

## A Study on the Functionalism Expressed in the Art to Wear

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### Abstract

*The first purpose of this research is to investigate the functionalistic concept through the general consideration of Functionalism, and to study the art's aesthetic value of functionalistic expressionist artists implication and form in terms of architecture and product design. Secondly, it analyzes the implication and shape of Functionalism towards 'Art to Wear', which can be explained as a mixture of fashion and art.*

*The results are as follows;*

*First, functionalistic 'Art to Wear' of Mechanical Analogy appears to have futuristic inclination stressing the significance of geometric shapes and machine aesthetics. It uses new materials, and reduce an unnecessary work of art to convey more accurate, concrete and effective character of form. Secondly, functionalistic 'Art to Wear' of Organic Analogy regards natural elements as important to pursue the warm human nature. Also, it appears to be free and comforting forms of Functionalism through an organic silhouette. Thirdly, functionalistic 'Art to Wear' of Moral Analogy excludes excessive ornaments, and includes the implication of appropriate and purposive purity which serves for practical function.*

*Key words : Art to Wear, Analogy, Functionalism.*

### I. Introduction

Fashion Design, as an art form was advocated in England by William Morris in 1870 at the time when the Art & Craft Movement was initiated. During that period, what started off as a way of showing discontent towards anti-aesthetic movements later on became the foundation of the Bauhaus Movement. Fashion was not only a part of industrial design featuring practicalism and Functionalism, but it also expressed and emphasized the designer's inner sense of beauty.

Entering the Bauhaus era, modern design supported the concept of genuine Functionalism,

collaborating technology with art and textile art began to take on functional pure form. Fashion design was taught in the stage workshops of Bauhaus, Germany in 1922, moreover, Italian futurists and Russian Constructivists experimented to find new ways to capture art experiences by transforming the image of the human body into a more attractive figure by using clothes as a method. However in 1933, after Bauhaus closed down, many artists and designers who were educated from Bauhaus spread around the world and made ground for modern textile art. The consciousness release and liberal styles of textile artists paved the way in developing plain observation, practical and decorative industrial textile crafts. Third dimensional sculp-

tural and cubical expressions became a related aspect in dynamic avant-garde art as a functional form of art.

Art to Wear is a new style of expression derived from textile art. Art to Wear is based upon the idea that the human body is an art medium that enhances the liveliness of outfits and effectively bringing out the shape of clothing. Generally, the term is used to emphasize the artistic aspect of clothing. Art to Wear became a new icon that combined the concept of art and the function of clothes, being a unified genre of textiles, costumes, paintings and sculptures. In other words, Art to Wear is a form of art made for the human body. As Art to Wear can be referred to as clothes people wear, it can also be known as formative piece of art that enlightens the image of the human body. What this means is that Art to Wear is an art which is conscious of practicality function, allowing clothes to escape from its simple old image as clothing to newly interpreting it as an art form.

The purpose of this study is to find out more specifically about the artistic value and concept by theoretically studying functionalism. These studies allows us to analyze the inner meaning and formation of functionalism in Art to Wear as it is a mixture of fashion and art. A method of the study is mainly based on inquiry and analysis of documentary materials through architecture and arts criticism books, and it contains the historical background of the theoretical study. For documentary study, various kinds of literatures, art-related journals, fashion magazine, Art to Wear works, and internet materials are used for an aesthetic analysis of concrete works of major fashion designers and artists that appeared during the time of modernism in twen-

tieth century. Functionalism referred to here, has been compared and examined with the functionalism found in architecture and product design.

## II. Theoretical Background

### 1. Definition of Functionalism

Functional would be the basis in finding the aesthetic foundation of design. The functional of design does not only fulfill the main purpose of serving the basic needs of life, but it also is the most important foundation in dealing with aesthetic aspects. Herbert Read once said, 'people should not have to worry about the aesthetical value of a product if it is made out of a the right design and material fulfilling it's function purpose that makes it a work of art'<sup>1</sup>. These words insinuate how functional is the most important element in aesthetic source of design.

The word Functionalism was first originated in 1896 by an American architect named Louis Sullivan in a statement, 'Form follows Function', which emphasizes how the object of design can physically carry out a realistic purpose and distinctively show how adequately it carries out its purpose<sup>2</sup>. In other words, utility and fitness for purpose is an element of traditional meaning of constructional Functionalism. Like so, although the concept of Functionalism came from architecture; this word has been used ever since the ancient times to the modern era as a comprehensive concept in many different fields of design. Like Marcus Vitruvius Pollio once stated, this can be related to commodity, firmness, and delight which are the three elements that are essential to constructing buildings<sup>3</sup>. Functionalism rejects the substantiality concept

<sup>1</sup> R. Kinross, "Herbert Reads Art and Industry: A History", *Journal of Design History* 1 (1988), 35-50.

<sup>2</sup> R. Arnheim, "From Function to Expression", in Beardsley and Schweller ed. (1967) *Aesthetic to Inquiry*, Belmont, Cal., Dickenson Pub. Co., 207.

