

Formative Characteristics of Contemporary Men's and Women's Suits

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Abstract

This study provides references that can be applied to future suit design by analyzing the formative characteristics of modern men's and women's suits. Research on related literature and case studies were carried out simultaneously. A criterion for analyzing formative characteristics of suits was drawn up through an examination of past research. A total of 1,410 suit photographs that appeared in the U.S. edition of Vogue Magazine from 1985 to 2008 were analyzed in order to observe the formative characteristics of men's and women's suits. Research results showed that in the 1980s suits pursued a more comfortable and natural fit based on the original properties of simplicity, modernity, and practicality; in addition, women's suits had a tendency to use excessive shoulder pads due to the power-look influence. In the early 1990s exaggerated shoulders and boxy straight silhouettes were in fashion but towards the later years suit designs gradually started to fit the body and established a skinny versus slouch conflict. Women's suits gradually began to show more curvy body lines, and men's suits became more feminine on the surface in terms of color and material. In the 2000s suits have become more feminine and sensual than the 1990s, design focuses of both men's and women's suits moved to the waistline. Skinny and long styles became the ideal silhouette and differences between formative characteristics of the two genders decreased. Fashion elements of men's and women's suits are seen to have changed with a mutual intimate connection under the influence of a similar societal environment.

Key words: Suit, Formative characteristics, Feminization trend

I. Introduction

Menswear can be represented by suits comprised of jackets, shirts, and trousers, and suits are the most conservative clothing which has maintained its basic homogeneous appearance over 200 years in the ever-changing world of fashion. However, a closer look shows that suits have also changed while reflecting social and cultural changes, and during modern industrial society where men held absolute dominant status, men's suits were very popular and formative characteristics of men's suits were vastly adapted to women's clothing. Men and women both live in the same era. Although society and culture of typical eras

affect both men and women, little has been mentioned in past researches on mutual connectivity of formative characteristics of men and women's suits, and most studies on changes of formative characteristics have been restricted to men's suits until the early 20th century. Therefore, research on formative characteristics of men's and women's suits in the late 20th century has significance. The process of materializing formative characteristics of suits through analysis of formative characteristics of modern suits may provide a point of reference for future application on designs of men's and women's suits. The objective of this study is to provide references that can be applied to future suit design by analyzing the formative characteristics of modern men's and women's suits.

Literary research on prior studies was conducted

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and case analyses were performed on front view photographs and photographs where the form and silhouette can be comprehended on men's suits and women's pant suits published in the U.S. Vogue magazine from 1985 to 2008 in order to set the criteria for examining formative characteristics design elements of modern suits. Vogue magazine is an internationally recognized fashion magazine, and U.S. Vogue was selected for its long history and popularity. A variety of opinions exist on the definition of suits, but the subject of this research was pant suits consisting of jacket, shirt, and pants, and innerwear was excluded. A criterion for analyzing formative characteristics of suits was drawn up through an examination of past researches and, and 1,410 suit photographs which appeared in U.S. Vogue Magazine from 1985 to 2008 were analyzed in order to observe the formative characteristics of men's and women's suits.

In this study case analyses were performed based on the researcher's judgment and it may cause a subjective one. So for the further research the results need verification by several experts and more detailed comparison and analyses of the gained data of this study.

II. Design Elements of Modern Suits

The entire form of clothing is decided by harmonious arrangement of clothing elements worn on human bodies.

Since suits have originated from menswear, it is not greatly affected by gender and the only difference is a skirt or pants on the bottom. General silhouette, color, material are also elements of design in suits and top, innerwear, and detailed design elements of the bottom and decorative elements combine to express the overall feeling of the look.

Prior studies for the purpose of analyzing formative characteristics of suits are as follows:

Jang (1992) categorized menswear by boxy and other silhouettes in the form of H, Y, and A, and provided an overall analysis including categories such as patterns and material. Jackets were analyzed based on waistline and lapel's position, buttons, collar, shoulder width, waist dart, width, single breast or double

breast, shoulder shape, fit, collar and lapel, slit, front hem, pocket, and opening, and pants were analyzed according to pleats, cuffs, wide or narrow legs, shape of pants, pockets, bottom hem and waist-line.

