

CASE STUDY

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Symbolic meanings of women's dress on Korean film <Madame Freedom> from the fifties

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Abstract

The mid-20th century, covering the end of the colonial rule and the Korean War, represented for Korea a period of tumultuous changes in the people's way of life as well as their value system. Women grew more active in professional and social capacities, and began to claim a status equal to that of men as their economic role within the family expanded. The just claim for a foray beyond the family boundaries, coming from women married to upper-middle-class husbands and consequently enjoying an opulent lifestyle, becomes a major theme of the film <Madame Freedom>. In it, we find a variety of female roles, ranging from not just the then oft-discussed 'liberated wives', but also to college students, single professionals, housewives with husbands in positions of prestige, and businesswomen. These characters' appearance, including their dress, makeup and body awareness, also function as symbols expressing the message and social role each character represents. The study examines the 1956 film <Madame Freedom> to explore how the conflict between the social environment surrounding the female characters, conventional values and self - image manifest themselves in their dress and the changes thereof in both family and broader social life, and to determine what symbolic significance such manifestations have.

Keywords: Dress; Social change; Korean film <Madame Freedom>

Introduction

Each society, there is in essence an ideology and a social value system about women which through the generations have been reproduced, even though this process in which each individual woman speaks, conducts, wears and dresses up has been both self-regulating and subject at the same time. The value system and the costume styles shared by individuals or groups of women at a specific time can strengthen normative aspects of society, or create just the opposite by anti-social meanings. In other words, the dress is a device that clarifies the relationship between the body and the living environment as a space outside the body, while the way of dressing the body is an active process and a skill that one physically forms and with which one expresses oneself (Mauss 1973 & Bourdieu 1986 as cited in Craik 2001).

Women-related traditional ideology consolidated by Confucian ideas of twenty centuries embraces ethical values concerning gender roles, chastity, views of marriage, motherhood and virtue embodied in clothes. Such social dogmas, without being changed easily, form women's daily practice. Into it come women who are in conflict and struggle with fixed values. Their dress embodies it in a concrete way, when a

society undergoes big changes in its political and economic aspects. According to Ussher, (Ussher 1997 as cited in Samantha 2004) the types of women in accordance with these cultural attitudes can be divided into those who follow a traditional femininity ('doing girl') and those who resist it ('resisting girl') in dress and physical attitudes. The important point is that there is, in spite of this contrast, no change in their visible dress including the appearance, and they actually have a common way of expressing themselves (as cited in Samantha 2004). Dress including attire, body ornaments and physical attitude is an instrument that can identify not only the inner side of one who wears it, but also the social and cultural background reflected in those dress, no matter whether it is worn by a woman who accepts the existing structure or by one who comes into conflict with it.

In the middle of the 1950s, Korean domestic situation underwent radical changes after the end of Korean War. Among the ruins of war, the responsibility of rebuilding and a drop in confidence were relatively stronger for men than for women. Women felt relatively free in a reality in which men, as representatives of the patriarchal system, had temporarily disappeared. In addition, Western ideas of democracy were introduced and spread the concept of freedom and equality. Next to American freedom and democracy, movies, magazines and the Western lifestyle of enjoying leisure and popular culture were soon imported. They became cultural ideals to women whose space and territory were limited to just the home.

With urbanization and the abundance of mass culture, the discourse of freedom involved not only more intensely single women, but also married women for whom social activities and going out were not feasible without being accompanied by their husbands. The group of married women who were leading a relatively luxurious family life thanks to the high social and economic status of their husbands started to assert gender equality at home and their right to go out. They were called literally 'liberal married women' or better 'freedom madame'. A movie called "Madame Freedom" of 1956 gives expression to the lifestyles of the publicly discussed 'liberal women' as well as a newly emerged women's group composed of female college students who have received an education equivalent to men, single working ladies and even married women with husbands of high social status. Women in the movie reflect social changes in the phenomenon of 'liberal women' spreading out at an unprecedented rate, and the increase of women's economic activities and network instead of those of men. They also reflect cultural discourses like classification, self-identity and counterculture through changes in their appearance including dress behavior, sorts of clothing and make-up as well. According to Stone, (Stone 1992 as cited in Roach-Higgins, EM, & Eicher, BJ, 1995) appearance plays a vital role as a syntax of an interaction which establishes the identities of members of society, and there is always a close relationship between non-verbal symbols and verbal symbols, i.e. between clothes and ornaments including gestures and appearance, and discourse (as cited in Roach-Higgins and Eicher 1995). Furthermore, it can be viewed that the women's costumes reflecting phases in the film, the texts transferring them and the descriptive structure have a strong power and influence to convey discourses to the world outside the movie.

