

## A Study on Colors of the Asian Look Influenced by East Asia Folk Costumes

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### Abstract

Folk costumes in East Asia are characteristic in their colors of the five-element colors based on natural colors or achromatic colors (such as white or black) that imply the beauty of nature or the beauty of naivety. The Asian look adopts forms of Asian costumes into western costumes in terms of structure, silhouette, ornament, pattern, and color; in particular, color had very limited attributes. This study is a comparative study on colors, shown in East Asian folk costumes and the Asian look. It discovered the differences of color in East Asian folk costumes and the Asian look to discuss the backgrounds of difference. For research, it simultaneously conducted literary reviews and empirical research based on the Asian look. Asian colors that appeared in some costumes of the Asian look were influenced by East Asian costumes, while the primary color of playfulness or color for low chroma or black exuding a contemporary nuance (common in the western fashion) were prevalent. This revealed that the costume that had the attribute of playfulness in terms of structure, ornament, or patterns is adopted in western fashion through the fusion of eastern forms and pastiche. Colors of the Asian look are different from those of East Asia with superficial imitation, in which all the East Asian spirits and symbolism are lost. While folk costumes of East Asia hold symbolism derived from Asian spirits, the Asian look disintegrates the ideology of East Asian costumes and replaces it with a Postmodern playfulness.

**Key words:** East Asia folk costumes, Traditional costumes, Asian look, Colors of costumes

### I. Introduction

Costume has a feature of high visuality. In particular, the most perceived factor of costume in the eyes of the people is a figurative feature. Colors of costume reflect faiths, values, and moral values of a society as well as an idea of beauty. Their formation is the influence of society's structure and their technological levels. The forms of folk costumes in East Asia have been formed under the influence of the Eastern aesthetics based on religious ideas. The colors in folk costumes are also varied. Most of all, the five-element colors based on the Yin and Yang concept and the characteristics of achromatic colors or natural color are conspicuous. When decen-tering in the 20th century

western fashion was distinctive, interest in other costume culture, out of the international universal style, in which Christian culture is in the center, was increasing. Representative case in the western fashion was the creation of the Asian Look based on imagery geography, imagery history, and imagery subjects (Kim, 2004). The Asian Look has had a long history. It has been gradually proliferated as a style of costume, continually appearing in the western fashion from the mid-late 20th century to the present, and the flow of globalization has brought about the proliferation of the Asian Look in the western fashion without being confined to the westernization of the Asian costume. In particular, since the mid 20th century, interest in the west by the hippie subculture, the emergence of Japanese designers, the opening of China, the growth of Japan, diverse issues of the Middle East, and the

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spread of Asian culture have affected the proliferation of the Asian Look (Seo, 2007). The emergence and spread of the Asian look are attributed to various causes; yearning for eastern mysticism, the disillusion of western materialism, the pursuit of beauty due to the spread of multiple design motives as well as Orientalism (Said, 1995), which is the movement for securing the superiority of the western values through depreciating the eastern values. Regardless of where causes are originated, the Asian look adopts eastern costumes or eastern styles in terms of structure, silhouette, adoration, and colors in the western costumes. However, color in the Asian look of the West has very limited attributes among the factors that are recognized as eastern characteristics, because it may be difficult to predicate the eastern characteristics only with colors, separately from the structure of costume or adornment. In addition, on account that the five-element colors have the characteristics of strong visuality, complete adoption of it in the western fashion is hardly seen. Accordingly, the necessity of study with regard to the colors of the Asian look that is distinctive in the western fashion, and difference with eastern costume, which have played a role of Asian look's ideas, is raised.

This research aims to conduct a comparative study of folk costumes in East Asia and the Asian look, which has been under the influence of eastern folk costumes. Most of all, the ultimate purpose of this research is to clarify the differences of colors in folk costumes of East Asia and the Asian look and to examine the formation and backgrounds of their differences. It is expected that this research will contribute to the approach intrinsic characteristics in dealing with differences of both eastern and western costumes. This research performs the empirical study based on the Asian look in Western collection. The research scope is confined to only three countries of East Asia: Korea, China, and Japan to enhance research outcomes since cultural and geographical similarities are high in these countries. In addition, the era is limited after the year 2000. Most existing studies have paid attention to the colors and forms of Asia folk costumes or colors and forms of the Asian look. However, this research finds its meaning and differentiation in that it conducts a

comparative study by focusing on colors and discusses intrinsic values of the eastern costumes and the western costumes based on color.