Kim (1995) divided formative characteristics of menswear into shape, color, material, and pattern. She further sub-categorized shape into outline, structure, and inner parts, and analyzed their characteristics into six types of outlines - waist emphasis, breast emphasis, long and thin, drooping shoulders, skirt, bodily exposure - three types of structure - partitioned, heavily gathered, eliminated interline - and inner parts such as neckline, collar, sleeve, and other decorations.

Kim (1999) generally analyzed women's suits according to slim or boxy, line, color, and material during her study on feminist modes of expression of modern women's suits, and analyzed the details according to stitch, belt, tuck, frill, embroidery. Jackets were analyzed according to shoulder shape, collar, length, shape, and position of lapel, waist, length, width, position of button, shape of sleeve, color, silhouette of jacket, color, button, tuck, pleat, pocket; skirts, into length, silhouette, pleat; and pants according to leg shape, waist dart, pleat, materials, and shape.

In her research on women's suits Jung (2000) expressed the general shape of silhouettes in hourglass or straight form, and shapes in terms of s-curve/hobble/tubular/long and slim, and organized material and color by periodical order/epochs/chronological order. Jacket were analyzed according to padded or non-padded shoulder shape, sleeve, waistline position, dart, opening, fit, and decorations such as epaulette or pocket as design elements of formative characteristics. The characteristics of the skirts were analyzed according to width, cutting, length, pleat, and form; and pants were analyzed according to length, width, and shape.

Kim (2006) differentiated silhouettes by H, Y, box, long and slim and analyzed the formative characteristics of jackets according to waistline, button, lapel, shoulder width, jacket length, waist width, slit, and collar width; and analyzed pants with dimensions of pleat and bottom end as grounds of judgment.

Vogue magazine described suits as natural or rounded form, or single or double breasted, and analyzed pants

by length and width.

Using prior studies as a basis, in order to analyze the design changes and characteristics of suits, this study broadly divided the analysis criteria into silhouette, color, and material; and examined the detailed design elements and decorative elements of suits according to item.

1. Design Elements of Suits

Silhouette, color, and texture are the most important design elements of suits.

1) Silhouette

Silhouettes of suits are externally shown by the combination of partial elements of shoulders, waist, hips, ankle of jacket and pants. This study, reorganizing methods of categorizing used in prior researches, and in reference to the categorical criteria by Lee (1996), examined silhouettes in suits by categorizing it into straight silhouette, which is shown by emphasis on the waist, hour-glass silhouette, and inverted triangle silhouette where the top is wide and bottom part is narrow.

In straight silhouettes, the top and bottom almost form a close-to-perpendicular vertical line, and the silhouette is called in various names such as the I-line, the tubular line, but in general can be divided into a body-tight sheath silhouette or plentiful boxy silhouette. The tight sheath silhouette, which is a type of straight silhouette and is also referred to as a fitted silhouette, has been defined to include long and slim lines. which fit the body but do not emphasize the bodily curves. The boxy silhouette gives a generally spacious fit around the whole body and is a silhouette used as a synonym for H-line silhouette.

The hourglass silhouette showed S-curve silhouettes in early 20th century women's tailored suits, but towards the latter half of the 20th century, men's suits

have been gradually showing feminine styles emphasizing waistlines, often referred to as X-silhouette, which have now become one of representative suit silhouettes today.

While the hourglass silhouette is comparatively feminine, the silhouette that mostly originated from menswear is the inverted triangular silhouette. The inverted triangular silhouette which emphasizes the shoulder and fits just around the breast and waist, with pants narrowing down, has a general form similar to the alphabet Y and thus is called the Y-silhouette which is within the definition of inverted triangular silhouette (Table 1).

2) Color

Color is a design element that distinctly differs between men and women, which is also clearly shown in the difference in color of men's and women's suits. In general the color of traditional men's suits was strictly restricted to simple and less glamorous achromatic colors avoiding bright, flamboyant, light colors and decorative elements on grounds of seeking rationality, function, and simplicity.

3) Texture

The texture of the surface of clothing grants the aesthetic effect to clothing. Texture is defined as surface characteristics of materials associated with a feeling which reaches our sight and sensation (Kim, 1995).

Materials used initially for suits were also restricted to typical materials, just like color. Combed wool or carded wool were the major materials used and were cut into soft textiles such as flannel or gabardine and occasionally had a mild glossy feel. A variety of textures started to be expressed in the 20th century with the use of various materials such as tweed, jersey, velvet, crape.