This study focusing on the movie <Madam Freedom> of 1956 tries to grasp how external cultural discourses about conflicts between the environment surrounding women in the movie and existing values appear through dress behavior. The film <Madam Freedom> (Jayu buin in Korean) is in fact a screen version of a novel in which the phenomenon of 'liberal married women' substantialized in real life is the theme. It

drew more than 150,000 female movie-goers in their thirties and forties just in the Seoul metropolitan area (Kang, 2008).

Kim (2003) published a study on customary aspects that appeared in <Madame Freedom>, as a serial novel in a newspaper, whereas Rho (2009) and Shim (2010) studied gender according to the sense of the times and classes among women in those days through the movie <Madame Freedom>. Eom (2010) carried out a study on the political meanings and the symbolism of costumes shown in the novel <Madame Freedom>. They discussed the cultural acceptance of gender around the new femininity from cultural and historical aspects through <Madame Freedom>, the original novel underlying the movie <Madame Freedom>.

This study has its significance in investigating conflicts between the image of women required by society that the costumes implied and the one demanded by women, and the development of self-consciousness by including the far-reaching influence of descriptions, behavior and dresses of characters. The study carried out literature surveys on the overall circumstances throughout Korean society, culture, and politics in those days and the changing face of women's life right after the Korean War in the 1950s through books, newspaper data, and research data. It also conducted empirical reviews of the relevant screens in <Madame Freedom>, a movie produced by Han Hyöng-Mo in 1958 (Korean Federation of Film Archives, 2008) (Figure 1).

Theoretical consideration of social change and new women's group in the 1950s

Social background of the emergence of 'liberal married women' in 1950s

In addition to the historical currents as mentioned above, there is a specific regional distinctiveness which can only be applied to Korean society after the Korean War in



Figure 1 Film poster <Madame Freedom> from Korean Film Federation Archives (2013). <http://www.kmdb.or.kr/SearchSF1/totalsearch.asp>.

the 1950s. A new topic appeared after the Korean War with the emphasis on the private and personal spheres separated from public obligations. In order to keep a solidated social community since the Yi dynasty, social identities reflected in belonging and obligation have been regarded as being of much greater importance than individual freedom, but this atmosphere was changing, now taking a serious view of the individual or self. People placed more emphasis on the personal and private sphere than on the social group experience closely related to obligation. This was not a matter of choice after going through Japanese colonial period and the Korean War. It was the period in which individual freedom in a modern sense was seriously considered for the first time in the 1950s (Oh, 2007).

Not just freedom, but also the issue of equality had a big effect on the relationship between men and women. The most prominent practice was the permission of concubinage by men and punishment for adultery of women, which indicates that women should be submissive to men according to the general moral of Confucianism. In fact, a man with a concubine had been regarded as a symbol of wealth and power in Korean society for a long time before 1953. Concubinage and adultery were not considered crimes for men according to criminal law. Only married women who committed adultery were punished. As resistance against this practice increased, dual punishment was of both man and woman in case of adultery took place seven times in 1953 (Lee 2004). The abolition of the concubine system was directly related to the improvement in women's position at home and in society.

