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Symbolic Values of Fur in Fashion Since 1990s

- An Analysis under the Theories of Fetishism -

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Abstract

Fur is conceived as a material signifier, not only with its commodity value as luxury goods but also as its symbolic value as objects invested by one's libidinal desire. In this study, complex meanings of fur as multi-layered signs of political and sexual power focusing on fetishism shall be explored, especially on the spectacle fetishism acted by mass media during the anti-fur movement in the 1980s. In conjuction herewith, a highlight shall also be made to the symbolic value in fashion design since 1990s. In this study, first, as a theoretical investigation, fetishism, that has been traditionally considered only as sexual fetishism in fashion discourse will be explored in socio-economic level. Second, in historical context, how the meanings and values of fur have become realized in various cultural spaces, such as literature, art, film and finally, fashion will be viewed.

In fashion, fur is a product of desire and power influenced by commodity fetishism as well as sexual fetishism. During the anti-fur movement, mass media has developed the concept of spectacle fetishism. Fur is a sign of animal-victim, and fur-clad women is viewed with images full of imperialsm, sexism and racism, thus act as derisive spectacles of consumerism. Since 1990s as a reflection on anti-fur movement, fetishistic characteristics, which challenge traditional operation method, are expressed by disguise, parody, and returning to the nature. First, fur as disguise is intended to hide sexually perverse, decadent characteristics and expensiveness of fur by texturing or patterning techniques. Second, fur as parody uses fake fur or dyed fur in order to satirize erotically and ethnographically fetishized meanings of fur. Third, aboriginal design of fur is adapted to use symbolic values outside the West, which can potentially mobilize antagonistic oppositions out of their fetishistic regimes. In conclusion, fur as sign of female sexuality and its libidinal profits of exchange, has significant symbolic values expressed in fashion.

I. Introduction

Fur is conceived as a material signifier, not only with its commodity value as luxury goods but also its symbolic value as an object invested by one's libidinal desire.[1)] In this study, complex meanings of fur as multi-layered signs of political and sexual power focusing on fetishism shall be explored, with an emphasis on the spectacle fetishism acted by mass media during the anti-fur

movement in the 1980s. In addition, an highlight shall also be made to the symbolic value in fur fashion design since 1990s.

As Walter Benjamin sees, fetishism which is based on sex appeal of the inorganic is the vital nerve of fashion. Fashion is the very topos of fetishism, as a place of oscillation between the inorganic and the living.[2] The world of fur fashion is the place where symbolic meaning and values of fur granted by sexual and commodity fetishism take active roles. Therefore, it would be meaningful to analyze symbolic values of fur in fashion, especially now, after the confusion of anti-fur/pro-fur movement.

In this study, first, as an introduction, fetishism that has been traditionally considered only as sexual fetishism in fashion discourse will be explored in socio-economic level. Second, in historical context, the realizations of the meanings and values in various cultural spaces, such as literature, art, film and fashion will be viewed. The sumptuary laws of England from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth century, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's late-nineteenth-century novel <Venus in Furs>, and twentieth-century Hollywood films are the main focus of this historical consideration. Then the characteristics of symbolic value ot fur expressed in the anti-fur movement in the 1980s are investigated. Finally, aspects of the representation of fur's symbolic value in fashion design since 1990s are analyzed. As research materials, theoretical works on sociology and cultural studies are reviewed first and as secondary visual materials, fashion collection reviews and fashion spread in popular magazines are selected.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Fetishism: Concept and Theory

