten the sleeves tightly. They liked hand-made knit vests and sweaters for their economical and warm quality. And they wore weaving sweaters that were made of synthetic or artificial fibers rather than wool. They didn't generally use pure wool because woolen clothes were easy to shrink and fade in the water. They embroidered their clothes with beads and dyed them in many patterns like flowers. And they wore blouses with diverse colors and design. Laces, beads, ribbons, etc., were used to make blouses more beautiful.

Tanrikoo(彈力袴), Tisingkoo(體形袴), Jiaota-koo(脚路袴)¹⁰⁾, whose legs were tight, were usually put on for their active and comfortable quality. In 1980's, "bell-bottom trousers" with long, wide legs were in fashion, but in 1990's, trousers with tight legs were popular. The young liked blue jeans in a style of tight legs.

Printed one-piece dresses and skirts with floral patterns were also very popular, which were called "miniskirt", "long skirt" depending on their length. In spring and autumn, they wore coats, half-coats and scarf. In winter, they usually Chinese silk or flower-patterned jacket, wool coat, light and warm mountain-climbing gears¹³⁾ (a parka with artificial wool or duck feathers within it), artificial fur coat, etc.

Little girls wore short skirts and frilly blouse to look cute and comfortable. Sometimes they put on knit vests and Tanrikoo(彈力袴) like grown-ups did.

⁹ Back Chae, and Jae Hyun Lee, Korean-Chinese Journalism & Culture, National Culture Scientific Books 3, (1998) p. 147.

¹⁰ Jiaotakoo(脚踏袴), a term only used in Yanbian, is tight and comfortable pants. At each end of leg, there is loop-shaped part so that one may put his feet into them.

For Women's hair styles, they had a permanent, ponytail or applied a hair spray to their forehead to make it straight upward. Most youngsters had their cut short for the comfortableness.

For Women's shoes, they usually had on high -heels and young people liked leather or artificial leather sports shoes. In winter, they put on boots with fur or cotton wool fixed on it. The old favored both warm and light shoes. Almost every woman wore knitted cap and muffler in winter season.

At this time, people preferred synthetic fibers because clothes made of them were easy to wash and comfortable to wear. And there were not much various colors. In other words, the colors and design were rather ignored when being manufactured, except the prominent shoulders and the wide legs of trousers. But, the fact that people in Yanbian wore jeans and Hanbok more than ever showed the changes in costume clearly. There were more diverse styles and colors in fashion in 1990's than it was in 1980's. but still far from high quality. Even after the treaty of amity with Korea in 1992, Korean apparel were not common yet in this time.

2. Second Half of 1990's

In second half of 1990's, costume in Yanbian showed rapid change. The reasons of this looks like the domestic social cultural changes and the frequent cultural exchanges with Korea, Korean -Chinese women's costume came to have more types, colors, styles and materials. Dresses each Yanbian woman possessed increased in number and got better in quality.

Formal dress style was in fashion then, and people preferred new and elegant colors, design and materials.

They started to wear colorful cardigans, woolen sweaters with many patterns dyed, wool jacket 12) and skirts, pants. Jacket styles in

fashion at that time are as the followings; A jacket with wide lapel and double buttons, one with big pocket cover hiding buttons on each side of jacket, one in unique design that made lapel in a diagonal line. In this time, waist line was highlighted and people started to think colors were important. There were suits of various colors and designs, sometimes with beautiful flowers imprinted on them. There were mini, medium and maxi skirts, and also pleats skirt.

Women also enjoyed wearing colorful one -piece dress or simple elegant one. Dress style was determined by the kind of material used. Collar and waist line were specially highlighted if it was in only one simple color. In summer, they wore hot pants and sleeveless shirts.

Young people liked T-shirt and jeans, cotton pants, corduroy pants. These pants were not like the pants with narrow legs of 1990's style, but pants with tight legs. They imitated wide width pants, overalls which were popular in western societies. And they also had sports wears on as if those are their uniforms. To represent youth, they often imprinted English letters, animals on

People favored wool coat of high-quality decorated with fur on their ends of sleeves to look luxurious. Very luxurious for coat(2~4 thousands renminbi) was one of people's favorites, which proved the raised standard living after the opening up. People still liked warm and light mountain -gears, which were also improved in their textiles and colors. Leather jumper, which became even smoother, remained as one of their favorites.