## II. Concepts of Folk Costumes and the Asian Look

### 1. East Asia and Folk Costumes

40 countries in Asia are classified into several regions according to various standards. Firstly, East Asia includes Mongolia in the northern part and several countries of Southeast Asia as well as well Korea, China, and Japan. However, Mongolia is classified as Central Asia that has the similar climate environment and culture. In particular, 10 countries of Southeast Asia may be distinguished from East Asia due to the tropical climate, religious difference and cultural differences. Accordingly, this research sets limits to three countries; Korea, China, and Japan with the exception of Mongolia and the Southeast. What these three countries have in common are that they are close geographically and share the culture of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. These countries are especially known as the circle of Confucianism and the Chinese character culture.

Folklore is a living condition that is grounded in an everyday's life and culture of a nation whose living tradition has been handed down from the past and present. It shows a strong vitality and finds its new significance all the time (*Britannica World Encyclopedia* 8, 2002). Although folklore is a traditional life culture, which is spread all over the world, it repeats the extinction and reduction due to the evolvement of early industrial society in Eastern Europe society. However, it has revealed a strong power of transmission in Africa and South America as well as Asia.

Folk costumes are cultural products of a society, which wear those costumes. Korean Hanbok, Chinese Cheongsam, Japanese Kimonos and Indian Saris are referred to as folk costumes, representing the environment and customs of a society as well as their spirits. According to folk costumes, they are clothes that contain the unique characteristics and tradition of a nation in terms of their unique history, custom, reli-

gion, values, tastes, subject matter, and technological status. Eicher and Sumberg (1995) define that folk costumes are physical wearing or adornment for representing cultural heritage and traditional clothes, showing the past of community members, and accessory. In a more strict sense, folklore is confined to the culture of civilians. However, in traditional culture, which is connected to the contemporary times, high culture and basic culture are mixed. Therefore folk costumes are to be seen as an expanded concept as transmitted and uniquely worn costumes, going beyond the common people's costumes that have the unique characteristics of each country. In this context, folk costumes are often mingled with traditional costumes that include costumes of traditional society. In addition, since folk costumes should have the feature of the present according to the historical elapse over a certain period of time, they are different from traditional costumes, which are recorded in literatures or seen in the museum to some degree.

Folk costumes are occasionally used as non-western dress except for the western dress in the western society (Baizerman et al., 1993). While contemporary fashion of the west has changing attributes, folk costumes are regarded as being traditional because it does not undergo a change. Therefore, the word, 'Fashion' is rarely used with reference to the non-western clothing system (Niessen, 2003). According to 'Fashion' theories, clothes which are characterized as being traditional transcends times (Jones, 2003). Therefore, folk costumes have the attributes of continual culture, which has not changed for a long time, but 'Fashion' which has the attributes of change. Everyday dress in these three countries of East Asia has been changed into a westernized dress, but it is still favored by people in important events like holidays, festivals, and wedding ceremonies. Even then, there are some regions that still wear folk costumes as an everyday dress. In addition, folk costumes are maintained and succeeded by efforts of each country for inheriting and developing regionalism and traditional culture.

## 2. Globalization and the Asian Look

Historically, eastern costumes have had a significant effect on western costumes. As designers need

to create new masterpieces for each season, reviewing past styles of the East, which has long been seen as the subject of mysticism and yearning, is often a great source of inspiration. With the introduction of Chinese silk through the Silk Road, the silk that has the patterns of the dragon or phoenix was produced in the 14th century (Steel & Major, 1999). With the influx of Islamic culture due to the Crusades and the eastern costume factors of the Baroque and Rococo times, the characteristics and factors of eastern factors in the West are adopted in Western costumes. Since the 17th century, Indian gowns have been worn by western men and women indoors, and the Chinese hair style called 'pigtail' began to gain popularity for soldiers and spread then to general people. Fascinating eastern style has continually been adopted in the living culture of people in a vigorous way. Back in the early days when non-European styles were accepted as exotic tastes there was no discrimination of the particular country of origin. China, Japan, and India were all seen as one and the same despite their differences. Napoleon's expedition towards Egypt gave birth to the creation of Orientalism in France. As a consequence the turban became popular (Steel & Major, 1999). The costumes of Turkey and Northern Africa were the symbols of wealth and affluence for the English gentlemen in the 19th century. While the kimono style robe was favored as a tea time gown or a dressing gown for the women of the upper class.