Fetishism was derived from fetish. Through an object, fetishism seeks for an alternative satisfaction of human desire by fantasy. Fetish was originated from a Portugese word "fetiço" which means an incantation or an amulet such as a crucifix, a rosary, relics,[3] as first used as a scientific term by a French philosopher Charles de Brosses in 1757. Defined as an interest in, and also a respect or worship to a visual object, the concept of fetishism was originated from the initial developmental stage of ancient religions. Fetishism has been studied in various academic fields for more than last two and a half centuries, ranging from anthropological studies in primitive religion to the psychoanalytic theories of the sexual deviation, and socio-economic theories of the commodity.[4] William Pietz arranged theoretical discussion of the fetish in historical context focusing on the influence on art history and aesthetics, tying various discourse in various fields in the meaning of the fetish, and thus finding interactive reference in fetishism.[5] Laura Mulvey, who built up a feminist film theory on fetishism by adopting Freudian and Marxist theories, said that, in a wide viewpoint, fetishism endows man-made object self-sufficiency and self-regulatory power.[6]

Historically, fur acquired its value not only as luxury good, commodity and an article of trade but also as an object invested libidinal desire. Fur has produced a wide range of symbolic values in arts and cultures, and also has signified literary works, visual materials and films, configuration of which provides complex meanings of fur in current scene. As a sexual fetish, and the

popularity of fur coats in the twentieth century as essentially a feminine fashion commodity, fur was libidinally codified. As commodity fetish, fur appears to fulfill the needs of a modernized capitalist society. Also as a libidinal fetish, fur has become the object which creates such needs.[7] In this study, two major fetishism theories will be discussed to understand fetishism which influenced the symbolic values of fur.

1) Sexual Fetishism

According to Freud, fetish is 'substitute for the penis' and used it as a central concept for the regulation of sexual subjectivity of man and woman in psychoanalysis. According to the scenario of the primal scene, a boy disavows the mother's lack of a penis and projects a substitute as a sort of compensatory mechanism. Sexual fetishism represents a defensive strategy against the fears and fantasies of castration and the threat of disempowerment. In the Freudian perspective, fetishism is an inevitable procedure for a man to pass through in order to be a heterosexual, since it endows a woman characteristcs of sexual objects and freed from the possibile homosexuality.

"Fur and velvet are fixation of the sight of the pubic hair, which should have been followed by the longed-for sight of the female member," Freud said. Fur fetishism is intimately linked to the tactile sensation associated with fur and also, its history as a sign of absolute power and mastery.[8]

This Freudian sexual fetishism is closely associated with sexual deviation such as transvestism, sado-masochism, and voyeurism. Consequently, studies on clothing behavior based on sexual fetishism have focussed on individual clothing fetishes, such as corsets and shoes, in the subcultural context or, sex appeal and sexuality. Lately the fetishistic meanings of fashion as commodity in the consumer culture context are viewed, as Valerie Steele commented, a current trend which deals with fetishism in psychoanalytic and socio-economic perspective.[9]

2) Commodity Fetishism

In Marxist theory, commodity fetishism is interpreted to be a false consciousness and alienation that finds spurious gratification through consumption by consumers. Lacking class consciousness, workers who produced objects attribute to them a secret value, which gives each consumer item the quality of a social hieroglyphics which need to be decoded.[10] Workers posit a fetishistic ideal, endowed with meanings and values that are intrinsic, mythical and immutable.

Commodity fetishism is found in an illusory state where products become commodity with no trace of human labor. As society evolves, products created by human power and wisdom

<Table 1> Sexual Fetishism and Commodity Fetishism

desire for sexual satisfaction ⇨	Object (Fur)	⇨ fantasy (distortion of reality)
desire to consume exchange value ⇨		⇨ aesthetic simulation

lose their utility value, endowed with new value according to the exchange relations among other objects. Then the products become objects naturally regarded as if products had their own values without any evidence of human endeaver. Marx compared the relations between humans concealed in the products with mystification of religious world, saying that the outcome of human intellect appears as self-restored, independant figure, making certain relations among themselves as well as along with the human beings. The fetishistic characteristics of commodity is generated by the unique social characteristics concerning commodity. The manufacturers and producers contact with society only through the exchanges of products of labor, and the social characteristics of their private labor is also presented by exchange.[11] Ever since the Sixteenth Century, a capitaist society has been defined as a society with the relations among commodities. The contents of production no longer matter much. The regulations of the effects of exhange value and their codes are conceived as having significant importance. New relations among the commodities are created with all the fantasies and absurdity which are surrounded by the products of labor on the basis of manufacturing commodities. Now the complex interactive relations which should have been formed by humans along with others are displaced with the relations between commodities and their exchange possibilities.[12] Because of the commodity fetishism, the object, which is formulated within the phantasm of relations between the human and the commodities, has come out as an independant being granted with its own life.

