

The Study of Children's Costumes Historical in Enlightenment Period of Korea⁺

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Abstract

This study was aimed at reviewing kinds and characteristics of children's costumes in consideration of their social and cultural backgrounds and particularly, those of children's costumes during the period of Enlightenment following Chosun dynasty and thereafter. Namely, this study focused on children's costume history in view of not adults' costume miniatures but their own concept. It is deemed very significant to review the history of our traditional costumes and thereby, express their decorative features with our contemporary sense. Its results can be summed up as follows:

Strictly speaking, the period of Enlightenment can be defined as the one from Gwangwhado treaty in 1876 through annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, but it may well extend until our emancipation from Japan in 1945. By 1890's, children's costumes remained almost traditional, but since then, the Chimas as well as Jeogori and breast tie began to be narrower. Particularly, Children's Jeogori began to be narrower with their breast tie disappearing gradually. By 1910's, children's costumes had changed much, with the breast tie replaced by the buttons and the longer Jeogoris.

Key Words : Children's Costumes, Enlightenment Period, Jeogori

I . Introduction

In Korea, researches into costume history have evolved with multi-faceted themes and in diverse ways. Costumes have been influenced by politics, society, culture and art of the time, creating their unique forms based on the aesthetic standards of the time.

Particularly in our contemporary society where the socio-structural controls have been abolished much, characteristics of the costumes seem to be determined by individuals or groups sense of aesthetics. On the other hand, we have been inheriting the traditional modes of costumes as valuable cultural assets. We may well be proud of the outstanding tradition as well as the aesthetics

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of costumes, which must be represented by the traditional 'Hanbok'.

In order to clarify the origin and sources of our traditional costumes, we need to review almost all of their cultural elements, which must be very difficult, but we may well examine how our traditional costumes have evolved by surveying literature, remains, paintings, folklore and other data.

Since we were born, we have been inseparable from clothing. Since we were born, we have always been dressed to live a stable and rich life in aesthetic, practical and psychological terms. For children, the costume is not simple clothing but a part of their living body, and therefore, costume means more than clothing. In this sense, costumes are more meaningful to children than adults.

After all, it has been found that children's costumes had been tailored from adults' rather than designed for themselves. Thus, this study was aimed at reviewing kinds and characteristics of children's costumes in consideration of their social and cultural backgrounds and particularly, those of children's costumes during the period of Enlightenment following Chosun dynasty and thereafter. Namely, this study focused on children's costume history in view of not adults' costume miniatures but their own concept. It is deemed very significant to review the history of our traditional costumes and thereby, express their decorative features with our contemporary sense.

II. Methods

This study focused on children's costumes during Enlightenment Period reviewed their characteristics, colors and patterns. First, as a

result of reviewing the preceding studies, it was found that children's costumes during Enlightenment Period could be divided between pre-school and post-school ages. Hence, this study narrowed its focus on the costumes for the children aged between 0 and 7.

Since few children's costumes remain from Enlightenment Period, it was difficult to check them directly, so it was inevitable to review the relevant literature. And because it was also difficult to divide children's costumes between earlier and late Enlightenment Period, this study reviewed children's costumes at large through the entire Enlightenment Period. The scope or time span of this study was limited to Enlightenment Period because it is the nearest period when our history and culture were well preserved. After all, it was decided to review children's costumes during Enlightenment Period in terms of their kinds, colors and patterns.

III. Results

1. Children's Costumes in the period of Enlightenment

Strictly speaking, the period of Enlightenment can be defined as the one from Gwangwhado treaty in 1876 through annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910, but it may well extend until our emancipation from Japan in 1945. Since 1876 when Chosun dynasty was forced to sign the market-opening treaty with Japan in 1876,¹⁾ she began to be modernized, accommodating the Western civilization. Thus, our traditional Hanbok culture also began to adapt itself to the mixed costume culture of Hanbok and Western dress.

Anyway, as the active costume culture began to be introduced to Korea, such Western cults

as one-piece Chima, full dresses and permanent hair styles were popular, and the Korean people would be familiar with the Western dresses, umbrellas and high heels. By 1890's, children's costumes remained almost traditional, but since then, the Chima as well as Jeogori and breast tie began to be narrower.

Particularly, children's Jeogori began to be narrower with their breast tie disappearing gradually. By 1910's, children's costumes had changed much, with the breast tie replaced by the buttons and the longer Jeogoris.

Since the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, the costumes began to be more practical than ever before, and especially since 1939, the closely fitting clothing and other simpler clothing such as nursing uniform emerged.

On the other hand, in 1889, Lady Louis Borenicht designed an apron keeping the food from staining clothes, heralding a news of ready-made Western kids' costumes. By 1890, she began to introduce some popular ready-made dresses instead of expensive tailored ones only to strike an unrivalled success in the market,



<Fig. 1> Family Photo(1890)²⁾



<Fig. 2> Pounding Grains in a Mortar(1890)³⁾



<Fig. 3> children's costumes(1900)⁴⁾



<Fig. 4> A Girl with a Plait of Hair Hanging down Her Back(1900)⁵⁾

since which the children's costumes would begin to be mass-produced to be popular.⁸⁾

The year of 1914 would witness a full-scale industrial production system for children's ready-made costumes; before then, the absolute majority of children's costumes were made at home or tailored. Since 1914, children's costumes began to be specialized depending on age groups or gender.

By 1920, children's costumes would evolve more remarkably, reflecting consumers' tastes of children's costumes.

