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**Reactions of Korean women who adopted western-style dress in
the acculturation period of 1945-1962: An oral history**

Park, Sunae, Ph.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988

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REACTIONS OF KOREAN WOMEN WHO ADOPTED WESTERN-
STYLE DRESS IN THE ACCULTURATION
PERIOD OF 1945-1962:
AN ORAL HISTORY

by

SUNAE PARK

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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1988

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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The purpose of the study is to analyze the reactions of Korean women who adopted the western-style dress in the acculturation period of 1945-1962. The focus of this study theoretically concerns the reactions of selected Korean women toward to western-style dress, as viewed through the anthropological concept of acculturation. The specific theories generated from this study seem to revolve around the variables of physical and psychological comfort, conformity, body image, societal and peer pressures, and clothing symbolism of ethnic identity in the acculturation process.

Once Korean women began to have contact with western culture, they adopted western-style dress more quickly than they did other objects or concepts. As the women turned more and more to western clothing for everyday clothing, they started wearing their traditional hanbok only for special occasions. During the process of adopting western-style dress by Korean women, two important concepts of ethnic identity and acculturation clashed. Although the women were becoming acculturated with western culture, they wanted to keep their ethnic identity by using hanbok as an national symbol.

For this study, twenty-four Korean women over fifty years old who are now living in the United States were selected, interviewed, and recorded on tape. The particular reason to choose the Korean women who are living in America now is because they were acculturated by the contact with western cultures twice, once in Korea, then later in America. Before the military took over the government in 1963, Korea was unstable both politically and culturally from 1945 to 1962. This transition period represented the initial acculturation of western culture in Korea and therefore was the time period chosen for this study. The oral histories collected from the twenty-four Korean were qualitatively examined to achieve the purpose of this study. The findings that may generate specific theories include the following:

1. The acknowledgement that psychological comfort is as influential as physical comfort is an important finding of this study. If people are not psychologically at ease wearing a particular type of clothing, they will not feel comfortable, even if the style is attractive and physically comfortable.
2. Family, societal, and peer pressures are important factors influencing Korean women's clothing behavior. Certainly family members, eg., mother-in-law, appear to exert a special influence in Korean women's clothing behavior.
3. The use of ethnic symbols for Korean women have changed since coming to America. Hanbok has become an important item that Korean women use as their ethnic symbol in this new environment.
4. Body image is another important factor identified in this study as influencing Korean women's clothing behavior. Clothing influences body image both positively and negatively. That is, an individual may see her figure as being improved or not improved depending upon the clothing and his/her self-perception. This perception of body image then influences clothing behavior. These women perceived their body images in terms of what each considered to be the cultural ideal.
5. The most influential factors affecting the Korean women's adaptation of western-style dress during this acculturation process were education and relative age.

In summary, this is an exploratory study in its approach to acculturation through clothing changes to western-style dress in Korean women. Moreover, this study not only utilizes a conventional method for historical research, but also provides an anthropological, life history approach. By considering acculturation as a framework for understanding the different reactions of Korean women, we see that change has been dramatic and influenced by two major factors, age and educational background of informants. Adoption of western clothing by Korean women reflects the Korean women's cultural adaptations.

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amazingly patient, cheerful, and loving throughout the many years I have studied in the United States.

할머니, 어머니 와 아버지, 등자고모, 촌 아줌마, 탐, 운주, 그리고 응범에게 학위를 마침과 함께, 그동안의 격려에 진심으로 다시한번 감사 드립니다.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
LIST OF TABLE.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Purpose of the Study.....	1
The Statement of the Problem.....	1
Significance and Scope of the Study.....	3
II. METHODOLOGY.....	4
Library Research.....	4
Oral History Methodology.....	4
III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	8
Acculturation and Ethnic Identity.....	8
Oral History: A Qualitative Analysis.....	11
Korean History and Culture.....	13
Clothing Acculturation in Other Countries.....	15
IV. CULTURAL ASPECTS OF KOREAN WOMEN.....	19
Background of Korean History.....	19
Korean Women's Life.....	21
(1) Before the Japanese Annexation Period (pre-1910).....	22
(2) Japanese Annexation Period (1910-1945).....	25
(3) Acculturation Period (1945-1962).....	26
Korean Women's Traditional Clothing.....	27

V. ORAL HISTORIES.....	30
VI. SUMMARY.....	90
VII. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	110
APPENDIX A. FIGURES.....	117
APPENDIX B. TABLE.....	128
APPENDIX C. QUESTIONNAIRE.....	131

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER IV

Figure	Page
1. Veil prior 1910.....	118
2. Hanbok.....	119
3. Jugori.....	120
4. Chima.....	121
5. Undergarments worn with hanbok.....	122
6. Korean shoes.....	123
7. Bosun.....	124
8. Jok.....	125
9. Binyo.....	126
10. Trends of school uniforms.....	127

LIST OF TABLE

Table	Page
1. Overview of the Interviewees.....	129

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The Purpose of the Study

After liberation from Japan in 1945, a number of acculturation changes were occurring at the same time in Korea. One of the most visual changes was Korean women's adoption of western-style dress. The purpose of this study is to analyze the reactions of Korean women who adopted the western-style dress during the acculturation period of 1945-1962.

The Statement of the Problem

Clothing is one of the significant non-verbal symbols that represents the culture and way of life of a society. Thus, clothing can be a valuable tool for a cross-cultural study based on the concept of acculturation. Of the three basic needs of people -- clothing, food, and housing -- clothing is the easiest to adopt from another culture in the process of acculturation. Food and housing may take as long as a generation or more to be fully adopted.

Although a few Korean women had adopted western-style dress through Japan after the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910, the great percentage of women were not interested in the new style dress until after 1945. Since then, Koreans have had more exposure to western cultures, especially American.

Industrialization, economic development, and the increasing contact with Americans have led to old customs being replaced by new ones. However, the Confucian thinking which was the ethical base of Korean society posed conflicts toward the adjustment of

Korean women to western dress. Confucius was an influential philosopher of ancient China whose ideas and philosophies, termed Confucianism, governed all aspects of Korean daily life especially during the Yi Dynasty (1392-1910). According to Confucian teaching, women were not allowed to meet, talk, or associate with unknown men; their sphere was limited to the house. Thus, women did not have any contacts or knowledge of the outside and consequently, became introverted and inhibited. In short, they were not supposed to follow anything new.

The first noticeable borrowings from American culture were the music and clothing, introduced through mass media such as films, magazines including fashion magazines and department store catalogues, and television. Perhaps in the beginning only a small number of Koreans took to what the Americans, representing the West in general, introduced. But according to Jin-Goo Kim (1977), after World War II, the Korean traditional costume was slowly disappearing "in urban areas, among the young people, men, and professional women."¹ When the western-style dress was accepted, it was sometimes admired, sometimes not, but nevertheless it was copied and imitated.

The adoption of western dress by Korean women raises the following questions that provide the focus of this study: Why, after wearing the traditional clothing for hundreds of years, do most Korean women now wear western-style dress? What are the reasons Korean women adopted western-style dress so quickly? When did this change begin? Were they pleased or embarrassed to wear western-style dress? Did anyone directly influence their clothing choices and if so, were they family members? What were their sources of western-style dress? Were there problems of size, color, or proportion in

¹ Jin-Goo Kim, *Korean Costume: An Historical Analysis*, Ph.D. Diss., Univ. of Wisconsin, 1977 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1977, 78-04863), p. 170.

wearing western-style dress? Finally, do Korean women wear traditional clothing now, and under what circumstances?

The Significance and Scope of the Study

Before the military took over the government in 1963, Korea was unstable both politically and culturally from 1945 to 1962. This transition period represents the initial acculturation of western culture in Korea, and therefore, was the time period chosen for this study.

Although a chronological history of Korean costume before 1910 has been written, there is unfortunately little research material about the trends in Korean clothing since then. Moreover, no study could be found that deals specifically with acculturation and clothing as reflected in social changes during the transition period following World War II up to the aftermath of the Korean War. Korean acculturation studies have been done in other fields of social science, but none of these studies deal with clothing aspects. Although a few studies of Korean women's clothing in the field of the socio-psychological aspects of clothing have been published in Korea, in general, these have used quantitative analysis which is a statistically-oriented process. In this study, the oral history method was used in order to provide insights concerning the interrelatedness of cultural phenomena. As an exploratory study about Korean women's acculturation and clothing changes to western-style dress, it not only utilizes a conventional method for historical study, but also provides an anthropological approach which M. Catherine Daly (1984) notes has rarely been attempted in the area of clothing and textiles.²

² M. Catherine Daly, "Use of the Ethnographic Approach as Interpretive Science within the Field of Home Economics: Textiles and Clothing as an Example," *Home Economics Research Journal* 12 (1984): 358-361.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Library Research

Books, periodicals, theses, and dissertations regarding the concepts of acculturation and ethnic identity, research methodology, Korean women's costume history, and Korean culture and history were investigated at the UNC-G library, UCLA library, and the Library of Congress. When necessary, interlibrary loan was used. Information about acculturation in other countries was found in periodicals. Attempts were also made to find related materials in Seoul, Korea; however, they were unsuccessful.

The library research prior to the interviews provided a basis for the interview technique. This research was also useful for comprehending the basic concepts -- acculturation and ethnic identity -- and the methodology for this study.

Oral History Methodology

This study employed the oral history methodology to provide insights concerning the interrelatedness of cultural phenomena by giving a broader base of information about cultural background as well as clothing. By using the oral history method, the interviewer has the advantage of seeing the facial expressions and body language of those interviewed and may also feel their emotions, even if they aren't verbally expressed.

Twenty-four Korean women over fifty years old who lived through part of the Japanese annexation, through the transition period of the initial acculturation of western culture, and who are now living in the United States (twenty one in California and three in North Carolina) were selected and interviewed for this study and recorded on tape. The

particular reason for choosing Korean women now living in America was because they had been acculturated by the contact with western cultures twice, once in Korea, then later in America. They were unaware how traditional clothing had been important for them in establishing their ethnic identity in Korea, but here in America, they feel their ethnic identity stronger. The interviewees were selected on the basis of a) the region where they lived in Korea, b) age, c) education, d) career, and e) years in America. They represent broad and various backgrounds and experiences on the aspects of clothing acculturation.

In December of 1987, three of the interviews were conducted in North Carolina. To get a wider set of experiences, and because the Korean population in North Carolina is relatively small, the final twenty-one interviews took place in Los Angeles during January of 1988. These interviewees were selected through personal contact, primarily through the network of Koreans living in both areas. The interviewees formed a chain of contact with each other and the interviewer. This procedure was designed to make the interviewees feel relaxed. After the women had been identified, each interview was preceded by giving the subject a list of questions written in Korean so she would be aware of what was expected and would be more comfortable during the interview process. (see questionnaire page 132). It was then explained orally to the women what the purpose of the interview was.

The interview included the following questions:

- (1) Do you remember when you began to wear western-style dress?
- (2) How did you feel when you first wore western-style dress (excited, scared, glamorous, or something else)?
- (3) Where did you get the clothing?
- (4) Did your husband or other family members -- parents, grandparents, sisters, or siblings -- influence you on your clothing choice?
- (5) Did you wear both western-style dress and traditional clothing?
- (6) What colors did you wear?

- (7) Did you have any problems with western sizing or proportions?
- (8) Do you remember school uniforms?
- (9) How do you feel now about western-style dress?

Although many of those interviewed were relaxed and responded to the interview willingly, others needed reassurance. None of the California-based Korean women was willing to have her name used in the report, asking that their right to privacy be respected. Traditionally, Korean women do not use their names. They are known as someone's wife, mother, or sister. Also, many interviewees were aware of the rest of the group in the study, and worried about whether others would find out what they had said. Several women said repeatedly, "Don't let others listen to what I say," and "I do not know what to say. What about others? What did they say?" To make the summaries of the interviews flow better, pseudonyms were used in this study.

The interviews usually took around one and one-half hours. The place for the interviews was often at the interviewees' homes. It was necessary for the researcher to speak the Korean language and it was helpful that she shared their cultural background. They felt comfortable with the fact that they could use their native language.

Most of the interviewees did not have any prior interview experience, especially with a tape recorder, so they were typically a little nervous at the beginning, but were soon excited to recount their memories. Although the original intent of this study was to interview Korean women only, two of them wanted their husbands to be included in the interview as well because they, the wives, were shy. In these cases, the questions were asked first to the husbands and then to the wives. The Confucian teachings in attitudes and morality have always been of extreme importance to Korean women. They have spent a large portion of their lives learning obedience and patience as taught by Confucius.

Because of this, they initially held back, so this approach was designed to make the women feel more comfortable. It was of prime importance that sufficient rapport be established with the women so that they were relaxed enough to feel free to be frank and open.

One important aspect of the oral history methodology is to regard the interviewees as experts who represent their culture. Once the women understood the goals of the interviews, the task of the interviewer was then to maintain balance and to try not to lead them, if possible. Also, the interviewer interrupted as little as possible to permit continuous flow of thought and conversation. One of the solutions for this was to use a tape recorder. When they could not remember what kinds of clothing they wore, etc., their family albums were sometimes used to refresh their memories.

The last step was to accurately report their feelings and words in an organized manner. First, the interviews were transcribed in Korean from tape, and then they were translated into English. As in all research of this type, the hardest obstacle to overcome was in the translation from one language to another. Many words are just not translatable, even literally, and there is also the problem of redundancy in the process of translating due to the limitations of vocabulary in Korean. Also, many concepts, for the same reason, are difficult to express in English.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review specific literature related to the background, methodology, and arguments of this study which is focused on describing Korean women's feelings, thoughts, and explanations about their acculturation to western culture through dress. Once Korean women began to have contact with western culture, they adopted western-style dress more quickly than they did other objects or concepts. As the women turned more and more to western clothing for everyday wear, they reserved wearing their traditional hanbok only for special occasions.

During the process of adopting this new style dress, two important concepts of ethnic identity and acculturation clashed. Although the women were becoming acculturated with western culture, they wanted to keep their ethnic identity by using hanbok as a national symbol. In order to understand how clothing functions with women's ethnic identity during the process of an acculturation, the relevant literatures on ethnic identity and acculturation are briefly reviewed in this chapter. References on the oral history method and its techniques is also included, in addition to the literature on Korean history and culture. Finally, the research about clothing acculturation in other countries is reviewed.

Acculturation and Ethnic Identity

The following four references are excellent sources for providing the concepts of ethnic identity and acculturation as they are applied to this study. Raymond Teske H. C. Jr., and Bardin Nelson's "Acculturation and Assimilation: A Clarification" (1973) reviewed the theoretically relevant literature to clarify the concepts of acculturation and

assimilation and how they are related or contrasted to each other. They found that when two or more cultures have contact, acculturation may occur in both directions, but assimilation is unidirectional. In addition, acculturation does not require change in thought and life style, though they may be acculturated; however, assimilation requires such change. Acculturation does not require out-group acceptance, but assimilation does require it. As these concepts apply to Korean women in this study, they were acculturated rather than assimilated by western culture. First, when western culture was introduced to Korean people, the women were willing to adopt some western culture and western-style dress while their life styles, manners, and thoughts did not necessarily change. They became westernized in some ways, yet they were primarily the same as before, that is, they retained their essential "Koreanness".

Thomas Fitzgerald's book, *Education and Identity* (1977) and the article, "Explorations of Acculturation: Toward a Model of Ethnic Identity" (1976) by Margaret Clark, et al., are significant resources concerning how individuals choose their identity in an acculturation situation. Fitzgerald focused on acculturation and the identity of Maori University graduates as they interacted with European New Zealanders. He used a situational approach in its theoretical assumption, that is, one that assumes an individual's identification changes depending on his or her situation. As his research showed, the change from Maori to European cultural orientation is not merely simple acculturation, but it is such that individuals may choose where they want to belong in the acculturate setting. Thus, the individual choice becomes a highly significant element in determining one's identity.

Clark, et al. focused on the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity by studying a combination of the two in the same individual. Their major research questions were (1) Does an immigrant population eventually assimilate? and (2) What is the

relationship, then, of immigrant populations to the host culture? This study was established by interviewing six individuals. An individual was selected from each generation -- immigrants, their children, and their grandchildren -- in two ethnic minority groups. Each individual was tested for his ethnic identity with three different scales -- Acculturative Balance Scale, Traditional Orientation, and Anglo Face. "The Acculturative Balance Scale is a picture identification test measuring an individual's relative knowledge of traditional popular culture compared with contemporary American popular culture. Two other ethnic identity components, Traditional Orientation and Anglo Face, are derived from a questionnaire on attitudes toward one's own ethnic group as well as degree and kinds of participation in activities characteristically 'American' versus 'ethnic'."¹ As a result, the most significant factor in defining whether these interviewees were more Anglicized or more ethnic was individual choice. These two references provided not only a research model but the theoretical base for this study.

The chapter, "Symbols, Stereotypes, and Styles" from *Ethnic Identity* (1982) by Anya Peterson Royce explains how these three concepts -- symbol, stereotype, and style -- are related and how they differ. All human groups use symbols either to identify themselves or as identifiers by other groups. Some symbols, not recognizable by outside groups, may be important within a particular group. The term "traditions" is most often used to describe ethnic identity because it implies the transmission of the same form (dress, ceremony, food, etc.) from generation to generation and also implies a degree of conservatism. However, Royce agreed that ethnic groups are better characterized by style because the symbols they use change according to situation. "Style as exhibited by an

¹ Margaret Clark et al., "Explorations of Acculturation: Toward a Model of Ethnic Identity," *Human Organization* 35 (1976): 233.

ethnic group, is composed of symbols, forms, and underlying value orientation."² The concepts of symbols and styles were particularly useful because, when applied to the Korean women in this study, they provided the idea how material culture, in this case, clothing, is used as a symbol of ethnic identity, considering the distinction between cultural tradition and cultural style.

Oral History: A Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis was used in this study for interpreting, describing, and analyzing Korean women's reactions collected by oral history methods. The following references not only provided interview techniques but showed the importance of qualitative analysis for research.

The books, *Friendships Through the Life Course* (1986) by Sarah Matthews, and *The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art, an Oral History* (1978) by Patricia Cooper and Norma B. Buford, obtained data by oral means. Cooper and Buford's work for this study provided primarily about the feeling what oral history is and when it can be used because their focus was on collecting data. Matthew's book provided a good example of research design as to how primary data gathered by oral means can be developed into proper form and analyzed for the purpose of study.

The book, *Proposals That Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals* (1987) by Lawrence F. Locke, et al., includes two chapters, "Preparation of Proposal for Qualitative Research" and "Qualitative Study," which are excellent sources for researchers writing proposals that use qualitative analysis. The authors stated that qualitative analysis is used for describing and developing a "special kind of understanding

² Anya Peterson Royce, *Ethnic Identity: Strategies of Diversity* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1982), 147.

for a particular social situation, event, role, group, or interaction. . . . Thus interview transcripts, field notes, diaries, and documents are primary sources of information."³ In qualitative research, "what individuals say they believe, the feelings they express and explanations they give, are treated significantly."⁴

The Tape-Recorded Interview: A Manual for Field Workers in Folklore and Oral History (1980) by Edward Ives explained the tape-recorder preparation that should be done before going to interview and also interview procedures, step by step, in detail. The methodology from this book was used to interview the Korean women.

In addition, three books, *Field Projects in Anthropology: A Student Handbook* (1984) by Julia Crane and Michael Angrosino, *Lives: An Anthropological Approach to Biography* (1981) by L. L. Langness and Gelya Frank, and *The Life History in Anthropological Science* (1965) by L. L. Langness examined the problems of rapport, language, interviewing, reliability, sampling, note-taking and other such matters. These were good sources for information about the methods and techniques involved in the process of oral history. Their guidelines were also followed in the course of this study.

Won Moo Hurh and Kwang Chung Kim's book, *Korean Immigrants in America: A Structural Analysis of Ethnic Confinement and Adhesive Adaptation* (1984), presented the general patterns of cultural and socioeconomic place and the problems of Korean immigrants in America. In this research, "The Methodological Problems in the Study of Korean Immigrants," provided helpful information. The authors described the problems encountered when they used western research methodology on non-western subjects. They said that "the difficulties include not only the language barrier and conceptual differences but also situational equivalence of sampling, interviewer training, and

³ Lawrence F. Locke, et al., *Proposals That Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals*, 2nd ed. (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, 1987), 84.

⁴ Ibid.

interviewing."⁵ As yet, there is no "transcultural methodology"⁶ so that methodologies currently used are "vulnerable, refutable, and subjected to critical tests."⁷ However, they believe that "a testable methodology is still better than an untestable dogmatic methodology."⁸

Korean History and Culture

The emphasis of recent histories of Korean culture has been on political and economic factors rather than any other cultural aspects. Some of the general history books about Korea introduced traditional hanbok only briefly. A few references dealt with either contemporary western-style clothing or modified hanbok (tong chima hanbok) as Korean costume although most Korean women wore both during the acculturation period.

A magazine published in Korea, 월간멋 (1986) by 동아일보사, has an article entitled "개화물결 100년, 우리옷 차림의 어제와 오늘". This article was transcribed from a talk show with several people involved with fashion -- a professor, a director of Korea fashion commerce center, and a president of a fashion institute. It presented the history of western-style dress in Korea, but was too superficial for use in this study, though the information was interesting. Another book written in Korean, 최경자 자서년감 패션 50년 (1976) by 최경자 provided good pictures some of which are used for this study, specifically, high school uniforms and tong chima hanbok. Most of the pictures in this book, however, were of high fashion, which the author had designed during the time period for special occasions such as fashion shows. The book, 한국 복식사 (1978) by 석주선, dealt with the history of

⁵ Won Moo Hurh and Kwang Chung Kim, *Korean Immigrants in America: A Structural Analysis of Ethnic Confinement and Adhesive Adaptation* (Rutherford, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1984), 184.

⁶ Ibid., p. 200.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

Korean costume up to the Yi Dynasty. For this study, it provided many valuable visual examples of Korean costume taken from the author's own collection.