<sup>3</sup> Larry L. Ligo, *The Concept of Function in Twentieth-Century Architectural Criticism* (Ann Arbor, UMI Research Press, 1984), 1.

and analyzes a subject matter functionally in an inter-operational manner, influenced by Charles Robert Darwin's theory of evolution and had an impact on philosophy, psychology, economy, law, social studies, anthropology and many other fields of study.

In overall, Functionalism of design represented and expressed the principle on innovative designs of the 20th century and the context of design is defined as 'something made to be simplistic, honest, direct, fit for purpose, non-decorative, universal and liable for mass production at an adequate price.' In this sense, although Functionalism does not fit into a precise theory that ends in ism, it is a kind of movement that has become the emblem of anything modern. That is, the tendency of leaving only the essence in a design can be characterized as the Spartan Attitude of Functionalism which was wielded in various forms for the past century<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. Functionalism Theory

Platon once stated, 'Beauty can be achieved when each and every segment collaborates all of its unique features together, and we can definitely achieve the beauty if an organic object naturally or artificially fulfills its purpose'<sup>5</sup>. In addition to this, Socrates held a strong functionalistic perspective about architecture in Xenophon's 'Memorabilia of Socrates'<sup>6</sup>, which he pointed out the connections among good, beautiful and useful aspects of architecture in which beauty and practicality was placed in the same

category<sup>7</sup>. Written documents from the Middle ages gave functionalists the basis to develop their theories on. Roman architect, M. Vitruvius gave out the three elements of architecture (structure, function, beauty) which even until this day have been used as an example to explain architecture<sup>8</sup>. Bernard criticized the useless and meaningless decoration of the church by stating, 'the decorations are not only difficult to understand but they are also barriers to achieving better lives. The Church should be educational, however decorations are incomprehensible and contradict the theory that forms carry on the idea of Functionalism'<sup>9</sup>.

In L. B. Alberti's autobiography, 'De Re Aedificatoria', the author says, 'architecture is in any way the closest method man can use to reach comfort. Taking Functionalism away from an edifice could make it nice to look at, but useless in real life. Moreover, a well coordinated and precisely finished building can fulfill people's needs and bring about joy and pleasure'<sup>10</sup>. Functionalism is a mechanical metaphor which uses the motto of 'Less is more' and Louis Sullivans 'Form follows function'. In terms of applied art function is not outside of the beauty sphere, but actually the main idea of beauty and the center theme. Frankly, if the material and method is the same, their can only be one form that can be obtained should it fit its purpose well<sup>11</sup>.

In 1904, Paul Sourriau related beauty with 'Certain Perfection' in *La beauté rationnelle*. Per-

<sup>4</sup> George H. Marcus, *Functional Design On Going History*, (New York; Prestel, 1995), p.9.

<sup>5</sup> Platon, *Hippias majeur 291 c, République X 601d*.

<sup>6</sup> Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, E. C. Marchant, Vol. III, VIII (Heinemann, 1923), 10.

<sup>7</sup> C. W. Park, *A study on the Modern Functionalism of 20th Century Architecture*, Seoul National Univ, 1988, p.17.

<sup>8</sup> Marcus Vitruvius Pollio and Morris Hicky Morgan, *The Ten Books on Architecture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), Vol. 1, III, 2.

<sup>9</sup> A. W. N. Pugin, *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture*, (London; Henry G. Bohn, 1853), 52-53.

<sup>10</sup> Leon Battista Alberti and James Leoni, *The Architecture of Leon Battista Alberti* (London: Thomas Edlin, 1485), Vol. 6, I, Introduction.

fection refers to a form that apply function, without flaw, 'Conflict cannot exist between beauty and utility. Object stated that form is seen to be beautiful when it is operating it's function.' Ideas like these had a great impact during the 20th century which led on to developing industrial aesthetic and influencing architects like Bauhaus. Thereafter, the Functionalism theory touched the sectors of philosophy and aesthetic during the ancient times and the middle era. It also had an effect on Humanism (during the Renaissance era) including science and skepticism (of the Baroque Era) being recorded connotatively in written documents and thesis. Therefore, Functionalism ideology gradually developed throughout various different backgrounds.

### 3. Aesthetic Value of Functionalism

Functionalists focus on pursuing social ideologies and moralism in designing and constructing architecture regarding it's intention of design. Rationality and functional is vital to functionalists in order to express their viewpoints and work upon philosophical of function ground, valuing simplistic form and rejecting decorations<sup>12</sup>. In terms of the characteristics of form, Functionalism describes the concepts of nature or socially realistic factors in a lucid and uncomplicated manner, preferring the lineal elements or patterns that conform with the rules of simple geometrical shapes<sup>13</sup>. The roots of aesthetics Functionalism is found in the time of Ancient Greece in the studies of philosophy and aesthetics which helped this ideology to develop into a comprehensive idea in various fields. Many scholars have used metaphors and analogical inferences to state their arguments about

Functionalism. E. R de Zurko categorized the different characteristics of Functionalism into, Mechanical Analogy, Organic Analogy, and Moral Analogy<sup>14</sup>. After the 18th century, Peter Collins categorized Functionalism into segments of Biological, Gastronomic, Mechanical, and Linguistic Analogy<sup>15</sup>. Peter Collins used analogy to help explain the origin of 18th century functionalism whereas De Zurko used three analogy to historic analyze functionalism. Hence, this study took a deeper look at the internal idea and formative features of Functionalism upon the E. R de Zurko's three analogies, Mechanical Analogy, Organic Analogy and Moral Analogy.