As Laura Mulvey pointed out, the Marxist concept of fetishism stems from the matter of the inscription; the problems of the inscription about the actual object is originated from the fact that the value fails to be inscribed in the commodity. The sign of value comes to be marked onto the commodity in and around the difficulty of establishing the exchange value of actual objects produced under Capitalism.[13] Furthermore, commodities are displayed in the market with glamorous appearance stimulating purchasing desire of the consumer. The spectacle with splendid appearance is presented when the references of the objects become vague. Man becomes to prefer the perfect world of spectacle in a social structure where the process of manufacturing dominates man while man does not dominate maunfacturing process.

Fur, with its exchange value as a commodity, sexual fetish and luxury goods, has been circulated as a material signifier, of which the meanings are attributed and the values are accrued. In the social production of values for fur, transactions necessitate recognizable codes of exchange and put those codes of exchange into circulation in order to produce the effects of identification. In the Twentieth Century the configuration of the symbolic values of fur has explicitly feminine connotation given to wealth and prestige. In addition the practice of putting the meanings and values ascribed to fur into motion in the symbolic world rests with female spectacle. Therefore, observing historial background which has given symbolic meanings and values to fur and understanding current symbolic value of fur would reason the fetishism inscribed to fur.

2. The Symbolic Value of Fur in Historical Context

1) Symbolic Value of Fur in Sumptuary Laws

The sumptuary law is a kind of regulation the ruling class formulates whenever class distinction is not visualy possible in a social structure where mobility crossing the classes are almost impossible. It appears whenever the ruling power in a society did not coincide with the economic power, that is, the ruled class with economic power imitates the ruling class.[14] Frances Elizabeth Baldwin distinguished the motivation for such legislation in threefold:

(1) the desire to preserve class distinction, so that any stranger could tell by merely looking at a man's dress to what rank in sosiety he belonged;

(2) the desire to check practices which were regarded as deleterious in their effects, due to the feeling that luxury and extravagance were in themselves wicked and harmful to the morals of the people; and

(3) economic motives: (a) the endeavor to encourage home industries and to discourage the buying of foreign goods, and (b) the attempt on the part of the soverign to induce his people to save their money, so that they might be able to help him out financially in time of need.[15]

Here Baldwin elaborated distinction between economic factors and libidinal interests, those desires that will preseve class differences and maintains a strict moral codes of behavior, disclosing the tension between hedonistic consumprion and ascetic restraints.

The libidinal investments in the symbolic production of fur can be traced to the sumptuary laws of England from the Fourteenth Century to the early Seventeenth Century. Flauber's definition of fur—"Sign of Wealth"—is one of the expression of the signifying force of sumptuary laws which were exercised over time. In Edward III's 1363 Act, fur was mentioned only in those items related to the apparel of knight and clergy. The sumptuary law of 1365 attempted to dictate that grooms, servants and the employees of urban craftsmen should only wear cheap woollen cloth, while merchants worth £1000 were permitted to wear silk and some fur, and knights worth £1000 could dress at their pleasure with the exception of ermine.[16] Around the same time in France, Phillip le Bel was also restricting the use of ermine for members of Royal household.[17] Henry VIII in 1510 forbade men under the degree of a lord from wearing any cloth of gold and silver, sables, or woollen cloth made out of England. The 1533 Act went farther in detail to limit prized furs like black genet(the skin of the civet cat) only for the royalty.[18] The hierarchical values attributed to fur were confirmed by various authors of fashion history. Anderson Black commented about the use of fur in the Thirteenth Century, saying that sheepskin, badger, muskrat, cat, and other coarse furs were used by the lower class, while the pelts of finer, rarer and smaller creatures were only within reach of the very wealthy.[19]