The following five books and a magazine, *Korea Tomorrow: Land of the Morning Calm* (1956) by Kyung Cho Chung, *Corea: The Hermit Nation* (1897) by William Elliot Griffis, *The History of Korea* (1971) by Woo-keun Han, *Korea: Land of Broken Calm* (1966) by Shannon McCune, *The Koreans and Their Culture* (1951) by Cornelius Osgood, and "The Yin and Yang of Paradoxical, Prosperous Korea" (1988) by Pico Iyer, were useful sources for dating the transition period from 1945 to 1962 for the present study and for the background of women's life in Chapter IV. Especially, the books by foreign authors provided excellent information about women's lives, which are a subject often ignored by Korean authors. These references described Korean women's lives in detail during the period when Confucianism dominated Korean society. The information about these past experiences is helpful to explain present Korean women's behavior and is integrated into this study.

The book, *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad* (1987) edited by Eui-young Yu and Earl H. Phillips, was the only source which studied Korean women specifically. In particular, the two chapters, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea" by Eui-young Yu and "Women's Roles and Achievements in the Yi Dynasty" by Hesung Chun Koh, were the most useful sources for documenting the change of the Korean women's life and status for this study. "Acculturation in Korea: Process of a Developing Nation" (1969) by Felix Moos was another very enlightening article about the changes in Korean society, especially family, women's status, and the mentality of the young generations during the acculturation period.

To the knowledge of the researcher, only two studies have included Korean costume of the acculturation period (1945-1962). Hewon Kahng in her unpublished historical

master's thesis, *The Evolution of the National Costume of Korean Women* (1964), mentioned modern Korean costume (1910-1964) briefly in one chapter. An unpublished doctoral dissertation, *Korean Costume: An Historical Analysis* (1977) by Jin-Goo Kim, presented a history of hanbok. These two studies provided some information about the trend of modern Korean costume, but they are historical research which either reviews secondary references or analyzes pictures, paintings, or photographs; however, their use in this study was limited because they did not cover the whole structure of the appearance.

Clothing Acculturation in Other Countries

Several references on the ethnographic approach in the clothing and textiles fields provided good sources of information for the methodology and ideas of cultururation, although they covered other cultures. Valerie Steele in her article, "Fashion in China" (1983), analyzed the trends of contemporary fashion in China by collecting opinions from several Chinese people on how they felt about Chinese fashion. Steele revealed that although Chinese people could not wear whatever they liked, they were beginning to show interest in western fashion after the death of Mao in 1976. "Fashion [in China] remains a controversial and ideological issue."⁹ "Despite initial appearances, however, fashion definitely does exist in the PRC, but sartorial self-expression continues to be limited by the current definition of what is appropriate for the citizens of a socialist and Chinese nation."¹⁰ This article provided some insight into the Chinese people's reactions to fashion that may be pertinent to Korean women as well.

The research, "Relationship between Traditionalism of Dress and Social Values of Ghanaian Women" (1979) by Lillian Matthews, demonstrated, by using quantitative

⁹ Valerie Steele, "Fashion in China," *Dress* 9 (1983): 8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

analysis, the degree of difference in wearing western dress and traditional dress between Ghanaian university students and their mothers and how marriage and family values reflected this difference between the two generations. The results showed that the mothers had more traditional values and wore more traditional clothing than their daughters.

Matthews also indicated that dress choice reflected age and education, that is, the more educated younger age group was more likely to adopt western dress. Two variables, age and education, of the Ghanaian women's study were the most important factors for this study. Matthews' research provided two important variables which may influence Korean women's clothing behavior. After Korea was liberated in 1945, education became one of the most improved fields. As young girls entered the middle or high schools they had increasing contact with western culture through their education. Moreover, they wore western-style uniforms in the schools.

Misao Batts' article, "Clothing Style of Japanese Immigrants in British Columbia, Canada" (1975), was effective in explaining how and why oriental people replaced traditional clothing with western-style dress in their adopted country of Canada. She pointed out that the first generation of Japanese in Canada adopted western-style dress quickly to reduce racial discrimination and were able to utilize this new style in their own ways. Unlike the first Japanese generation, later generations were taller and looked more natural in western clothes. Although they felt more comfortable in western-style dress, the later generations continued to wear kimono for their special occasions.

"Fashion Consciousness of Thai Women" (1968) by Karlyne Anspach was a clothing cultururation study which investigated fashion as a cultural reflecting device. Anspach interviewed three separate groups of women using a tape recorder, dividing each group of seven to nine women by three social classes: lower and lower-middle, middle, and upper. These women were studied in four main areas: (1) fashion consciousness

(especially preferred colors and fabrics), (2) desired image, (3) clothes for social occasions, and (4) personal wardrobe. Although each class group had a separate style image, all three classes had the same opinion about a desired fashion image. Factors such as age, skin color, modesty, and the importance of the opinions of others were shared similarly by all groups. However, some ideas were different between groups -- which fashion models to follow, the extent to which western dress should replace the traditional Thai dress, and what items are most useful as status symbols.

Anspach's article was a helpful source for providing the concept that the process of fashion acceptance in a culture reflects the process of the change in its traditional beliefs. When the Thai women adopted western-style dress, they worried what their friends and relatives said about their new fashion, so that they did not want to follow any extreme fashion. These women were embarrassed to wear western clothing which revealed their bodies. These examples are based on their traditional culture.

Karlyne A. Anspach and Yoon Hee Kwon's "Western Dress Styles Adopted by Korean Women" (1976) revealed that age and education were the significant factors in choosing dress styles among Korean women. The Korean women for their study were divided into three age-culture groups -- over 60 years old, 30-60 years old, and under 30 years old. The study questions were based on the styles of western dress owned and also the number of different styles owned. As a result, age and education were also found to be important factors as to the quantity and variation of styles owned.

This article which used quantitative analysis provided good information about western dress adopted by Korean women. However, on the whole, it sought information that is not related to the current study. Furthermore, Anspach and Kwon's techniques would not be appropriate here.

Finally, the following texts, *Functions of Dress: Tool of Culture and the Individual* (1987) by Penny Storm, *The Second Skin: An Interdisciplinary Study of Clothing* (1968) by Marilyn J. Horn and Lois M. Gurel, *The Social Psychology of Clothing* (1985) by Susan B. Kaiser, *Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order* (1965) by Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne B. Eicher, *Clothing Concepts: A Social-Psychological Approach* (1972) by Mary Lou Rosencranz, and *Clothing: A Study in Human Behavior* (1965) by Mary Shaw Ryan included chapters about the interrelationships of clothing and culture. All argued that acculturation is the process by which groups or individuals contact and learn from other cultures, and in the process of acculturation, clothing, which is material culture, is adopted more quickly than abstract ideas such as 'value'. The texts were helpful in that sense, despite their general nature.

CHAPTER IV

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF KOREAN WOMEN

Korea has a long history and has kept its traditional customs for generations. However, since 1945, a rapid expansion of educational opportunities and increasing contact with western cultures has brought gradual changes in the thinking, feeling, and behavior of the Korean people. While contemporary Korean society is affected by past customs and manners, the quickest and most visible change has been Korean women's adoption of western-style dress. It has taken barely twenty-five years for almost all Korean women to adapt to wearing western-style dress. As explained in the Introduction, clothing represents the culture and the way of life of a society. As in other oriental countries, as women's lives improved, the most obvious change that Korean women embraced was simple western clothing. They needed comfortable and convenient clothing for their new active lives.

This chapter explores three areas to help explain the changes in Korean women's lives and the impact of those changes on their clothing. In the first part, Korean history will be briefly related; secondly, the changes in Korean women's lives will be explained in each of three periods; and finally, Korean women's traditional dress will be described.

Background of Korean History

The history of Korea, according to mythical legend, goes back as far as twenty-four centuries before the birth of Christ, but recorded history began with its division into three kingdoms, Kokuryo (고구려), Paekje (백제), and Sinla (신라), fifty-seven years before the

birth of Christ. In 918 AD, Wang Kon (왕건) rose from the powerful merchant class to begin the Koryo (고려) Dynasty, a reunification of Korea.

Korea had what seemed to be endless invasions from "the Khitan of southern Manchuria, the Jurchen tribe, and ultimately the Mongol horsemen of Genghis Khan."¹ When the Mongol invasions slowed down, a new Korean dynasty, Yi, began in 1392. Thereafter, Korea, which had been devastated from the foreign invasions, retreated for many generations into isolation as the "Hermit Nation" and developed into what may have been the world's most homogeneous society.

Since the 1800s, western nations such as France (1866) and the United States (1871) tried to open trade with Korea, but were unsuccessful. Finally, after 1876 when the Japanese forced the Korean ruling court to sign a modern trade treaty, other foreign countries began to trade with Korea. By 1905, the Japanese had unofficially taken over Korea and controlled the social, political, and economic life of the Korean people.²

The official Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910 lasted until Korea was finally liberated in 1945 at the end of World War II. After a euphoric three weeks, the country was divided at the 38th parallel and occupied in the north by Soviet troops and in the south by the Americans. This temporary dividing line has unfortunately developed into a permanent boundary, despite the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea being established in 1947 to set up a government for all of the Korean people. Since North Korea did not cooperate with the Commission, which met in Seoul in January of 1948, an election under U.N. supervision took place only in South Korea during May of 1948. As a result, the Government of the Republic of Korea, with its first president Syngman Rhee (이승만), was established.

¹ Pico Iyer, "The Yin and Yang of Paradoxical, Prosperous Korea," *Smithsonian*, Aug. 1988: 52.

² Shannon McCune, *Korea: Land of Broken Calm* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1960), 74-78.

In June of 1950, the Korean War broke out with North Korea's invasion of South Korea, in part perpetrated because North Korea was convinced the United States would not help. South Korea was in disarray and had no equipment to match the superior power of North Korea, which was Soviet-trained and equipped. The South Korean government asked the United Nations for help and the U.N. appointed General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of the United Nations Armed Forces in Korea. Soon, volunteer military forces from member nations came to help Korea. In 1951, a conference to finish the war was held, but not until July of 1953 did the war end with the signing of the Korean Armistice at Panmunjum (판문점).

It was the Korean War and its aftermath that brought about the conditions for radical change, not only in women's dress, the subject of this study, but in most facets of Korean life. Over two million Koreans died in the war and ten million families were broken up. Also, the Korean War brought more and more opportunities for Korean people to have contacts with American culture through the G. I., who was the first direct source of contact with the West for the average Korean.

Unfortunately, Syngman Rhee's administration of South Korea soon became corrupt. The first president of South Korea resigned following a student demonstration on April 19, 1960 and Bo-Sun Yun (윤보선) took office as the second president in August of the same year. But the government could not survive and in 1961, a military group took over the government. Finally, in 1963 when Chung-Hee Park (박정희) was elected as the third president, the transition period ended.

Korean Women's Life

During the transition period (1945-1962), the amount of women's economic participation outside the home and the level of women's education increased. However,

women's status was not really improved because the traditional Korean woman's place was supposed to be at home and the concept of male superiority still influenced the Korean society and family.

The past life styles of Korean women continuously influence their present and future life styles. In order to understand the status of the contemporary Korean woman and her way of life, it is necessary to understand the traditional thinking of Korean people, how women have been treated in the family and society, and how the change in Korean women's way of life has influenced their current attitudes toward clothing. The history of Korean women's life is briefly explained in this section during three periods: (1) before the Japanese annexation period (pre-1910); (2) the Japanese annexation period (1910-1945); (3) and the acculturation period (1945-1962).

(1) Before the Japanese Annexation Period (pre-1910)

Confucian teaching dominated most Korean customs so that a woman's life was primarily limited to the home. Her role was to please as a good daughter, wife, mother, or daughter-in-law. In short, women were not considered important except in terms of bearing children and running the household. Felix Moos (1969) quoted the below paragraph from Reverend Robert Moose:

In Korea there is nothing sadder nor more to be deplored than the exceedingly low estimate placed upon woman. She is supposed to be inferior to man in every respect; and she has been told from early childhood that she has no sense, till she has become to believe it to such an extent that often she refuses to learn anything but to walk in the treadmill of domestic service. This is not only true of the lower classes, but of the higher classes also.³

³ The quotation is from Felix Moos, "Acculturation in Korea: Processes of a Developing Nation," *Studies in the Developmental Aspects of Korea*, ed. Andrew C. Nahm (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan Univ., School of Graduate Studies and Institute of International and Area Studies, 1969), 75.

As perhaps a continuation of these ideals, a woman's chastity was considered so important that a woman could not marry again even if her husband died young, although concubines for men were considered to be a high status symbol. The widowed woman was not allowed to remarry legitimately "unless she was carried off by a man: but her husband was permitted to practice polygamy."⁴

Korean girls had unrestricted freedom until they were seven years old, after which they were not allowed to go out without special permission. Whenever they left home they had to cover their faces with veils.⁵ (see Figure 1 page 118) Because girls were taught that it was shameful even to be seen by males, they hid themselves whenever men were around. Especially in the Yangban (양반) class,⁶ none except family members was allowed to see or speak to a young women who had reached marrying age. And "After their marriage, the women are inaccessible."⁷

William Elliot Griffis, in his book *Corea: A Hermit Nation* (1897), described the Korean woman's sphere well in the following paragraph:

Fathers have on occasions killed their daughters, husbands their wives, and wives have committed suicide when strangers have touched them even with their fingers. If a bold villain or too eager paramour should succeed in penetrating secretly the apartments of a noble lady, she dare not utter a cry, nor oppose the least resistance which might attract attention; for then, whether guilty or not, she would be dishonored forever by the simple fact that a man had entered her chamber. Every Corean husband is a Caesar in this respect. If, however, the affair remains a secret, her reputation is saved.⁸

⁴ Kyung Cho Chung, *Korea Tomorrow: Land of the Morning Calm* (New York: Macmillan, 1956), 33.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ In Korea, there were several social classes in the Yi dynasty. Yangban was a scholar landlord class, which had close ties with the government and the court.

⁷ William Elliot Griffis, *Corea: The Hermit Nation*, 6th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), 245.

⁸ Ibid.

The Korean family was a patriarchy and a woman was counted only as "an instrument of pleasure or of labor; but, never man's companion or equal."⁹ The husband did not discuss anything with his wife at all, even the details of his domestic, social, and economic problems. If it was discovered that a husband had asked his wife for advice, it would be dishonorable. Consequently, he made all decisions alone.¹⁰

Korean women had no names; instead they received nicknames such as Happy, Fat, Skinny, Small-Baby, Healthy, Ugly, and Pretty, and were usually known as some man's daughter, sister, wife, or mother.

In childhood she receives indeed a surname by which she is known in the family, and by near friends, but at the age of puberty, none but her father and mother employ this appellative. To all others she is "the sister" of such a one, or "the daughter" of so-and-so. After her marriage her name is buried. She is absolutely nameless. Her own parents allude to her by employing the name of the district or ward in which she has married. Her parents-in-law speak of her by the name of the place in which she lived before marriage, as women rarely marry in the same village with their husbands. When she bears children, she is "the mother" of so-and-so. When a woman appears for trial before a magistrate, in order to save time and trouble, she receives a special name for the time being.¹¹

A Confucian proverb says that when children reach the age of seven, boys and girls can not sit together. According to this teaching, men and women were not allowed to have any social interactions. And from the time they were young girls the women's place was already determined to be at home. After they married, they were to give themselves not only to their husbands but to their parents-in-law, sisters-in-law, and brothers-in-law. Korean women's status in families was extremely low. The husband was the master of the family and the wife was merely a subordinate.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Cornelius Osgood, *The Koreans and Their Culture* (New York: Ronald Press, 1951), 50.

¹¹ Griffis, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

(2) Japanese Annexation Period (1910-1945)

Before 1900, only women from the upper Yangban class received any education about Confucian teachings, and this came from their mothers at home. Finally, after the turn of the century, several girls' schools began to be established. Korea's first women's college, Ewha Hakdang (이화학당), was established in 1910, and produced many important female leaders who struggled for women's rights and national independence.¹²

When Korea was annexed, women's education was usually limited to the elementary schools. In 1930, only 10% of Korean women were literate. There were not enough schools for all school-aged children so the schools admitted boys first, then, only if there was room, they admitted girls. In 1940, the percentage of boys enrolled in elementary schools between the ages of 6 and 12 was approximately 47% compared to only 18% for girls of the same age. In this same year, only 4% of boys, and less than 1% of girls, aged 13 to 18 were still in school. By 1944, only 102 women of the total Korean population had completed four years of college education while 7,272 men had completed college.¹³

However, some improvements for many women were beginning to be made. "The spread of Christianity, Japanese-induced industrialization, the expansion of the modern educational system and the independence movements all helped women to gain prestige."¹⁴ Women no longer used the veil to cover themselves while outside, and their place was no longer limited to the home. Women and men went to church together and sat side by side.¹⁵ The number of female workers in modern industry also increased. In addition, professional jobs such as teaching, nursing, and midwifery were available for women and

¹² Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Eui-Young Yu and Earl H. Phillips (Los Angeles: Center for Korean-American and Korean Studies, California State Univ., 1987), 20.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁵ The Christian church was the one of the first places which provided social contact for both men and women. Thus, Korean people sometimes say that churches are not for religion but for dating.

a few female writers began to take on very important roles in the modern literary movement. By 1945, all of the elementary schools had become coeducational.¹⁶

At that time, the majority of women were still not interested in being professional or socially-active women. Even the professional women had to devote themselves primarily to their married and family lives; work was secondary. Social and cultural discrimination against women remained. Although the remarriage of widows became legal, society still did not accept this favorably. And though the holding of concubines became illegal, the practice was still common.¹⁷

(3) Acculturation Period (1945-1962)

Of the many changes affecting women after 1945, education was the most important, especially after the constitution of 1948 included the concept of equality between sexes. In 1955, roughly 66% of boys and 58% of girls were enrolled in elementary schools, and the number of both girls and boys in secondary schools increased. Yet, by 1966, only 51% of boys and 33% of girls were in grades 7-9. The college population too, though still small, increased for both sexes after 1945. In 1955, 7.9% of the men and 1.3% of the women between ages 19-24 were college students.¹⁸

Women's participation in paid employment increased drastically after 1945. Especially since 1960, as Korea was transforming itself from an agricultural society to an industrialized nation, both men and women have had more opportunities for employment. Women gradually took an important role in the total work force. With these structural changes, their life styles and their thinking changed significantly. Remarriage and divorce rates soon increased. Young people began to feel natural about the mixing of men and

¹⁶ Yu, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

women together in public. Also, young people started to prefer living apart from their parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc. However, although women's positions had improved, "rapid economic development and urbanization were not accompanied by improved social, political, and legal status for women."¹⁹

Although most of the Korean people did not keep all of the old customs, many older people were still against women and men socializing together, and many husbands typically appeared in public places without their wives. "Both on the sociological and on the psychological level, Koreans have tended to carry the idea of male superiority to a point of pseudo isolation even from their wives."²⁰

Korean Women's Traditional Clothing

Hanbok (한복) means *Korean clothes* and is not restricted to mean only women's clothing but includes the general costume worn by men, women, and children. The Korean woman's hanbok (see Figure 2 page 119) is composed of two-pieces, an upper jacket and a lower skirt. The upper part is called *jugori* (저고리) (see Figure 3 page 120) and the lower part is named *chima* (치마). (see Figure 4 page 121). It has always been cut loosely, obliterating the contours of a woman's bust, waist, and hips. Hewon Kahng (1964) suggested that the hanbok was made to cover the woman's body as much as possible to be suitable to a sense of modesty, and for protection against the cold.²¹

The *jugori*, in its short-length style, just covers the breasts and has full length sleeves. *Jugori* sleeves have a curved loose shape. Two long cloth ribbons, called *gorum* (고름), are attached to the *jugori* for front closure. The long, flowing, and full gathered *chima* has a wide band on the top with two extended long strings for the purpose of

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁰ Chung, op. cit., p. 36.

²¹ Hewon Kahng, "The Evolution of the National Costume of Korean Women" (M. A. thesis, Univ. of Maryland, 1964), p. 86.

fastening by constricting the woman's bust tightly. Chima design corresponds to the western-style gathered wrap skirt, but instead of wrapping at the waist, as in the West, it wraps around the breast. The edges of the jugori, the bottoms of sleeves, necklines, side seams, and gorum are often bordered with contrasting colors.

Hanbok fabrics vary by seasons; silk, satin, or heavy fabrics are used in the winter; fine gauze, ramie, or light fabrics in summer. Under the wide chima, several layered voluminous undergarments are worn. Because summer hanbok fabrics are very sheer, several layers of undergarments are essential under the hanbok. Today, *sokchima* (속치마) and *sokbaji* (속바지) are the basic undergarments (see Figure 5 page 122) that are supposed to be worn. Usually they are made in white or whitened pastels.

With the hanbok, Korean women wear narrow boat-shaped, turned-up, flat shoes, called *gomusin* (고무신). (see Figure 6 page 123). There is no difference in shape between the left and right and usually gomusin is made of rubber in a variety of colors. The women also wear tight and narrow padded socks, known as *bosun* (버선). (see Figure 7 page 124). Originally, the bosun was made of cotton, but now it is often made of nylon or other synthetic fabrics. Gomusin is usually smaller in size than the actual foot size so that women have some difficulty putting them on and they hurt their feet.

Traditionally, when women wore hanbok they styled their hair in a certain way, typically waist length and parted down the middle. Unmarried women braided their hair, while married women rolled it into a large knot at the nape of the neck, a style referred to as *jok* (쪽). (see Figure 8 page 125). The jok was held by a *binyo* (비녀) (see Figure 9 page 126), a long pin made of gold, silver or other materials such as jade. However, at the present time, Korean women wear a variety of hair styles -- including western style -- while wearing hanbok.

The upper class Yangban women wore longer and more voluminous hanbok made from fine, delicate materials in certain bright colors; but lower class women wore very simple cut hanbok made of cotton or hemp in natural colors. Since 1910, as the class structure disappeared, these differences no longer existed. Today, the only difference is between age groups; young girls wear *sackdong jugori* (색동저고리) hanbok, which has the rainbow colored sleeves; adults usually wear solid colors.

When girls entered middle and high school they learned to wear simple clothing in either western-style uniforms or modified *tong chima* (통치마) hanbok uniforms. (see Figure 10 page 127). The modified hanbok has a knee-length chima and a less restrictive band around the bust with vest suspenders.

CHAPTER V

ORAL HISTORIES

Note: The following personal histories were recounted to the researcher in the Korean language. They are placed in the third person to aid the narrative in English translation.

Items in parentheses are explanatory remarks by the researcher to clarify meanings for non-Korean readers.

Names are pseudonyms to protect the interviewees' privacy.