Most of all, the influence of P. Poiret was great in the emergence of the contemporary fashion. He attracted the sensational popularity of the eastern style with the performance in Paris of the Russian Ballet in 1909 and the party of theme, 'The Thousand and One Nights' in 1911. Fantastic atmospheres are invoked with eastern motifs such as Tunics and harem pants, feather decorated turbans, a long pearl necklace, oriental colors, kimono sleeves, obi belt, and so on (Kim, 2009). The retro style invoking the nostalgia of past appeared in 1950, and became stronger in 1980's. The skirt of the exotic print and Sarong style were influenced by Southeast Asia and widely worn by western society. Hippies contributed to the development of Eastern culture into western fashion in the late 1960s (Steel & Major, 1999). With displaying of African-style dress

by Y. S. Laurent in 1967, folk costumes became demonstrated in haute couture. Increasing interests in Asia caused by the expansion of exchange in the economy and diplomacy in the United States and China in the 1970s and the economic growth of Japan has had an effect on the society of the fashion world.

Numerous fashion theorists including G. Simmel have maintained that fashion phenomenon occurs in a rapidly changing industrial society. This underpins the theory that clothing forms of many regions in the world represent the regional development (Niessen, 2003). Recently, we have seen that a variety of styles and designs from each region are accepted into the fashion world. We have witnessed the shift of fashion from the domination of the west to the multicultural fashion. (Skov, 2003) The emergence of the Asian look in the center of the western fashion and the maintenance of its existence are in line with the huge cultural phenomenon; postmodernism and disintegrative and amusing culture, which emerged in the latter period of the 20th century. Clothing structure in folk costumes and exotic tastes of patterns and decoration are combined into the functional and closed forms of western costumes, showing playful and open forms of costume.

The concepts of beauty were different in each era and each cultural realm. However, the difference of beauty concepts in each cultural realm is narrowed in the globalized era. In addition, the characteristics of times are taking up the great part. It is difficult to negate the fact that globalization brings about a widespread change in life and social organization because globalization alters the results of modernization as well as tradition (Albrow, 1996). Therefore, globalization can be defined as the process of being one world in one place of the whole world. (Robertson, 1992) Therefore, a new trend in accordance with contemporary senses intensifies the characteristics of the global era, which are commonly accepted in almost every cultural realm, and there is no exception in the tendency of costume fashion. People who are bored with the homogenized and stereotyped western costume due to the globalization of fashion take an interest in past costumes or exotic tastes. This explains the reason for continual fever of the Asian look and the settlement of it on the central stage.

### III. Characteristics of Colors in East Asia Folk Costumes and the Asian Look

#### 1. Characteristics of Colors in East Asia Folk Costumes

Religious belief system and concepts are expressed in costumes through myriad symbols, revealing the concepts of holiness. Religious symbols are conspicuously visualized with extraordinary decoration or color, but they are restrained by strict regulations of a religion or faith and show the oppressive costume culture. Such religious effect on the forms of costumes has had an enormous effect on values in Asia for a long time.

The forms of folk costumes in three countries of East Asia have been affected by eastern aesthetics based on religious ideas. They have dominated the spirits of East Asia regions. In particular, religions, which are a basis of eastern aesthetics have the characteristics of coexistence as well as embracing feature in comparison with the exclusive western religions. Put simply, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism have coexisted in China, while Shamanistic faith characterized with Taoism as well as Confucianism and Taoism has been spread in Korea. In addition, a national religion, Shinto, influenced by Confucianism and Taoism, has coexisted with Buddhism in Japan. Eventually, three religions; Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism and the philosophies of these religions laid a foundation for contemporary Asian culture, and the costume styles have been under the absolute influence of these religions. Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism have repeated risen and fallen according to countries and times. The ideas of these three religions have a lot of similarities. In addition, even in the decline period of a particular religion, the effect of religious ideas was still pervasive. In this regard, the costumes of Korea, China, and Japan have received the influence of three religions evenly. Over the last couple of centuries, the tradition of East Asia has been destroyed due to the invasion of the western culture and globalization. However, the forms of costumes as well as the tradition and spirits of East Asia have remained under the influence of eastern religions.

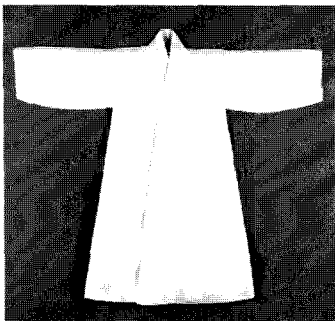
The figurative characteristics of folk costumes in