Laws issued by almost all of the kings and queens of England from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth Century mentiond fur only related to the apparel of knights and clergy, establishing fur apparel as ideological codes of economic status and wealth. In a sense, the laws had virtually recognized the fact that people of all classes could and would wear furs if they could afford them. Sure is the fact that these legislation assisted fur to have a symbolic value as luxury goods by codifying fur as luxurious, extravagant item for the ruling class.

<Fig. 1> <The Ambassadors> (1533) by Holbein. <Costume and Fashion> p. 84

<Fig. 2> Man licking the Shoe of a woman in a fur coat, ca. 1937 (Kinsey Institute) <Fetish> p.145

The hierarchy of furs and social class created by these regulatory measures also influenced the notions of sexual propriety among different classes of women. Acts forbidding prostitutes to wear fur were an attmpt to set a moral order. In terms of sexual morality, the distinction between the 'respectable' and the 'fallen' women was regarded with significance. A British Parliamentary ordinance of 1355 attempted to police this distinction, saying no known whore should wear any hood or fur.[20] Its fundamental purpose is evidently to protect the morals of the community by forcing prosstitutes to wear distinctive clothing, so that everyone might be able to distinguish them from the respectable women citizens.

The effect of the sumptuary laws to the symbolic values of fur could be summerized as follows; (1) by systematically codifying fur garment styles as signs of wealth and privileges, sumptuary laws helped to define class differences, and (2) by forbidding prostitutes to wear fur, they helped to relate fur garments with sexual propriety.

2) Symbolic Value of Fur in <Venus in Furs>

With feminine despotism in the guise of fur-clad, whip-wielding woman, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's late Nineteenth Century novel <Venus in Furs> provided the theoretical context of psychoanalytical constructions of sexual fetishism, masochism and sadism. In this drama of surrogate mastery where power is willingly shifted by a man to his mistress, fur fetishism is a central prop. The Venus of the novel, Wanda, figures as an elaborate sexual metaphor for cruelty and violence. And the male antihero, Severin places himself in the role of sexual slave.[21]

Richard von Krafft-Ebing interpreted this sexual perversion in this novel as masochism, and since the late Nineteenth Century this novel became known as a psychosexual dramatization of masochism and sadism full of sexual fantasies.[22] The fetishistic obsession to fur apparel and the representation of the erotic scene in the text are based on the pleasure from suspense, waiting and denial experienced in masochistic fantasies.[23]

Freud classified masochism, which means sexual perversity seeking sexual pleasure from being abused by the sexual partner, into three types, of which "female fetishism" in the subject is the commenest and less problematic. Sexual fetishism is a defensive strategy against the fear and fantasies of castration, and the sexual fetish exists as a kind of device a masochist uses in order to soften anxiety toward power loss and impotence. When a masochist accepts the experience of castration and "becomes a woman", he projects his loss to an external object, that is, sexual fetish. Here, the masochism has to be understood as a "self-inflicted act of reverse mastery. Best way to win over the unavoidable fear of castration is to become a female masochist. Through this novel Masoch created a female tyrant in fur and velvet in fiction, and thus, masters the reality.[24]

Felski examplified <Venus in Furs> as a concealment in masculinity and feminization of writing, quoting Deleuze's reading comprehension. The sexual fetishism in this novel has formed the sexual appeal of the inorganic. The materiality of the naked woman's body has removed, and the alien device such as whip, fur coat, or elaborate clothing becomes an object of erotic stimulation. Unlike the common belief, the control over the structure of fantasy comes from man's desire, and the woman only exists as his duplicate, saying what he wants to hear and acting as he want her to do. <Venus in Furs> ridicules traditional iconography of patriarchical order through the rearrangement of sexual power relations in imagination. On the other hand, it reconfirms male-centered world view and existed sexual hierarchy in the end. The author idealized sexually-deviated tyrant woman, but denies her active power and self-consciousness. Woman, as the other of male subject, functions as a stimulator for the pursuit of male idealistic figure.[25]