1. Jungmi (정미)

Jungmi was born in Manchuria (만주),¹ China, in 1938, and lived there until she moved to Choonchun (춘천), (South) Korea at age seven. Manchuria was very cold and she wore a tiger fur coat which her father bought for her. In elementary school, her mother made all of Jungmi's clothing. Jungmi wore hanbok only on New Year's.² When she moved to Seoul in 1950, she wore the two-piece uniform, which her mother made, in both middle and high schools. When she entered college, she began to wear "formal western-style dress." It made her feel mature.

Second-hand clothing generally was given to destitute people, but some well-to-do people liked to wear it too because it was unique. Thus, after the Korean War she bought second-hand clothing and altered it. Even though Jungmi was not poor enough to acquire it in the normal way, the clothing was available through her church. "I think since

¹ During the Japanese annexation, a number of Korean people fled to Manchuria which is why several women for this study were born there.

² The New Year's (January 1), which is called Seol (설), is the most important occasion of the year for Korean people. In the morning of the Seol, all of the family relatives get together and have ancestors' worship ceremonies. Afterwards, the younger people give a New Year's big bow to the elderly people. Also, people visit their other relatives, neighbors, and teachers, to greet them on the first day of the year.

American women had big breasts I had trouble wearing second-hand clothing. If people asked me where I got the clothes, I said that they were from America and people believed me because the fabrics looked American. I regret that one of my best friends asked me to leave her a blouse that I had remade from second-hand clothing [when she was moving to the USA] but I did not give it to her and brought it with me." The favorites of high school girls were slips and bras made of nylon and trimmed with lace. They were happier with underwear than with outfits.

Since American printed fabrics were of better quality, Jungmi went to the second-hand stores to buy clothing. If they did not fit, she altered them and her husband was proud of her design talent. When she was a sophomore in college, she did not like a class in Korean History. She thought she wasted her time studying this boring subject, so she started to study fashion design in a fashion institute. She liked to design her clothing and wanted it to be different.

During 1956-1958, the number of small custom-made clothing shops increased in the streets back of the South Gate market. Customers could either bring fabrics with them or buy fabrics in the tailor-made shops. She usually went to dressmakers to make her clothing and used Sears-Roebuck and J.C. Penny catalogues to choose designs to have made up at the tailor-made shops.

Jungmi wore hanbok only when she was very young, and after she got into middle school, she never wore hanbok again in Korea. She was not interested in hanbok at all. She came to America in 1965 and became engaged the next year. When she was engaged, she wore hanbok for the ceremony and it felt strange and funny. Since she wore hanbok only once as a grown-up, she thinks it was uncomfortable, though her memory is not clear about it. It seems that the bust was too tight. Even though she wore undergarments, she felt funny because the chima felt so open. The long chima was uncomfortable, too. "I felt

that I was wearing stranger's clothing, but I felt that I was sophisticated. When I saw Korean women wearing hanbok properly and prettily, I wondered whether it looked good on me. I would like to try hanbok once more to see how it looks, but I do not want to go out in hanbok. I do not have a single hanbok with me." Her husband wore western-style clothing. He did not like for her to wear fashionable clothing, but he did not pressure her about it.

2. Haekyung (해경)

Haekyung was born in Hwanghae Do (황해도), (North) Korea in 1937. She remembers as early as kindergarten she wore both hanbok and western-style dress. Hanbok tong chima was for everyday, and long chima for New Year's. When she was in elementary school, her mother had made Haekyung a sailor-collar one-piece dress. Since she was the only daughter, her mother liked to make clothing for Haekyung. In 1947, when she was in the fourth grade her family moved to Seoul and after that she wore western-style dress more frequently. Either her mother bought clothing for Haekyung or somebody gave it to her as a gift. "I remember that one day one of my best friends wore the exact same dress as I wore and we felt great. I thought that the western-style dress looked better on me than hanbok did."

In middle and senior high schools, she wore a western-style uniform. During the summer, it was a white blouse with a navy skirt and in winter it was a navy blue jacket and mompee-like (뽕뽕) (loose) pants. The jacket had a detachable white collar attached with safety pins. At home and in public, she wore western-style dress. As a student at a women's teachers' college, she was required to wear a uniform consisting of a black tight skirt and tailored collar jacket. She made her own simple gathered skirts and flare skirts

even though she usually went to a dressmaker. Wearing western-style dress made her feel grown up.

After graduating from college, she bought a summer dress at Midopa which was one of the high fashion and expensive department stores in Korea. "I remember I bought a one-piece dress made of dacron. The owner said that it was made in America, but now I think that it was made in Korea and they cheated me." During the transition period, everyone liked to buy foreign-made goods. The customers were cheated because the dresses were not made in foreign countries, but in Korea. The Midopa department store did not carry Korean traditional dress but carried dresses from America, Japan, and Hong Kong. Because the Korean government restricted imports, the foreign-made clothing was much more expensive and there was little variety. Haekyung does not remember having big problems finding foreign-made clothing that fit, although "I remember once I could not buy one dress which I liked very much because the bust of the dress was too small for me."

She also liked buying the second-hand clothing from America sold in big second-hand clothing markets in Seoul. "They were wonderful if you found the right one. The Korean government did not have restrictions on selling second-hand clothing so that the sales girls hung them on the hangers and displayed them. We could bargain the price." The cost of clothing was much cheaper in second-hand stores than in department stores. "While I am being interviewed I am reminded of one blouse. The blouse, which I bought in a second-hand store, was emerald color. I enjoyed wearing it very much. I cannot remember exactly about its detail; however, it had short sleeves. My friends said that it was very pretty and I felt wonderful." Also during that time, everyone loved foreign-made goods and she often went with her friends to buy second-hand clothing.

After graduating from college, Haekyung taught in middle and senior high schools for one year. Then she studied fashion design at the Kookje Fashion Institute (one of the biggest fashion institutes in Korea). She later opened and operated her own custom-made dress shop from 1965 to 1966 in downtown Seoul.

She married a Japanese man who did not pressure her about her clothing, but he did say what was pretty and what was not pretty. He also liked for her to wear hanbok, and one time, in 1972, he became angry because she did not wear hanbok to a concert they attended in America.

Since coming to America in 1970, she has worn hanbok for such special occasions as parties and church socials. Though New Year's was a special time for other people to wear hanbok, she did not wear it then. "These days I wear hanbok informally so that I just wear chima without wearing undergarments. I have to wear high-heels and white socks because the chima is too long. If I give my height to the hanbok sewers, they know how much length they should make hanbok chima for me. The most uncomfortable part of the hanbok is the bust ties. I hate the long and wide chima because it is inconvenient for driving a car. Gabsa (갹사, fine gauze fabrics) for summer is easily wrinkled and needs special care. When I watch Korean historical dramas on the TV, I really appreciate that I am living in this present time period. The women had so much work in ancient days."

Since Haekyung always wears western-style dress she feels she cannot appreciate how comfortable the western-style dress really is in comparison to Korean dress. She wears hanbok only twice a year these days. When foreigners tell her that hanbok is beautiful, she is proud of it and she thinks that her ancestors had an excellent sense of color.

3. Soonja (순자)

Soonja was born in Choonchun, (South) Korea in 1936. "I do not remember what I wore as a little girl, but I think I wore whatever my mother put on me." When she was ten years old she transferred to a private school in Seoul. In Korea, each private school had distinctive uniforms so that people could recognize where the students attended. Her serge uniform consisted of two pieces -- a knee-length gathered skirt and a French-style jacket (straight cut in hip-bone length). "It was very fashionable." At home, she wore simple western-style dress. She does not remember exactly where her clothing came from, but she is sure somebody made the dresses for her.

In middle and senior high schools, Soonja again wore two-piece uniforms. In summer, she wore a white blouse with a navy blue skirt, in winter, navy blue mompee-like pants and jacket. As soon as she entered college, she had permanents. "I felt free and began to wear real western-style dress. I enjoyed wearing tailored suits the most. I always wanted to wear unique clothing. I think I had a good body for them -- big breasts, big hips, and small waist."

"I usually went to the top dressmakers, that is, they were the same as Rodeo [Beverly Hills] design in Seoul. The clothing from these places was comfortable and had pretty lines. I could wear them for a long time because their fashions lasted longer. It was a kind of investment. I remember one suit -- a jacket with gusseted dolmen sleeves and a flared skirt of mid-calf length. Afterwards, the skirt lengths became shorter during the rest of my time in Korea. I always bought American-made shoes in Midopa department store even though they were several times more expensive than those from Korea, because the sound of shoe-heels made in America was more pleasing while I was walking. I bought foreign-made t-shirts and blouses at the import stores and bras and cosmetics in the Midopa department store. I did not have big problems for size because they imported small sizes

for Korean women." Soonja added that after the Korean War the American G.I. introduced new fashions to Korea, but it was middle-class fashion.

The clothing stores appeared in the big neighborhoods during the late 1950s. The South Gate and East Gate markets carried food and clothing but she never bought any clothing there. The first time Korean-made clothing began to appear in the markets, the colors were not clear and the fit was not comfortable. "I think the Korean clothing manufacturers did not know about draping and used only flat patterns. That's why I felt uncomfortable wearing Korean-made clothing -- even t-shirts. Also, there were no bright colors in the markets but plain colors such as cream, beige, black, and white." Her favorite colors were light blue, dark grey, dark wine, and black.

-- Koreans called the modern and fashionable ladies *Afraie* (아프래이), those who had dark make-up and wore stylish clothing, and who did not have good reputations (In Korea, virginity was very important. People equated the high-style look with loose morals, thus they were considered to be very bad girls). "People thought I was *Afraie* because I put on dark fingernail polish and make-up, plus I wore high fashion with big padded bras. My family did not allow me to eat with them when I wore dark fingernail polish, so I had to put it on outside and take it off before I returned home. Although my bra had peaked cups, I put in more pads to make my breasts look bigger. I did not feel any shame and was proud of myself." Her mother and brother-in-law pressured her the most about her clothing, but she disregarded what they said. Her mother always said to Soonja, "I am embarrassed that you wear dark make-up and lousy clothing. Wash off the make-up, please." Her brother-in-law was ashamed to be her relative. In 1959 she bought a skin-colored swimming suit made in the United States. "At that time, usually [Korean] people wore black swimming suits so that my suit looked pretty weird. People thought I was naked but I was very happy because it was so unique."

At age twenty-two, she went to a certain beauty parlor everyday. All the top stars were customers there. It had massage rooms used by rich married women. "I remember I went to a massage room because I envied rich women." A lady who was next to me said, "You have a pretty and young body, why do you need a massage? Only old people like me need it." At this time, she was curious about everything. "I wanted to do everything if it was related to fashion."

Before Soonja came to America, she wore both fashionable hanbok and western-style dress. During this time fashionable hanbok became popular and a hanbok contest was held. Her friends suggested she apply to enter this contest, which was not just for pretty girls but for those with manners and grace. She was not supposed to wear hanbok because it was the symbol of married women and she was single,³ yet she enjoyed wearing it on weekends, New Year's, and at friend's weddings. If single women wore hanbok, people thought they were *gisaeng* (기생, female entertainer in a traditional restaurant, the Korean equivalent to the Japanese geisha). "But I ignored what others thought about my clothing. The more people pressured me about my clothing, the more I was against them, and the more I wore the clothing they did not like."

"I do not know about hanbok fashion now, but when I wore it in Korea, the jugori was short, the gorum was long. I would step on the gorum (the long cloth ribbons for fastening jugori) and tear it apart so that whenever I came back to my house with broken gorum my mother was mad at me. Sometimes I used a brooch instead of the gorum. What I worried about most was stepping on the long gorum and tearing it apart." She remembers that she used to tear the gorum, and ask a maid to fix it in secret; otherwise Soonja would have had trouble with her mother. "I think that I could not breathe well because of tight ties

³ Since western-style dress was adopted by most of the younger generation of Korean women, hanbok was worn only by married women, especially in public, though young girls wore hanbok for the special occasions.

around my bust. While I was eating, my hanbok sleeves would get into the food. I do not remember if the bosun and gomusin hurt my feet, but they were cold in winter. Think of that, the toes had no movement and they were tangled together in the small rubber gomusin. Even now, when I remember these things, I do not want to wear hanbok. I wore a dark purple or black chima, and a white or colored jugori. Also, I wore the same color for both chima and jugori. I just wore hanbok for fun and fashion."

Since coming to America in 1961, she has worn hanbok once, for an American party in the same year. "When I imagined about America in Korea, I thought I would wear hanbok all of the time, very gracefully like movie stars, so I brought lots of hanbok. I imagined coming down stairs in my long chima like Grace Kelly. Soon, I found that real life was different and I sent them back to Korea. I did not have places to wear hanbok. I was very busy and could not even remember Korean traditional occasions. Now I want to wear hanbok but it is very impractical for work. The chima has a back opening and we have to hold the back part with one hand to make beautiful draping. If I use one hand for holding the chima back, how can I work? I do not want to use a sash because it is ugly. The most valuable thing for me is esthetic."

Soonja married at age thirty-five, in 1971, a Japanese man. Her husband admired the clothing she wore as always gorgeous and beautiful, but during that time she did not have enough money and time to take care of these things. "As soon as I came to America, I changed a lot concerning my clothing. But after a while, I came back to be myself and I tried to get back my beauty and fashion."

"I think my esthetic view has been changed now. When I went to Korean parties, people who wore hanbok looked rustic to me. I want to enjoy wearing hanbok in Korea, but not in America. Hanbok looks natural in Korea but it does not match with the American environment."

4. Yoonju (윤주)

Yoonju was born in Choongchung Do (충청도), (South) Korea in 1935 and lived there until she moved to Seoul as a teenager. When she was four or five, her eldest sister (who was twenty-two years older than she) went to Shanghai to study fashion design. After that, Yoonju was a "fashionable girl" as her sister sent her clothes from Shanghai. The Shanghai of that period was a much bigger and more crowded city than Hong Kong is today. Her friends envied Yoonju's clothing very much, and in her neighborhood both adults and friends called Yoonju by a nickname that meant "a girl who wore the best clothing." When her friends wore mompee, she wore herringbone pants or a short skirt with suspenders. Pictures of her at two or three years of age show her wearing knitwear made by her sister.

She wore hanbok only for New Year's. She remembered that once she wore a pink tong chima and a yellow jugori. In 1946, when Yoonju was eleven, her sister moved to Seoul from Shanghai and opened a tailor-made shop. After that, her sister sent Yoonju clothing from Seoul so she continued to wear very fashionable outfits. One day, when she passed one of the department stores in her home town, one woman told her she would like to put Yoonju in the store window instead of the mannequin.

Right after the Korean War, when she was in middle and senior high school, there were few fabrics available in Korea. However, she could make her own clothes, thanks to her sister who had taught Yoonju how to sew, or her sister made Yoonju's clothing. She had begun sewing at twelve and she even made her high school uniform.

After graduating from high school, she did not go to college. Instead, she studied fashion design in Korea for awhile; then she came to America to study fashion design in

1963 as a married woman. She returned to Korea in 1965 and opened a tailor-made shop in Seoul until she moved back to America in 1969.

She had married in 1957. At the beginning of her marriage, she wore hanbok to visit her parents-in-law, but wore western-style dress for everyday activities. Her husband was the youngest son of a very conservative family, and he had many relatives. They did not say she should wear hanbok, but she did when visiting so as not to offend, especially for Jesa (제사, annual ancestry worship). Her husband wore western-style suits all of the time. In suburbia, the men wore hanbok but city men wore western-style suits.

Her husband had no opinion about her clothing except for skirt length -- not to show her legs in public. Once in 1960, while studying fashion design at a fashion institute, an instructor chased her with shears to shorten her skirt. The instructor thought that Yoonju's skirt length was too long and out of fashion. As skirts grew shorter, she was embarrassed to wear them because of her thick calves.

From 1955-1959, her main source of clothing was the second-hand clothing which she bought in the East Gate market, then altered. Even though the second-hand clothing was cheap, the fabrics were of good quality. "I think that the second-hand clothing did not fit my figure, probably because they were out of fashion. Americans might send clothing ten years out of date. I learned clothing construction by myself while I was fixing the second-hand clothing to fit me." Her friends envied her pretty fabrics and asked where she had bought them.

Yoonju bought foreign-made stockings, socks, and slippers in Midopa department store. She said that Midopa carried only foreign-made clothing, especially American imports. Her favorite colors were beige and black. She never bought any fabrics for herself; the fabric she used was given to her, and most of that was black. She began to like black as a color. She thinks that after 1960 more women wore western-style dress than

wore hanbok. Also, she thinks that Koreans were poor and made a bare living so that Korean women could not enjoy wearing hanbok but wore it as their everyday clothing during hard economic times. But now, when times are good, people enjoy wearing designers' hanbok for their special occasions.

When Yoonju came to America the first time, she had no opportunity to wear hanbok, but this changed after she began to participate in church activities. Sometimes she wore hanbok for fun when she met with her friends. "I always worry that the back opening of the hanbok chima might be unwrapped and the undergarments show. If I move my arms a little bit actively, everybody can see my underarms because the side length of jugori is too short. I should tie it around my bust tightly to have a pretty shape, but it is hard to breathe. Hanbok does not look good on me and it is uncomfortable. Whenever I wear hanbok, I know it will be uncomfortable so that I am fine in it for only a short time. Otherwise, it is inconvenient to wear hanbok all day long, from morning to evening. I have never worn bosun and I did not even bring one pair from Korea. I wear shoes instead of gomusin. I worry that the shoes will show under the skirt, so I wear a long chima, then step on it. It is really uncomfortable. I feel natural wearing western-style dress because I have worn it since I was young, although I felt something new and good when I wore hanbok. When I take hanbok off, I appreciate how comfortable western-style dress is. I think it is the same as when we take off formal dresses and put on everyday clothing -- we feel relieved. Anyway, in one sentence, hanbok is very uncomfortable, but it is my ethnic clothing and it makes me feel nostalgic about my country."

5. Yuri (유리)

Yuri was born in Seoul in 1935 and came to America in 1963. Her family had a manufacturing company which made fabrics for western-style clothing so that she wore

western-style dress as a young girl. In 1944, when Yuri was nine years old, her mother made her a tong chima hanbok in solid black satin. "I was shy to wear solid black at first because usually children wore hanbok made of bright or rainbow colored serge. But, later I was glad because my friends liked my hanbok and they were jealous." Even when she was young her mother took Yuri to dressmakers to have her clothing made. Yuri's clothing was always unique and attracted attention from her friends, which made her excited. Her parents and older brother cared about her clothing more than she did.

In high school, she wore two-piece uniforms. Later, she worked as a translator at AFKN (the American G.I. TV channel in Korea) and she was studying fashion design in a fashion institute. She usually wore western-style dress at work. Yuri did not like to wear hanbok because she thought it was uncomfortable for daily living. "While I am walking I keep stepping on the chima because it is so long. Hanbok is tied so tight around my bust that I cannot breathe well. Bosun is very tight, but I do not mind wearing bosun because bosun and gomusin are part of the hanbok outfit. I do not mind the hanbok sleeve design either. I think hanbok looks good on thin women; unfortunately I am plump so that hanbok looks ugly on me. Other people say that I look better in western-style dress than in hanbok. Probably, others' opinions affect my clothing decisions."

During a college vacation, Yuri visited Hong Kong and bought slips, bras, and sweaters. After that, she ordered shoes from Hong Kong. She also bought these items at the Midopa department store -- where more American imports were available than European items -- and also through the Sears-Roebuck catalogue. The price of foreign-made goods was much higher than for similar goods made in Korea.

"When I bought foreign-made clothing, I did not have size problems for the shoes, but skirt lengths and blouse lengths were too long. Although the sweater sleeves were long, if I pulled them up, they were fine. My favorite colors were black, white, and grey,

and I thought that these colors were sophisticated. I never thought of going to dressmakers who had tailor-made shops in my neighborhood, and I do not know about any local dressmakers. I always went to the dressmakers in downtown Seoul. I thought that usually housewives wore plain and routine clothing made by these local dressmakers. I do not know about any second-hand clothing."

Yuri was married in 1962. Her husband had always worn western-style suits. He liked her clothing choices. He really liked her to wear hanbok on special occasions. When she came to America, she wore hanbok when she went to birthday parties for the mothers of her Korean friends, when she visited her parents-in-law,⁴ and when she went out on special occasions. Sometimes, when she did not want to be the only one to wear hanbok, she arranged with her friends to wear it for going to special parties. "I always care about my appearance because impressions are important. I try to wear clothing suitable for my age."

Yuri used *Vogue* and Japanese magazines when she chose her designs in the tailor-made shops. Japanese magazines were the most popular sources for designs. "I think that Korean women follow the fashions pretty fast, comparatively. Whenever I wear western-style dress I feel more cheerful. I am interested in the fashion world and in wearing fashionable clothing. Although now I am over fifty years old, I am thankful that I still look forward to wearing stylish dresses for each occasion. I still feel as an eighteen-year-old girl does in fashion. I am a Korean so that I cannot forget hanbok. Hanbok has traditional beauty, and foreign friends say that it is pretty, but I would like to wear hanbok just for special parties. I prefer to wear western-style dress for my everyday life because I can choose and enjoy current fashions, and also I feel comfortable. Although hanbok is

⁴ In Korea, parents-in-law are considered the most important people for a daughter-in-law, so that she pays careful attention to her actions in front of them. Typically in a Korean home, the mother-in-law has most of the control over the household, while the daughter-in-law has the responsibility for the household chores.

colorful and has traditional beauty, the only fashion for hanbok is to lengthen or shorten the jugori length."

6. Minkyung (민경)

Minkyung was born in Seoul in 1935. She has several sisters and has worn western-style dress since she was young. Her fashionable sisters influenced her clothing attitudes. "When I was in elementary school, I liked to touch my sisters' stockings which had seams in the back. Because the stockings were expensive, few people could afford them and I wanted to wear them." Her sisters either bought clothes for her in the department stores or made them for her. Also, her sisters handed down their clothing. She remembered a favorite one-piece cotton dress with a Peter Pan collar.

When Minkyung was in Korea, she wore western-style dress most of the time; however she wore hanbok for her parents' birthdays and for New Year's. "I have straight and broad shoulders so that hanbok does not look good on me, but western-style dress does. My friends even nicknamed me *Yang Jang Jeng E* (양장쟁이), which meant a lady who always wears western-style dress. I looked like an old-fashioned girl wearing hanbok. My friends and other people said so. Probably, I was influenced psychologically not to wear hanbok because of comments of friends."