Table 1. Silhouette of suits

Various silhouettes of dresses and ornaments	Classification of silhouette of suits		
	H, Y, A, I, S, X, F Hourglass Straight, Boxy, Slim, Long, Fitted	Straight	Fitted
Boxy			Slouchy, H-line
Hourglass		X-line, S-curve	
Inverse triangle		Y-line, pencil	

2. Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Detailed design elements are sublevel design elements that form the silhouettes of jackets and pants. It is comprised differently according to clothing item and is either formed during the sewing process like collars and cuffs, or formed during the composition process like seams, darts, slits, shoulder pads, pleats or gathers. These detailed design elements together constitute the form and shape of clothing.

Suits as defined in this research are composed of coats or jackets as upper garments and pants as lower garments and each item is the most basic general composition element of clothing.

A study of the formative characteristics of each item of jacket or pants in prior research materials shows that they generally have similar compositions but different naming methods. Thus it is necessary to reorganize them by uniform criteria.

1) Top Garment

The elements that structure the form of a jacket are the shapes of each part of the shoulders, sleeves, waist, overall fit, and length. Shoulder form is further categorized according to shoulder shape and presence of padding, and in cases of sleeves, shape and fit

of sleeves acts as a dividing criterion. Waist shapes are differed by tightness and position, fit refers to degree of spaciousness around the body part, and lastly jacket length functions as a detailed design element. Additional detailing elements are the shape, length, and size of lapel, shape of collar, fastening method of single-double breast suits and their number of buttons, presence and size of pocket and belt. The detailed design elements of jackets can be summarized as in <Table 2>.

2) Lower Garment

Pants can be categorized according to length and fit in terms of form, and presence of pleats and cuffs in terms of details. Pants are relatively restricted in changes of form in comparison to skirts and are limited in expressing diversity in trimmings or silhouettes (Table 3).

III. Changes in the Formative Characteristics of Modern Suits

1. Formative Characteristics of Suits in the 1980s

55 men's suits and 103 women's suits from the 1980s were analyzed and their quantity ratio was

Table 2. Detailed design elements of suit jackets

Detailed design elements described in previous studies	Detailed design elements used in this analysis		
Waistline, lapel, button, collar, shoulder width, waist, torso width, shoulder shape, fit, collar and lapel, slit, front hem, pocket, fastening (Jang, 1992)	Form	Shoulder	Shoulder shape
			Presence of padding
Sleeve		Shape of sleeve	
		Sleeve fit	
Waist		Presence of darts	
		Waist position	
Shoulder shape, collar, lapel, waist, length, width, button position, sleeve shape, color, jacket silhouette, color, button, tuck, pleat, pocket (Kim, 1999)	Overall fit		
	Overall length		
Shoulder shape, sleeve, waistline, fastening, fit, decorations (Jung, 2000)	Lapel and collar	Lapel shape	
		Lapel length	
		Lapel size	
Waistline, button, lapel, shoulder width, jacket length, waist breadth, slit, collar breadth (Kim, 2006)	Fastening	Single breasted	
		Double breasted	
	Number of buttons		
Presence and size of pockets			
Presence of belts			

Table 3. Detailed design elements of suit pants

Detailed design elements described in previous studies	Detailed design elements used in this analysis	
Torso width, waist darts, pleats, material, shape (Kim, 1999)	Form	Length
Length, width, shape (Jung, 2000)		Fit
Width of pleats and bottom end (Kim, 2006)	Detail	Pleat
		Cuffs

roughly 1:2. The general image key words frequented in the magazines were simple, modern, and practical which are expressions conforming to the basic image of suits, and also described as soft, easygoing, less rigid, more comfortable, loosen up, which were expressions noting a more liberal trend and a more casual and comfortable trend compared to the suits of the former half of the 20th century. In women's suits, masculine/mannish image expressions derived from the women's symbol of authority 'power look' were prominent, and rigid and broad shoulders were its characteristics and sensual expressions such as bareness and sexiness co-existed (Table 4).

1) Men's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

The silhouettes of suits were mostly H-silhouettes. They were not a totally fluffy fit but a natural fit with a little bit of waistline. Y-silhouettes where shoulders were exaggerated and the bottom of the pants were very narrow were also seen, and extremely 'big looks' were also mildly found, but X-silhouettes were rarely found.