#### 1) Mechanical Analogy

Formative perfection or beauty of Mechanical Analogy is something that naturally comes with the pursuit of mechanical efficiency, and a machine turns out to be an important source of inspiration<sup>16</sup>. That is to say, Mechanical Analogy is based on machine aesthetics, and it is deeply related to standardization of objects resulted from new types of metal goods and machine mass-productions under the influence of scientific, technical development.

The first architecture practicing machine aesthetic was *Crystal Palace*(1851) designed by Joseph Paxton and the Eiffel Tower(1887) designed by the French architect Gustave Eiffel, who both expressed anti-traditionalism in their outrageous forms by wielding new materials and shapes in their work. *Crystal Palace* was constructed in a new fabricated structure consisting of cast iron and glass blocks being the first largest Proto-Functionalism building made up of geometrical shapes and a repetition of machine-like modules(Fig. 1). *The Eiffel Tower* is a

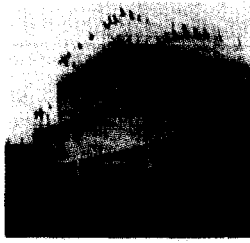
<sup>11</sup> K. Rowland, *The Development of Shape* (London, Ginn, 1964), 66.

<sup>12</sup> Ann Ferebee and G. J. Yho, *Design History* (Seoul: Chongwoo, 1983), 12.

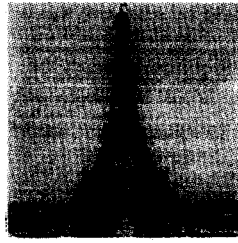
<sup>13</sup> W. Curtis, Jr., *Modern Architecture since 1900* (Oxford, Phaidon, 1987), 174.

<sup>14</sup> De Zurko, Edward Robert, *Origin of Functionalist Theory* (N. Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1957), 7-8.

<sup>15</sup> Peter Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture, 1750~1950* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 159.



〈Fig. 1〉 J. Paxton.  
(*Crystal Palace*, 1851)



〈Fig. 2〉 G. Eiffel.  
(*Eiffel Tower*, 1887)



〈Fig. 3〉 M.van der Rohe.  
(*Cantilever chair*, 1927)

1,000 feet high fabricated metal structure of modern style, which was also the focus of criticism in the past as a treacherous site. However, this new formative style architecture based on mechanical aesthetic has had strong influence on modern architecture and has been a renowned design since the Modern Era (Fig. 2). Mies van der Rohe produced a *steel pipe auxiliary chair* (1927) used like a cantilever, a metal frame new to the area of modern furniture. A simple metal chair made by new technology had become the emblem of comfortable elasticity and the modern mechanical aesthetics of Functionalism (Fig. 3). Functionalism design of Mechanical Analogy obtained standardized through technological development and mass production during the Industrial Revolution. Moreover product rationality and mechanical generalization made Functionalism design realistically possible.

## 2) Organic Analogy

Organic Analogy is based upon the beauty and perfection of nature and nature is the basis for inspiration<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, supporters of organic architecture believed that architecture is a living organism and that its structure or function should follow the same rhythm<sup>18</sup>. Louis Sullivan asserted that a building is an organism emphasizing its biological function. In 1892, he

presented series of open form, non-decorative buildings, such as 'organic architecture' which was directly influenced by the evolutionary ideology. This ideology expanded with the help of Frank Lloyd Wright who strongly cited that buildings should always develop in accordance with location and environment<sup>19</sup>.

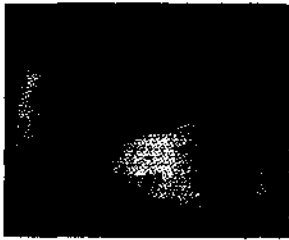
Le Corbusier, a functional designer of Organic Analogy, focused on the importance of the organic relationship between human and nature, emphasized the rational style and functional aspects of architecture. In his work, the architect aesthetically expressed the image and form of an organic substance and how it interacts with its surrounding nature. The cover of a crab was the inspiration of the organically constructed and curved form of *Ronchamp Chapel*(1957), which he chose to design unsymmetrically. He put spiritual meaning into simple streamline shaped architecture which was inspired by untouched nature and symbolically expressed the mental elements of humans and the emotional elements of nature (Fig. 4). Erich Mendelsohn's *Einstein Tower*(1921), an astronomical observatory is shaped non-orderly like that of an organism raised in wildlife atmosphere also having bumps that look as if they have been ecologically dug in around windows and doors with the tip of the thumb that shows its style of freeness. He fini-

<sup>16</sup> E. R. de Zurko, J. H. Youn and Y. S. Gee, *Origin of Functionalism Theory*, (Seoul: Sejin, 1997), 7.