A large amount of Korean ready-made suits started rushing into Yanbian and Korean dress shops increased in there. Yanbian people imported Korean textile and introduced Korean advanced technology for their domestic manufacturing.

Yanbian women usually had their hair per-

within it as 'Mountain-climbing gears'.

¹² Jacket means tailored collar in Yanbian,

¹¹ A term of 'Parker' is not used in Yanbian. They call all the clothes with cotton or duck feather

med, and often had their hair cut short to look younger and got long hair to look sexier, and also made it up-style. By mercy of the increase of Korean beauty salons, Korean hair style, including blond and brown colored hair, became popular.

They put on parasol, sunglasses, hat, etc. in hot summer, and wore scarf and uniquely designed hat for both warmth and decoration.

Shoes has become much more various and had higher quality than they had been in the first half of 1990's. And more divers types of materials such as leather, artificial leather and suede were used.

They commonly put on high-heeled shoes exposing the top side of foot in summer. And in winter, they had on various types of colorful shoes such as boots, thick-soled shoes, shoes with shoelaces or zipper, pointed, flat or round shoes, Sports shoes was still favored.

For ordinary dress of this time, more colorful and stylish clothes of high quality became general. Additionally, people began to enjoy unconventional dresses and costume types increased.

V. Factors Affecting Yanbian Women's Costume

In 1990's, because the government adhered to the opening-up policy more than ever, the whole society had remarkable changes and economy expanded rapidly. It led to the changes in sense of value and life style. These changes had great influence on costume. Most of Chinese people wore T-shirt, miniskirt, blue jeans and showed a trend toward personality and famous brands instead of just wearing clothes in vogue. Korean-Chinese in Yanbian were also effected. The factors causing these changes are as follows;

1. Economy

As a consequence of the rapid economic growth since 1992, China has started to produce a large amount of goods in demand. At that time. China was the first country to have goods in excess among the socialist states. The rapid

economic growth improved the level of Chinese people's lives. Well fed, clothed and housed people had more buying power and showed interest in beauty.

In the first half of 1990's, women preferred blended or synthetic fibers rather than expensive wool, and usually wore handy-made knit sweater. They made loosely knitted vests for hot weather. In this way, they could satisfy their desire for beauty, which was hard to be met owing to the lack of textile.

Based on the story of professor Chui, Ming -Shu of Yanbian University (female, 50yrs, old, 1997, 7, women) in Yanbian got paid more than before, they could buy many types of dresses such as ordinary dress, uniform, suits and casual wear so they might choose whatever they wanted. Sometimes they failed to put on all of the clothes they possessed over one of the seasons even though they wore different dresses each day during the season¹³⁾.

As the income had increased and people had became proud of having much private properties, they got more susceptible to changes in fashion, favored famous brands more than before, and tried to make themselves look more beautiful through diverse colors and styles.

Not like the first half of 1990's when they chose dark colors like grey and black, people in this time wore dresses in more bright colors like orange, yellow, pink and red. Especially in the second half, people preferred dresses in two colors than those in single color. And their liking for well-known brands increased. In winter they usually wore woolen coat and half coat. The rich often wore very luxury fur coat costing 3-4 thousands renminbi to show off their wealth.

It is assumed that economic growth caused more various kinds of textile, high-quality, variety in colors and design and style.

2. Politics

Before the opening-up, the government used Chungsanfoo(中山服) for political purpose to promote a sense of unity from the propertyless

class. However, after the adoption of practicalism by Deungsopyung, western fashion style was introduced and then ideological usage of costume have been disappeared.

In this time, ideological problem between socialism and capitalism could not govern people any more. Chinese started bringing and imitating western styles. Chinese people wore T-shirt with English letters on it and pants with flower patterns, had their hair dyed just like western people, exposed their shoulders and put on sunglasses. But no one criticized these kind of fashion for ideological reason any more.

3. Cultural Exchange

Yanbian has been greatly effected by cultures of other countries for its geographical and national characteristics.

1) North Korea

In spite of the treaty of amity with South Korea and the declined economy of North Korea, North Korea maintained its effect on Yanbian until early 1990's because Yanbian and North Korea has shared their borders for a long time and people in two regions often visited each other. In early 1990's, some shops remained selling shoes and bags made in North Korea in Yanji City.