Colors used were mostly black, gray achromatic colors, and a little of brown and beige were used. Most suits were in patternless solid fabrics but two pieces each of striped and checkered suits were found. Most suits used the same color for top and bottom but in cases of comparably lightly dressed, informal occasions, and outdoor activities, separated suits were observed.

Materials used were mostly traditional suit fabrics such as wool, flannel, gabardine, cotton, but occasionally silk was used.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Major characteristics of men's suits during this period were mostly silhouettes with good fits and a little bit of waistline, with the exception of few styles with exaggeration or spaciousness such as in the cases of 'big look' and the unisex trend. Looking into the detailed design elements of jackets, shoulders had a comparably natural shape with shoulder pads, and occasionally were pad-less showing a comfortable curvy loose silhouette. Sleeves were set-in-sleeves without puffs or gathers and had a natural fit to the arms. There was also a similar ratio of single-breasted and double breasted suits with a little bit more of single-breasted fastenings, but no difference in body form was found in between them. In comparison to the 1970s, the lapel was narrower, but double breasted suits also had lager lapels, and collars which were pointy and elevated towards the shoulders (peaked collar) and natural perpendicular collars (notched collar) both roughly accounted for half and half. Jackets were mostly lengthy and covered the hips but about three short jackets were observed. Most jackets had one pocket on each side, and they were flap pockets and lip pockets in most cases. Yet not many changes in form could be observed in conservative men's jackets.

The length of pants mostly covered the shoes and the fit became more fitted as it went downwards, but there were degree of differences for different pants. Straight pants that went down from the hips could be seen towards the end of the 1980s, and there were hardly any cuffs by then.

Table 4. Number of appearance of men's and women's suit by periods

Period	1985 - 1989	1990 - 1999	2000 - 2008
Men's Suit	55	210	402
Women's Suit	103	316	324

2) Women's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

The X-silhouette was the dominating overall silhouette, completed by exaggerated shoulders and a tight waist. Due to the 'big look' influence, loose H-silhouette or Y-silhouette which emphasized the shoulders and narrowed towards the bottom of the pants, could be found, and there waist emphasis in all silhouettes.

The color of women's suits was used as an element to show feminine aspects in an overall 'power look' trend. Roughly 50% were in achromatic colors such as black, grayish, and white, but navy and brown, and also red or purple, pastel tone color such as ivory or beige, and in rare cases, gold, could be seen.

Materials used were much more diversified compared to before; linen, wool, flannel, cotton were used and also feminine materials such as cashmere, wool crepe, silk, leather, and viscose rayon were also used and unique materials with unique textures such as jacquard and tweed were noticeable, too.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

The 1980s was when many women had become socially active and 'power suits' with thick shoulder pads symbolized women's authority and power, and the liberation of women. Shoulder pads that originated from menswear were an important fashion trend in the 1980s. Additionally, in the 1980s, along with women's power suits, pant suits became a must have item and very popular.

If you look into the detailed design elements of women's jackets, as shown in <Fig. 1>, much padding has been used to show an exaggerated shoulder which is bigger than the diagonal shoulder lines. Pointy shaped and round curved shaped sleeve caps were both observed but as it moved on towards the latter half of the decade, the rigid and pointy form decreased. In terms of opening each of single and double breasted jackets accounted for half of the jackets, and the number of buttons was more varied with up to seven buttoned jackets being observed. The method of opening saw variations through the use of buttons and other means such as hooks or waist fastening styles, belt fastening. The number of



Fig. 1. 1988 men's suit and 1986 women's suit.

buttons of single breasted jackets increased and consequently its collar and lapel became smaller and positioned more upward. Diverse designs such as collarless, lapel-less jackets or connected shawl collar could be observed. Diversified jacket length could be one of the characteristics of 1980s women's suits; roughly 5% had long jackets, and 20% had short jackets just under the waist.

About half of the pants had a natural fit and slightly narrowing bottom ends. Wide pants were seen following wide shoulders, and tightly fitted design could also be found. Approximately 10% of women's suits were confirmed to have cuffs, and bottom garments with highly unusual designs such as shorts, riding pants, harem pants also appeared.