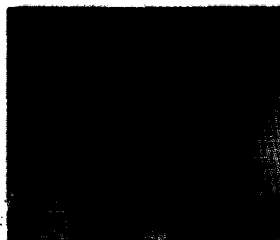
<sup>17</sup> E. R. de Zurko, *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>18</sup> A. Lurçat, *Architecture*, (Paris: Au Sana Pareil, 1929), 158.

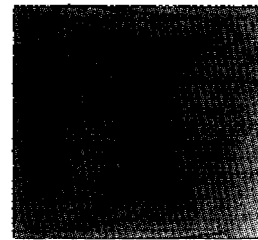
<sup>19</sup> J. Turner, *The Dictionary of Art*, Vol. 11(Grove, 1996), 840.



〈Fig. 4〉 L. Corbusier.  
(*Ronchamp Chapel*, 1957)



〈Fig. 5〉 E. Mendelsohn.  
(*Einstein Tower*, 1921)



〈Fig. 6〉 T. Wirkkala.  
(*Kantaleli Vase*, 1947)

shed the dynamically curved monument that carries out the functional ideology of organic form and the form and shape is composed in biological rhythm (Fig. 5). The leader of Finland Glass Design Mode, Tapio Wirkkala expressed the softness and elegance of pure art in his *Kantaleli Vase* (1947) taking the living organism and expressing in rhythm with nature's pure aesthetic (Fig. 6). Like so, the Functionalism designs of Organic Analogy are functional aesthetics seeing how it perceives all things as an organism with one or more set of functions, focusing on the importance of nature's characteristics and giving inhumane, cold and mechanical people warm inspiration.

### 3) Moral Analogy

Architecture in Moral Analogy reflect the importance of morality and ethics believing in contributing to heighten these factors, making sure that buildings express the real picture of the world just the way it really is<sup>20</sup>. This ideology can be interpreted in many ways. Adolf Loos an architect from Vienna thought decorations of modern architecture were the evil of society and therefore focused his work on expressing practical genuineness with perfection honesty and truthfulness as the essential key.

*Dessau's Bauhaus* (1925) established by Walter Gropius represents Moral Analogical architecture by exempting decorations and adequately keep-

ing the simplistic style of Functionalism. His architecture is divided into three district, educational district, craft district, and residential district where they all pursue the qualities of a functional building because each room is constructed unsymmetrically of one box ensuring purposiveness (Fig. 7). Also, Louis Sullivan once said, 'Form follows Function' which well describes his production of the *Scott department store* (1903~1904) in which form really did follow function. The windows in the edifice were largely designed in order to receive as much sunlight as possible and the offices were produced in the most practical way possible in order to fit the form of a working facility (Fig. 8). Kay Bojesen designed a modern style *Stain dining table set* in 1938, which was designed not to be excessively decorative and yet at the same time maintaining the features of traditionalism. In order to take advantage of the fact that the tip of a knife is usually used to cut food, Bojesen designed a knife especially short at the tip to enhance it's function (Fig. 9). In this manner, Moral Analogy designs eliminates excessive decorations and has the tendency to focus on practical functions instead. Functional designs reject excessive decoration and value the function of an object, using simple formative decoration to express the purpose and the genuine internal meaning of design.

<sup>20</sup> E. R. de Zurko, *Ibid.*, 19.



〈Fig. 7〉 W. Gropius.  
(Dessau's Bauhaus, 1925)



〈Fig. 8〉 L. Sullivan.  
(Scott Department store, 1903)



〈Fig. 9〉 K. Bojesen.  
(Stain Table set, 1938)

### III. Functionalism Expressed in Art to Wear

#### 1. Background of Functional Art to Wear

After World War I, efficiency and Functionalism was the propulsive force that constructed structure and form. The ideology of Functionalism was initiated during the Bauhaus era based on rationality, perfectly unifying all ideologies and promoting rationality. In the 20th century, a new style of abstract art was introduced which differed from realism and supported the study of pure forms. It disclosed the structure of the substance itself, geometrically correcting and dividing pictures, being the foundation of Russian Structuralism. The materials and structures of machineries were chosen not from artistic perspectives but from scientific formulas and calculations, transforming rational and functional aspects into pure forms. Kasimir Malevich, Piet Mondrian, Van Doesburg, Wassily Kándinsky and Moholy Nagy, pioneers of abstract art were invited as professors at Bauhaus and economically developed universal and functional ideas and established functional formative aesthetic by eliminating decorations and expressing the essence of forms.

In the 1920s, Bauhaus was the center of mechanism-based Functionalism entering a fashion era with functional motives. With the influence of Bauhaus, fashion was simplistic in style and women wore practical and functional clothing.