The Korean War increased the social participation of women who replaced their husbands, the now absent heads of household, as a historical process of leading women to the outside of the house. Women recognized that there was another world outside home in this process. The percentage of women who had a job during the war was 63.7% in 1951 and 58.4% in 1952. This figure means that all women excluding those below the age of 14 were economically active in one form or another. The rate of women's economic activity was 45% even after the war (Kang 2008).

This high economic and social activity of women became the main factor in dividing the female stratum in those days and coincided with a drop in the consistency of men as heads of the household. Women who had a role limited to the inside of the home were part of many different groups, organizations, and social gatherings according to their needs and purposes by working outside of the house. This kind of organizing of women's groups is of importance, because social and cultural factors influenced gender roles and areas of activity at the home, which were assigned to women. According to Donelson (1990), women did not have the opportunity to belong to groups such as at public meetings, in social clubs, and in the business domain, which belonged to men, because they were tied to childbirth and rearing; men's solidarity became stronger than women's due to this type of labor distribution. In other words, there was no gender difference in group activity and sociocultural powers created this tendency.

Under these circumstances, the women's group called 'liberal married women' reflected a new structure of 'socialness and social activity' generated by the women themselves. Married women who belonged to a group of 'liberal married women' organized public social gatherings and collective activities through channels, dancing and maternal associations, not through job regarded as the public activities. They generated a spontaneous social and economic network in addition to issues such as the sense of

virtue and love affairs of married women (Kwon 2008). The revitalization of social meetings set up by married women who deployed their economic activities, taking up more initiatives than men did in the commercial field. These change reflected the increase of their external status and the changes in their lives.

Married women who emerged as the new subject in real life began obtaining a social position different from their previous one. All these women were married to men who formed the intellectual elite above the middle class. Married women who had secured some degree of the economic and social position were called wealthy women of leisure in public discourse and often became the focus of criticism in society as they established their socio-economic networks independently without making use of men, mainly their husbands (Rho, 2009). This criticism proved that these women had already become significant people and the crisis of men belonging to the elite, their counterparts, had increased.

Presence of Madame Freedom in representation through the movie <Madame Freedom> in the 1950s

The movie <Madam Freedom> arrived on the scene in the context of a historical and rapidly changing social situation, developed as cultural medium from a novel and a play to a movie and eventually resurfaces more as one of the social phenomena than in the form of its true nature (Kang, 2011). Topics like the role of middle-aged women at home who have a spouse from above the middle-class, female identity, outdoor activities, feminine virtue, moral standards etc., have been initiated as discussion subject by men.

The movie <Madame Freedom> is much more mass-oriented than the text of the novel. And because of its active re-interpretation of the characters, scenes and visual effects, at its first venue in Seoul it attracted a record crowd of 180,000 viewers and it then explosively drew a total of 1,500,000 attendants. The dynamic combination of the movie and reality becomes important and has more value when the subject is a woman who always is lower in social standing. The three-dimensional movie forged a strong relationship with the audience as characters and texts were combined in the print media such as books and magazines. Furthermore, Stephan (2010) explained that the space in the movie draws sympathy and resistance from the audience by means of cinematic incidents as a process element instead of simply reproducing historical moments of the day as they were.

Also, <Madame Freedom> in the movie represents the contemporary real group and freedom as social issue is expressed through the women's dress of film. This study examined the identification and the styles of the real group and that of the film based on 'presence in representation', the media is not independent from the real (Kim 2006). Bernhard (2000) explained that the material elements including dress within movie has a stratum as expressive meaning which can show or concrete the non-material theme. Hence, the analysis of this study which started from mass media as social by-product as well as the dress in the movie could provide symbolic meanings of the femininity and new women image of the fifties.

Madame Freedom in the movie freely enjoys a modern and Western lifestyle as seen at a dance hall, a Western dress shop, a restaurant and in an automobile (Kang and Jeon, 2007). There is no reason to mention the word 'freedom' nor does it make sense to mention it for those who enjoy freedom as a daily occurrence. Madame freedom proves, however, the contrasts of real life that the most married women with a bun hair style wearing hanbok and rubber shoes, is shaded by husband and children and could

not go out freely, even less than the unmarried women. The married women who is tied to a private space called home cannot be an economic subject through their own educational quality and capacity, nor sexual subject radiating their feminine attraction, nor a cultural subject enjoying leisure activities. The movie <Madam Freedom> focuses on just this kind of passive material ideology, namely that the married woman who is an external consequence of a traditional image of women. The movie strives for embodying a new image of women by naming them Freedom.