Her undergraduate degree was in art, and Minkyung thinks that she had a highly-developed sense of color in her clothing. She made her own clothing when she was in college. Even when she was a high school student, she made her school uniform. After the Korean War, she purchased her clothing at the foreign-made goods stores located in a back street in downtown Seoul. Minkyung thinks that most of her foreign made clothing was made in Europe rather in America; however, she did not know which European countries. She bought basic skirts and sweaters. The price was relatively high so that few

people could buy foreign-made clothing. She usually went to a dress maker and had her make clothes from Minkyung's own designs. Sometimes Minkyung used magazines for her designs, but she could not remember from which countries. Her college did not have a uniform, but students usually wore navy blue. After graduating from college, she studied fashion design at a fashion institute and then operated a tailor-made dress shop until she came to America in 1973.

Minkyung was married in 1963 at age twenty-eight, but soon divorced. She does not remember that anybody pressured her about clothing and she said she rejected what others thought. She has never felt uncomfortable wearing western-style dress. Since her coming to America, she has worn hanbok five times -- for her second wedding, her baptism, New Year's, a year-end party, and while visiting New York.

"I hate to wear hanbok because I dislike the tight ties around my bust and the long and wide chima. It is impossible to alter hanbok because the hanbok silhouette is cross shaped. I think the tall women look good wearing hanbok and that is why hanbok looks good with high-heels. I like the curved sleeves and I do not feel uncomfortable with them. Usually in America, Korean women try to wear hanbok only for parties because the hanbok design is not functional and is uncomfortable. Also, I do not want to wear hanbok because I should have the proper accessories and handbags, but I do not have these suitable things. As you know, hanbok bags are different from western-style bags. However, if you wear hanbok properly, it is gorgeous. My foreign friends like for me to wear hanbok and they say it is beautiful. I brought a dozen of bosun [from Korea], but I have never worn them because they are not functional at all. If the western style white socks are shown under the chima it is very ugly, so I wore white boots instead of bosun and gomusin. Sometimes, people wear white shoes and stockings. I think it is ugly to show the skin in white high-heels. White boots are the best."

Her favorite colors were white, black, and pink. When she was young she thought print and flower designs were too bold for her, but the older she became, the more she liked them. "I think western-style dress is suitable now, and I also prefer western-style dress to hanbok because I like to be active and to be able to move around. I cannot wear clothing according to my opinion, but I have to follow the trends of the world [fashion] situation."

7. Haesoon (혜순)

Haesoon was born in Japan in 1933. When she was three years old she was sent by her parents to Jeju Do (제주도) in (South) Korea to live with her grandparents.⁵ Haesoon is from a Buddhist family. She only had an elementary school education because her grandfather was a very conservative man and did not want Haesoon to study further, although her grandmother argued otherwise.

Haesoon was sent western-style dress from her parents and her other relatives in Japan even when she was a very little girl. Her mother, who lived her entire life in Japan, wore western-style dress until she died in 1951. Haesoon's friends liked and wanted to wear her clothes because it was hard to purchase any kind of clothing during the Japanese annexation.

Usually, Haesoon's friends wore black tong chima and white jugori. The jugori length was getting shorter and gorum were getting longer by the time Haesoon was fifteen, in 1948. The material was of a low quality cotton, but the girls from rich families wore a better quality cotton. Haesoon liked her friend's clothes more than her own; however, her friends preferred Haesoon's outfits. One day she and her friend traded clothes at the suggestion of one of her friends. She remembers that when her grandparents found out,

⁵ Children stay with their father's parents in Korea if their parents move to another town until things are settled, and also if the grandparents are lonely.

they scolded her because they were afraid her clothing might be ruined. She said she was lucky to have a pair of leather shoes when she was eight or nine years old because leather shoes were very rare at that time, and her friends were so jealous that they dumped sand on her shoes. Then, she was afraid to wear those leather shoes again.

She had moved to Pusan (부산) and remembers that the teachers in the elementary schools there wore hanbok until 1962. After that, a few teachers began to wear western dress. She recalled that some Korean movie stars adopted western-style clothing more quickly than ordinary people. Haesoon remembered that when she was eighteen years old (1951), one of her uncles brought her some fabric to have hanbok made. The white cotton jugori in breast length had a red git (깃, neckline) and the gorum and chima in calf-length had one inch pleats around the top of the skirt. Her friends said they liked her new hanbok very much and it was pretty and she felt wonderful.

She got married when she was nineteen (1952) and moved to Seoul and after her marriage she wore hanbok all the time. She lived in a wealthy area in Seoul, and the women of her neighborhood wore longer and wider chima, compared to the ordinary hanbok chima. She followed their lead, and adapted hers to be the same as the others.

Her western-style clothing as a young girl had been only one-piece dresses. In 1960, at age twenty-seven -- she remembers this exactly -- she again wore a western-style dress. This suit had a tailored collar and looked like a man's suit jacket. The only clothing she wore under her jacket was a bra, and the jacket was fastened with a brooch. The wide skirt came to below her knee. She had felt comfortable wearing one-piece dress, even the first time, but she felt uncomfortable with the suit because she was afraid somebody might see her chest. "I remember that when I met my friends, they told me not to be afraid to drop my arms away from my chest, and one of them draped a scarf around my neck. Still, I had some looser feeling around my chest because I was so used to the hanbok which tied

tightly around my breasts with strings. Also, whenever I wore this suit I felt uncomfortable and strange because I did not wear it every day. A few years earlier I had worn a tight calf-length skirt, but after I had had a baby I could not wear it because it was too tight."

After this first uncomfortable time, she began to enjoy it. Her friends and neighbors admired her clothing. Her husband, who had worn a western-style suit since he was twenty-one years old, liked Haesoon's suit so much and he bought several more (pleated skirts and blouses) for her when he visited Japan in 1967. Her friends thought perhaps even dresses made in Korea were from Japan because most of the the fabrics for her western clothing came from Japan. In 1961 the jugori length shortened to below the breast or breast length, and during 1962-1963, western-style dress began to appear in quantities in Korea. When Korean women wore suits, they did as she had and wore only scarves wrapped around their necks with no blouses underneath. Finally by 1963 only a few women wore hanbok regularly.

Some people had a local tailor make their hanbok while some sewed it themselves. As early as 1958, one or two tailor-made shops opened in her neighborhood, but no stores carried ready-made clothing. By 1963 several tailors opened shops in her neighborhood and the women could order their clothing there. She had a tailor make her clothes. She chose the designs by using the Japanese fashion magazines in the tailor shop. She did not remember that she had ever seen the Korean and American magazines.

She visited Japan when she was thirty years old (1963), and while there she visited a Tokyo department store. If she found clothing she wanted there, she bought it; otherwise, she gave her size and favorite color to the sales people and ordered what she wanted, having to wait only one week for it. The department stores used mannequins for fittings to

custom-tailor the clothing for the customers. In Korea, department stores had carried ready-made western-style clothing since 1966, but only a few carried hanbok.

Although she had been wearing western-style clothing more frequently after 1960, still, whenever she went to see her parents-in-law, she continued to wear hanbok each time. "In Korea, it is the custom that when visiting older people the younger person must show respect by bowing on one's knees." Especially at the New Year's she had to wear hanbok to give the customary traditional deep bow to her parents-in-law. Also she had to wear hanbok for Jesa, which is a very special occasion, and for sixtieth birthday celebrations (the sixtieth birthday is one of the biggest occasions because it used to be very difficult to achieve). For such other occasions as August Harvest Festival and weddings, she wore western-style dress. However, she had worn hanbok for all special occasions until 1960.

Whenever she met with her friends, she checked with them beforehand, "What kinds of clothing are you going to wear today?" because she wanted to reduce the possibility that she might be the only one to wear a western-style dress. She emphasized several times that she got all her dress fabrics from her relatives or parents in Japan. Most were black or grey, so she remembers exactly two pieces of fabric she chose by herself in 1971, right before she came to the United States, one being beige, the other one white and blue wave design.

Although she was used to grey and liked it, she envied her friends who wore hanbok in such bright colors as blue and red. Her friends asked her, "How come you always wear grey like a grandmother?" Thus, once she made an entire hanbok, both jugori and chima in red; then, she felt very uncomfortable wearing the bright red color, even though her friends said she looked pretty. She wore the red hanbok several times but she was afraid that her parents-in-law would criticize her and suggest she must have been crazy. As a result, she

had never worn her red hanbok to visit her parents-in-law, but wore it only with her friends. However, when her friends or others wore bright colored clothing, she felt fine with them.

Haesoon immigrated to America in 1971 and now she feels strange wearing hanbok. Several days before she was interviewed, she went to the wedding of one of her relatives. Nowadays, Korean weddings are mixed with western and Korean style. For the first part, the western-style wedding, she wore western dress, then she changed to hanbok for the Korean-style second part. She felt uncomfortable wearing hanbok again as she had wearing her western-style suit the first time. She could not breathe well in hanbok because it was tied very tightly with strings around the breasts. She did not wear bosun and gomusin; instead she wore western white socks and shoes with her hanbok. She took the outfit off immediately after the second part of the wedding.

She thinks that she must have changed since she came to the United States because now she thinks hanbok is too much trouble to wear, especially with the several layers of underwear. "It is too hard to breathe in it, and is too long to work in."

Both her husband and she wore hanbok only for Jesa until 1982. But now they no longer wear it even for Jesa because their life in the United States is too busy to consider hanbok. Now she enjoys most of all western-style shoes because they are easy to dust off. It was very hard for her to wash gomusin, made of rubber, and to get them clean. She greatly prefers to wear western-style dress -- she is glad not to wear bosun. Dressing is so much simpler and easier. Also, she does not have to worry about styling her long hair, which once she wore in a pony tail, for she keeps her hair short and simple. She hopes that hanbok is retained in Korea and worn at least once, say for New Year's, but adds, it is not for her.

8. Mija (미자)

Mija was born in Pusan in 1933. She has worn western-style dress since she was young so that she feels as if it is her national costume. However, when her mother put hanbok on Mija for New Year's and Harvest Festival, Mija was delighted. In kindergarten, she wore jumpers, blouses, and sweaters, in red, pink, and blue. "I remember that all of my friends wore western-style dress." In middle school, she wore the sailor collar uniform with pleated skirts -- a navy blue one-piece dress with a sailor collar adapted from Japanese school uniform.

Pusan is a harbor city which is located at the farthest eastern point of South Korea near Japan, and new cultures were adopted very quickly there. She soon moved to Seoul after the Korean War, and found that Pusan was more modern than Seoul because people in Seoul still kept the traditions of the Yi Dynasty. Even after she was married in 1954, she continued to wear western-style dress all of the time, with no pressure from her husband to do otherwise. "Hanbok is not suited for me so that I did not have to make many of them. But I wore it a couple of times when I went to relatives' funerals and to visit her parents-in-law." This was when she was in her twenties, but she has never worn it since. Her husband thought that she was pretty in western-style dress and encouraged her to wear it. Further, her parents-in-law were Christian and modern. Thus, they thought it was appropriate.

Mija remembers no ready-made clothing in the late 1950s, so she went to a dressmaker. The tailor-made shops stood close together, side-by-side in downtown Seoul. Dressmakers kept fabrics on the shelves so that the customers could see and choose them, but selected and advised on the designs that the customers picked from fashion magazines. The shop that she used to go to probably had the first fashion show in Korea, in the late 1950s, and asked several customers, including her, to be models. After that, fashion

models began to appear in Korea. She worked as a model several times a year after graduating from college. Her parents were not concerned since they saw it as only a hobby. Often, this was not considered to be a reputable profession.

Since her coming to America in 1977, Mija has not worn hanbok. She does not own one and she still does not like them. She herself thought that hanbok was not suitable for her, and her friends agreed and told her, "Hanbok is ugly on you." "I do not feel strange with western-style dress, but I feel uncomfortable with hanbok. It seems that hanbok is not my national clothing. I must have different gestures and attitudes when I wear hanbok. Everything -- bust, bosun, gomusin, etc., are uncomfortable for me."

She remembered that during the Korean War, people still wore hanbok, though afterwards, many more people wore western-style dress, especially those who lived in Seoul. Most of the people who lived in the countryside, however, still wore hanbok.

During the Korean War, many people fled from Seoul to Pusan. They spread their fashion there so that Pusan became a very active city for fashion. When she moved to Seoul after the Korean War, she could no longer tell the differences between Pusan and Seoul. "I felt that fashion was the activist thing among other changes to be observed after the Korean War."

During 1957-1958, fabrics came from Japan and Macao. The Sears-Roebuck catalogue was used on the cheaper tailor-made shops, while *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and other American magazines were used in the better shops, and *Elegance* was used in the high-fashion shops.

Mija opened a tailor-made clothing shop in Seoul in 1965. During 1967-1968, skirt lengths shortened, finally reaching only thirty centimeters. "Of course I wore the thirty centimeter miniskirt. One Korean singer who visited America introduced the miniskirt to Korea in the late 1960s. In early 1970, the maxi was the fashion for a while. I went to

Paris for a year to take a training course and wore the maxi and bell-bottomed pants suits. I felt that I was a superior fashion leader, and I liked that feeling. Whenever I dressed-up, people said that I looked wonderful. I could have a unique appearance because I was a fashion designer. So nobody laughed at me. I felt good all the time." She did not wear bright colors, but "decent" colors such as black, grey, and beige. "I think the weather in Korea is the same as the weather in Europe so that I wore the European colors."

In the early 1960s, she remembers that a few department stores appeared with ready-made clothing. These stores carried clothing from Japan and Hong Kong. The clothing made in Korea was of lower quality. There was Korean-made clothing in the South and East Gate markets, but it looked out-of-date and ugly. She did not wear any clothing from either of these two markets.

"Usually I wore clothing from Hong Kong, Macao, and America. I did not wear Japanese clothing because the Korean government had stopped trading with Japan. The bags, shoes, and clothing which were made in Hong Kong were very popular, and there was lots of American-made clothing. I do not know how the foreign-made goods arrived in Korea, probably unofficially. Sometimes travelers brought foreign-made goods and they were usually Korean favorites. Most people wore grey, beige, and black. Sizes were fine, but the sleeve length of American-made clothing was long, so I shortened them. Foreign-made clothing had no variety of sizes and was expensive. Big women could not buy any ready-made clothing so the tailor-made shops were popular in Korea. Even though foreign-made goods were expensive, the stores were always crowded, and the stores which carried those goods made large profits. Even dressmakers used foreign-made fabrics. Although these fabrics were more expensive than those made in Korea, the demand was great."

She pointed out that fashionable women wore western-style dress and had more money. While western-style dress was being introduced, the hanbok designers became popular making a special hanbok for weddings and engagements. The East and South Gate markets carried hanbok.

"Hanbok looks graceful on the body, but it is not functional. I do not want to wear hanbok, but it looks pretty on others. My bust was tied tightly. First of all, I do not feel comfortable physically with hanbok and I am afraid that the curved sleeves might get wet when I work in the kitchen. Because of these reasons, hanbok should be worn for parties -- not for housework."

Mija's mother is eighty-two years old now and has never worn any western-style dress except for an overcoat. She has lived in America for thirteen years and always wears hanbok, binyo, and durumagi (두루마기, a winter coat worn over hanbok). "My mother liked western-style dress, but she had no chances to wear it. My mother was not like a New Woman [a Korean woman with higher education in either Japan or other western countries]. Only a New Woman was supposed to wear western-style dress. My mother was afraid that my grandparents might scold her if she wore them." Mija's mother told her children, "Wear hats, manicure and polish your nails, and you will look good."

9. Jinju (진주)

Jinju was born in Chunra Do (전라도), (South) Korea in 1932, and after 1945 she moved to Seoul. While in elementary school she wore a sailor-collar dress made by her mother. During the Japanese annexation, she wore the required sailor-collar uniform, after that she wore two-piece uniforms.

Ever since Jinju was young, she wanted to come to America and work in the fashion field. As a young girl she drew clothing designs. She went to a special high school that

emphasized home economics and manners. It was at this time that she discovered she could make and sew her own patterns and that she enjoyed it. When she was in high school she made a sailor-collar dress out of serge fabrics that her father had worn. She did not want to go to the tailor-made shop recommended by the school for her school uniform because their uniforms were not good quality. Although the school had strict rules about hair styles, the students had some flexibility with their uniforms, so she made her own.

"I remember one time that I made a ramie dress with pleated skirt and puff sleeves. While I was playing tennis in this dress, one of my teachers saw me. Then, in the next morning session for moral instruction and physical exercise, the principal said that one of the students had worn a very fashionable dress which students were not supposed to wear. I think I really was interested in stylish clothing and liked to wear it. While I was playing basketball, I did not feel comfortable wearing the wide cloth strap used as a bra. It was not until the middle of the 1960s that bras began to appear in Korea. Before this time, individuals wore a wide cloth strap that looked like the hanbok bust band."

After graduating from high school, while she was working in a bank, she studied fashion design at a fashion institute in a night class. Her friends admired her clothing which she made, and they brought their fathers' old shirts and asked her to make garments for them. "I think I was a fashion leader." "My father played the violin and my mother wore high-heels. Both of them were pretty enlightened. Conservative parents did not allow their daughters to get jobs, but my father helped me to get the job in a bank."

After 1945, Jinju bought second-hand military serge uniforms at the East Gate market and used it to make clothing for herself. "Koreans were so poor and we did not have enough fabrics." She bought and altered second-hand clothes, too. Clothing from America had large waists and long sleeves which she altered to fit. She had no big problems when she bought the clothing. It was almost right for her. "We had to wear

second-hand clothing, we had to make our own clothing, or we had to go to dressmakers because we did not have foreign-made clothing or ready-made clothing. I bought second-hand clothing to wear, and I lied to people that my relatives sent it to me from America. They envied my clothes. Between close friends, we told the truth and went to second-hand stores together to look for unique clothing. Everybody wore second-hand clothing so that nobody paid any attention to it."

"In the East Gate market, we could buy hanbok but not western-style dress. I like western-style dress because it is so simple. It is fine to wear hanbok once in a while because it is beautiful, but it is uncomfortable to wear hanbok frequently. I can enjoy the fashion and newness in western-style dress, but hanbok has the same design all the time except for different fabrics. During the end of the Japanese annexation period, the Japanese forbade wearing long chima but required mompee made of black cotton or serge. There were no good fabrics because Japan was losing the war and needed fabrics for their own use."

Jinju usually made her clothing and her sisters' uniforms by herself. Her sisters were pretty happy with the uniforms she made because the fitting was better than those from a tailor-made shop. One summer, she earned money making forty uniforms for her sisters' friends. However, her husband asked her not to do any more because she was not paying enough attention to her housework. She also quit her job in the bank after she was married. After her youngest son graduated from elementary school in 1971, she opened a tailor-made shop which she operated until she came to America in 1972.

She went to a dressmaker for lined clothing or for a heavy coat, but usually she made her own clothing. She sometimes bought her outdoor clothes in the Midopa department store and she bought homedress in the Peace and South Gate markets because they were inexpensive. Midopa sold the better quality clothing and fabrics made in Korea.

Jinju used Sears-Roebuck catalogue given to her by a G.I. for her clothing designs. She made western-style dress with oriental fabrics which her parents-in-law gave as wedding gifts and when people saw these dresses, they were surprised. As a young girl she liked purple, grey, and brown. As she grows older, she now likes bright colors that she did not feel to be appropriate before.

She was married in 1954 at twenty-two. Her husband has never worn hanbok because he thought it very uncomfortable. Before she was married, she wore hanbok for New Year's, Harvest Festival, and for going to her parents' grave. Sometimes in summer she wore velvet chima and ramie juksam (적삼, unlined summer jugori) to be fashionable. After her marriage, she wore hanbok more frequently. She wore hanbok when she went out with her husband; when she wanted people to know she was married; when she visited her parents-in-law; and when she celebrated her babies' first birthdays.

"During this time, my skirts were tight, or flared with a petticoat. Western-style dress was uncomfortable -- especially when I visited my parents-in-law and sat down on the floor. Hanbok was also more comfortable when my children were babies. When I carried a diaper bag and my baby on my back, if I tied hanbok chima with a sash at the waist, hanbok was the most comfortable clothing."

Her husband did not like clothing which showed Jinju's body. "I did not have any reasons to wear clothing my husband did not like. I had enough clothing to wear." Her parents-in-law had no preference concerning her clothing, but she wore hanbok more frequently when she visited them because she felt more comfortable.

Since coming to America, she has worn hanbok for her children's weddings, for New Year's, and for her husband's birthday. When she has guests, sometimes she wears hanbok because she is proud of her heritage. She now thinks hanbok is uncomfortable for housework, but when people say hanbok is beautiful she feels wonderful.

"Hanbok is really uncomfortable -- you have to wear long and wide sokchima and chima which sweep the floor. The bust should be tied very tightly. But the sleeves are fine with me. Think of that, in winter, when we washed cotton padded hanbok, we had to take apart the layers, wash them separately, iron them, and finally sew them again. The big bosun is ugly so that it should be worn tightly to make the feet look small and narrow. It hurt my feet and it is so hot in summer."

10. Sunghee (성희 씨)

Sunghee was born in Choongchung Do in 1932. Twice a year when she went on school field trips (in the spring and winter, all the Korean elementary, middle, and high school students go on a field trip, each with a lunch box, so that the students feel this activity is a picnic) her mother made a pretty hanbok for her, made of black tong chima and jade green jugori. She remembers that she once had a one-piece dress which her mother bought. "I think I went to the store with my mother and she bought me the dress. I thought it was very wonderful when I got it. It was a white and red plaid dress." In middle school, she wore sailor collar uniform, with her hair braided in a pigtail. When she was at home, she wore hanbok which her mother made for her. She wore hanbok most of the time before the Japanese annexation ended. Afterwards, she wore one-piece dresses more frequently than hanbok.

Before her marriage, when Sunghee got together with her friends, she wore western-style dress, and at home, she wore simple blouses and long skirts, generally wearing western-style dress more often. After she was married, however, she usually wore hanbok, especially when she visited her parents-in-law. They did not ask her to wear hanbok, but she felt it was the proper clothing to wear when she visited them. She thought that western-style dress was inconvenient for the traditional bow to elderly people. "We

should show respect by wearing hanbok around elderly people. Also, we should wear hanbok properly for birthdays, weddings, and New Year's. I think Koreans look good in hanbok. Hanbok looks dignified, so I wear it for going to church or special occasions." Her husband, who wore hanbok only for New Year's, did not care what she wore generally, but he liked for her to wear hanbok, sometimes asking Sunghee to wear it when they went out. She thought that hanbok looked good on her, so she wore it regularly.