In 1917, with the development of science technology and machine industrialism a new material was created, Rayon. Latex was created during the 1930s and opened up a new era of more functional and active-style designs. At that time, Bauhaus textile workshops manufactured new materials which were consumed by designers and then popularized to the public. The 1950s was a period when designers who produced fabric and designs, worked in collaboration with formative artists. Entering the 1960s, textile arts and formative arts was grouped into the same category, and artists used textiles like object due to this change. Classic genre began to dim away in contrast to the expanding phenomenon of modern Art to Wear. Functional Art to Wear with its link to the human body, became a substantial field in textile art. This change in fashion trend allowed fashion artists to go far beyond the limits of pure arts elevating them to understand fashion as a special field that can influence real life. Due to this effect, they began to make clothes one could wear comfortably and at the same time express its beauty as an art form<sup>21)</sup>.

#### 2. Functional Art to Wear and Bauhaus

In the 20th century, art and technology joined forces with the opening of Bauhaus era when textile art began to pursue pure forms. Artists were intrigued by the new form of functional Art to Wear that used the human body as a link

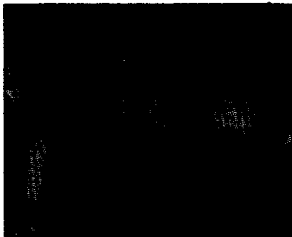
<sup>21</sup> J. S. Dale, *Style: The Nontraditional Wearables* (N.Y.: Horizen Craft, 1978), 33.

of expression and made further efforts by asserting technology and cooperation to produce new practical lines of Art to Wear. Bauhaus accepted spirit of Functionalism in organizing and experimenting with art in theory and practice wanting not only to keep the original shape, purpose and condition of objects, but to also extract new forms from these objects as well. Scientific theory was used to integrate the relationship between primary colors and disregarding decorations of geometrical shapes, generally producing functional and simplistic aesthetic forms.

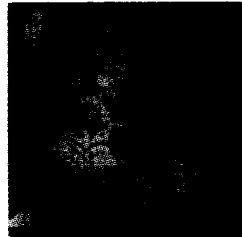
Bauhaus stage workshops art master, Oscar Schlemmer, used the artistic and technological styles of Bauhaus in his dynamically formed stage Art to Wear and promoted his work by linking abstract forms and his interests in geometrical shapes with machinery. He made Art to Wear in the 'Treppenwitz, 1926', 'Space Dance, 1925~1927', 'Dance of Gestures, 1926~1927', 'Musical Clown, 1926~1928' which were revolutionary attempts to substitute the human body for abstract shapes, such as in his first piece of work, *Triadic Ballet* (1922). Three

characters each covered up in red, yellow and blue performed by making geometrical movements within a group, not only on stage but also inside of a pre-organized three dimensional space. The human body wearing exaggerated costumes becomes a moving source of power while the human body is magnified or covered in thick clothing, rationalized as a platonic shape. The body is covered up with metal circle objects that are used like masks in an attempt to hide distortion<sup>22</sup>). Rhythmic space carefully organizes to enhance visual effects influenced by movement, color, form, nature, art, humans or machinery are unified by Art to Wear and abstract movements using an absolute stage as space for mechanical movement<sup>23</sup>) (Fig. 10).

From 1917 to 1924, Pablo Picasso and major musicians of that time designed and created costumes for ballets such as 'Le Tricorne, 1919', 'Melequle & Pulchinela, 1920', 'Quadro Flamen-co, 1921'<sup>24</sup>) and also designed the Art to Wear for Serge Diaghilev's, 'Parade' performed by the Russian Ballet Company in 1917 (Fig. 11). This ballet work that was composed by Jean Cocteau, and became the icon of Russia's modern ballet



〈Fig. 10〉 O. Schlemmer.  
(*Triadic Ballet*, 1922)



〈Fig. 11〉 P. Picasso.  
(*Parade*, 1917)



〈Fig. 12〉 S. Delaunay.  
(*Cléopâtre*, 1918)

<sup>22</sup> Judith Clark, *Addressing Century 100 Year of Art & Fashion*, (London; Hayward Gallery Publishing, 1998), 87.

<sup>23</sup> S. H. Yang, "Art & Fashion; focused on Oskar Schlemmer's Theater Costume", *Sookmyung Journal of Science for Better Living*, Vol. 8 (1993), 86.

<sup>24</sup> Harry N. Abrams, *The Picasso Museum*, (Paris/Cata by Michele Richet; tr. by Augusta Audubert, Inc., Publishers, N. Y., 1989), 154.