The keyword 'freedom' also appears in the appearances of women in the movie through their dress. The difference from the existing image of women can only be recognized concretely when it is formalized by material means such as costumes. The impractical hanbok and the ungroomed face function as a non-verbal messages for and at same time as a code for the model wife and mother who supports her husband well and raises her children well. After studying at college, women go to her work wearing Western clothes, while they wear hanbok after being married. This apparently means that wearing clothes as a social convention is still more meaningful than wearing clothes in order to express a free taste and the charms of individuality. For men, the supply of Western suits and a clothing reform were carried out as a modernizing and rational process from the beginning of the 20th century. However, most women had worn hanbok until the 1950s (Kum et al. 2002). The heroine in the movie gets a job, makes up her face, wears Western clothes and takes an active part in social life, not because it is a social code, but just for herself. Her appearance is eventually linked with a meaning contradicting the existing image of women.

<Madame Freedom> reflected the changed status and attitudes of women of those days, but did not encroach upon the existing male culture and a social structure intended to maintain the traditional ideology given to women. In other words, it did not submit to the role and the identity of women, desired and required in the society in those days. However, the movie had its significance in the sense that it gave the female audiences a prospect that the life of women could be changed in future in a direction that might become more active and equal to men. Moreover, the government policy promoted under the banner of rebuilding national ethics started from the beginning of 1960s. The men in this movie were described to be connected with the power and the traditional image of women, a wise mother and good wife, was recreated. In this way, the value of <Madame Freedom> was set much bigger. (Oh 2007) Four years after the showing of <Madame Freedom> these traditional gender roles were again demanded from women for the sake of the military regime and the rebuilding of the nation. In other words, the new image of women opposed to the traditional one was mostly absorbed into the dominant image of those days. Naturally, especially in Korean pre-modern and modern history, the image of men as symbolized by their power and authority, maintained its social dominance for a long time. The new image of women in <Madame Freedom> that appeared as a creative force of a small group of women eventually has its meaning as a process in the sense that it was adapted to its time and continued, even though it subsequently was gradually absorbed by traditional culture.

Symbolic meanings of women's dress in <Madame Freedom>

The dress as a social form has a meaning only within elements which composes the social context. For this reason this study aimed to analyze the symbolic meanings of women's dress categorized according to specific social, political, economic, and cultural changes.

Leisured class

A gradual differentiation of status and duties among women, namely between those who have a husband with economic possibilities and therefore enjoy the pleasure of an elegant home life without the burden of production, and those who have to work for their livelihood. In other words, the division of labor in the past was polarized by the sexual attributes of men and women, is meanwhile setting on the basis of social and economic status of women. It generates by degree the types of social classification, namely stratification among women (Illich 1996). The stratification among married women in the movie increased in relations among economic capital such as money and materials, clothes, and cultural capital called taste. Bourdieu, (Bourdieu 1985 as cited in Robbins, D, 2000) identified economic and cultural capital that occupied the interactive relationship in social space. The valuation of consumption including dress is regarded in signs that symbolize meanings. Habitus is the phenomenon of the inclination of actors who are gathered in this social space and can be classified by dividing people by groups according to the propensity to consume clothes, furniture, and music. (as cited in Robbins 2000) The valuation of costume commodities, clothes and clothing behaviors is based on this aspect, and aesthetic attitudes and the propensity towards various things such as furniture and music as well as dress and appearance enable the stratification of married women in the movie.