2. Formative Characteristics of Suits in the 1990s

210 men's suits and 316 women's suits were analyzed from the 1990s, and an increased ratio of men's suit was observed. The image of suits in the 1990s can be broadly divided into two groups; one long and slim and of a sharper image and another of a big, exaggerated, loose image. The long and slim image which was described as longer, slimmer, taller, leaner, elongated became even thinner and longer, and as seen through expressions such as straight, linear, narrow, pencil, sensuality of stiletto, it appeared to be a

more linear and sharper image like an I-line rather than a boxy H-line. Contrarily, in such cases as the big, exaggerated style, it has been referred to as a comfortable, baggy and exaggerated image by words such as softer, easy, loosen up, looseness, baggy, and oversized. Therefore, the skinny style suits and slouchy style suits basic image of plain and simple suits with basic images also existed. One of the characteristics of this period is that suits which used to be masculine noticeably began to show a feminine image. It changed towards expressing feminine characteristics by increasingly becoming fitted to bodies and revealing bodily curves. As with the general trend of all clothing, suits also reflected the unisex trend.

1) Men's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

An examination of the overall silhouette of men's suit of the 1980s shows that a well fitted, slim silhouette such as H and Y-line silhouettes dominated, but waistlines were usually slim. Three piece suits with vests were popular and red vests were sometimes worn as a pop of color against achromatic colors. Also, the front line of vests became very high, and knit V-neck vests were usually used, and due to the proliferation of casual modes, separated suits further increased.

Color of men's suits in the 1990s were also achromatic in general, such as black, gray and white, but became more colorful compared to the 1980s. Navy, brownish plus primary color such as red yellow, blue and purple suits appeared and pastel tones like ivory and beige and various chromatic colors such as olive pink also appeared. The appearance of chromatic colors has close relations to the active works of black actors. In the 1990s black actors such as Wesley Snipes frequently appeared in *Vogue* magazine and usually in primary color suits. Materials used were usually solid with nearly no patterns, or possibly some stripes of checks.

The basic materials used for men's suits were similar to that of the 1980s but, glossiness was added by using silk, jacquard, velvet which were used in women's suits, and suits made from flaky and soft materials such as linen could also be found.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Men's jackets in the 1990s became more simplified. Many men who were growing out of formalities ditched the broad shoulder power suits and took up long, thin, soft and detailed tailored clothing with slanted shoulders. The media called them "new men" and described them as sensuous and warm figures. As seen in <Fig. 2>, jackets fit more naturally compared to the 1980s and shoulder pads were not excessive but although there were some exaggerated shoulders, they were not as severe as it was in the 1980s. However, slightly drooping shapes with shoulders broader than the body's shoulder line, or naturally comfortably dropping curvy shoulder shapes could be found. Sleeves were set-in sleeves which fitted the arm well and most forms were naturally connected to the bodice, and there were also sleeves which were decorated with puffs. In terms of openings, single breasted jackets were on the increase compared to double breasted jackets, and comparably a more liberal design change occurred with the number of buttons increasing, for instance. Torso width or design difference according to different fastenings did not prevail but, as the 1980s women's suit's lapel became smaller and upward positions as the number of buttons increased, also the 1990s men's suit's lapel length decreased as buttons began to climb up. Peaked collars and notched collars were both similarly preva-

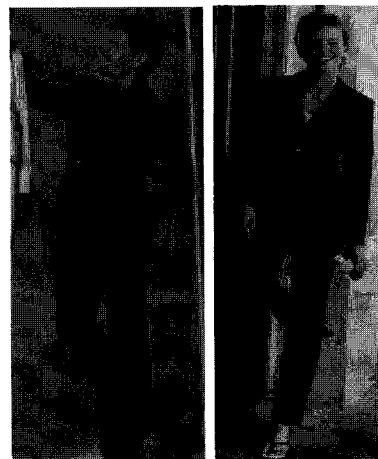


Fig. 2. 1996 men's suit and 1994 women's suit.

lent, and changes such as connecting lapel and collar, known as shawl collar, occurred in design. Jacket lengths did not vary much and mostly covered the hip area and pockets were on each side, and a breast pocket was added to the tuxedo suit.

Pants noticeably became slimmer and either fitted to the body or were baggy and narrowed down towards the bottom. Most pants had middle pleats but some casual pants were not pleated. Double tucks in front of the pants mostly vanished as pants became slimmer but still existed on baggy designs. Cuffs almost disappeared, and the normal length of pants that covered half of the shoe was maintained as in the 1980s.