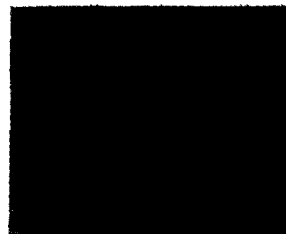
<sup>25</sup> N. Y. Choi and M. S. Kim, "A Study on the Theatre Costume Design of Picasso", *Journal of the Korean Society of Costume*, Vol. 51, No. 4(July. 2001), 131.



because of the Chinese magician's costume which was designed by Picasso and evaluated as one of his most outstanding masterpieces<sup>25</sup>. Picasso integrated the world of painting with the functional form of Art to Wear, starting a sensational trend during that time with his experimental Art to Wear designs that combined astronomical images and cubism into an abstract manner.

Sonia Delaunay designed the Art to Wear for Aga Lahovska's 'Aida' performed in the Liceo in 1917, and the costume for 'Cléopâtre' in the ballet performance directed by Diaghilev, based upon the Théophile Gautier's fiction in 1918. Sonia produced Cléopâtre's appearance as a mummy using layers of different scarves to emphasize the process of wrapping the body of Cléopâtre. In addition, concentric circles of mirror disks were used to show Cléopâtre's 'Simultaneous gown' when she took off her attire<sup>26</sup> (Fig. 12). In 1923, Sonia was in charge of designing the simple costumes of the French dancer, Lizica Codreant, in which she used the laws of simultaneous color contrasts in designing simple silhouettes and practical Art to Wear, producing fantastic rhythm that was influenced by Bauhaus's powerful pattern of geometrical shapes in formative arts.

Wassily Kandinsky, promoter of the absolute law of Functionalism, pioneer of abstract painting, avant-garde artist and art critic was invited as an art master at Bauhaus in 1922. Kandinsky established functional formative aesthetic upon the foundation of universalism, functionalism and expressed the essence of an object in a simple manner without any decoration. Kandinsky extracted the main characteristics of an object and produced a new Art to Wear by reconstructing and simplifying the overall form. He designed elegant and practical costumes



(Fig. 13) W. Kandinsky.  
(*Gegen den strich*, 1904)

focusing on simple outlines for Gabriele Münter, Paintings by Kandinsky from the Munich period were influenced by Russian folk art, Tunisian abstract geometric motifs, and, through his companion Gabriele Münter's intervention<sup>27</sup> (Fig. 13).

### 3. Functional Trend Expressed in Art to Wear of the 20th Century

Functional Art to Wear is a new dynamic art mode that combines the concept of art and the Functionalism of clothes, considering shape of the human body. Although, functional Art to Wear is a formative art, it can also be worn by people as well, considering as canvas that produces and puts in the power of life and practical form into clothing. Hauptli said, 'My sculptures that take on the form of clothes can only become a perfect piece of art once a person wears it increasing the value of its worth depending on how well the person fits into the outfit<sup>28</sup>', where the artist insinuates that although an Art to Wear, clothes have the qualities of practicality and functional. With further efforts of development by Poiret, Chanel, Patou, Vionnet and Delaunay, practical costumes became closer to being simple and functional Art to Wear. The main issue raised upon E. R. de Zurko's three functional analogies, Mechanic-

<sup>26</sup> J. M. Eim, A Study of Sonia Delaunay's works and influences on modern clothing, Chungang Univ., 2000, 33.

<sup>27</sup> Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society*, (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1990), 238.

<sup>28</sup> Linda Dyett, *Art to Wear* (American Craft, Nov. 1983), 19.

cal Analogy, Organic Analogy, and Moral Analogy. These three analogies will help to analyze the inner meanings and formative elements of functional Art to Wear.

### 1) Functional Art to Wear of Mechanical Analogy

Mechanical Analogy is based upon mechanical aesthetic and is related to anti-traditionalism in which the appearance of science, technology and new materials interrupted links to the past. Bauhaus included mechanical logic onto his designs in order to establish what is called mechanically rational designs. Going beyond the traditional concept of design, materialistic and futuristic aspects were included into this art, creating what we now know as functional formative arts. Therefore, functionalistic Art to Wear of Mechanical Analogy appears to have futuristic inclination stressing the significance of geometric shapes and machine aesthetics. It uses new materials, and reduce an unnecessary work of art to convey more accurate, concrete and effective character of shape.

Paul Poiret, as the leader of early modernism, combined art and clothing in the 20th century, experimenting new forms of modern style by expressing functional beauty with straight silhouette and avoiding extravagant decorations or the use of corsets. His designs made it possible for the body to move freely and actively with the use of the tubular silhouette and also used simple geometrical lines in his kimono style

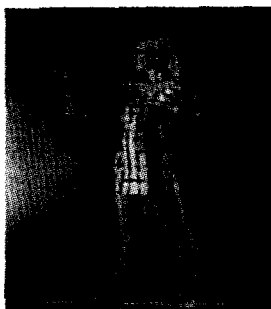
designs promoting the rational aspects of mechanical aesthetic (Fig. 14). He disregarded the used of decorations in his designs and made lineal silhouettes emphasizing functional purposes giving women the opportunity to become more free in activities eventually giving his style the rational image of being a mechanical aesthetic.