East Asia are shown in the unstructured full outline of the clothing that wraps the body with an amorphous type, emphasis of chastity and moderation, solemn decorations in Buddhism and shamanistic decoration. The colors of East Asian costumes are also under the influence of three religions, showing the preference for low-chroma colors including natural color and achromatic colors such as gray, black, and so on. In particular, the tradition of favoring white color through regarding white as pure and precious color appear in China as well as Korea. While in the case of Japan, the white color symbolizes purity and serenity. This is the eastern concept of color that include several ideas; the ideas of non-action, spontaneity, relativism, and emptiness of Taoism, the restraint of color under the ascetic view of Confucianism as well as forms of perception or idea of feeling, seeing the manifestation of desire as evil. These characteristics were widely shown in clothes such as the garments of the literary men, everyday dress, mourning dress, and ceremonial dress, symbolizing the solemnity and integrity as well as religious costumes such as robe. In addition, these characteristics are also shown in jacket called "Simui" in harmony of black and white, gray robe of Buddhist monks, the full-dress attire, round outer garment of black, restrained general dress, and the costumes of the Chinese Qing dynasty.

In the white costumes as shown in the <Fig. 1> and <Fig. 4>, spirits of nobility and integrity are imbed-

ded, while, <Fig. 2> is the costume of a frugal identity with the wearing of a white jacket and black skirt. Meanwhile, <Fig. 3> showing Cantonese and Hakka woman's burial jacket and skirt, and a head-dress of <Fig. 5> reflect the idea of color-restraint. The nobility of white color and grace are dwelt in the costumes of <Fig. 6>-<Fig. 7>.

Most of all, colors of costumes influenced by Yin and Yang and the five-element ideas are conspicuous. In particular, it is not an exaggeration to say that the five-element colors; yellow, blue, white, red, and black under the principles of five-element ideas account for all colors in the costumes of East Asia's cultural realm. The five elements symbolize fire, earth, wood, metal, and water, and they also represent center and four directions. The five elements colors by five elements are five colors: red, yellow, blue, white, and black, while the five secondary colors are green, dark blue, sulfurous yellow, and purple. In costumes, the five elements colors were mainly used, but occasionally the five secondary colors were used. The five-element colors are found in many clothes such as a jacket with sleeves of multicolored stripes, shamanism costume, clown costume, traditional costumes of several races in China, and traditional patterns of Japanese costumes. In addition, clothes such as official robes, colorful ceremonial costumes of three countries including Korean Hwarot used the five-element colors in consideration of the Yin and Yang principle, the rank in intermediate color



**Fig. 1. Durumagi, worn by former president, Lee Seung Man.**  
From Kyungwoon Museum. (2004). p. 9.



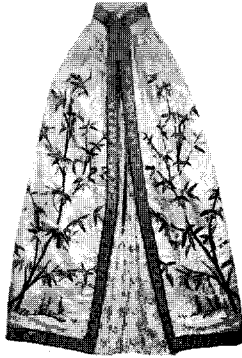
**Fig. 2. Cheering squad of North Korea, Busan Asian games.**  
From Departure of North Korean cheering squad from the Incheon international airport. (2005, 9. 5). [www.wyonghapnews.co.kr](http://www.wyonghapnews.co.kr)



**Fig. 3. Cantonese and Hakka woman's burial jacket and skirt.**  
From Garrett. (2007). p. 175.



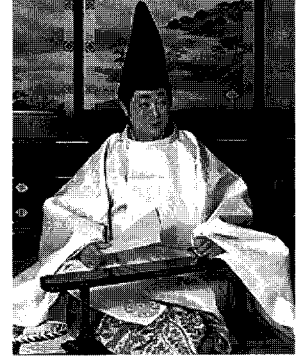
**Fig. 4. Wearing of simui, portrait of Lee Che.**  
From Geum. (1994). p. 85.



**Fig. 5. Head-dress of a Chinese woman.**  
From Wu. (1986). p. 410.



**Fig. 6. Traditional wedding costume in Japan.**  
From Wedding Kimono. (2011).  
www.ourworldheritages.



**Fig. 7. Costume of a Japanese noble.**  
From The Life of the Nobility.  
(1988). www.iz2.or.jp

of five-element colors, as well as the symbolism and incantatory meaning. The harmony in 'a green jacket and a red skirt' or 'a yellow jacket and a red skirt' implies the arrangement of colors considering the Yin and Yang five-element ideas and mutual antagonism and mutual beneficiaries. Traditional Korean Kkachi durumagi in <Fig. 8>, Hwarot in <Fig. 9> contain the symbols of wealth and honor as well as good health and long life. A xia pei stole in dark silk in <Fig. 12> and Red satin wedding gown embroidered with peonies and phoenixes appear in <Fig. 13>. Various patterns are expressed with five-element colors in the Kimonos in <Fig. 15>. The Ornamental Jacket called Sam-hoejang Chogori <Fig. 10> shows the arrange-

ment of color under the principle of mutual beneficiaries of Yin and Yang five-elements, while the Shamanist costume in <Fig. 11> contains the symbol of preventing bad spirits with the harmony of yellow and red.