2) Women's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

Most overall silhouettes were X-line but H-line and Y-line silhouettes were largely observed, too. However, 1990s X-lines were different from the 1980s. Whereas the 1980s X-line silhouettes were represented by exaggerated shoulders, wide pants and tight waists, the X-line silhouette in the 1990s was more natural with emphasis on the waist area and generally shown to be a fitted style. During the latter half of the 1990s, slim X-line and loose H-line coexisted with both skinny and slouchy suits. However, as seen through the mention in the 1997 March edition of *Vogue* magazine, "All people possess long and slim modern sense," while the 1980s suits were masculine supported by the power look, 1990s' suits were definitely showing a strong feminine trend.

Women's suits of the 1990s came in almost all the chromatic colors of Munsell's 10 color wheel. Black was the most used color and most other suits were in achromatic colors but suits appeared in all colors. The ratio deep colored suits such as navy, olive, brown and wine especially increased. Also, pastel tone colors such as ivory, beige, light pink and lavender were prominent. Among the above colors, popularity of ivory, beige and olive derived from the prevalence of naturalism and preference of environment-friendly natural materials triggered from the rise of environmental issues, reflecting the preference of natural colors of linen or cotton, or green colors associated with

nature. Also, the popularity of futurism and techno style introduced previously avoided suit colors such as gold or silver. This is regarded as the influence of the end of century, new millennium trend and popularity of techno during the latter half of the 1990s.

Materials used were linen, wool, flannel, cotton, and also materials expressing soft and feminine senses such as cashmere, wool crape, silk, leather, viscose rayon were used, while glossy materials were much more diversified by the use of satin, taffeta, shantung, and nylon.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Although the form of the jacket became comparatively more natural, shoulder exaggeration was not completely eliminated. Shoulder pads deliberately made shoulders more pointed or rounded to exaggerate, and jackets were gradually made to fit the shoulders towards the latter half of the 1990s. Sleeves were set-in sleeves with non-exaggerated fit, and bell sleeves with slightly enlarged sleeve ends started to appear. Because the skinny look of the 1990s started from emphasizing shoulders and arms, clothes with fitted arms started to appear. Opening of women's suit were generally similar. There were more single breasted jackets, and a one button design was preferred for single breasted jackets. The number of buttons observed went up to as many as seven buttons and even double breasted jackets with six buttons appeared and it could be seen that buttons were not just being used as a way of fastening jackets but as a decorative element. Various methods were being used for opening of jackets such as zip-ups, waist button fastening, and fastening by belt. As the number of buttons increased, and their positions moved upwards, collars and lapels decreased in size and larger-than-lapel collars or styles leaving out collars and lapels were observed. Diverse designs in shape of collars and lapels such as standing collar, mandarin collar, were introduced, and round style Peter Pan collar, and connected or uniquely shaped lapels were also observed. Jacket lengths varied from short jackets falling just under the waist and above the hip to knee-length long jackets, and fancy designs using braids, embroidery, stitches and spangle decorations on the

jacket surface were observed.

Pants during the early 1990s were baggy and roomy, but towards the end of the 1990s, it narrowed down the overall fit to fit the body and usually took the form of narrowing down at the bottom of the pants. Lengths were usually down to the ankles showing the shoes and heels, and shorts were observed as lengths were diversified. As slim silhouette became the majority silhouette, tucks around the waists were almost eliminated and pants without middle pleats increased. As the lengths became shorter and slimmer, cuffs naturally disappeared and wide pants or bell-bottom pants which widen at the bottom end came into fashion and pant designs diversified.

3. Formative Characteristics of Suits in the 2000s

In the 2000s, for the first time, frequency of men's suit exposure (402) outnumbered the women's suits (324) in a women's magazine. In view of clothing in general, this phenomenon can be interpreted as due to suits being less worn on the whole because it was restricted to being worn for ceremonial purposes and formal occasions, and also because women in the 2000s began to wear clothing that is more feminine than masculine pants suits such as dresses.

Summing up the image key words related to suits in the 2000s, due to the influence of minimalism, simple images like 'spare and simple' and also liberal images which were not restrained, such as 'informality, mismatched, casual, languid' the skinny look that was introduced in the latter half of the 1990s became greatly more skinnier with added 'gamine, thin, long and lean' and formed a much more skinner and long tomboyish silhouette. The ambiguity that started to appear in the 1990s continued to represent the 2000s, and a thin and long silhouette made differentiation between men and women even vaguer. Unlike the past, the tendency of an ambiguous image was mainly expressed through men's suits that strongly expressed feminine images rather than through women's suits. Compared to androgynous fashion of the 1960s when clothes were big and loose, the difference becomes clear. Unisex in the 2000s became much thin-

ner and expressed with feminine lines. Towards the end of the 2000s there was a tendency to reject simplicity, as inferred by "no austerity, no minimalism, no basic" and pursue things that are especially of the very minority and extraordinary. The Brit sense that expresses the British sentiments that can be seen as the source of modern ready-to-wear, was added on top of that to create an image that represents suits of the 2000s.