After she married in 1953, she moved to Seoul. In the same year, she opened a clothing store in the South Gate market. To have her own dress made, she went to a dressmaker, choosing fabrics there and using Japanese magazines for her designs. She never paid any attention to second-hand clothes and did not see them at all. She would go to the two big markets in Seoul, the East Gate which carried cheap goods for country people and the South Gate market which carried better quality clothing demanded by Seoul consumers.

When Sunghee was young, she wore dark colors such as grey, but as she has grown older she prefers to wear bright colors. Also, she likes red and black plaids. After turning thirty in 1962, she wore western-style dress for everyday life, but continued to wear hanbok for going to church, wedding parties, and for 60th birthday parties.

Western-style dress for her was more comfortable and nicer than hanbok. It takes longer to prepare and dress with hanbok. On the other hand, she thinks hanbok better for dignified functions. Although suspenders make hanbok easier to wear, it is still more complicated than western-style dress. "I am used to wearing hanbok, so I feel less uncomfortable compared to young Korean girls who are not used to it. I have a daughter-in-law in America. When we have special occasions, she wears hanbok, but she cannot stand it for more than an hour at a time, so that she goes back home to change to western-style dress and comes back again. I find the sleeves are fine with me, but the long and

wide chima is really uncomfortable. The Yangban had to have narrow, small feet. Usually, bosun size was smaller than the women's foot size, so it was hard and painful to wear bosun. It hurt my feet." The older women are very much interested in the shape of their feet. "I think that young people never care about the shape of their feet, and they wear big size bosun. Of course I wear bosun and gomusin when I wear hanbok. Even if hanbok is uncomfortable to wear, it makes me feel peaceful because it is my national clothing."

Since she came to America in 1983, she still wears hanbok for Christmas and other dressy occasions. She also wears hanbok when it is her turn to take up the collection at church. "I am working and busy in America and I do not wear hanbok often. Probably, I follow American ways. I am so tired and just do not feel like having to do so much preparation to wear hanbok. I think Koreans should wear hanbok even if they are in America. Western-style dress does not look respectable on Koreans. As women grow older, they should wear hanbok to be considered decent. When I see the women who wear really extreme clothing, I wonder what kind of women they are."

11. Soojung (수정)

Soojung was born in Seoul in 1931, and at age four went to Jeju Do to live with her grandparents, and as early as kindergarten, she wore both hanbok and western-style dress. Her grandmother made hanbok for Soojung with cotton fabrics dyed from gardenia seeds which made a light orange color. Also, she wore sakdong jugori, a typical child's jugori with sleeves of many colored stripes, and tong chima. After middle school, she wore hanbok only for New Year's and Harvest Festival.

She went to middle school in Daejun (대전), (South) Korea, and there she wore the sailor collar uniform. The summer collar was white with navy detail and the winter one

was the reverse. Her high school required students to wear two-piece uniforms all the time, even when not at school. However, she wore a simple and comfortable western-style dress at home.

Soojung seldom wore hanbok because she thought it was very uncomfortable. "Even though I tied it tightly around my bust, my hanbok chima slid down. The sleeves were uncomfortable too. Bosun hurts my feet. I wore mostly western-style dress, but since I was married in 1957, I wore tong chima hanbok several times.

She did not have any strange feelings when she wore western-style dress because she was used to it. Whenever she wore hanbok people said that she looked like a gisaeng. She was so embarrassed that she did not want to wear hanbok at all. During the transition period, there were few cars in Korea and hanbok was not practical to wear in public transportation. "It was difficult for me to walk on the street in long chima. Hanbok was also uncomfortable when I had a job."

Soojung went to dressmakers to have her clothing made a couple of times, but she had made her own western-style clothes since she was young. She bought sweaters in department stores. Sometimes she bought and fixed second-hand clothing and used pretty buttons, also from second-hand clothing. The design of the second-hand clothing was unique, the cost was cheap, and if she bought a small size, it fit. After graduating from college, she opened her own dress salon in downtown Seoul in the late 1950s, and she usually made her own personal clothing there, often from fabrics which she bought from a peddler⁶ who carried American-made goods. When her customers saw her personal clothing, they liked it and ordered the same as she wore. They did not mind whether it looked good on them or not. She used *Vogue* magazine for her designs. She used to use bright colors such as red and purple, though now she likes black.

⁶ The peddlers in Korea carried goods to customers door to door. They carried clothing food, cosmetics, jewelry, etc.

"Once I made a coat in bright purple and everybody in the street was looking at me, but I was proud of my coat and felt wonderful. I was brave enough to wear bright colors which ordinary people were embarrassed to wear. I never felt embarrassed because I liked them. My husband, who wore the western-style suits, did not pressure me on my clothing because I usually dressed properly."

"Hanbok is too dressy and not suitable for everyday clothing. The idea is the same as American women wearing long dresses for special occasions as Koreans wearing hanbok for New Year's and Harvest Festival. Although my parents-in-law did not influence one way or the other if I wore hanbok, after I was married I wore hanbok more frequently, especially when I visited them." Since coming to America in 1967, she has worn hanbok twice; the first time was to take pictures for her second marriage; the second was just for fun at a friend's home. She did not go outside in hanbok either time. "I think hanbok design is physically impractical and uncomfortable."

12. Bora (보라)

Bora was born in Kyungsang Do (경상도), (South) Korea in 1928. As a young girl in elementary school, she wore a modified hanbok which consisted of tong chima and jugori. She has only an elementary school education. She always wore hanbok in both private and public places until she came to America in 1985. In the summer she wore juksam, an unlined jugori which is usually worn in summer, and in winter she wore cotton padded jugori with batting. At home, when the hanbok was uncomfortable, she wore just the rayon sokchima, an inner skirt worn under chima, and white western-style socks. Her favorite hanbok colors were white, pink, and yellow. Before her marriage, a relative made Bora's hanbok. Afterwards, she usually made her own hanbok, but sometimes she took hanbok fabrics to a local tailor to have them made. Although she had heard about western-

style clothing, which at that time (after World War II) was second-hand clothing from America, which was distributed to the orphan houses, she had not actually seen any because she only wore hanbok.

Bora married at age nineteen in 1947 and moved to Seoul with her husband. Even though everybody around her wore western-style dress, she did not. "I did not look good in western-style dress because of my narrow and dropped shoulders and big hips. When I saw people wearing western-style dress and looking pretty, I wanted to wear it also, but I was always disappointed because of my curvy shoulders. Now, because of shoulder pads western-style dress looks better on me. If somebody gives me a dress without shoulder pads, I won't wear it and people say I am too picky. So whenever people give a dress to me, they add the shoulder pads." During the interview, she showed two dresses which her husband bought for her and added the shoulder pads himself. "Can you believe how ugly my shoulders are? Otherwise he would not put in shoulder pads."

Bora likes to do her housework in pants or a shorter skirt, and now feels that bosun are very uncomfortable. However, it is uncomfortable for her to sit down on the floor in western-style dress because the narrow skirt pulls up and her undergarments show. She has no hanbok now because her children took them away from her when she came to America. "I think that my figure is fit for hanbok and looks good in it, and I feel very comfortable psychologically in hanbok. I am always afraid that other people might say western-style dress is ugly on me." Her family and friends said that Bora is too fussy about clothing. "Other people also said that my figure is bad for western-style dress. But now I feel very comfortable in western-style dress and like to wear it for everyday life although I do not have a proper figure for western-style dress. When I had worn hanbok in Korea, I had not noticed how very uncomfortable hanbok was for housework."

Although bosun and gomusin hurt her feet, she wore them without complaint because she was supposed to wear them.

"I remember that I wore western-style dress once in Korea when I was thirty-three years old, in 1963. It was a one-piece dress with a vest. I do not know why the tailor did not put in shoulder pads like now -- probably they did not know how to put them in. When I looked at the completed dresses I really liked them and hoped they would fit. But when I tried them on, I looked awful because of my shoulders. Also, when I modelled my dresses for my parents-in-law they said they could not stand them." Since then, she never again wore western-style dress until she came to the United States.

Both her husband and her friends said that she looked ugly in western-style dress. "I did not mind not wearing western-style dress because I thought that was the way it was supposed to be. Once I went to the beach with my children, I wore hanbok there rather than a swimming suit and even now, my children make fun of me because I was so much old-fashioned."

"The first time when I wore western-style dress was on the way to America and I insisted the skirt was too short. Actually the skirt length was long enough. I worried that my legs and slip might show. I brought several blouses with shoulder pads from Korea, which I made from my hanbok chima. I wear bright colored tops and dark colored bottoms and do not wear all bright colors because people would think I am a crazy old lady."

Now, working women and educated women wear western-style dress most of the time in Korea. But before 1975, Korean women who followed this fashion did not have good reputations. She was famous in her neighborhood in Korea because she wore hanbok all the time. If anybody asked her neighbors "Do you know the lady who always wears hanbok?", they could find where she lived easily.

"I think that although the people who wear hanbok for everyday life are decreasing dramatically, the people who wear hanbok for special occasions such a wedding will increase in the future. If I go back to Korea, I think I will wear hanbok outside the home, but western-style dress at home. I think hanbok is very inconvenient, especially for housework. I wish I had a hanbok again here to wear to the Catholic church."

13. Youngsook (영숙)

Youngsook was born in Hwanghae Do, (North) Korea in 1926. At age eighteen in 1944, she married and moved to Kimchun (김천), (South) Korea. She often wore bright colors, especially pink, which she thought looked better with her dark complexion. In 1962, she had a dressmaker make her clothing in striped patterns.

She wore mompee with a simple sweater or shirt at home. When she went out she wore long chima. As soon as Korea was free from Japan, Korean women did not like to wear mompee because it was a Japanese style.

Machine-made sweaters appeared in the markets between 1946 and 1950. She wore tong chima and machine-made sweaters during the Korean War. "I think even during the Japanese annexation, there were knitted sweaters, and probably the Koreans learned the knitting technique from the Japanese. I was knitting in 1937 when I was eleven years old."

She stopped her education in the third grade. For an elementary school picnic, her mother made a tong chima and durumagi for her and bought her new sneakers. Youngsook said the durumagi and sneakers were symbols of rich people. Her mother bought her new clothing for other special occasions like New Year's, Harvest Festival, and Dan-O Festival (단오, on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month). She added that in North Korea, children also usually got new clothing for Dan-O Festival.

She began to wear western-style dress when her daughter entered kindergarten in 1962. At first, there were no markets that carried it, so she went to a dressmaker to have her dress made. After the stores began to sell western-style clothing, she shopped for it there. She wore hanbok for parties, for New Year's, and for get-togethers with her friends.

Youngsook used Japanese magazines to select her clothing designs. The tailor-made shops she went to were divided into two sections, one for women, the other for men. The magazines she used included men's, women's, and children's clothing, and other items. They were very thick. (The interviewer believes these were actually Sears-Roebuck catalogue.) She borrowed these magazines to design her daughter's clothing by herself.

After she came to Seoul in 1977, she wore western-style dress for the most part. She bought fabrics in fabric stores and took them to a dressmaker to make her clothing. When she had permanents in her hair, she was embarrassed, and afraid that others might laugh at her. But her husband and others said "good and simple." Her husband did not take a special interest in her clothing. He wore hanbok only once, when he was married, but did not wear it again, even for New Year's. When she moved down to the southern part of South Korea, the men who wore western-style suits were respected. Also, her husband worked at a Japanese fabric company and he could get many kinds of fabrics, unlike other people who were restricted to cotton and flannel by rationing.

During the Japanese annexation the Japanese government did not allow Korean women to wear hanbok. If Japanese policemen saw Korean women wearing white hanbok, they smeared it with black paint and told them to wear black. The Japanese thought the white hanbok was hard to keep up and impractical. One day in Hwanghae Do, her mother-in-law went to a market in a white cotton hanbok and came back with a big black mark on her back where the Japanese policemen had made an example of her.

"I remember later that once my friends and I wore western-style dress to a friend's daughter's wedding. We all agreed beforehand to wear western-style dress as I did not want to be embarrassed and be the only one."

Since coming to America in 1984, she has worn hanbok only once for New Year's to receive a big formal bow from her children and grandchildren. "I just cannot stand being in bosun and the tightness of the bust. I cannot breathe well. But the chima length, width, and the sleeves are fine. When I saw my friends wearing hanbok with white socks and shoes, I asked them not to wear hanbok improperly. That was so ugly! The bosun I bought in the market was usually big, so I had to alter it for my feet. Sometimes, I made my own bosun. The Yangban should have small and pretty feet. Now I can purchase nylon bosun, but when I was young, we usually made bosun with cotton fabrics. If I wore the cotton bosun several times, the cotton fabrics were stretched badly. I had to remake bosun small for my feet."

Right after the Korean War, she had a permanent wave hair-style done with charcoal. "You rolled a small charcoal about finger size into the hair and waited until permanent wave appeared. It was easy to burn the hair, but still the people who had money and were fashionable enjoyed this risk."

Youngsook knew about second-hand clothing after the Korean War, but she did not buy any. She did not like to wear second-hand clothing and she thought that the designs were ridiculous. "I think the ministers distributed a little of the second-hand clothing to church congregations, and they sold the rest of it to the markets. People liked and bought the second-hand clothing. One of my friends bought two scarves and made a blouse. Although the blouse was very pretty with bright colors, I did not wear any bright colors. I liked and wore dignified colors." After the Korean War, the number of G.I.'s increased

and the women who married G.I.'s wore brilliant clothing, thus, all women who wore brilliant clothing were thought of as G.I.'s wives.

She was interested in wearing unique clothing. Her neck is short so she doesn't like to wear high collars. "Western-style dress is very simple and good for working." When the short sleeves came out, she liked it better.

She thinks hanbok is pretty and looks nice, so she wears it for parties and for playing the role of the esteemed elder; however, she says it is uncomfortable. Sometimes when she wore hanbok, on the way home she unwrapped the straps around her bust. When she visited her close friends, she would take her hanbok off and wore only her sokchima, but when she left her friends she put her hanbok back on properly again.

In the early 1970s, when she put pants on for the first time, she did not have the confidence to wear them, but after she tried them several times, she was fine. "Actually, I think that hanbok is my national costume. I always feel confident when I wear hanbok. I am not embarrassed and feel comfortable wearing hanbok anywhere. I always wonder whether the western-style dress is fit and proper for me even though western-style dress is comfortable physically. I do not mind wearing hanbok in bright colors, but I am afraid to wear western-style dress in bright colors."

14. Miran (미란)

Miran was born in Manchuria, China in 1925, and was married and came to Seoul in 1946. Since then, she has worn one-piece western-style dress at home. For New Year's and the Harvest Festival, she wore hanbok. A few years after her marriage she began to wear hanbok more frequently in public again. In Manchuria, a woman could not wear the long hanbok chima unless she was married. In Manchuria, even though she was single, she wore the long chima when she gave her New Year's bows to older people. She

thought that this custom probably came from North Korea. Her high school education was in a Japanese school which did not allow students to speak Korean. Not surprisingly, she wore the sailor collar uniform, with top and pleated skirt. Since no irons were available there, she put her uniform skirt under her mattress to keep the skirt pleats crisp. She wore both a skirt and pants, as part of the uniform in elementary school. She could not wear hanbok in Manchuria because the weather was too cold to wear chima and the Japanese elementary school did not allow it. Her mother was very conservative about hairstyles, always making Miran wear braids until the fifth grade. Her Japanese teachers kept asking Miran to change her hairstyle, but her mother always said "no." In 1938, she finally had her hair bobbed.

"In about 1955, I attached vest suspenders⁷ to hold my chima on my shoulders to keep it from dragging down. I bought imported dacron to make these suspenders from a peddler who carried foreign-made goods. Most people made strap suspenders but the strap suspenders looked ugly, especially when they showed through summer net jugori."

Miran recalls that from 1958 to 1963, French net was very popular for hanbok fabrics, so she bought it from the same peddler. She also dyed ramie with gardenia seeds and made her own hanbok. "French net was so fine that I could hold a hanbok made of French net in my fist. I wore pretty undergarments. It was fashionable to show pretty undergarments through black net. I thought that western-style dress was too simple and plain, so I liked to wear hanbok which had fashion. The peddlers who carried foreign-made goods would cater to the upper classes. They would also bring foreign-made cookies and snacks." She also bought clothing in the Midopa and Hwasin department stores. After 1958, she remembers the number of western-style clothing stores increased.

⁷ There are two kinds of suspenders for hanbok: vest suspenders are shaped like a vest, and the other type is like conventional suspenders. Summer hanbok fabrics are see-through so that the vest-shaped suspenders are more often used in the summer.

"I went to one of the best dressmakers in Seoul for my clothing. I wore two-piece dresses in simple, solid colors and did not like bright colors. I wore grey and white for western-style dress and silver for hanbok. I did not feel at all strange wearing western-style dress for the first time." After she married, she wore hanbok most of the time, even though her husband wore western-style clothes. Sometimes, she wore a long skirt with a blouse at home. She thinks her friends envied her western-style clothes. "My friends wanted my clothing made of good fabrics. I felt sorry for them, so sometimes I wore cheaper clothes when I went to see them. I also gave good fabrics to them." The fabrics were the same in the South Gate market as in the tailor-made shops, but since the prices were higher in the shops, she went to the South Gate market to purchase the fabrics for her clothing.

For parties, she wore the petticoat-like sokchima under her hanbok so that the hanbok chima spread out like a bell. During 1964 to 1965, hanbok designers made fashionable hanbok with a narrow bustline and wide hemline.

Around 1967, a peddler who carried foreign-made wares brought her two-piece suits, sweaters, and blouses. Also, her dressmaker took her to a corner room and showed her imported clothing from America. During this time, it was illegal to sell foreign-made goods -- yet the black market existed and she bought her foreign-made blouses and skirts there. The American blouses had sleeves that were too long so she went to the dressmakers to have them shortened. The skirts from other western countries had long waist lines and skirt lengths that did not fit her well, but the dresses from Japan fit her perfectly. In addition, peddlers usually carried popular styles of favorite Korean clothing, usually in the typical dark colors because they worried they could not sell bright colors.

"Since coming to America in 1985 I have not worn hanbok. I feel comfortable in all types of western-style dress. I do not like to tie my bust tightly when I wear hanbok.

Hanbok is not economical. The better quality hanbok fabrics cannot be dry cleaned more than once or they look very ugly. The Yangban wore three layers of bosun -- under bosun, a cotton padded bosun for the shape, and an outer bosun -- to make their feet tight and pretty. I used to wear three layers of bosun. They hurt my feet too, because they are smaller than my foot size so I have to put my energy into wearing bosun. Small and narrow feet were the ideal figure and they were considered pretty. Because of these reasons the girls in a Yangban family wore small bosun from the time they were young and their feet were small and narrow. People could tell the family from which a girl came by her foot shape. Lower class people did not treat their feet properly and their feet were big and square. I cannot stand people wearing big bosun, it looks so ugly. Hanbok is full dress. How come people can wear hanbok with western-style shoes and white socks? When people see the women who have pretty feet, they say the feet look like cucumbers. In addition to bosun, undergarments were very important for the Yangban, so they wore sokjuksam (속적삼, an inner jugori worn under the regular jugori) all the time. They wore good quality undergarments made of fine silk."

"I was afraid of other's opinions all of the time in Korea so that I could not wear what I wanted to, but in America nobody cares whether I wear skirts or pants. Even if I wear clothing like a crazy woman, nobody looks at me. I feel really comfortable in America."

15. Oaksoon (옥순)

Oaksoon was born in Pyungyang (평양), (North) Korea in 1924. She came to America in 1985. Oaksoon is from a Christian family and her family had accepted the western culture comparatively early, so Oaksoon hardly wore the hanbok. When she was in elementary school, she wore hanbok only for special occasions such as New Year's.

Bosun hurt her feet because it was very tight and she did not like to wear it at all. In high school, she wore modified hanbok tong chima and jugori as a school uniform for two years, and a sailor collar uniform in the third year. After Oaksoon graduated from a high school in 1939, she studied at Sookmyung Women's University during 1939-1942 in Seoul. She wore a white blouse and navy blue skirt as uniform even at college. Her mother, who died at age seventy, had never worn western-style dress, but other family members did.

She could not remember exactly how she felt when she first wore western clothing; however, she thought that she felt no pressure from her community, friends, and family. She was happy to wear the western-style dress. When she was in the third grade one of her sisters who was studying in Seoul brought her a pretty dress that looked like a dance dress. Oaksoon was very happy and walked around at home clasping the dress to her because she liked it so much. She was too shy to wear it except for church, however, because it looked too different from all her other clothes and the clothes of the people around her, and she did not want to stand out.

Again, she could not remember exactly, but Oaksoon said that in general married women wore hanbok and young children wore western-style dresses more often. After graduating from college, she wore western-style dress all the time. Most of her friends wore both hanbok and western-style dress, depending on the occasion or circumstance. However, western-style dress was not worn in the transition period as much as in the present time. She remembers that people saved western-style dress for special occasions. "I am proud of hanbok and I think it is pretty, but I would not like to wear it because I find the style is uncomfortable -- it is too long and tight around the bust."

She also mentioned that the most frequently worn western-style dress was a simple one-piece dress that was convenient for work. Her own favorite color was pink. She,

again, emphasized that because she is from a Christian and well-educated family, her family had accepted western culture quickly through the church and its missionaries from the United States.

When she was young, her everyday dresses came from department stores, her mother made her house dresses, and her sister sent her dresses for church from Seoul. As an adult, she occasionally bought clothes from dress stores, but usually tailors made her dress for her. Oaksoon explained that it was necessary for her clothes to be tailor-made because she was too small to find what she wanted in the department stores. She found the dress designs from the Japanese magazines. She did not complain after the tailors made her dress for her because she knew that she was tiny and her figure was different from the magazine models. She had never felt that the western-style dress was uncomfortable or bad. She often wore high-heeled shoes with western-style dress because she was so short (under five feet). She had the same hair style as now; that is, chin length in a simple style. Lots of her friends wore their hair style in braided pigtales even with western-style dress.

"When I was a young girl in elementary school, several missionaries stayed at my house and I liked to be with them. I thought the western-style dress was pretty and envied it." She also said that "everything that the Americans did looked wonderful to me and I asked the missionaries to bring me to the United States."