Aesthetic values, shown in colors of East Asian costumes are classified into 'the beauty of emptiness,' 'the beauty of nature,' and 'the beauty of symbol.' These aesthetic values are discovered in the forms including the structure of costume. In particular, 'the beauty of emptiness' and 'the beauty of nature' are manifested in color as well. In addition, 'the beauty of symbol' is expressed with the incantatory symbolism of telling fortunes and the symbolism of classes and roles.



**Fig. 8. Child's Kkachi durumagi.**  
From Lee. (2003). p. 342.



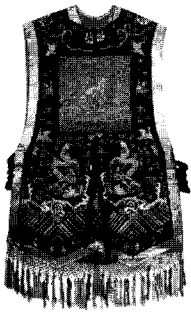
**Fig. 9. Hwarot in Korean wedding.**  
From Yoo and Kim.(1998)  
p. 282.



**Fig. 10. Sam-hoejang Chogori.**  
From Social education center of Dankook university . (2004).  
p. 32



**Fig. 11. Shamanist costume.**  
From Geum. (1994). p. 82.



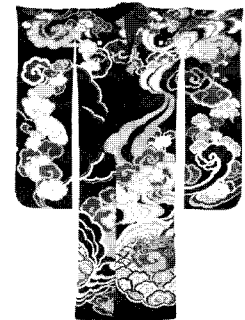
**Fig. 12. Xia pei stole in silk with ties at the side.**  
From Garrett. (2007). p. 101.



**Fig. 13. Red satin wedding gown embroidered with phoenixes.**  
From Garrett. (2007). p. 153.



**Fig. 14. Attire in the Heian period.**  
From Izutsu. (2004). p. 53.



**Fig. 15. Kimono of five color patterns.**  
From Geoffroy-Schneiter. (2001). p. 109.

## 2. Characteristics of Asian Look Color, Influenced by East Asia Folk Costumes

As is examined in Chapter II, the Asian look is a style of western fashion in which formal characteristics of folk costumes are adopted in terms of image, adoration, pattern, color, the structure of clothes, and silhouette. Accordingly, the Asian look influenced by folk costumes of East Asia adopts over 1 factors among figurative factors; the structure of costume, adornment, and patterns. In particular, color is included in these factors. The characteristics of achromatic colors including natural color influenced by the moderation of Confucianism, non-action of Taoism, and the idea of emptiness of Buddhism are conspicuous in the costumes of East Asia. In particular, the most distinctive color is five-element colors, influenced by the Ying and Yang five-element idea.

The Asian look varies with the adoption of structure, silhouette, adornment and patterns, or colors. Among them, there are many cases that are adopted over 2 factors. Furthermore, Pastiche is seen in many cases in accordance with the unique characteristics of the Asian look. For example, there is a costume that may require western silhouettes and heavy exposure with wearing decoration with gaining motif from Africa in the costume structure of East Asia. In addition, since it cannot predicate that it shows the characteristics of the Asian look only with adopting colors with white, black, red, and so on in western style costume. There-

fore, an empirical study on the Asian look, appeared in the western fashion is limited to some degree. Accordingly, this research sets a limit in research subjects with the cases of explaining the titles of image with terms, Asian, Asia, Oriental, Orient, East, Japan, China, kimono among 『Collezioni Donna』 between 2000 and 2010 in order to secure the objectivity of research. Regarding the terms; ethnic or international, these terms are only included when the identity of East Asia costumes is distinctive.

The analysis results about the colors of the Asian look which have emerged in western fashion since 2000 are as follows: Firstly, colors of East Asia costumes are main motifs. Secondly, colors were used as subsidiary ideas along with other figurative factors such as costume structure or decoration. Thirdly, the direct connection with colors of East Asia is rarely found even in the Asian look. The first case of costumes make people difficult to classify them as the Asian Look with the exception of color, and these costumes have unique colors of Asia without a great change. The second case was the costumes that adopt Asian colors along with the structure and adornment partially or those that transform the characteristics of color. The third case was the costumes which are seen as the Asian Look with the structure of costume and adornment despite the exclusion of color, even though they do not represent unique colors of Asia. However, it should be reminded that it is hard to secure the complete objectivity only with the principles of clas-

sification above.