Particularly in 1930's, films would influence children's costumes much, and the example was Rosenau who would continue to grow into a world-class childwear supplier.¹¹⁾ In mid-1920's, childwear manufacturers would be more specialized depending on market segments, particularly age groups and gender.



<Fig. 5> Chemulpo(1903)⁶⁾



<Fig. 6> Seoul(1910)⁷⁾



<Fig. 7> Brother and Sister (1910)⁹⁾



<Fig. 8> children's costumes(1911)¹⁰⁾

2. Children's Costume in the Period of Modern

In Korea, the modern children's costume market began to be formed with 'Mammoth' of 'Taehung Apparel' in 1958, during which the absolute majority of children's costume manufacturers were petty suppliers to traditional markets.

By 1960's, the number of such petty children's costume manufacturers increased much, and only since 1970, several high-quality ready-made children's costume manufacturers began

to emerge together with a few large businesses entering into the market.

This period may well be called 'a quickening period' of children's costume; a few high-class children's costume manufacturers were emerging in the traditional markets, while some large companies were attempting to enter into the markets. In addition, some traditional markets were forming their common trademarks by market or arcade to create children's costume special markets. Nevertheless, children's costume markets could not be formed widely, while most



<Fig. 9> children's costumes(1946)¹²⁾



<Fig. 10> children's costumes(1950)¹³⁾



<Fig. 11> children's costumes(1950)¹⁴⁾



<Fig. 12> children's costumes(1950)¹⁵⁾

students still wore traditional uniforms or costumes.

By early 1970's when ready-made manufacturing technologies had still to develop, consumers were still dissatisfied with sizes, price levels, designs and/or decorations, and such a dissatisfaction with sizes and needleworks in particular would continue until late 1970's.

In 1973, the first street of Jongro would witness a new children's department store called Shinsaeng attempting to differentiate their children's costumes from those in the traditional markets. During this period, children's costumes followed adults' fashion, and in 1973, the one-pieces with frills were popular. In addition, such casual styles as blue jeans, T-shirts and pantaloons were popular together with their adults' counterparts.

The children's costume brand representing this period, particularly in 1979, was 'Babyra', which would help to open a way towards the high-class children's costumes.

During 1980's when people were more aware of children's costume owing to the economic growth, many ready-made brands began to be attractive, diminishing such traditional markets as South Gate Market dominating children's costume markets. As people's living standards were rising with lower birth rate, some parents were eager to make their children dressed unique and outstanding, and thus, children's costume markets would be more segmented. On the other hand, children's costume specifications were published, while their designers were trained. Between 1980 and 1984, children's costume would be more specialized in terms of design concepts, size specifications and colorations, while a mixed design tendency of casual and formal dress would emerge.¹⁶⁾

By mid- and late-1980's, children's costume

would look like adults' quality formal dresses, while they followed adults' fashions. This period was characterized by 'Moabang' in 1984, 'Yubera' in 1986 and 'Familia' in 1989. Later in 1990's, more new brands would emerge only to make children's costume markets more segmented. During this period, children's costume would be more influenced by the Western fashion, and the hip hop fashion was an example: coat larger than actual size or cargo pants with large side pockets, fur hats, shirts over trousers, etc.

In 1990's, consumers' lifestyles would begin to change according to internationalization, and thus, children's costume would be more diversified, detailed, specialized and improved to be established as a firm segment of ready-made costume markets, conducting to promotion of nation's apparel industry. On the other hand, some reputed designers joined hands to promote the children's costume brands, and thus, children's costume brands would be more important.

In 2000's when Missies are more influential consumers, children's costume attracts their attention more. The order of consumers' emphasis changes from price, quality and image to image, quality and price.

Thus, children's costume is being more divided and specialized to flatter the consumers' tendency towards reasonable and individualistic consumption. In addition, as the transnational distributors increases with the department stores destroying their prices, family brands and consumers' unique tastes are dictating the current children's costume markets. Besides, more diverse emotional designs are being introduced, while the children's costume using the cartoon characters are shown much in the market.

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

This study focused on children's costume history in view of not adults' costume miniatures but their own concept. It is deemed very significant to review the history of our traditional costumes and thereby, express their decorative features with our contemporary sense. It is results can be summed up as follows:

1. Since 1876 when Chosun dynasty was forced to sign the market-opening treaty with Japan in 1876, she began to be modernized, accommodating the Western civilization. Thus, our

traditional Hanbok culture also began to adapt itself to the mixed costume culture of Hanbok and Western dress. Anyway, as the active costume culture began to be introduced to Korea, such Western cults as one-piece Chima, full dresses and permanent hair styles were popular, and the Korean people would be familiar with the Western dresses, umbrellas and high heels. By 1890's, children's costumes remained almost traditional, but since then, the Chima as well as Jeogori and breast tie began to be narrower. Particularly, children's Jeogori began to be narrower with their breast tie disappearing gradually. By 1910's, children's costumes had changed much, with the breast tie replaced by the buttons and the longer Jeogoris.

2. The modern children's costume market began to be formed with 'Mammoth' of 'Taehung Apparel' in 1958, during which the absolute majority of children's costume manufacturers were petty suppliers to traditional markets. By early 1970's when ready-made manufacturing technologies had still to develop,

consumers were still dissatisfied with sizes, price levels, designs and/or decorations, and such a dissatisfaction with sizes and needleworks in particular would continue until late 1970's. During 1980's when people were more aware of children's costume owing to the economic growth, many ready-made brands began to be attractive, diminishing such traditional markets as South Gate Market dominating children's costume markets. In 2000's when Missies are more influential consumers, children's costume attracts their attention more. The order of consumers' emphasis changes from price, quality and image to image, quality and price.

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