

PATTERNS OF INTERIOR COLOR COMPOSITION OF KOREAN TRADITIONAL HOUSES

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The purpose of this study is to identify the patterns of interior color in Korean traditional houses and to present a Korean-style color composition that can be applied to modern interiors.

The specific objectives are as follows :

1. To identify the color characteristics of each element by investigating colors of the architectural elements (wall, floor, ceiling, door, window, etc.), furniture (*jang, nong, mungap, sabang-takja*, etc.), interior accessories (*byoung-pung*¹, *boryo*², *bangsuk*.³, etc). The subjects of this study are limited to the *an-bang* and *sarang-bang* interiors from the late Chosun dynasty.
2. To identify the color combination characteristics of each element.
3. To identify the interior image characteristics of Korean traditional houses by analyzing the dominant color, subordinate color, and accent color of each element.
4. To identify the Hue & Tone characteristics of Korean traditional house interiors.
5. To present the Korean-style color composition of men's and women's rooms that can be applied to modern interiors.

The COS-color samples⁴ were used for field study. To investigate the interior colors, field study was done on sunny days from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Ten traditional houses for

¹ Korean style screen.

² Korean style mattress.

³ Korean style cushion.

⁴ COS-color system is the product of the Research Institute of Clothing and Textile Sciences at Yonsei University, which was assigned the work by the Korea Fashion Color Association. The system was developed based on the Munsell color system.

upper classes (20 rooms) were selected, from the late period of the *Chosun* Dynasty, located in the *Seoul* and *Kyong-ki* area. All the houses were restored or moved from their original sites. One of them is *Unhyun* Palace, some are in the village of Traditional Houses in the *Namsan* Valley, and others are in the *Yong-in* Folks Village. The color characteristics were recorded by the Munsell color system

The procedures were:

- 1) Ten upper-class Korean traditional houses were selected, which were built in the late period of the *Chosun* Dynasty and are located in the *Seoul* and *Kyong-ki* area. Each house was under a supervisor's control, so the maintenance condition was good.
- 2) The interior colors of the Traditional Houses were recorded by categories of architectural elements, furniture, and accessories, and each room was recorded on videotape.
- 3) The results of the investigation were classified to the dominant color, subordinate color and accent color, which were then analyzed by hue, value, and saturation.
- 4) The interior composition format was made from the pictures, based on the color combination images of each space.

The results are:

- 1) The results of the single color analysis

In the architectural elements, most of the colors were from the YR and Y groups and were located above the middle value, below the low saturation. In furniture, most of the colors were from the YR, R and Y groups; the R group was especially more frequently used in the *an-bang* than *sarang-bang*. Low-value colors were dominant except for the accent colors of *an-bang*, and subdued colors with low saturation were also dominant. However some of the furniture in the *an-bang* were decorated with brilliant colors with high saturation. The colors of interior accessories were mainly from the YR and Y groups, and from the PB and R groups. RP, G and various colors were also found. The value range is evenly distributed with the strength of high-value colors, but the saturation level is relatively low. With the *an-bang*, high saturation colors were found

in many elements, showing that much stronger colors were used in *anan-bang* than *sarang-bang*.

2) Color composition characteristic

Architectural elements show natural and light color combinations with white wall, white ceiling, and floor colors from the RY group. Most furniture is monochromatic, but in the case of multi-colored furniture, colors from the same group were used with little variation of value and saturation. For the *an-bang* furniture, bright metal ornaments were used on the wood surface, making a contrast; color combinations for interior accessories were done two ways: a combination of brilliant and strong colors, and a combination of sophisticated and subdued colors. The former is mainly used in *an-bang*, and the later in *sarang-bang*.

3) Interior color characteristics

The picture image analysis revealed that the colors of wall and ceiling can be considered as dominant colors, the colors of floor and *byoung-pung* as subordinate colors, and the colors of furniture and interior accessories as accent colors. Therefore the interior colors in Korean traditional houses were varied by the interior accessory colors, based on white colors and the light-value low-saturation YR group.

4) Overall color tone of traditional interior spaces

Colors of architectural elements were from the YR, Y, R groups with Dull and Light tones (Pale, Very Pale, Light Gray, Light, Gray). Colors of furniture were from the YR, R, Y groups with Dark and Dull tone (Dull, Deep, Dark, Dark Gray). However, interior accessories show a wide range of colors from the YR, R, Y, PB, RP, G groups, with various tones varying from Vivid to Dark tones, while *sarang-bang* accessories tend toward Light, Gray, and Dull tones. Therefore, the color tones of the *an-bang* and *sarang-bang* elements show clear differences.

5) Overall interior image

Therefore, in the traditional Korean house, white and light colors from the YR group with low saturation make up the background of the interior space, which the colors of the accessories add variations to the overall atmosphere.