16. Wonju (원주)

Wonju was born in Chunra Do, (South) Korea in 1920. She was from a Christian family, went to Christian schools, and moved to Seoul in 1931. As early as kindergarten she wore western-style dress. The dress she remembers was empire style with a laced skirt edge. She was timid to wear this clothing because it was different from all of her friends.

Wonju wore tong chima hanbok uniform in high school and during college. In summer she wore white jugori and black chima and in winter a variety of colors, although students were not allowed to wear bright colors or elaborate materials. The girls either wore braided pigtails or had their hair bobbed. Her shoes had medium high-heels. At home, she wore western-style one-piece dress with buttons down the front and no collar, which her mother made for her.

After graduating from college in 1940, she began to teach at a high school. At that time she wore both western-style dress and hanbok tong chima and she was no longer embarrassed to wear western-style dress. She did not like bright colors and she wore combinations of black and white. Usually, she went to dressmakers because there was no ready-made clothing. During the Korean War, she quit her teaching job, but after the war, when she began to teach again, a little bit of ready-made clothing was available in the markets. Fifty percent of the women wore hanbok then, and fifty percent wore western-style dress. Even in 1973, when she came to America, many Korean women still wore hanbok. When she went back to Korea in 1976, ready-made western-style clothing was available everywhere.

After she was married, she usually wore tong chima hanbok. Neither her husband nor her parents-in-law pressured her about her clothing. Outside of the home, her husband wore western-style suits, but he wore hanbok at home. She wore hanbok when her family had Jesa and when she visited her parents-in-law. At this time, not all streets were paved, and she was afraid that her long hanbok chima would get dirty easily. Also, if she wore the long hanbok, she would have to wear bosun and it would get very dirty. "Think of that, in order to keep the bosun white, I washed them with caustic soda, then put a cotton layer inside to shape them. It took a long time to wash them and it was hard to do."

When she was at home, she wore long hanbok chima in winter, and in summer she wore western-style dress or tong chima for bottom and short sleeve juksam on top. In summer, western-style dress was much cooler than hanbok.

After the Korean War, she always went to a dressmaker to make her clothing, even for very simple styles. "Several dressmakers opened tailor-made shops in my neighborhood. I bought fabrics in the East Gate market and brought them to a dressmaker. I looked at magazines from Japan and America to choose my dress designs."

Since 1973 when Wonju came to America, she has only worn hanbok for an international party to show it off, and for New Year's when her grandchildren give her the traditional deep bow. For her daughter's wedding in America, she wore a pink western-style suit rather than the customary pink hanbok. (In Korea, the bride's mother wears a solid pink hanbok and the bridegroom's mother wears blue.) She liked purple and other colors as well, but she did not wear solid black or white outfits because those indicate mourning. She feels that hanbok is for parties and that hanbok with the long chima is inconvenient for active life. Also, the wide curved sleeves are inconvenient for housework. She does not mind tying her bust because she does not tie it tightly, but she really hates to wear white bosun and gomusin.

When she buys ready-made clothing, she does not have any major problems. She does not like shoulder pads at all. "I feel I am a Japanese samurai (a macho-looking man) with big shoulder pads. Whenever I buy new clothing, I take out the shoulder pads immediately. Basically, I think that western-style dress is suitable for everyday life."

"I remember that when I was seven or eight years old, my father brought me a hat from Paris which looked like what Queen Elizabeth wore. I was afraid to wear the hat, so I put it in my school bag and wore it only when I came back home. Probably my friends were jealous because I was the only girl who wore fancy dresses and hats in elementary

school. My father was modern in other ways -- we danced the waltz together and went figure skating."

17. Yunkyung (연경)

Yunkyung was born in Seoul in 1918 and has an elementary school education. She wore black tong chima and white jugori made of cotton serge with white sneakers. Before she was married she always wore black tong chima with white or green jugori for everyday clothing. When she was married in 1936, she wore a jok (chignon) with a binyo. Next year when she set up a separate household from her parents-in-law, she felt free.⁸ After that, she wore a small fashionable jok with a long and thick binyo. While living with her husband's parents, she could not have this hair style because she was afraid they might scold her. She got a permanent in 1947. At home, she wore mompee and a simple shirt. When she went out, she wore godobang (고도방, the most durable Korean shoes) and sebiru (세비루, a jacket with a tailored collar and a curved center front).

"After 1945, when Korea was free from Japan, Korean women were able to wear hanbok -- the prettiest and most decent clothing. Before then, Japan did not allow Korean women to wear hanbok." As soon as she heard that new hanbok fabrics were in the stores, she went there with her friends and bought them. During the period between 1945 and 1950, the jugori was long with a wide dongjung (동정, a white collar for jugori). After the Korean War, the jugori became shorter, reaching the shortest size in 1958. Clothing became simpler. She sometimes bought her western-style clothing in neighborhood markets or stores, but sometimes she went to dressmakers to have her clothing made. She likes and wears bright colors, especially red which is her favorite color.

⁸ Although the family system has changed somewhat in Korea, the first son after his marriage still lives with his parents. However, now it is possible after one or two years that the first son and his wife may take a separate household from his parents. If this is the case, the daughters-in-law usually feel relieved and free.

Yunkyung has worn western-style dress for ten years, and did not feel strange when she tried it the first time. When she went out, she wore western-style dress more frequently than hanbok. However, until her parents-in-law died, she always wore hanbok to visit them. Even though they did not criticize her for wearing western-style dress, she thought that hanbok was more appropriate for visiting them. Her husband wore hanbok only as a young man, but not now. He did not feel strongly about her clothing, but he preferred her to wear hanbok, since people gossiped about the women who wore western-style dress behind their backs.

She came to America in 1987. Now, she wears pants or simple skirts because they are cool and simple. According to her thinking, the proper way to wear hanbok is to wear several layers of undergarments, bosun, and gomusin. "As I grow older, it is hard to put on hanbok with several layers of undergarments. The long chima interferes with my walking." She wears hanbok for family weddings, for 60th birthday celebrations, and for New Year's, but even when her friends' sons or daughters were married she often did not wear hanbok because the wedding was not in her own family. Occasionally, though, she and her friends promised to wear hanbok beforehand for the special events.

"While I was nursing my babies, my breasts were big. When you wore hanbok, you had to tie your bust as tightly as possible to make your breast small, and that was very uncomfortable. The sleeves are okay, but the chima is too long and wide for housework. The bosun is very uncomfortable as well. I have to take good care of hanbok fabrics, which are very fine and delicate. I cannot wash them in the laundry but I must take them only to the dry cleaners."

18. Minja (민자)

Minja was born in Manchuria, China in 1917 and received an elementary education

there. She wore the black tong chima, white jugori, and cotton knee socks in Manchuria. When she worked as a telephone operator in 1934, she continued to wear tong chima and also wore her hair in braids adorned with dangi (땡기, a streamer attached to the end of a single braid).

Minja moved to Choonchun, (South) Korea in 1946 and to Seoul in 1950. When she came to Seoul people did not wear tong chima but the long chima instead. She began to wear western-style dress in 1965. "I liked bright colors, but I was fearful to wear them, so I never did. I usually wore blue and jade green for hanbok. My husband did not suggest I should wear hanbok, but he did not want me to wear bright colors. When I began to wear western-style dress, most people already did. I was behind the times. I wore simple one-piece dress with a round neckline and front buttons. If I had worn western-style dress when few people did, my parents-in-law would not have liked it. But my husband thought that western-style dress was simple and good. I wore very humble and simple suits or one-piece dress so that I never felt unusual wearing them. During this time I was not rich and did not have enough clothing to choose from so that I wore whatever I could get."

Minja used to live near the South Gate market which did not carry fashionable items. At home, she wore cheap clothing from there. After the Korean War, she got some second-hand clothing given to her church by American missionaries. The church distributed it to poor people, but some of the rich people tried to get second-hand clothing because it was unique and pretty. Consequently, some churches did not distribute the second-hand clothing to the poor, but instead sold it to the second-hand stores. When she received the second-hand clothing she felt very grateful to the Americans. "As I looked through the second-hand goods I could feel the warmth of the Americans." There were lots of flared skirts. The busts were big and the sleeve and skirt lengths were too long, but she

could choose colors she liked. About that time, nylon first appeared in Korea and women wore both hanbok and western-style dress made from nylon.

After arriving in America in 1981, Minja began to wear western-style dress and said, "It is very nice that western-style dress is comfortable and simple. When I wear hanbok I have to wear several undergarments and it is so uncomfortable. I like to wear western-style dress because I do not have to wear so many undergarments." These days, she wears hanbok for New Year's and to church. Besides its being uncomfortable, she does not have many places to wear it here. "The thing I most dislike about hanbok is the way the wide hanbok chima tangles around my legs. I cannot work efficiently with the curved, bulky sleeves. It is very tight around my bust. These days, elderly people do not wear hanbok for these reasons. Although bosun hurt my feet, I know I have to wear bosun when I wear hanbok. Hanbok is my national clothing so that when I wear it for a little while, I feel good, but I do not like to wear it for a long time because it is uncomfortable. I appreciate the convenience of western-style dress. It makes my life easy."

19. Heesook (희숙)

Heesook was born in Choonchun, (South) Korea in 1917. During elementary school she wore tong chima hanbok. She attended a high school run by an American mission, where students wore hanbok uniform for patriotic reasons. Private or Japanese schools had sailor collar uniforms, with each school having its own style of uniform and emblem. All schools, both public and private, charged an expensive tuition and there were no scholarships available. Other people respected the students, their school uniforms and their chance for education because only rich people could afford these things.

In her school the students were not allowed to wear rayon slips but had to wear cotton ones. The music teacher who was female always checked. For physical education

classes, she wore mid-calf length black bloomers and a short sleeved white blouse. At home, she wore either the long chima or the pleated tong chima hanbok, but sometimes she wore a white blouse and long skirt which she made. After she was married in 1941, she wore long chima hanbok when she went out.

She entered a medical school which began admitting women students in 1941. During medical school, she wore a uniform which consisted of a white blouse with a stand-up collar and black buttons in front, and a black flared skirt in calf length, black shoes and silk stockings. The silk stockings were expensive and ran very easily; she mended them each Sunday. Before 1945, she wore silk stockings, but afterwards she had nylon stockings.

During the Korean War, she and her family were refugees in Pusan where many refugees from Seoul took shelter. At this time her husband, who was a government officer, went to Japan to purchase the books for the public libraries. On the way home, her husband bought sky blue nylon fabrics for her hanbok, which was the most fashionable fabric during that time.

After the Korean War, second-hand shops were a very popular source for dresses, and she could also find blankets and quilts if she looked hard. The second-hand goods were relief supplies which were supposed to be distributed to poor people. However, the relief workers did not distribute all of them, and sold some unofficially to the second-hand markets. The items were socks, shoes, sneakers, and long underwear. Even during the Japanese annexation, Turkish merchants opened department stores and tailor-made shops, but neighborhood tailor-made shops did not appear until early 1970s. She bought her western-style dress in the department stores. Ready-made clothing came in three different sizes; large, medium, and small. If dress did not fit, she altered it at home; however, she

rarely had any problems in size. She preferred dark colors over bright, because she did not want to stand out in bright colors.

During this time, married women wore long chima hanbok, but when Heesook wore western-style dress for the first time, she felt ok. The Korean ideal was a woman who wore beautiful hanbok and ignored western fashions -- riding in Jeeps and going to dance parties were thought to be strange by most people. Her mother wore hanbok until her death in 1962, and also wore simple make-up with lotion and powder, but her father wore western-style suits.

Heesook said, "I think we should wear hanbok at least for special occasions because it is ethnic traditional clothing. When we wore hanbok a long time ago, fabrics such as silk, cotton, and serge wrinkled easily and were hard to take care of. But today, nylon blends makes things easier. Moreover, the sash at the waist helps to reduce the bulkiness of the chima. Although hanbok is inconvenient for working in the kitchen, if you pull up sleeves and tie chima with a sash at the waist, you will be fine. Hanbok is good for winter because it is warm. But, I know hanbok summer fabrics are transparent so that several layers of undergarments should be worn, and that is hot in the summer. Also, bosun is very hot. By the way, there was a special design for summer hanbok; it had short sleeves and originated from one of the women's universities even before 1945. The chancellor of this university wore this short-sleeved hanbok at the International Club, and the students followed her style. I agree that western-style dress is comfortable for everyday life. Since I came to America in 1978, I have seldom worn hanbok because I can not be active in hanbok. However, these days hanbok and bosun have been changed in some ways; bosun is made of nylon and is easier to wash, and it is made larger so that your feet do not hurt as much. Western-style dress is easy to wash and wrinkleless. Why should you pray to go to heaven after death, now your young generation is living in heaven?"

20. Nari (나리)

Nari was born in Hwanghae Do, (North) Korea in 1917. She went away to school in Seoul and only came home on vacation. At age twenty-two she was married. After 1945, while she was a high school teacher, she wore a tailored jacket and pants in winter and a jacket and an A-line skirt in the summer. When she first tried western-style dress on, she did not feel comfortable at all. At home she wore hanbok more frequently than western-style dress. She wore hanbok more frequently in winter because of its warmth.

Her college major was nursing, but her family did not want her to be a nurse since nursing is a lower status job. Her father said "If you want to be a nurse, you cannot be my daughter." She tried to go to a pharmacy school in Japan, and her parents promised that if she got married they would support her and her husband during their studies in Japan. But she did not enter pharmacy school and instead entered a Japanese medical school in Seoul.

Her husband wore western-style suits. He was interested in his wife's clothing and he asked her to wear make-up, which she did. Although she liked to wear vibrant colors she did not wear them because her parents asked her to wear dark colors. When her parents' friends came to her house, she changed from western-style dress to hanbok, and then she greeted them.

Since Nari came to America in 1972, she has rarely worn hanbok, only when she goes to church, to weddings, and to 60th birthday parties. "Since the long chima covers the feet, I wear white socks and shoes rather than bosun and gomusin. Western-style dress is really good for summer and it is easy for everyday life. When I wear hanbok I should have shoulder straps because my bust is not big enough to hold the strings which tie around the bust. Even with shoulder straps, hanbok is still very uncomfortable, and

anyway, the bust should be tied as strongly as possible. The chima is too bulky to do anything in, even if the sash is used at the waist to make it less bulky."

"I am old and ugly now, but when I was a young teacher at middle and high school I was pretty. When the students' parents asked their children how they could find their teacher at school, the children said that the parents should look for the prettiest woman in beautiful clothing."

After the Korean War, poor people, churches, and orphanages received second-hand clothing from America, but Nari did not get any clothing this way. She remembered that the second-hand clothing was displayed in stores. Usually, she went to a dressmaker for her clothing. The dressmakers did not listen to her, and made her skirt length short even though she asked for them to cut it long. She selected designs by using Japanese magazines or the Sears-Roebuck catalogue. Most people had dressmakers make their clothing, but some bought dresses in their neighborhood shops. She thinks that ready-made clothing from Korea was not available until after 1960.

21. Hanna (한나)

Hanna was born in Choongchung Do, (South) Korea in 1916 and she married when she was eighteen years old. Because her grandparents were very conservative and did not want her to study at all, she had no formal education. She lived in Choongchung Do until 1975; afterwards she stayed in Seoul until she emigrated to the United States in 1980. Until she came to the United States she wore hanbok most of the time. The western-style clothing she wore, usually in summer, was very simple: a wide gathered skirt with an elastic waist band, and a short sleeved shirt that had a front opening with buttons.

Her first experience with non-traditional dress was wearing mompee during the Japanese annexation. The Japanese government thought that the chima was too long for

work, and inconvenient. They asked Korean women to wear pants, but the women resisted, feeling them to be immoral. As a result, Japanese policemen accosted Korean women in the streets, took shears and cut the hanbok chima vertically from the hem up. Women were forced to make mompee, or trousers, with ruined cloth. One day, while Hanna was walking in the street, all of a sudden a Japanese policeman accosted her and cut her chima with shears, so she had to make mompee with the ruined cloth. She was very mad and ashamed to wear it. Japanese policemen even cut Korean women's long hair off to export it, took Korean women's long silver and gold binyo, and exported those, too. Hanna's sense of outrage and violation is still apparent, as is her hatred of the Japanese.

Living in Seoul from 1975 to 1980 she wore hanbok most of the time, though sometimes at home she wore long gathered nylon skirts with elastic waistbands. She felt most comfortable wearing this kind of skirt because it was almost the same style as hanbok chima. She always bought her western clothing at her neighborhood shops in Korea.

Since coming to America in 1980, Hanna has given up wearing hanbok, feeling it is very uncomfortable. When she worked in hanbok, especially while in the kitchen, she wore a belt to reduce bulk. She had never thought bosun was uncomfortable, but now since she has known western-style socks, she cannot go back to wearing as it is too tight and hurts her feet.

Hanna was given her first western-style one-piece dress as a gift from her children for her sixtieth birthday in 1977. She still has it and showed it to me during our interview. It is a polyester one-piece dress with a shirt collar and sleeves, front opening from neck to waist, and a gathered skirt attached to the bodice. The color was a brownish print.

Hanna's husband remembered that he took his wife to the neighborhood tailor shop in 1978 and had a tailor make her a white western-style suit. He reported that he picked the

fabric and the design among styles already made in the tailor shop. But Hanna could not remember this at all.

When she wore western-style dress for the first time, her husband encouraged her, "Why don't you wear western-style dress? Look at other people, everybody wears it, why not you?" When she did wear it, people around her said "It looks nice on you." Her husband wore both hanbok and western-style clothing in Korea, but he hasn't worn hanbok since arriving in the United States. Hanna said she has no places to wear hanbok except for the Korean church she goes to. Sometimes she would try to wear hanbok to church, but she always gave up for she thinks it is too much trouble to wear, and if she does wear it, she will be the only one. Therefore, she does not feel comfortable. Another reason she does not want to wear it is because others told her hanbok made her look older.

She likes to wear plain grey, white, and brown because she does not feel comfortable in bright colors, even though her friends and family prefer her in bright colors. She did not have any trouble finding her right size in Korea, but in the United States she has a great deal of trouble because she is under five feet tall. During the interview she wore polyester navy blue pants and pink shirt brought from Korea.

Now she declares that even if somebody forced her to wear hanbok, she wouldn't wear it. When she had no choice and knew nothing else in Korea, she did not think hanbok inconvenient; however, she does not like to wear hanbok now. The wide band for fastening the chima is too uncomfortable. When it is tied at first, it is hard to breathe, and later it loosens easily, so it bothers her. She said, "If hanbok is disappearing we should live without hanbok. But when I went to Korea last spring, when my young relatives gave me a big bow in western-style dress, I wish they had been wearing hanbok."

22. Sinhae (신혜)

Sinhae was born in Hwanghae Do, (North) Korea in 1915 and moved to Seoul in 1929. She married at eighteen in 1933, and was widowed five years later, in 1938. While she was married she wore both tong chima and long chima hanbok. After her husband died, she went to medical school. At first in 1939, she wore hanbok uniform at the school which had a Japanese chancellor. Later, around 1943 or 1944, she began to wear western-style uniforms. In summer she wore a white blouse and a black skirt, and in winter she wore a black suit with a tailored collar.

When Sinhae first wore western-style dress, she was a little nervous. "I can say I was pressured to wear western-style dress because everybody who worked at the hospital wore it." She wore flared or tight skirts, tailored jackets, and shoes for everyday activities. She usually went to a dressmaker in her neighborhood. She selected her dress designs from magazines, which ones, she cannot remember. While an intern and medical resident, she had to wear western-style dress, but at home she wore hanbok. After the Korean War, the number of people wearing hanbok decreased while the number wearing western-style dress increased. "When I saw women who were fashionable, I wondered why. The ideal had always been women who stayed at home and wore muted colors."

She wore humble colors such as navy blue, grey, and black and did not like bright colors at all. "I did not wear bright colors because in Korea widows traditionally were not supposed to, and I was afraid that people might laugh at me if I did. Even though I have never worn bright colors, the women who did looked good. Probably I was influenced by people around me, and hesitated to choose bright colors. Here in America, grandmothers wear red so I tried it too. I like this idea. I did not wear dark make-up in Korea, either -- probably for the same reasons of tradition."

Since coming to America in 1980, Sinhae has rarely worn hanbok. When her Catholic church requests for the members to wear hanbok, she does. Otherwise, she cannot even think of wearing hanbok. Now she is used to wearing shorter skirts and pants so that whenever she wears hanbok, she does not feel comfortable at all. "Chima is too long to do any thing. After I wore hanbok for a while, when I took it off, I just felt wonderful." The most comfortable clothing items for her are sweaters, tong chima, and pants.

23. Mihee (미희)

Mihee was born in Soowon City (수원), (South) Korea in 1910 into a Christian family. She went to a private elementary school, and wore hanbok and durumagi. She wore hanbok most of the time until 1974, when she came to America, although during the summer she wore western-style dress because it was cooler. In 1963 she had a one-piece dress with a round neckline and front buttons. "When I wear panties, a slip, and a skirt together, there is too much around my waist, and they hurt. So, I like one-piece dress better." In America, she wears hanbok for her birthday, for relatives' weddings, for her friends' 60th birthdays, but not for New Year's. "I brought lots of hanbok so that I could wear them, but they are too bulky." She liked and wore pink, blue, and beige for her hanbok. She does not like patterned prints and prefers white or solid colors for western-style dress. "Since I am here in America, I can wear bright colors."

Right before the end of the Japanese annexation, Korean women were required to wear mompee on the first and fifteenth of each month. If they did not wear mompee, they could not ride trams, the only public transportation. When she wore mompee, she also wore jugori and geda (계다, Japanese slippers). In winter, they made mompee out of khaki blankets distributed by the Japanese government, and for summer, they made

mompee with thin fabrics of the same color. After freedom from the Japanese, Korean women liked wearing their traditional hanbok again, finishing the Korean look with a Kami (까미, chignon without binyo) hairstyle. However, the rural women had come to appreciate the convenience of the mompee.

"Hanbok is so long that it bothers me when I am working. The sleeves are also very uncomfortable, though the bosun is fine with me. I had Kami hairstyle even in America, until several months ago when my daughter cut my hair very short. I was very upset at first, but now I like my new simple, short hairstyle. When I wore western-style dress for the first time, I liked it and thought it very comfortable."