Firstly, the cases that colors are used as main concepts in frequency in the Asian look. In this case, the influence of East Asia costumes is not clear only with color itself. In the case of the first image of A group in the <Table 1>, the harmony of black and white, in which atmosphere of East Asia costumes appears. In the case of the second image, traditional multi-striped colors that are often used in Korea and China are conspicuous. In cases of remaining three cases, traditional colors of red or blue of East Asia appears in the costumes. In particularly, the patterns or parts, expressed in the costumes make the eastern nuance in color salient.

Secondly, the colors of East Asia are often used as subsidiary ideas along with other figurative factors such as the structure of costumes or decoration. These costumes use eastern colors, but the influence of color is trivial. That is, eastern colors are expressed with other factors such as structure, silhouette, ornament, pattern, and so on. Therefore, in view of the characteristics of the Asian look, in which pastiche is distinctive, the frequency of setting color as a main

motif is less than other Asian look. The impression of B group in the <Table 1> is the Asian look, whose motive is obtained from the minority costume of East Asia, and colors are somewhat different in terms of color and chroma. However, eastern atmosphere is still created in color. In particular, East Asia costume is expressed with the parody technique along with myriad details. The second costume expresses the atmosphere of East Asia with the structure of costume and patterns of flower. Red color plays a role of a subsidiary role. The third image expresses the characteristics of East Asia in terms of non-structural feature and patterns. With the expression of East Asia color, its effect is enhanced. The fourth and the fifth image give out eastern nuance in patterns and structure of costume. In this case, subject matter and color heightens the atmosphere.

Thirdly, although idea or motive is obtained from East Asia costume, the direct connection with color of East Asia costumes is rarely found. This kind of the Asian look is seen as the highest frequency. This Asian look is classified into three sections; primary color of the Asian look irrelevant to East Asia costume, the

Table 1. Classification of the Asina look according to colors

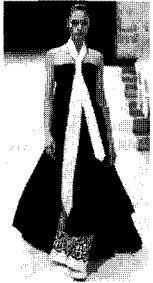








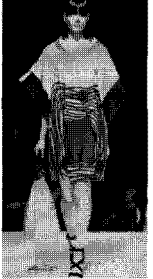
Classification	Image of the Asian look				
A Group. Asian look, whose colors represent main ideas					
	'06 F/W Franois	'04 S/S Anna Sui	'03 S/S Franois	'05 F/W Cavalli	'06 F/W Kenzo
B Group. Asian look, whose colors represent subsidiary ideas					
	'02 F/W Chalayan	'08 F/W Kenzo	'08 F/W Kenzo	'03 S/S Romeo Gigli	'08 F/W Kenzo



Table 1. Continued

Classification		Image of the Asian look				
C Group. Asian look, in which direct connection with East Asia costumes is small	(a). Primary colors with high chroma					
		'02 F/W Galliano	'03 F/W Christian Dior	'09 F/W Tilu	'07 F/W Fraga	'06 F/W Sirop
	(b). Colors with low chroma					
	'03 S/S Blumarine	'00 S/S Marras	'04 F/W Prada	'07 F/W Erifilli	'07 F/W Fraga	
	(c). Black and dark colors					
	'00 F/W E. Due	'03 S/S Blumarine	'02 F/W Chloe	'03 S/S Blumarine	'08 F/W K. Lagerfelt	

Asian look, which holds the color of the western atmosphere with low chroma, and the Asian look with low brightness of black color or other colors. Five costumes appeared in (a) of the C group, were shown by using primary colors.

However, these colors are not primary colors that create the atmosphere of East Asia. Moreover, these colors are not relevant to the eastern atmosphere. The characteristics of these costumes are the pastiche, in which Asian factors are partially adopted, and show the feature of play with the exaggeration of decoration and the combination of colors. The case of (b) has the characteristics of high-brightness and low-

chroma, which are commonly used in an everyday dress in the western costumes. These colors are far from the atmosphere which is derived from natural color or achromatic color. The costumes of this group are seen as the Asian look because of the patterns, decorations, and the structure of costume with the exception of color. (c) is the dark costume, in which tone is down. Black appears in the costume of East Asia as one of five-elements. However, black in these costumes are irrelevant to the eastern style. Characteristics of these costumes are that Eastern patterns or decoration is added to the structure of western costume, silhouette, subject matter, and color.

#### IV. Comparison of Color in Folk Costumes in East Asia and the Asian Look and Its Implications

One of characteristics in the forms of East Asia costumes is color. Since three religions have an effect on the restraint of color, the characteristics of achromatic colors including natural color are conspicuously seen in the costumes of Japan. In addition, folk costumes in three countries of East Asia have the costume culture of splendid color. Five element colors based on the Yin and Yang five-element ideas and the derivational colors account for the most colors, which are shown as multi-colored strips of five colors. Among them, one or two symbolic colors are used in the entire costume.