Also, the figure of fur-clad feminine despot could be read as a charged characterization of a European fantasy of Oriental despotism. Concurrent European expansion was constitutive of fur's cultural inscription. <Venus in Furs> depicts a map which shows the crossings of desire and power, imperialistic and sexual conquest.[26] According to the <Orientalism> by Edward Said, all Western discourses on the East are determined by the will for domination over Eastern territory and nations. Orientalism promotes stereotypes of the binary opposition representation system, which distinguishes and essentializes Oriental and Occidental identities with fixed differences between Europe and Asia. As a result, the Orient is represented as silent, sensual, feminine, despotic, undeveloped and irrational, while the Western as masculine, democratic, rational, dynamic and progressive.[27] The figure of female despot, emerged as a possessor of sexual violence and the imperialist, Wanda in <Venus in Fur> specifies the European fantasy over the Oriental despotism.

3) Symbolic Value of Fur in Hollywood Cinema

In the late Nineteenth Century and throughout the Twentieth Century, fur coat has emerged

primarily as an object of female apparel. A bourgeoise woman who purchases, acquires or wears the fur coat is a reader of the codes of prestige, wealth and femininity. She then produces and reproduces the symbolic and material interests of fur. She has also been emerged as an exemplary token in the libidinal investments of the sexual exchange of women's bodies. Fur signifying the signs, meanings, and values of bourgeoise class affiliation was expressed in the Twentieth Century Hollywood cinema.

Women's representation as a subject of modern consumer related to this symbolic value of fur. In the late Nineteenth Century, the consumer was represented solely as women, participating modern experience by taking responsibility for purchasing. A woman was described as a passive human being, seduced by glamorous phantasm of newly arrived consumer culture. The monumental gate of the international exposition held in Paris in 1900, for example, was decorated with a flying figure of a Parisien woman, wearing tight skirt, ship-shaped headdress symbolizing the city of Paris, and evening coat made of faux fur.[28] Women's desire for commodity was considered as legitimate, though trivial, officially acknowledged as an acceptable form of desire, which retailers and tradesman tried to stimulate with allures of extravagant window displays. Having lost her

<Fig. 3> Ginger Rogers in <Lady in the Dark>(1944) <Fashion in Film> p.47

self-control, woman was portrayed as a purchasing machine being led by impulsive urge to spend money for accumulation of her possessions. The cliché of the greedy female buyer implies a way of thinking, which influenced attitude toward modernity and popular culture, even in the twentieth century.[29]

In the early Twentieth Century the fur coat began to circulate as an object of female consumption, and the figure of fur-clad woman "emerged as an exemplary token in the libidinal and political investments of the sexual exchange

<Table 2> Symbolic Value of fur in historical context

	sumptuary laws	<Venus in Furs>	Hollywood cinema
historical period	14-17th century, England	late 19th century	20th century
symbolic value of fur	meaning of luxury goods	meaning of object of erotic desire	meaning of female commodity
related concept	sexual morality	female despotism/violence	female consumer/pleasure
objectifcation	object for the class-distinction	object of erotic desire	object of libidinal desire

of women's bodies."[30] A silent film <The Joyless Street (Die freudlosse Gasse: 1925)> by G. W. Pabst traces the significance of a fur coat as an object of credit in a mode of sexual exchange. His film dramatizes an imaginary resolution of the material contradiction bourgeois women face as producers and reproducers of symbolic value—that is, their production of symbolic value as a substitute for their lack of access to material value. Here, she deploys a powerful eroticism, already inscribed in the commodity and sexual fetishisms attributed to fur in order to become a figure of power.