She visited her son who has a Ph.D. degree and stayed in the U.S. during the mid 1960s, before she herself moved to America. "I like being here even if I do not know how to speak English. Everyday life is easier and nicer in America than in Korea."

"When women began to wear western-style dress, people spoke ill of them behind their backs. They thought that Koreans should wear hanbok. But when the number of people who wore western-style dress gradually increased, everyone liked to wear western-style dress, especially in summer as it was cooler. My husband wore western-style dress. He wore hanbok only for his birthday and for New Year. He liked new things, so he preferred western-style dress. I like to wear western-style dress too. It is very nice when I go out and sit on chairs. Also, I do not have to wear several layers of undergarments. Since I wore western-style dress, I did not have to spend lots of time sewing and cleaning my clothes."

24. Kyungsook (경숙)

Kyungsook was born in Seoul in 1902. She had never worn anything but hanbok until she came to America in 1980, even during her plane trip to America. In summer she

still wears a ramie juksam and a long hanbok chima; in winter, she wears a satin hanbok. Every Sunday she wears hanbok to go to her Catholic church. She had no formal education, but learned how to sew at home. Now she wears big mompee and sweaters at home. Her nickname in her community is "the grandmother who wears hanbok all the time". Whenever she goes outside her home, she wears hanbok the formal way, with several layers of undergarments, bosun, and gomusin. She has never worn tong chima.

"If somebody wore a western-style dress; it looked good to me." She liked when her children adopted western-style dress, but, "I do not feel uncomfortable in hanbok at all. I have been used to hanbok since I was a young girl and I do not like to wear other kinds of clothing. I like bosun and have never worn American shoes and white socks instead of bosun and gomusin. I like white and beige colors. I like hanbok the best. After I came to America, I began to wear western-style dress, but it makes me uncomfortable -- it is too tight and it shows my body shape."

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

Since 1945, many important changes have occurred in Korea, many of which have directly affected women. After the concept of equality between the sexes was written into the South Korean Constitution of 1948, the number of women participating in education and the paid labor force increased. Although their actual status remained substantially inferior within the family and society, their everyday clothes changed to western-style clothing. The transition period between World War II and its aftermath (1945-1962) brought greater change to Korean women's dress than any other time in its history. In this period and since, western countries, especially America, have become an ever-increasing influence on how Korean women dress.

Second-hand clothing from the United States was the most popular source from which Korean women could get a variety of designs, colors, and items either free or inexpensively. Although they could purchase western-style dress from other foreign countries in the black markets or from imported goods stores, western clothing was too expensive for the average Korean woman to buy. Most of the women remembered that they also used American magazines to choose their designs at tailor-made shops. Several women for this study thought the Sears-Roebuck catalogue was a fashion magazine and they used it for their design selections. In short, after the Korean War, when the women were exposed to western cultures, the United States was the most influential country for starting Korean women's adoption of western-style dress.

This study has focused on the acculturation changes of Korean women which were brought about by contact with western cultures and the many factors which were important in affecting this situation. These include: technological developments, economic

development, changes in social class or stratification, changes in family life and family living, and higher education. During the transitional period the role of the homemaker was altered considerably and activities both inside and outside the home increased. In addition, single women holding jobs outside the home increased in number; however, after marriage, most of them continued to stay at home. These aspects of change were reflected in women's choices of clothing designs throughout the acculturation period.

This study used the oral history method to discover the varied reactions of Korean women who adopted western-style dress between 1945 and 1962. (see Table 1 pages 128 and 129). In general, their experiences and reactions differed according to two age groups, fifties and sixty or older. Eleven women now in their fifties ranged from seven to thirty-three in this period and the thirteen older women were in their twenties to forties during the period. The women now in their fifties began to wear western-style dress when they were young girls. However, the older women now in their sixties, seventies, and eighties were already married women during the acculturation period and wore hanbok more frequently. In this period, there were great differences in manners and attitudes between married and single women because society expected them to be different. Thus, the reactions of all these women could be divided into the two age groups. All of the women were asked the following nine questions and their responses are summarized below.

1. Do you remember when you began to wear western-style dress?

Most of the women now in their fifties remembered that they began to wear western-style dress for their everyday clothing as little girls and would only wear hanbok for special occasions. On the other hand, the women over sixty remembered that they wore tong chima hanbok more frequently than western-style dress for their everyday clothing until their late teens. If a woman from the older group had a job before she married, she still

wore tong chima at home, and simple skirts and blouses at work. After marriage, she would wear only long chima hanbok when she was in Korea. The Korean women with more education, who went to high school or college, adopted the new style more quickly; however, the change for the average woman was slower in development.

2. How did you feel when you first wore western-style dress?

Each of the women in their fifties was more used to the western-style dress and felt more comfortable with it. They claimed that their figures naturally looked good in western-style designs, that they looked and felt strange in hanbok, and that they enjoyed the fashion change to western-style dress.

Among the older women, most felt timid at first wearing western-style dress. They said that their figures were ugly for it, that it exposed their body shape, was uncomfortable when they sat on the floor, and that they looked much better in hanbok. Although initially these women remembered feeling psychologically uncomfortable when wearing western-style dress, they mentioned that eventually they liked wearing western clothing for functional reasons.

3. Where did you get the clothing?

There was no mass-produced clothing in Korea until the early 1960s so one of the most common sources of western-style dress was home sewing. Koreans did not have paper patterns, so they created their own designs copying pictures from magazines. In Korea, the traditional ideal woman sat on the floor and always sewed. As a single woman, she made her hanbok and prepared her trousseau. Sewing skill was one criterion of a good bride. After marriage, the women made clothing for all their family members. Middle and high school girls had taken either a craft or a simple clothing construction course each

semester so that most of the Korean women for this study were trained in sewing and design. For a long time, a sewing machine was an essential bridal item, but it is not anymore.

A second source of clothing for their western-style dress was from tailor-made shops. Thirdly, after the Korean war, Koreans received relief supplies including second-hand clothing from America. Poor people were supposed to receive the second-hand clothing, but the Korean churches, which were responsible for the distribution of the clothing, sold much of it to second-hand stores. Korean women, especially the younger ones, loved to wear the second-hand clothing, not only for the price but for the unique designs and quality fabrics. Sometimes they bought second-hand clothing to use the fabrics to make other clothing as the fabric quality was better.

The fourth source for western-style dress was imported goods. After the Korean War, the Korean government restricted imported clothing, so Korean women had to purchase it from the black market. Even though imported clothing was twice as expensive as that made in Korea, imported-goods stores were always crowded. Although older women bought Korean-made clothing in the markets, younger women tended to avoid it because the quality, style, and colors were thought to be poor. Thus, the younger women wanted the new style clothing from whatever source they could get it.

4. Did your husband or other family members -- parents, grandparents, sisters, or siblings -- influence you on your clothing choice?

Most of the women were influenced in their selection of their clothing not by their parents but by their parents-in-law. Korean children must obey their parents' demands without reserve, which is part of Confucian teaching, so that they have to wear whatever

their mothers give them without resistance. Because it is so deeply imbedded in their upbringing, they do not remember any parental pressures.

On the other hand, these women felt stronger pressures from their parents-in-law, especially their mothers-in-law. It was not until recently that Koreans typically married for love. During the transition period, most marriages were arranged. The Korean mother-in-law had a strong influence on the family, including the power to choose her daughter-in-law. She also reserved the power to expel her daughter-in-law if she did not like her. Most of the Korean mothers-in-law liked a daughter-in-law who had kindness and traditional beauty. Thus, married Korean women were fearful of their mothers-in-law and wanted to be careful with them. Hanbok was the most visible item through which they could show their traditional manners. The women usually said that whenever they visited their parents-in-law they wore hanbok, especially when they first got married. These women also said that although their parents-in-law had no strong feelings one way or the other about their daughters-in-law's clothing, they still wanted to be careful in front of their parents-in-law. These answers are paradoxical because if their parents-in-law did not care, why did these women feel it necessary to wear hanbok whenever they visited their parents-in-law? Although their husbands' parents did not dictate what dress their daughters-in-law should wear, there was evidence of an unspoken but well understood pressure that they should wear hanbok.

Married women were also afraid to wear bright colors and unique styles because others might criticize them. Wearing bold colors and fashionable styles was sometimes taken as an indication of low social class or worse. It also might mean that the woman was married to an American G. I., which was a serious social stigma.

Some of the women who had a heightened sense of fashion said that they were not bothered by others' opinions and wore bright colors and different clothing. But their

answers suggest that they actually felt pressures. "I did not care about others opinions" while indicating a certain bravado, reflected at least an awareness of others' opinions, otherwise they would not have mentioned it. Especially when they were young girls, they did not want to wear different clothing because they were embarrassed. But they liked to have something new and unique. Clearly, these women had some conflicts between conforming and being individual.

Other influences on their clothing came from the husbands. Most of the women said that their husbands had no preference on the kind of clothing they wore. However, most of these women eventually admitted that their husbands preferred them to wear hanbok at certain times, and the women acted accordingly. They believed that if a husband did not care about his wife's clothing choice, it is an indication that the husband is a liberal man. As western cultures came into Korea, the Korean people admired the westernized liberal men who were considered highly educated and respected. Thus, these women wanted to be able to say their husbands were liberal men.

It was interesting that all of the husbands always wore western-style suits and only three wore hanbok on special occasions. Usually men are more conservative in adopting new fashions. But in this case, all of the husbands adopted western-style suits for their everyday clothing even after marriage. The women explained that their husbands would not wear hanbok because it is not functional, relating to the traditional Korean idea that men are superior and do not feel bound by traditions if inconvenienced. However, there is no doubt that the adoption of the western-style suit by Korean men sped up the Korean women's adoption of western-style dress.

5. Did you wear both western-style dress and hanbok?

Two of the women wore only hanbok until they came to America. One is now in her

eighties, the other in her sixties. The older of the two had no formal education, married early, and stayed at home. The younger one, though she graduated from high school and had opportunities to wear western-style dress, chose not to because she worried that her figure was not suited to western styles.

6. What colors did you wear?

The women wore hanbok in bright colors, but they seldom wore western clothing in bright colors. A couple of the women enjoyed wearing western-style dress in bright colors such as red, pink, purple, and other eye-catching colors, but the rest liked to wear dark colors such as brown, black, and grey because they felt these colors were sophisticated. Usually, the older women did not feel comfortable in red or pink though they wanted to wear them. The older the women were, the more they preferred bright colors. However, their choices of colors for their own clothing were different from their favorite colors, that is, they chose dark colors for their actual clothing.

The Korean women were also very careful in choosing color because they were afraid of others' opinions. The color choice of dress is partly cultural. After Korean women marry, they are expected to have the proper manners and attitudes of adults. Clothing choices, including colors, designs and fabrics, are determined by the wearer's age and marital status. The older women are expected to wear simple designs, more expensive fabrics, and "decent" colors such as grey and brown. In Korea, after husbands die, wives are not supposed to wear bright colors. Thus, one of the women, Sinhae, said that after her husband died she did not wear bright colors at all because of what others might think, but now she sometimes wears bright colors in the United States. Today, these women feel free to wear any colors they like in America because they think that people in America do not gossip about others' clothes.

7. Did you have any problems with western sizing or proportions?

When the Korean women received second-hand clothing from America, skirt length, sleeve length, and upper body length were all too long for them. These were not major problems because these women knew how to sew and could easily alter them. The second-hand clothing represented a completely new way for the women to get the western-style dress. Most women loved to wear this clothing, but several said that while they had heard about second-hand clothing, they did not try it because they thought that it was out of fashion and the styles were ridiculous. Also, they did not want to wear clothes which somebody else had already worn.

The imported clothing stores, on the other hand, usually carried clothing in the latest fashions cut to fit Korean women, though it was very expensive. Here, the only major problem was cost. As the women got a great deal of their western-style dress from either home sewing or tailor-made shops, this clothing was designed to fit properly and to suit their tastes.

8. Do you remember school uniforms?

During the Japanese annexation, middle and senior high school students wore either a sailor collar uniform or a hanbok uniform. The sailor collar uniform was a symbol of Japan and was chosen by the public schools to reinforce the political realities of the time; however, in some of the missionary schools, the students wore the hanbok uniform for patriotic reasons. In women's colleges, the students wore either a uniform consisting of a white blouse and black skirt or a tong chima hanbok uniform.

After the Japanese left Korea, the schools gradually ceased using the sailor collar dress uniform because the Korean people had a strong revulsion toward Japan and

Japanese things. Both middle and senior high school students wore two-piece western-style uniforms (skirt or pants). In general, college students did not have uniforms, but they wore simple styles in dark colors. The younger women who had worn western-style uniforms as school children felt more comfortable wearing western-style designs away from school because although the schools required certain design and fabrics, the uniforms still represented western-style dress. It can be said that the western-style uniform was the initial introduction of "western-style dress" in Korea. However, when the older women were in school, they wore hanbok uniforms which in no way helped them to adjust to western-style dress.

9. How do you feel now about western-style dress?

All of the women except for the oldest one now enjoy wearing western-style dress and do not want to wear hanbok. It must be remembered, however, that these women are special cases: they are Korean, but living in America. Their busy way of life in America makes them want to wear only western dress here, unlike their counterparts in Korea who still wear hanbok for special occasions.¹ They also feel that Korean-Americans do not have places to wear hanbok except for Korean churches or Korean community parties. Still, they unanimously expressed a desire to maintain hanbok as their national dress, though they are not willing to carry the tradition themselves.

These Korean women are proud of their national clothing in terms of traditional beauty, beautiful colors and dress line, yet almost every woman complained about the functional, practical, and physical aspects of hanbok. The common complaints included: hanbok is too clumsy to work in because of its bulkiness and length; it is tied around the

¹ In Korea, even now, many people wear hanbok for such special occasions as 60th birthdays, New Year's and Harvest Festival. They do not wear hanbok anymore while visiting their parents-in-law, as the way of life has become less formal.

breast too tightly to breathe; it is too much trouble to wash; bosun and gomusin are too tight, hurt the feet, are hot in summer, and need special care to keep clean; the several layers of required undergarments are also too warm in the summer months. Time after time, the women sounded these complaints. And yet, as noted, they all feel hanbok must be traditionally retained.

One of the reasons several women in their fifties do not want to wear hanbok is because its design is too simple to reflect fashion. They think that the only fashion possibility for hanbok is either to lengthen or shorten the jugori and chima. They are comfortable in western-style dress both physically and psychologically. On the other hand, the women over sixty miss hanbok, but they agree that western clothing is very comfortable, functional, and is easy to care for. They also like to wear western-style dress in America because no one pressures them about their clothing. But they do not know whether they will wear hanbok again if they go back to Korea. Perhaps they feel more secure wearing western-style dress in America because everyone else wears it. They were unaware of how uncomfortable hanbok was until they began to wear western-style dress. These women thought that clothing was supposed to be that way. The oldest woman in this study, Kyungsook, said that hanbok is the best clothing for her. She does not feel uncomfortable in hanbok at all, even now, because she feels comfortable psychologically while wearing it. In short, the women in the sixty and older group, are still in a transitional period of adopting western-style clothing.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the liberation from Japan in 1945, a number of changes in culture were occurring at the same time in Korea. One of the most visible changes was Korean women's acculturation of western-style dress. The adoption of western dress by Korean women raised the following questions that provide the focus of this study: Why, after wearing the traditional hanbok for hundreds of years, do most Korean women now wear western-style dress? What are the reasons Korean women adopted western-style dress so quickly? When did this change begin? Were they pleased or embarrassed to wear western-style dress? Did anyone directly influence their clothing choices and if so, were they family members? What were their sources of western-style dress? Were there problems of size, color, or proportion in wearing western-style dress? Finally, do Korean women wear hanbok now, and under what circumstances? In this study, an attempt was made to answer these questions using a qualitative research methodology to describe and document changes in clothing patterns. The focus of this study concerns theoretically the reactions of selected Korean women toward to western-style dress, as viewed through the anthropological concept of acculturation. The specific theories generated from this study seem to revolve around the variables of physical and psychological comfort, conformity, body image, societal and peer pressures, and clothing symbolism of ethnic identity in the acculturation process.

Since the founding of girls' schools in Korea at the end of the 19th century, the number of educated women has increased. Educated "New Women" entered into the work force and mingled with men in public spheres that previously had been taboo. But, truly, a

Korean woman's place was at home and she was not accepted in public places until recently. As Korean women became more involved in a wider sphere of activity, they realized that the hanbok was burdensome for this new world. Women were eager to wear the more convenient western-style dress as their everyday clothing. When western-style dress was first introduced into Korea, a highly educated young generation who were very small in number quickly adopted it; yet it took some time to come into wide acceptance. Having chosen to wear western-style dress, women found it difficult to return to traditional clothing for everyday life though they kept it for special occasions. Although the adoption of western dress by Korean women during the acculturation period may have seemed like a simple process, in fact, it implies complex cultural and socio-psychological interactions. Clothing is a social and cultural response, reflecting a socio-psychological base, values, and norms of a given society. The fact that the subjects of this study adopted western-style clothing meant that Korean society, to some extent, allowed and accepted the changes in women's life style. However, during the Japanese occupation of Korea, when the Japanese tried to introduce simple western-style clothing, it was generally ignored. This may be explained for two reasons: 1) Korean hatred for the Japanese resulted in the deliberate avoidance of innovations in dress by Japan; and 2) Korean women were not yet liberated and, therefore, not ready to adopt a new style of clothing.

The acknowledgement that psychological comfort influences physical comfort is an important component to understanding this study. If people are not psychologically at ease wearing a particular type of clothing, they will not feel comfortable, even if the style is attractive and physically comfortable. Most of the younger Korean women in this study, who were raised with western-style dress, felt comfortable and natural in western clothing while they felt strange and uncomfortable when dressed in hanbok. Although they wanted

to keep hanbok as a national costume, strange and unnatural feelings about hanbok seemed to reinforce the physical discomfort of hanbok.

However, the older women, more familiar with hanbok, were psychologically and physically comfortable wearing hanbok, though they often admitted that western-style dress was more practical and functional. As a result of this psychological discomfort with western fashion, these women miss hanbok and continue to wear it more frequently than the younger women. They are more at ease in their traditional clothing, even if sometimes physically uncomfortable. This contrast between the older and younger women reinforces the belief that clothing is an important part of self-image.

Societal and peer pressures are also important factors influencing Korean women's clothing behavior. It emerged, however, that all of these women felt greater pressures from society and peers in Korea than in America. As discussed in the summary chapter, the strongest pressures the Korean women mentioned came from their families, most especially the mothers-in-law. However, though they did not specifically mention peer pressure from their friends, the interviews pointed up the strength of interactions between peers. Experiences with these types of pressures began when they were young. They were embarrassed to wear different clothing in front of their friends and were sometimes chastised by them for doing so, though they wanted to wear something unique. Several women's memories about their childhood supported this notion of peer pressure. One of the subjects, Haesoon, liked her leather shoes a lot, but her friends dumped sand on her shoes because they were jealous. Afterwards, she claimed not to feel comfortable wearing them. When another woman, Oaksoon, got a new, pretty dress, she only wore it to church because of the distinctiveness of the dress. In the case of a third, Yuri, her mother made her a black satin hanbok; but she did not want to wear it because it was too "different." The fourth woman, Wonju, got a new, pretty hat; but she was afraid to wear it because she

was the only one wearing a fancy hat and her friends were jealous. The children were very honest in expressing their jealousy, but when they became adults they hid their emotions and expressed it in more indirect ways. As they grew older, while being encouraged by their friends to wear different clothing, they simultaneously felt indirect pressures from these same friends. Haesoon said that though her friends encouraged her to wear the color red which she thought too bold, she still thought her friends envied her clothing. Another, Miran, said that she wore nice clothes and her friends liked them; however, she did not feel comfortable and purposely wore ordinary dresses when getting together with her friends. Many women said that they continued to want unique clothing and sought it with zeal in the black market, clothing stores carrying imported goods, and second-hand stores. Because their friends were looking for clothing of similar styles at the same places, in actuality, they not only were looking for unique clothing but also wanted to conform to their peer group. They recognized the peer pressure and were afraid to be isolated from their peer group.

There were several ways these women responded to such pressures. One was to conform to these pressures, for example, choosing such acceptable colors as beige, black, brown, etc. The married women wore hanbok in the presence of their parents-in-law and in public, while they wore western-style dress as single women because they did not want to go against their societal norms. They also checked with one another before a particular occasion to see what each was going to wear. Another response was to try and rebel against the pressures. When there was pressure from peers or society about their clothing, some women acted as though they did not care, responding to such criticism by repeatedly wearing the clothing. They rationalized that because they were trained in clothing design and sewing and were fashion leaders, they were different, bold, and unique. The stronger the pressures, the more they tried eccentric colors and styles. The younger women responded more often by resisting the pressures.

Living in the United States, however, was quite different. These women were free to wear any style of western dress in any colors; but they were not often psychologically comfortable wearing hanbok. Several older women began to wear western-style dress once they arrived because they felt more at ease wearing it in a new society. They had been housewives in Korea, and continued in that role in America. Even though the household facilities in America were much more convenient and easier to handle than those in Korea, the women complained that hanbok was too inconvenient to wear around the house. An implication of this is that they wanted to adjust to American society by conforming to the new ideal. They did not want to be distinguished by wearing hanbok, this explains why most Korean women wear hanbok only to Korean community parties or for Korean church events.

The study by Misao Batts (1975) is similar to the present Korean study in that both the Japanese and Korean subjects are living in foreign countries as minorities. However, as opposed to the first generation of Japanese in Canada studied by Batts, the primary reason for Korean women to adopt western-style dress in Korea during the acculturation period was because they wanted to wear it, not to help ease racial differences. The new western clothing was modified to approach more closely the Koreans' personal taste. They often chose to wear simple, gathered, long skirts and blouses, which is the basic hanbok composition.

Another important conclusion of this study is that some objects of material culture -- in this case, clothing, hanbok -- become important factors to be used as a symbol of ethnic identity. The symbols people use change according to changing social situations, as Royce (1982) suggests. In spite of the pressures of different life styles in America, one might ask why Korean women wanted to continue to wear and keep hanbok. Human groups have and use symbols to identify themselves as a unique group. Once western-style dress was

worn as everyday clothing in Korea, hanbok was worn only on special occasions. At that point, the Korean women then did not consider hanbok as a symbol of their ethnic identity. In fact, there was not as much need to have symbols of their ethnic identity in Korea because they lived in homogeneous society. However, although most of the women have worn hanbok only once or twice since coming to the United States and several women do not own one, continuous contact with many different cultures in the United States has aroused in these women a sense of ethnic identity, and they use hanbok as an ethnic symbol in selected contexts.