The one and only free external activity of married women in the movie who have a husband in a high social position and with economic power is made through a network of social gatherings connected to the husband. They show clothing behavior expressing their own class culture. Their differentiated appearance was a means of showing off the husband's economic power in a situation in which high-quality hanbok fabrics such as silk satin were all Japanese products and Korean fabrics were just rough cotton cloth and artificial silk. (The institute for Korean Historical Studies 1999) The manner of going out, dressing up in hanbok made of high quality imported fabrics such as brocade and velvet, expensive jewelry, Western dresses made of American fabrics, silk scarfs and handbags show the position of married women of leisure represented by a comfortable and luxurious family life.

The hanbok composed of a long silhouette and high-quality materials in the movie was far removed from working women's clothes in terms of activity and practicality (Ko 2001). Non-activity and non-utility symbolize an economic composure with no need to work. According to Veblen (1995), dresses with high-priced materials which women in the movie wear caused a high valuation of composure and the upper class to female audiences. In spite of the visual limits of a black and white film, the soft touch and the luster of silk and hair represented wealth and status very well in terms of dress materials (Shin 2008). Not only dress but also details in cultural taste and attitudes such as the atmosphere in restaurants in which meetings are held, the table settings and the main conversation subjects also contribute to a hierarchical division (Figures 2 and 3). Class culture is also shown in a social gathering in which women who have a relative economic advantage in a group are closer to American cultural goods with things such as a diamond ring, a formal dress with high quality fabrics, imported cosmetics and money than other women.

This ostentation and longing are connected to the symbolic consumption in women's dress choices as luxury items, not daily necessities, and to the characteristics of the



Figure 2 Scene of dressing up with luxurious hanbok, captured from the film (2013).

concept of oneself. According to Cooley, (Cooley 1902 as cited in Solomon MR, & Rabolt NJ, 2006) the self-concept is composed of three elements, imagination about one's own appearance toward others, imagination about other's judgment toward one's own appearance, and a kind of self-feeling such as self-esteem or indignity. In addition, even though it is formed at the stage of social customs because this self-concept is not static, but changeable, the symbolic meaning of the clothing product can be consumed



Figure 3 Scene of table setting of high society housewives, captured from the film (2013).

at the individual's experiential stage. In other words, clothing behavior and consumption of the women in the movie are made to pursue a social meaning such as ostentation of wealth and status along with a personal meaning differentiated for self-esteem.

Self-identity

As Korean culture experienced specific circumstances such as the rule of a foreign power, liberation, and a war different from the Western cultures, the totalitarian social identification appeared more predominant than the personal identification in Korea. (Han 2002) From the aspect of the personal identification process, married women who started economic and social activities outside the house can be considered to be the most important among all the types of women who appeared in <Madame Freedom>. It is important to explain social conditions that enabled a personal identity to become more predominant than the existing social identity in changes in their values and behavior. These women undergo the process of self-identification, which gives shape to self-identity by showing others the fact that they are a particular type of human being, leaving behind not only external dress standards, but also abstract norms for married women set up by society such as a range of activities, to wit roles at home and social gatherings. According to Schlenker & Weigold, (Schlenker & Weigold 1989 as cited in Han, 2002) there are personal factors such as personality and values, situational factors such as rules and standards for social roles concerning individuals, and audience factors such as a role model in that process (as cited in Han 2002).

Women represented by the heroine, 'Soyoung' in the movie, belong to a group in which an internal change called 'self-identity' occurs most rapidly along with visual changes such as appearance, and this group embodies the modernity that Korean society just enters into. The heroine is a married woman who plays the role as a virtuous and wise mother and good wife who proficiently handles assistance for her husband with a socially stable status and child care. She starts to find attractions and abilities as an individual, not an identity given by society as she takes social dance lessons as her hobby and looks for a job. The absence of identity felt as a housewife while moving around in society and having social activities outside the home, and the desire for self-identity can be considered as the process in which her social identity is changed into a personal identity by means of self-regulating choices and life. It is also one of the important attributes of contemporaneity beyond modernity (Giddens 1997).