Film, a medium criticized as perfectly fetishistic by modern culture critics, is a site where you could find hundreds of attractive actresses in fur associated with highly sophisticated sexual approach. Hollywood cinema, especially femme fatale movies in the 1930s and 1940s delivers the symbolic meaning of fur as female commodity, fetishizing the actresses and the fur coat at the same time.

3. Anti-fur Movement in 1980s

During the 1980s anti-fur movement by the animal right organization such as Lynx, PETA and Greenpeace has effectively challenged the fur industry and its profit margins. Fur sales were reportedly dropped by 75 percent between 1985 and 1990. Especially in U.K., anti-fur movement became a metonymic sign for the environmentalist movement and its hegemony in the domain of political struggle.

Animal right activists used the mass media as a vehicle for adjusting public opinion about buying and wearing fur. According to the promotional literature of the anti-fur campaigners, their aim was "to create a new climate of opinion which ensures that wearing fur garment is no longer acceptable." In this way they could attack the fur industry depriving it of the customers of fur products, and consequently reducing the number of animals killed for their fur. This is being achieved by a "spectacular and innovative advertising campaign using billboards, bus shelter posters and cinema commercials, which show the unpleasant reality behind the glamourous image portrayed by the fur industry."[31]

The media campaign set out to implicate the cruelty to aminals not only the fur industry but, by virtue of her complicity in wearing a fur coat, the female bourgeois consumer. Hanif Kureishi incorporated the anti-fur attack on women into his screenplay for Stephen Frears' film <Sammy and Rosie Got Raid>(1987). Near the conclusion, the feminist, anti-imperialist and lesbian activist in the film crosses behind the property developer's wife and spray-paints and "X" on the back of her long sable coat. Here the figure of the white, heterosexual, fur-clad bourgeois woman was "a feminist allegory on the limits of gender in representing economic violence capital-intensive property development, an accessory to the crime of exploitation and oppression". The figure of the fur-clad bourgeois woman holds a remarkable degree of symbolic power.[32]

<Fig. 4> Lynx Anti-fur Poster(1984) <The Cultural Politics of Fur>. p.25

Anti-fur lobby also significantly influenced the symbolic values of fur, especially by the seductive power of image the campaigners used. It used images that reminded already symbolically invested signs of social distinction. By implicating the cruelty to animals, not only the fur fashion industry but, by virtue of her complicity in wearing the fur coat, the female bourgeois consumers become the immoral beings. Its images by a spectacular advertising campaign, whose photos reproduced precisely for the fetishistic voyeurism that dominates its spectral perception, used the spectacle fetishism depicting bourgeois female consumer as morally responsible for the exploitation and oppression of other human and animals.

The images show the spectacle fetishism acted by mass media. According to Emberley,

> The advertising medium is one ideological apparatus of the representation capable of disseminating political as well as commercial interests... [and] the astheticization of political events is a highly profitable enterprise, capitalizing as it does on the twin currencies of provocation and mystification. In the case of Lynx the distinctioin between the political and the commercial seemingly all but disappears as the high production values of its protofashion images provide a protective gloss for the simulation of its political agenda... [The advertising campaigners] used seductive power of the image, especially high-production-value fashion images of sumptuously clad fur-bearing fashion model, though turning this images to other purposes.[33)]

The spectacle of the media culture dramatizes and justifies existing oppressive power.[34)] And yet this figure also serves to deny such women power where they exercise it—as symbolic agents who through the visual display of their bodies must manipulate the field of symbolic power to gain class affiliation and commodity-based material wealth.