Again, there are some differences in the feelings about ethnic identity between age groups. The older women felt a stronger ethnic identity in hanbok while younger women worried more about fashion and esthetic views. The older women insisted that they should wear hanbok more frequently, and felt they looked better in hanbok than in western-style dress because they are Korean. They also thought hanbok should be worn in the traditional attitudes and manners even in America; otherwise, they would not feel that hanbok represents their ethnicity. The younger women agreed that they should wear hanbok in the traditional way, but their opinions were not as strong as those of the older women. They regarded hanbok as their party dress rather than "Korean clothes". They especially wanted to wear it for international parties because it has unique beauty and foreigners seemed pleased with it. Several younger women, used to the western ideal of a tall and slender figure, thought that high-heels looked better with hanbok than the flat gomusin.

Some symbols are not recognizable by other groups though they are important symbols within the same group. For foreigners, hanbok chima and jugori are often the most recognizable symbols of Korean nationality. They do not know nor do they care about gomusin and bosun. But for the Korean women, bosun and gomusin are very important, especially for the older women. They feel an obligation to wear gomusin and

bosun with hanbok, otherwise they fear someone might see them wearing unsuitable shoes and stockings. If Korean women no longer care about the change of hair style or hanbok design, why are they concerned with bosun despite its discomfort? They had lived in a society with strong class distinctions that had endured for thousands of years. Today when rigid class distinction does not exist, bosun and small feet are reminders of the Yangban class. The continued desire to wear bosun or to have small feet, then undoubtedly indicate their continued desire to belong to the higher class.

Another undeniable factor identified in this study as influencing Korean women's clothing behavior is body image. Clothing influences body image both positively and negatively. That is, an individual may see his/her figure as being improved or not improved depending upon the clothing and his/her self-perception. This perception of body image then influences clothing behavior. The Korean women in this study are alike in terms of culture and appearance, but their opinions about body image are quite different. The women who used to wear hanbok think their figures are suitable for hanbok, but the women who wore western-style dress more frequently insist they have good figures for western-style dress. The following illustrates the concept of body image. Two of the Korean women complained about the shapes of their shoulders. Both of them have similarly small shoulders, but the younger woman, Minkyung, believed that she had straight shoulders and her figure was well fit for western design. The older woman, Bora, thought that her round, sloping shoulders looked better in hanbok. These two women perceived their body images in terms of what each considered as the cultural ideal. The younger woman, more familiar with western-style clothing, structured her body image according to Western design. That is, she had already determined that her figure was fit for western clothes. But in the other case, although the older woman enjoys wearing western-style dress now, she had determined her body image in terms of hanbok.

This study suggests that the most influential factors affecting the Korean women's adaptation of western-style dress during this acculturation process were education and age factors. Until initial acculturation reached a stable point, Korean women faced conflicts between traditional and newly introduced customs. The more educated younger generation accepted western-style clothing more quickly than the less educated women of the older generation. The Ghanaian study by Lillian B. Matthews (1979) drew a similar conclusion; the more educated, younger age group of Ghanaian women was more likely to adopt western dress.

Many general textbooks on history and socio-psychological aspects of clothing show that women with higher education who participate in the work force speed up the changes in clothing. Clothing reflects women's lives and changing life styles. When a new type of dress is first introduced, the conflicts always exist between the old and the new styles. Human beings seek to conform while wanting to be different. Women who are from an enclosed and homogeneous society, such as oriental countries, may feel this conflict more strongly. While the traditional dress, hanbok, has been replaced by western-style dress as everyday clothing, Korean women had to struggle with the traditional societal norms. The Chinese study by Valerie Steele (1983) supports this phenomenon. During their acculturation period (after the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s), when a new style of clothing came into China, the Chinese women adopted it based on their societal norms.

All of the Korean women in this study are currently wearing western-style clothing in their everyday lives. Although the majority of these women keep a hanbok, they seldom wear it in the United States, though they feel that hanbok should be retained as their national clothing. Korean women in America continue to interact with western culture; and, as time passes, their societal conflicts may be lessened.

Several acculturation studies in other countries presented conclusions similar to this Korean study, but some of them used a different methodology such as quantitative analysis. Also the places and periods of acculturation in other countries were quite different from this study, and their adoptions of western-style dress were based on their societal norm. The purpose of this study was to analyze the reactions of Korean women who adopted the western-style dress during the acculturation period of 1945-1962. In order to achieve this purpose, the data was collected from twenty-four Korean women now living in the United States by oral history method and qualitatively examined. The findings that may generate specific theories include the following:

1. The acknowledgement that psychological comfort is as influential as physical comfort is an important finding of this study. If people are not psychologically at ease wearing a particular type of clothing, they will not feel comfortable, even if the style is attractive and physically comfortable.
2. Family, societal, and peer pressures are important factors influencing Korean women's clothing behavior. Certainly family members, eg., mother-in-law, appears to exert a special influence in Korean women's clothing behavior.
3. The use of ethnic symbols for Korean women have changed since coming to America. Hanbok has become an important item that Korean women use as their ethnic symbol in this new environment.
4. Body image is another important factor identified in this study as influencing Korean women's clothing behavior. Clothing influences body image both positively and negatively. That is, an individual may see his/her figure as being improved or not improved depending upon the clothing and his/her self-perception.

This perception of body image then influences clothing behavior. These women perceived their body images in terms of what each considered as the cultural ideal.

5. The most influential factors affecting the Korean women's adaptation of western-style dress during this acculturation process were however education and relative age.

In summary, this is an exploratory study in its approach to acculturation through clothing changes to western-style dress in Korean women. Moreover, this study not only utilizes a conventional method for historical research, but also provides an anthropological, life history approach. By considering acculturation as a framework for understanding the different reactions of Korean women, we see that change has been dramatic and influenced by two major factors, age and educational background of informants. Adoption of western clothing by Korean women reflects the Korean women's cultural adaptations.

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APPENDIX A
FIGURES

Figure 1.

Veils prior to 1910.

(page 23)

**The designs of these veils changed period to period.
The above one was worn in an earlier period than that of the below.**

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.



Figure 2.

Hanbok.

(page 27)

From Pico Iyer, "The Yin and Yang of Paradoxical, Prosperous Korea," *Smithsonian*,
August 1988.



Figure 3.

Jugori.

(page 27)

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

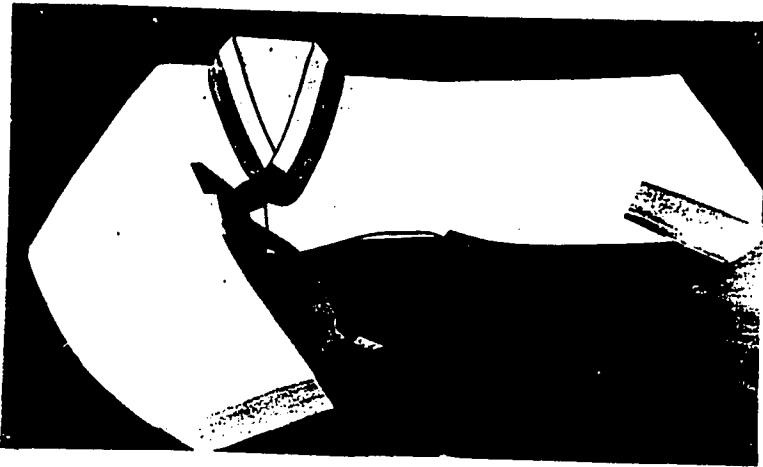
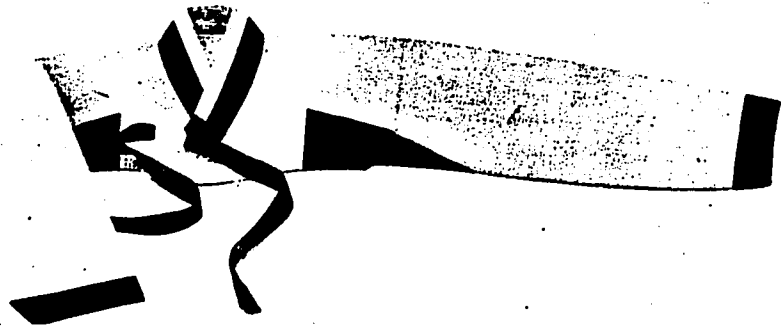


Figure 4.

Chima.

(page 27)

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

121 A

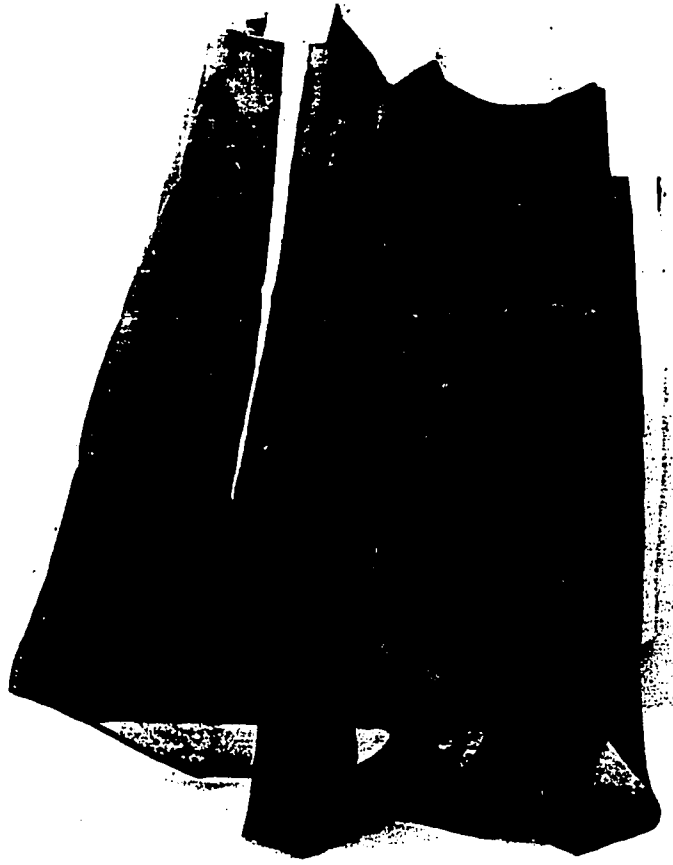


Figure 5.

Undergarments worn with hanbok.

(page 28)

These undergarments were worn in order of inside to outside, sokgot, sokbaji, and sokchima, ca Yi Dynasty.

Above: Sokgot, Middle: Sokbaji, Below: Sokchima.

Today, sokgot is not worn any more and the design of sokchima and sokbaji has been changed to a less bulky form.

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

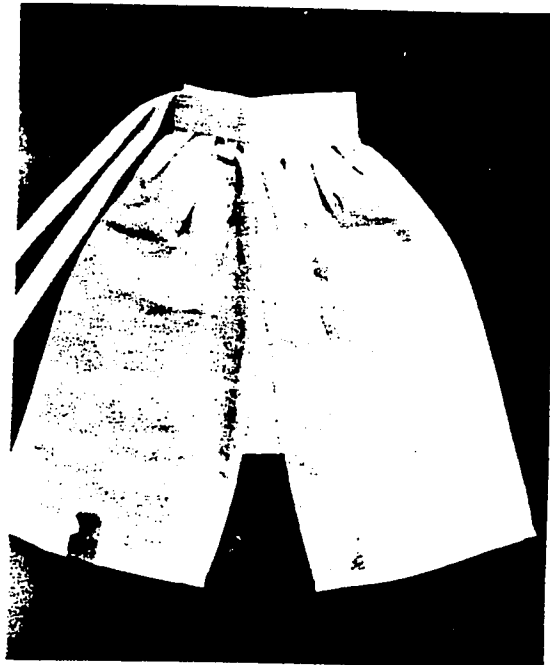
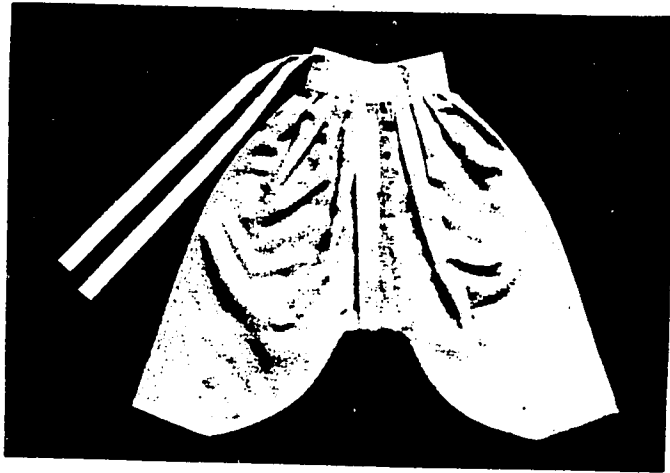
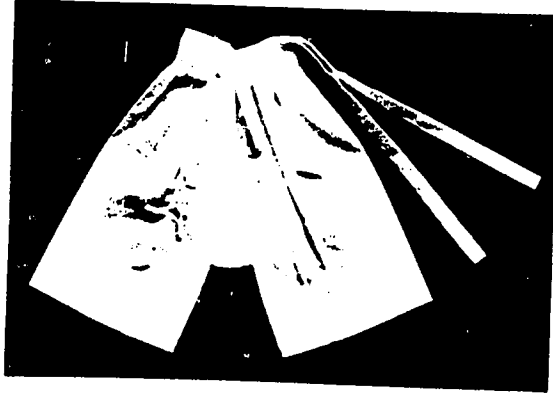


Figure 6.

Korean Shoes.

(page 28)

The shoes in this picture, similar in shape to gomusin, were cloth with wooden support. A true gomusin is made of rubber.

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

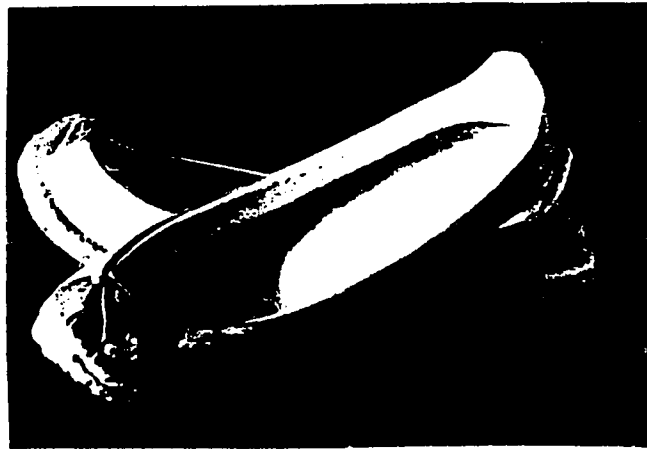


Figure 7.

Bosun.

(page 28)

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

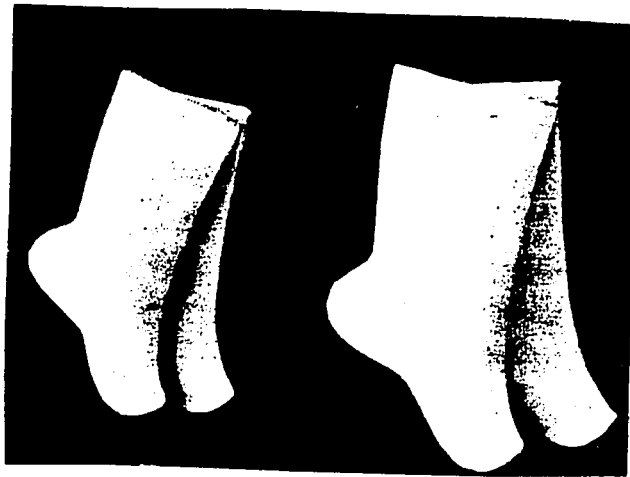


Figure 8.

Jok.

(page 28)

From 석주선, 한국 복식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.



Figure 9.

Binyo.

(page 28)

From 석주선, 한국 부식사, 서울: 보진재 주식회사, 1978.

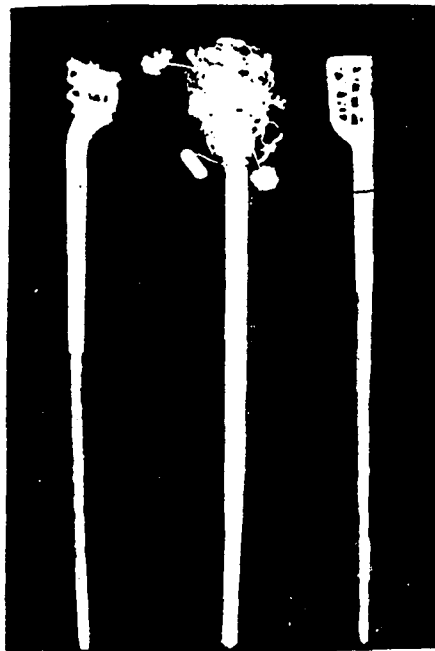
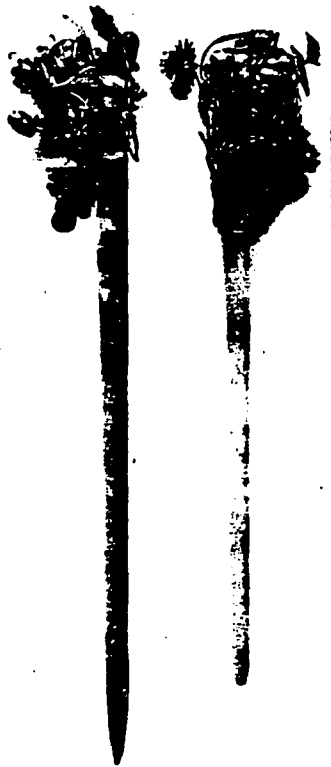


Figure 10.**Trends of school uniforms.****(page 29)****Above: Hanbok uniforms.**

- (a) Tong chima hanbok uniform for winter (1916-1931).**
- (b) Tong chima hanbok uniform for summer (1916-1931).**
- (c) Long chima hanbok uniform (1906-1916).**

Below: Western-style uniforms for spring and fall, summer, and winter.**Each school has its own design.**

- (a) Uniform for spring and fall (1931-1944).**
- (b) and (c) Uniform for winter (after 1945).**
- (d) Uniform for spring and fall (after 1945).**
- (e) Uniform for summer (after 1945).**

From 최경자, 최경자 자서년감 패션 50년, 서울: 의상사출판국, 1974.



1916-1931 冬服

(a)



1916-1931 夏服

(b)



1906-1916

(c)



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)

APPENDIX B
TABLE

Table 1. Overview of the Interviewees.

*1: Year of birth and age

*2: Year of emigration

Name	interview area	region in Korea	age *1	education	career in Korea	career in America	year *2
Jungmi	LA	Manchria Seoul	1938 (50)	College (2yrs)	-----	Pattern maker	1965
Haekyung	LA	Hwanghae Seoul	1937 (51)	College	Designer	Pattern maker	1970
Soonja	LA	Choonchun Seoul	1936 (52)	College (1yr)	Secretary	Designer	1961
Yoonju	LA	Choongchung Seoul	1935 (53)	High school	Designer	Pattern maker	1969
Yuri	LA	Seoul	1935 (53)	College	Translator	Designer	1963
Minkyung	LA	Seoul	1935 (53)	College	Designer	Pattern maker	1973
Haesoon	GR	Pusan Seoul	1933 (55)	Elem.	Housewife	Housewife	1971
Miza	LA	Pusan Seoul	1933 (55)	College	Designer	Dress shop owner	1977
Jinju	LA	Chunra Seoul	1932 (56)	High school	Banker Designer	Pattern maker	1972
Sunghee	LA	Choongchung Seoul	1932 (56)	Middle school	Dress shop owner	Maid	1983
Soojung	LA	Seoul	1931 (57)	College	Designer	Designer	1967

(table continued)

Name	interview area	region in Korea	age	education	career in Korea	career in America	year
Bora	LA	Kyungsang Seoul	1928 (60)	Elem.	Housewife	Housewife	1985
Youngsook	LA	Hwanghae Kimchun	1926 (62)	Elem. (3yrs)	Housewife	Maid	1984
Miran	LA	Manchuria Seoul	1925 (63)	High school	Housewife	Housewife	1985
Oaksoon	GR	Pyongyang Seoul	1924 (64)	College	H-School teacher	Missionary	1985
Wonju	LA	Chunra Seoul	1920 (68)	Tech college	H-School teacher	Housewife	1973
Yunkyung	LA	Seoul	1918 (70)	Elem.	Housewife	Housewife	1987
Minja	LA	Manchuria Seoul	1917 (71)	Elem.	Telephone operator	Housewife	1981
Heesook	LA	Choonchun Seoul	1917 (71)	Medical school	Doctor	Doctor	1978
Nari	LA	Hwanghae Seoul	1917 (71)	Medical school	H-school teacher	Housewife	1972
Hanna	GR	Choongchung Seoul	1916 (72)	None	Housewife	Housewife	1980
Sinhae	LA	Hwanghae Seoul	1915 (73)	Medical school	Doctor	Housewife	1980
Mihee	LA	Soowon Seoul	1910 (78)	Elem.	Housewife	Housewife	1974
Kyungsook	LA	Seoul	1902 (86)	None	Housewife	Housewife	1980

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE

이 설문지는 본 연구자의 박사학위 논문 외에 다른 목적에 사용
하지 않을 것 입니다. 생각 나시는 데로 말씀 해 주시면 감사
하겠습니다.

1. 옷의 변화에 대하여 기억 하십니까?
2. 처음 양장을 하셨을 때에 어떻게 느끼셨습니까?
3. 양장은 주로 어디에서 구 하셨습니까?
4. 부군 혹은 다른 분 께서는 본인의 양장에 대해 어떻게
생각 하셨습니까? 그리고 부군 께서는 어떤 복장을 주로
하셨습니까? (양복 혹은 한복)
5. 본인은 한복과 양장을 겸용 하셨습니까?
6. 어떤 옷을 즐겨 입으셨습니까? (색깔, 크기)
7. 양장을 구입 하실 때에 어떤 문제가 있으셨습니까?
8. 교복에 대하여 기억 하십니까?
9. 지금은 양장에 대하여 어떻게 생각 하십니까?