However, the analysis results of the Asian look appeared in the western fashion after 2000 shows that the colors of the Asian look influenced by East Asia costume are strikingly different from the East Asia costumes. In cases of some costumes, the red or blue color of eastern atmosphere are used in the entire costumes, while natural colors or five-element colors that are the most distinctive characteristics in East Asia costume are rarely found. Meanwhile, bright and showy colors, which are easily found in the contemporary costume of the west, colors with low chroma or bright colors, the mingled color of achromatic color and chromatic color, dark gray and strong black are frequently seen in the Asian look, which is influenced by folk costumes of East Asia. This represents that

the adoption of East Asia folk costumes in the Asian look is preponderated on the comparatively easy decoration or pattern, and visually strong colors are relatively small in adoption. In other words, prejudices on traditional colors, flamboyance of eastern costume, and trends rather than traditional true color against the background of culture are preferred, and tendency of approaching with forms rather than colors is emerging (Kim & Kim, 2008). In addition, it is hard to definitely predicate the adoption of East Asia costumes into the Asian look only with the use of eastern color due to the feature of color, whose diversity is limited. For this reason, the Asian look that adopts the structure of costume, silhouette, decoration or pattern looks more conspicuous than the case of adopting the colors of East Asia costumes in the Asian look, influenced by the costumes of East Asia.

<Fig. 16> is the diagram of mechanism of the Asian look, influenced by the East Asia costumes. However, the factors that affect the western costume are not always fixed. Even though the Asian look holds the eastern characteristics, basically it is a western costume. The factors of form in East Asia costumes; the structure of costume, silhouette, subject matter, decoration, pattern, and color are reflected in the western costume. In addition, it is probable to reflect the characteristics of playfulness, the views of Orientalism, fashion trend, or parts of ethnic costumes in the western costume at the same time. This represents the advent of multinational products in the era of multinational capitalism rather than the meaning of traditional folk cos-

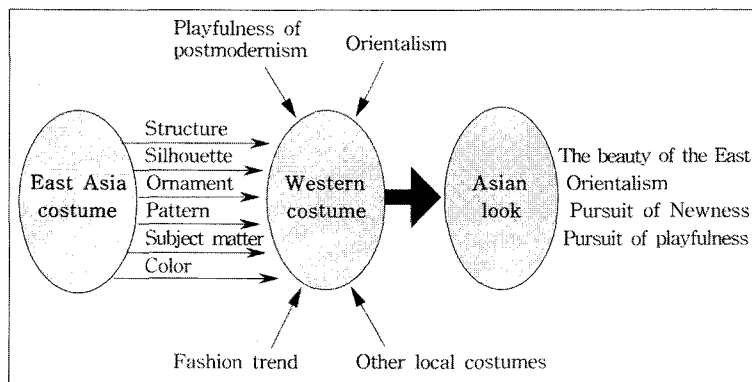


Fig. 16. Mechanism of Asian look, influenced by East Asia costumes.

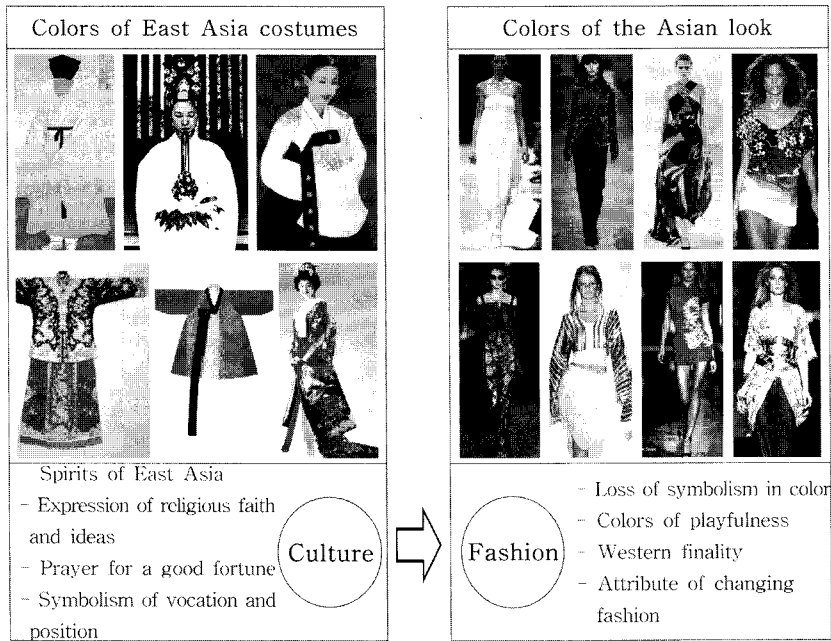


Fig. 17. Comparison of color of East Asia costumes and the Asian look.