Important opportunities that create a discourse on freedom for those who belong to the group of free women are social intercourse and activities through their jobs. Ordinary married women of the middle class who have previously focused on assistance to the husband and child care are represented by Korean traditional clothes, hanbok, that covers up the whole body, while modern and free women after starting social activities are appeared in Western-style dress. The modern life of city-dwellers was commercialized through men's clothes rather than women's clothes in the movie (Hollander 1995). In the movie, appearances of married men who have jobs such as businessman, civil servant, and professor are completed with props such as Western-style suits, hats, spectacles and pocket watches that symbolize the working man's time management (Craik 2005).

As soon as the heroine of <Madame Freedom> starts her economic and social activity as an employee at an apparel store, her clothes are changed from hanbok to Western-

style dress. Her modern and refined image is no longer expressed by hanbok, but by Western-style dress, and not by her unadorned chastity, but by her feminine attractiveness in her appearance (Kim 2005) (Figure 4). Scenes closing in on her colorful makeup and the figure of fixing her makeup show that changes in clothing behavior are connected to changes in the self-concept as a process in which she directs her life by making her own choices (Figure 5). In addition to the heroine, a woman who runs a business of importing products has a completely Western-style appearance fully equipped with hats, scarfs, shoes and Western-style dresses in the latest fashion of those days, while directly managing her business and being socially active (Figure 6). Differently from men who had monopolized the public area through their jobs, for a long time, women's own areas, namely the private area and home, were linked with non-expertise and traditionality. Consequently, in terms of appearance, a woman's perfectly modern dress, not the Korean traditional dress, now implies expertise and public activities. The mechanism that revitalizes her identity more efficiently, is her appearance; especially dress plays the role of connecting her past with her future. In this sense, it is well supported that an appearance shown to others decides self-attitudes better than the abstract self-concept that one has of herself (Stone, 1992 as cited in Roach-Higgins and Eicher 1995).

The reason why autonomy is especially important in changes in women's dressing behavior is that most women had never thought about the direction and the way of life that they really desire. Women who had been subordinated to masculine values were passive and dependent. They were encouraged to pursue a role as rearers who are dependent on men. (Kim 2005) 'Soyoung', the heroine of the movie, had the opportunity to temporarily leave her home and her private space behind and to play a typical gender role by getting a job at an apparel shop. The movie showed the process of women reorganizing their own desires in a self-regulating way, breaking away from her inner self affiliated to the dominant family in the traditional context rather than from changes in



Figure 4 Scene of adorned appearance, captured from the film (2013).



Figure 5 Scene of suit look for job, captured from the film (2013).

external elements such as Western-style dress, make-up, job activities and social activities represented by dancing (Joo 2001).

Counter culture

Women in <Madame Freedom> show anti-cultural attitudes that come into conflict with the culture conserved in existing society. Female college students, single working women and married women who enter society come to have many opportunities for



Figure 6 Scene of Western look with accessories, captured from the film (2013).

encountering every single moment of their life as a new moment owing to the inflow of new Western ideas and lifestyles. The wondering at every moment of what they really wanted, made them conscious of their thoughts, emotions and physical senses, and caused them to change (Janette 1989). In their wide reception of Westernized culture, mainly women show anti-cultural and radical attitudes in sexual taste and preferences which society might criticize as being provocative. According to Williams (2007), culture has two aspects, a shared meaning that should be trained and learned as routine stuff, and a new meaning tested inside. Thereby culture has the two essential elements of traditionality and creativity.

As a result of the reception of Westernized lifestyle and leisure culture in those days, married women in the movie dance with men in dance halls which rapidly increased in number in cities. They also drink and smoke without hesitation, while a young single woman might have a love relationship with a married man (Figure 7). A society represented by men judges these anti-traditional behaviors of women as self-indulgence of women that is beyond freedom. The changed awareness of one's body and physical sense as a concept of self-ownership, not of female virtuousness, is expressed in women's dress as well. The heroine in the movie strategically makes the best use of feminine attraction in order to raise enough money and expand her own business, visiting a dance hall as part of social intercourse connected with her working life. (Eom 2010) The heroine who has had just one feminine identity as a housewife, now has many different feminine identities such as housewife, working woman, and woman in social circles. She makes full use of one of these femininities, namely sexuality as a façade depending on the situation and its purpose. (Riviere, 1925 as cited in Phoca & Wright 2001) She wears a see-through hanbok made of a very thin silk fabric that gives erotic stimulus with its rustling sounds that are produced whenever she moves when dancing with a man, her business sponsor (Figure 8).