Paco Rabanne challenged stereotypes by using unique materials and opened his own world of styles wielding movement, light and sounds as materials for his designs. He used plastic, optical fiber, aluminum, and neon as materials and made visual effects such as shininess when reflected by light or when making machine-like movements. The new structural form of his fourth dimensional designs are rhythmically and dynamically shaped in futuristic forms and machine aesthetic express Rabanne's sense for high technology. (Fig. 15) shows the mechanical mechanism of functionalism. The exquisite decorations and elegant shape made of metal shows mechanical dynamics of functionalism. Whereas geometric lines and structurally simple shapes expressed futuristic trend to it.

Thierry Mugler, who used the characteristics of machine's predictable functions as his inspiration, added mechanical Functionalism with simple geometrical shapes, using primary colors and simple machine form as it's universal formative language and avoided the use of complicative structural methods to in his designs. The reflection of light by new high-tech fabrics and



〈Fig. 14〉 P. Poiret.  
(*Brown Stripe*, 1920)



〈Fig. 15〉 P. Rabanne.  
(*Aluminum dress*, 1969)



〈Fig. 16〉 T. Mugler.  
(*Motorcycle dress*, 1992)

brightness expresses the movement, dynamics, rhythm and the energy of machines act as a visual effect, unified with the movements and dynamics of the human body and clothes to signify speed and a sense of direction. Mugler combined the movements of light with human's activity in order to express futuristic ideas upon the basis of machine aesthetic (Fig. 16).

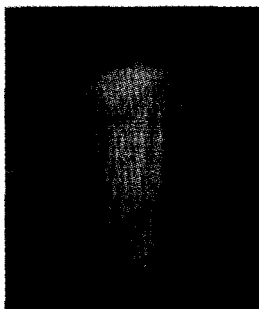
## 2) Functional Art to Wear of Organic Analogy

Organic Analogy is based on the beauty of nature, perfection and considers a work of art as a living organism noting that the structure and function within it must follow the same rhythm. That is to say, nature did not merely become an inspiration for its outer shape but because of its principle. Organic Analogy is consisted of colors or natural materials that coincides with nature. Consequently, functionalistic Art to Wear of Organic Analogy regards natural elements as important to pursue the warm human nature. Also, it appears to be free and comforting forms of Functionalism through an organic silhouette.

Madeleine Vionnet create comfortable and natural silhouette with bias-cut, organically combining humans and nature with limited type of lines and silhouette that do not constrain human activity and body. She attempted to reconstruct the relationship between nature and culture by using unprocessed materials through body and

clothes, allowing women to go back to nature and escape from fabrication<sup>29</sup>. The bias-cut brings out the liquid style and dynamic drape of the human body through geometrical shapes (Fig. 17). Sonia Delaunay attempted to harmonize colors and material, with natural wave patterns, various abstract shapes, colors and patterns, advocating functional Art to Wear by playing rhythmical music while designing functional Art to Wear that consist of natural silhouette. The simultaneous colors reflected by the sun that appear in her work act as the essence of formative art. The colors eventually take on form and transforms body image into a dynamic screen that is used to express internal elements. Sonia's world of art combines internal language with poetry within endless rhythm and liberal colors, using natural and comfortable looking silhouettes to make her design patterns contain simultaneous contrast effects of natural elements. Simultaneous dress(1913) is one of the important works of a new style called simultaneity, in which costumes are connected by small pieces of fabric to imitate whirling colors made by Bal bullier dancers(Fig. 18).

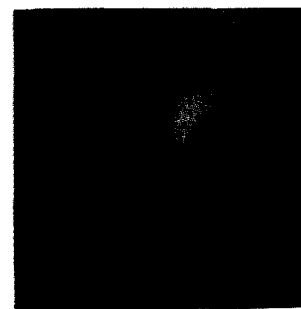
Elsa Schiaparelli made comfortable outfits that naturally show the curved outline of the human body unifying human emotions with nature harmony through the channel of position conversion. She extracted various characteristics



〈Fig. 17〉 M. Vionnet.  
(Bias-cut dress, 1920)



〈Fig. 18〉 Delaunay.  
(Simultaneous dress,  
1913)



〈Fig. 19〉 E. Schiaparelli.  
(Butterfly Button, 1937)

<sup>29</sup> C. I. Evans, *Women & Fashion* (Londen: Quartet, 1989), 121.

of outer sources and used them as inspiration for her work, and so her work is full of animals and natural symbolism. Circus collection(1938) has joyous and loud features of a festival or a fancy ball, being made up of a pink silk evening jacket with blue ponies running around on top attached with golden buttons implicating acrobats tumbling around in the air, referring to the lightness of a costume ball. She used one of nature's features, insects as decoration in her work. In 1937, she made a jacket with butterfly buttons, making the buttons look so realistic enough to make the outfit seem more natural. Like so, she used one of nature's elements, insects as decoration patterns, which made her designs, blend in with the characteristics of nature (Fig. 19).