On the other hand, the imagination in mass culture depends on the power of attracting the audiences, representing collective fantasy and fear in a biased and obscured way. Allegory, an expression method which presents reality metaphorically suggesting similarity at the same time, is used for manifestation of the abstract to the tangible. The aesthetics of spectacle depends only on excitement from the appearance and the denial of the reference, concealing the link of cause and result. Adherence to the appearance leads to a rejection for realizing reality underneath.[35)]

The reality underneath the spectacle of fur-clad women in the images of anti-fur campaign is not different from that in fashion photo in general. The

<Table 3> The Fetishization process in the 1980s

Object		value		fantasy
Fur	+	luxury goods sexual fetish female commodity	→	female spectacle in class-distinction, racially charged superiority

fashion photo is "reproduced precisely for the fetishistic voyeurism that dominates its spectral reception."[36] Anti-fur movement, which attempts to change consumer habits by guiding the masses through guilty politics in the property of environmental movement, methodically used the spectacle fetishism delivering existed prejudices on the symbolic values of fur.

III. Symbolic Values of Fur in Fashion Since 1990s

Since 1990s, acknowledging the concept that fur as one of "natural" fiber and therefore, ecologically more beneficial than any synthetic fibers was accompanied with pro-fur movement which recognizes the economic conditions of the indigenous hunters and the Third World fur-factory workers. That is, anti-fur movement has become a movement which suggest the global political and economic powers could threat people's lives who live outside the First World metropolitan areas.

The mainstream fashion industry adjusted its representation of fur in terms of clothing styles, advertising, and fashion spread in magazines. New fur fashions reject the previous notion of "dumb blonde" and launched informative advertising campaign strategy. As the fashion journalist Jeffrey Weiner commented, women of nowadays wear fur with clear consciousness and without consideration of its relation with social status. New images of fur-clad woman is smart, young, sexy and ultra-modern look.[37] As a result, it is noteworthy to point out that the fetishistic characteristics, which challenge traditional operation method, are expressed by disguise, parody, and aboriginal designs.

1. Disguise

In September 1992, the New York Times Magazine featured a fashion spread titled "Furs in Disguise".[38] In order fo maintain access to this luxury good, new modes of representation were given as a new vogue. Furs were cut, patterned, and texturized to foreground their "artificiality" as well as to create the illusion that fur resembled fabric. The techniques of disguise masked the use of real fur and further abstracted the product from its association with the central anti-fur referent, the fur-bearing animals. Karl Lagerfeld for Fendi used fine, clipped fur which could not be recognized as real fur, minimizing its tactile characteristics.

On the other hand, fur accessories, such as handbags, shoes and hat were to disguise the

<Table 4> Symbolic Value of Fur expressed in fashion during the 1990s

	Meaning of luxury goods	Meaning of object of erotic desire	Meaning of female commodity
Disguise	Patterned or cut to look like fabric	Textured or clipped fur	Fur accessories (handbags, shoes, or hat)
Parody	Fur dyed in unconventional colour	Animal print fabric or fur mimics characteristics of fur in wildlife animals	Fake fur
Aboriginal designs	Functionally designed fur	Fur design with Eskimo motifs	Popularization of inexpensive fur

<Fig. 5> "Furs in Disguise"(1992) Maximillian Alta Moda <New York Times Magazine> 9/27/1992

<Fig. 6> Fendi 99 a/w. Milan collection. <Vogue Korea> 1999. 5

<Fig. 7> Fendi 99 a/w. <Vogue Korea> 1999. 5.

meanings of fur coat as an expensive female item, as fur was shown as an accent in small detail.

2. Parody

Departing from ideological representation of fur through the use of decadent, materially excessive and elitist commodity, the symbolic values of fur are also parodied. Feminist visual artists recreate the images of women which highlight the playfulness of their own way of reading and seeing the world, and subvert dominant and mainstream representation of women in male gaze. It is an attempt to displace the emphasis on negative and oppressive images and construct instead a discourse that centers on the liberatory possibilities of female viewing practices and pleasure, as Suzanna Danuta Walters commented.[39] Judy Olausen's parodic images of a 1950s-style representaion of women in fur are one of the examples. These images bring us closer to the dialectics of pleasure in their re-presentation of the sterility of mass media images