tume, appointing unique rational identity and ethnic bonds (Yang, 1999). Eventually, the Asian look strongly shows the characteristics of Pastiche. This Asian look is the expression of the beauty of the east, and the manifestation of Orientalism view, Postmodern-playfulness, and the pursuit of the present.

It is often seen that colors in the East Asia costume are identical to the colors of some costumes of the Asian look. However, this is not sufficient to explain that natural color or red or symbolic meaning of multicolored strips in East Asia costumes are implied in the Asian look as itself. Eventually, the colors of East Asia costume are cultural products of East Asia in contrast to the western fashion which holds the changing attributes. Moreover, traditional faith, philosophy, values, and spirits of East Asia regions are contained in color such as the prayer for good fortune, or expression of rank and occupation.

However, colors of the Asian look, which adopts the motif from the forms of East Asia costumes are the superficial imitation of color, whose symbolic meaning is lost, and does not hold the characteristics of eastern color. Colors of the Asian look that lose the eastern symbolism varies. For instance, some colors

express the eastern identity through mind-imagery, hold the characteristics of playfulness, or follow the colors which are changing according to the fashion or functional color. This difference may be seen as cultural product, acquired by cultural difference between the East and the West. After all, the Asian look is basically differentiated from folk costumes in Asia because it is part of the western fashion and holds the attributes of change. <Fig. 17> is summarization that compares color characteristics of East Asian costume with the Asian Look.

## V. Conclusions

Form in the style of figurative arts is an expression way of the essence in contents, and represents the external state of special beauty or characteristics as an apparent phenomenon of an object. The form in the beauty of costumes is understood as a figurative principle, composing and arranging figurative factors such as form, color, or quality of the material. This represents the aesthetic characteristics of an object named costume. The contents in the beauty of costume imply the collective mental world of us, in pursuit for

creating the aesthetic characteristics such as artistic will, emotion, thinking, and imagination. In particular, these contents contain aesthetic values, inherent in the aesthetic characteristics of costumes.

This research compared the colors of the Asian look influenced by folk costumes of East Asia and East Asia folk costumes in order to explore differences in forms of Asian costumes and the Asian look, and the mechanism causing such difference, and to find internal values, imbedded in each difference. Folk costumes in Asia have undergone a change by numerous internal and external factors of costumes over the long period. In particular, the Asian spirits influenced by religion are expressed through the structure of costume, silhouette, ornament, pattern, color, and wearing methods. In the case of color, five element colors by natural color, achromatic colors, and the Yin and Yang five-element idea in the emphasis of the moderation, integrity, the beauty of nature or the beauty of naiveness are strikingly shown. However, the colors of Asia are shown partially in the Asian look, influenced by East Asia costumes. Primary colors, which are commonly seen in the western fashion, the color of middle or low chroma, or black color exuding modern nuance are often seen in the Asian look. These phenomena appear in the fusion of eastern form in the western fashion or pastiche because the structure of costume that holds the attributes of easy adoption and playfulness, ornament, or pattern is mainly used.

The colors of East Asian costumes are the cultural products of East Asia. They express faith, philosophy, values, beauty concept, and so on based on ideas and spirits. They also imply incantatory meanings, telling fortunes and are full of symbols and meanings such as the expression of different classes and vocations. However, colors of the East Asian Look are the imitations of superficial colors, which lose their inherent meanings, or do not hold the characteristics of East Asian colors. Some colors of the East Asian Look express eastern images by imagery or have the attributes of playfulness. Even there are colors of East Asian Look which appear to be functional colors or trend colors of the western look. Eventually, colors of the Asian look are different from colors of East Asia, or these colors are prone to be the superficial imitation, in

which all spirits and symbolism of East Asia are lost. The reasons for this tendency are found in the expression of Asian image from the western perspectives, the postmodern playfulness, the finality of the western costumes, the influence of fashion, which has the attribute of changing. While ideology that had an effect on the formation of East Asia folk costumes is the symbolism, derived from religious idea and Asian spirits, the Asian look, which is one of the western fashion tendencies disintegrates the ideology of East Asia costumes and replaces it with postmodern-playfulness.

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