### 3) Functional Art to Wear of Moral Analogy

In Moral Analogy, forms must appear exactly the way it is in an honestly frank manner that fits the purpose of being practical and restoring the genuine nature of human beings. In other words, Moral Analogy values rationality, pursuing non-decorative simplicity and purposiveness as it's objective ideology. Accordingly, functionalistic Art to Wear of Moral Analogy excludes excessive ornaments, and includes the implication of appropriate and purposive purity which serves for practical function. This kind of style is presented in the terse lines and design of simple colors, and sometimes it takes the

form of functionalistic minimalism of unornamented style.

Gabrielle Chanel designed the little black dress in 1926 expressing the formative beauty simple of freedom, practicality and Functional. She stated that clothes must functional and made to be comfortable to move in and have functional purposiveness qualities. She did not use decorations or distort expression, making practical clothes limited in a simplistically genuine way. In the 1960s, Mary Quant, the creator of the mini skirt, designed clothes to express limited preciseness and refused to concentrate on details, making functional Art to Wear, promoting simplicity and perfection, stressing limited decoration yet maintaining unique, focusing on the reconciliation of forms and emphasizing geometrically shaped styles of costume (Fig. 20).

André Courrèges, one of the major designers during the 1960s designed clothes that were simple carrying the formative beauty of rational architecture that was the basis of Bauhaus's architectural idea of 'Form follows Function'. His designs were simple, with the silhouette of straight lineal rectangles, intending his designs to be honest costumes with the quality of purposiveness. Educated by Balenciaga himself, Courrèges created the A-line silhouette, using straight lines and the color white to express rationality for his formative exactly designs that he learned from Balenciaga emphasizing, simpl-



〈Fig. 20〉 M. Quant.  
(Black dress, 1960's)



〈Fig. 21〉 Courrèges.  
(Black&White, 1965)



〈Fig. 22〉 Gemreich.  
(Resort wear, 1968)

icity and functionalism. Courreges's Art to Wear of minimalism style were short well-fractured and comfortable without any decorations based on being practical and functional in form (Fig. 21). Rudi Gernreich pursued minimal Art to Wear of functional designs neither exaggerating the human body used simple constructed lines in geometrical form nor using any details. His simplistic silhouette styles of work had the genuine qualities of purposiveness and practicality, establishing functional form of styles by simplifying all the decorations which contains the logical nature of humans (Fig. 22).

#### IV. Conclusion

In the early twentieth century, sloughing off traditional notion of 'Pure and Applied Arts', and taking part in an innovative movement with new art volition between art and industry were the matter of grave concern for the artists. Clothing artists with such inclination exceeded the bounds of pure art to expand the areas of practical Art to Wear which is suitable in practical life. At that time, Bauhaus made a combination of art and technique by carrying on the spirit of Functionalism. so a functionalistic style of art and design which advocates the machine aesthetics of the present day had a direct influence on human thought and sensibility to persue the changes of mankind, nature, and a view of the world.

Functionalistic Art to Wear is a new form of expression that combined the notion of art with the functional clothing, and it is three-dimensional formative arts which considers the human body as a medium of art, and it gives clothing life and shape. By positive way of interpretation, Art to Wear became a work of art as well as a design which concerns practical function, and it approved the clothing as a form of art breaking away from the restricted meaning of the conventional clothing. In conclusion, from three analogies of Functionalism that E. R. de Zurko had presented, which are Mechanical Analogy, Organic Analogy, and Moral Analogy,

it was possible to analyze the implicative and formative character of functionalistic Art to Wear, and it is as follows.

Formative perfection or beauty of Mechanical Analogy is something that naturally comes with the pursuit of mechanical efficiency, and a machine turns out to be an important source of inspiration. That is to, say, Mechanical Analogy of Functionalism is based on machine aesthetics, and it is deeply related to standardization of objects resulted from new types of metal goods and machine mass-productions under the influence of scientific, technical development. Therefore, functionalistic Art to Wear of Mechanical Analogy appears to have futuristic inclination stressing the significance of geometric form and machine aesthetics. It uses new materials, and reduce an unnecessary work of art to convey more accurate, concrete and effective character of shape.

Functionalism of Organic Analogy is based on belief towards perfection and beauty of nature which becomes the source of inspiration. These forms of Organic Analogy are composed of warm hues and natural materials that harmonize with the surroundings, and each part follows the identical rhythm. Consequently, functionalistic Art to Wear of Organic Analogy regards natural elements as important to pursue the warm human nature. Also, it appears to be free and comforting forms of Functionalism through an organic silhouette.

Functionalism of Moral Analogy demands the reflection of man's moral and ethical ideal to contribute to it, so that the purpose and the era of Moral Analogy could be a truthful expression featuring things exactly as it is. In other words, it has simple character of purposiveness which implies an appropriate and practical purpose as well as the restoration of pure human nature. Accordingly, functionalistic Art to Wear of Moral Analogy excludes excessive ornaments, and includes the implication of appropriate and purposive purity which serves for practical function. This kind of style is presented in the terse lines and design of simple colors, and some-

times it takes the form of functionalistic minimalism of unornamented style.

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