Figure 7 Scene of housewife smoking in public, captured from the film (2013).



Figure 8 Scene of housewife dancing in public, captured from the film (2013).

Except for dancing or smoking in hanbok, she shows ambiguity when she is eventually engaged to marry another young man, even though she falls in love with a married man. In real life in the 1950s, young single women were dressed in Western style but wore a hanbok after marriage, the hanbok indicating that she was just an ordinary woman of the middle class. (The Institute for Korean Historical Studies 1999) Social standards for women's dress, the coding and the message from dress, are not easily changed. Moral values and standards for women's behavior, attitudes, and dress were still conservative. Accordingly, there is a discrepancy between the speed of changes in awareness and the speed of the spread of Western lifestyle. In other words, women in the movie attempt to follow social standards for women such as clothing standards and marriage culture. At the same time, they show counter-culture, in the sense that they want to behave according to their own subjective desires and wishes.

Conclusion

The Korean War provided women with opportunities to enter society because of the necessity to earn a living. In the beginning, women who deployed economic activities were not threatening to men. However, as husbands came back into society after the war, women were forced to return 'home'. As the status and the life of women under men's domination was eroded by radical changes of Korean War, a new image of women, i.e. that every individual woman had independent desires instead of what society desired of her, started to be formed.

The aspects seen in the movie <Madame Freedom> as follows. Married women as cultural and economic subject show a new image of women. The movie comes, however, to the final conclusion that these liberal married women are stigmatized as immoral wives and they have to come back home. The so-called 'freedom' modified to 'madame' might be a kind of ironic expression of the view that the greater social chaos is, the freer married women will be. Furthermore, corresponding with the liberal married women in the movie, the kinds of jobs that young women who graduate from

university hold, are mainly those of simple office workers such as a typist or as a seller at an apparel shop for which no higher knowledge or skills are required. The confines of the economic activities and participation of women become visible, but the men's domains of expert professions such that of professors, politicians and businessmen are not yet accessible to women. As far as costumes are concerned, the appearance of obedience when the traditional hanbok is worn in the movie serves as the image of a housewife from above the middle class, while the object culture has a strong influence on the costume behavior of women. That is to say, even when they take up countercultural activities such as smoking, drinking and dancing, the modest figure in the hanbok as a symbol of the wise wife and good mother confirms that the costume is a symbol in which female virtue is visualized. It is an embodiment of the object culture for women through discipline and learning.

Women actualize their self-identity by expressing their attitude by looking for work and handling it actively in refined, modern Western attire in an environment that regards collective value and identity of great importance. By means of dancing and free love, women also take the initiative in radiating their desires and physical freedom which disseminate the concept of self-ownership against the moral and cultural standard required in existing society. It manifests itself in a body which follows the existing pattern and functions as a social resource, and shows itself in a body which acts subjectively in what it wants. This attitude toward the body is made concrete in clothing behavior which is expressed in dress and makeup which emit a feminine attractiveness in the dance hall. In the domestic sphere which regards collective harmony and social identity to be of greater importance than individual autonomy when compared to the West, these kinds of changes pose a big challenge to contemporary Korean society. Women of all time lie between the two extremes, between the dominant femininity on the one hand and the new, creative femininity on the other when considered in the same period. It is expressed in a type which keeps carrying out the traditional view in their outward representation or in a type which resists it (Ussher 1997). The appreciation of which is good or bad does not matter anyway, but what really counts is the understanding of the diverse types of women's images which emerge in each period, by which we can better experience the spirit of the times and related cultural patterns, including the clothing behaviors of women.

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