2) South Korea

South Korea influenced material, manufacturing method and size system of Yanbian. When spandex was used to make western suits in South Korea, Yanbian imported them directly. When narrowed shoulders and highlighted waist line was popular in South Korea, so was in Yanbian. Most of all, the liking for cotton clothes was entirely from South Korea. People began to call sizes of wear as "Size 77, 66, 55" instead of "Large, Medium, Small", just like Korean did.

Korea had considerable influence on wearing style of Yanbian people. The young were inclined to wear jeans and T-shirt, and they chose to wear floral pattern imprinted pants and more colorful dress as they grew older.

3) Other Countries

In the second half of 1990's, with the return of Hong Kong to China, costume culture of Hong Kong and Taiwan have flowed into Yanbian. Many youngsters liked those clothes, both expensive and cheap ones. It was natural that Yanbian people, living in one of Chinese provinces, had accepted the culture of Han nation continuously. But unlike most other people, Yanbian people did not much like shoddy clothes.

4. Society

Several social surroundings affected together to decide certain costume style. Additionally, the fact that anyone had a chance to move up to higher social class influenced the fashion.

Positive attitude toward changes made the removal of old customs easier and the adoption of new trend faster.

Korean-Chinese women in Yanbian, who were more educated than any other nations in China, could accept new trend or reject it on their own will. They favored costume of high quality, avoided wearing weird ones, and sought after beauty of high level using pants, shirt, sweater, jacket and coat. Their desire for consuming more goods and possessing new, beautiful and good things increased. Thus, they wore clothes to create beauty and show their personalities rather than to protect their bodies from the cold, etc. More colorful and tight wear was all over Yanbian, from single blue clothes Chinese government forced to have under the principle of equality. Their increased sense of beauty was reflected on not only clothes but make-up, footwear, hat and other accessaries.

5. Technology

Pure wool had been disliked due to its shrinking property in water. But technology improved this remarkably so that many people became fond of wearing woolens. Moreover, a large amount of clothes made of cotton, linen, silk was in need in Yanbian. As for cotton, it had been hard to get stain out in the past, but in this time, people used cotton in many types of clothes thanks to the technological development. Cotton was widely used for it was economical, durable and beautiful.

The development of manufacturing technology helped improving the quality of clothes in many aspects. It gave rise to the massive consumption of clothes, causing a trend of using new textile properties and increase number of dresses each person possessed. Therefore, It changed the function of dress, from the means to protect their bodies into those to show their personalities. And it accelerated the changing speed of fashion. Thermoplasticity of synthetic fabrics was used to make pleated skirts. Artificial fur and leather was helpful in producing clothes of diverse styles.

VI. Conclusion

This study is to analyze Korean-Chinese women's costume in 1990's Yanbian and the factors affecting their costume. It divides the 1990's into two halves; the first half and the second half for more detailed study. With this as a base, it analyzes each factors affecting their costume; economy, politics, cultural contact, social change and technological development. The conclusion is as follows;

1. Economy

In the first half of 1990's, they thought practicality more important than high quality. China was in disorder as other developing countries were. Thus, clothes in single color, clothes made of synthetic or fibers were common. Custom suits was more popular rather than ready-made ones. However, in the second half of 1990's, continuous growth of economy enabled people to wear expensive fur and woolen. Well-known foreign brands were imported to Yanbian. Economic growth caused plenty of materials, increased number of clothes each one had and speedy change of fashion.

2. Society

People didn't judge each other under the ideological criterion any more, and considered ability and wealth important. In addition, they started showing their own personalities instead of worshipping only one man. These made it possible for people to wear clothes in unconventional way and imitate western style.

3. Cultural Contact

With the help of mass media, transportation, telecommunication, contact with Korean companies and citizens, Yanbian people started to accept Korean and western cultures through Korea, Korean clothes were generally used by direct import from Korea or local processing.

4. Society

Change in economy structure caused excessive spendings and more educational opportunities that enabled people accept foreign culture quickly. Values moved onto new, beautiful and better characteristics.

5. New Technology

With the successful mass consumption, ready-made clothes could be produced in great quantities. And cotton, wool, linen and silk, which had not been common in the past, became popular.

New technology, the bases of mass consumption, increased possession of clothing and accelerated change of fashion.

As metioned in the above, China had experienced great changes in its economy, society, technology, politics and culture. As a part of China, Yanbian had made changes too, that were reflected on costume.

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