<Fig. 8> Mother in Camouflage, Judy Olausen <The Cultural Politics of Fur> p.135

<Fig. 9> Givenchy Fox fur jacket <Vogue Korea>. 1998. 10

<Fig. 10> Gaultier, J. P. at MTV Awards in 1995. <Fashion Today> p.86

<Fig. 11> Vivien Westwood (1996), <The Man of Fashion> p.188

of white middle-class women depicted as agents of consumerism.[40] <Fig 8>

Dyed fur in unconvetional colour parodies the sexual fetishistic character of fur in conventional colour of black, which has been recognized as natural colour for a mink coat. Fake fur is also introduced in high fashion in order to satirize symbolic values of fur as a expensive, female commodity. Animal print fabric or fur mimics characteristics of fur in wildlife animals, and thus ridicules their provoking, tough images.

Worn by male models, fur's meaning of female commodity and object of erotic desire are doubly satirized by erotic images of men in fur.

3. Aboriginal Designs

In aboriginal designs, the symbolic values of fur are put into question and thus the fetishism attributed to sexual and cultural differences is mobilized. History of costume in the Western World, which has been believed in the developmental logic of style and put the origin of clothing in the functional adornment of primitive men, has misread fashions of the native purely functional, not with symbolic values and meanings.[41] In trying to avoid eurocentric viewpoint, influenced by feminism and postcolonial theories in the 1990s, the symbolic meanings of fur are recognized as outcome of the historical and cultural specificity, and thus the fetishism associated with the meanings is questioned. The aboriginal designs intend to introduce the symbolic meanings of fur for people outside western culture.

The meaning of luxury goods, the meaning of object of erotic desire are questioned in the aboriginal fur designs of Lang and J. P. Gaultier. Lang's sporty fur signifies functional values, and Gaultier's Eskimo-inspired fur intends to adopt symbolic values of fur among the Eskimos. Inexpensive furs from rabbits or squirrels, which have become increasingly popular in spite of the meaning of high-priced, female commodity also

<Fig. 12> Helmut Lang 99 a/w. <Vogue Korea> 1999. 5

<Fig. 13> Gaultier <Fashion Today> p. 347

<Fig. 14> YK038, fur from rabbbit. <Vogue Korea> 1999. 1

question existed symbolic values of fur.

IV. Result of Research

In fashion, fur is a product of desire and power influenced by commodity fetishism as well as sexual fetishism. As a sexual fetish, fur was libidinally codified, and as a commodity fetish, fur appears to be an multilayed object. In this study, Freudian and Marxist fetishism theories were discussed in order to understand fetishism which influenced on the symbolic values of fur. In conjunction herewith, the meanings and values of fur, which become realized in various cultural spaces, such as literature, art, film, are reviewed in historical context. The sumptuary laws of England from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth century, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's late-nineteenth-century novel <Venus in Furs>, and twentieth-century Hollywood films were the main focus of this historical consideration.

During the anti-fur movement in the 1980s, mass media has developed the concept of spectacle fetishism. Fur is a sign of animal-victim, and fur-clad women were viewed with the images full of imperialism, sexism and racism, thus act as derisive spectacles of consumerism. Since the 1990s as a reflection on anti-fur movement, however, fetishistic characteristics, are expressed by disguise, parody, and returning to the nature in an effort to challenge the traditional operation methods of fur.

First, fur as disguise was intended to hide sexually perverse, decadent characteristics and expensiveness of fur by texturing or patterning techniques. Second, fur as parody used fake fur or dyed fur in order to satirize erotically and ethnographically fetishized meanings of fur. Third, aboriginal design of fur was adopted to use symbolic values outside the West, which may

potentially mobilize the antagonistic oppositions out of their fetishistic regimes. In conclusion, fur as sign of female sexuality and its libidinal profits of exchange, has provided significant symbolic values expressed in fashion.

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