1) Men's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

Overall silhouettes were mostly H-line silhouettes, but pants gradually became more fitted and Y-line silhouettes with lower waistlines increased. Also, noticeably increasing X-line silhouettes in men's suits were typical of the 2000s and generally formed a fitted slim silhouette.

Since the development of jeans and casual wear and casualization of formal wear, suits were worn in restricted locations and thus colors used in suits returned to achromatic colors. Over 30% of suits were black and the ratio of achromatic colors was over 70%. Other colors used were navy, beige, ivory, in the order of frequency, and the feminine color pink increased.

Comfortable casual suits were seen more widely and thus separated suits gradually increased. Mostly non-patterned fabrics were used, and stripes, lattice, checkered, and geometric patterns were observed.

No big changes in the forms of men's suits of the 2000s were observed, but diversified material expression was prominent. Usage of feminine materials was already generalized and menswear manufacturing businesses focused on the development of physical properties of materials based on the development of technologies. 'Zegna's fabric' introduced by Zegna in 2002 became a considerable issue for it introduced a sleek style jacket with hardly any creasing made of superior high torsion yarn.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Jackets of the 2000s no longer showed shoulder exaggerations or changes in form. Jacket shoulders fitted to the body well and in a natural shape using only basic padding as seen in <Fig. 3>. Sleeve caps



Fig. 3. 2008 men's suit and 2001 women's suit.

of the set-in sleeves were not high or largely fitted, but displayed a natural sleeve. Openings were largely single breasted and double breasted, and only had 2×3 buttons, and fastening by zip-ups were also found. As in the case of women's wear, the increasing number of buttons in single breasted jackets decreased the size of collars and lapels and various other attempts were made such as transformation into shawl collars or mandarin collars. Uniform jacket lengths diversified into short lengths coming down to waist heights, and long lengths coming as far as down to the knees.

Tucks around the waist could hardly be found in pants, but middle pleats were present, and cuffs were included or not. Most pants, excluding tuxedo pants, were tight, and towards the latter half of 2000s, ankle length cropped pants could be seen.

2) Women's Suits

(1) Characteristics of Design Elements of Suits

The slouch and skinny conflict mostly disappeared in silhouettes, and skinny suits became dominant. Body fitted X-line silhouettes formed the majority of silhouettes, and H- and Y-line silhouettes were found occasionally.

Black and white were used the most among achromatic colors and ivory and pastel tone colors appeared often. Also, suits with a white background and overall prints were found rather than single color suits.

Almost all materials that are used in dresses and ornaments were used, and the use of materials with added texture such as tweed or cashmere. was prominent compared to the use of non-textured materials.

Suits using solid materials were dominant and stripes, checks, geometric patterns were occasionally used. Braids, embroidery and laces were also used.

(2) Characteristics of Detailed Design Elements of Suits

Natural and slim style jackets were dominant in women's suit jackets since the latter half of 1990s. Therefore, women's suits in the 2000s mostly had well fitted shoulders, and although in the early half of the 2000s pointy-end shoulder forms with shoulder pads were observed, this was simply a mechanism to contrast and emphasize the waist and no exaggerations in form were observed. Openings were mostly single breasted and double breasted jackets were hardly found. Double breasted jackets had more 2×2 as opposed to 2×3 buttons and thus the position of the first button went down in contrast to the decorative first button positioned near the breast in the prior period. Much more diverse fastening methods such as waist fastenings with buttons, zip-up or hook fastenings, belts, ropes were used, and even open style jackets without fastenings were found. Collars and lapels were no longer a necessary element and besides notch collar, peaked collar and shawl collar, jackets without collars and lapels, and ruffle collar, lapel collar and standing collar were introduced. Jackets with long lengths were found but there were many short length jackets up to around the waist, and also bolero jackets falling above the waist were observed. Towards the latter half of the 2000s, jackets lacked not only lapels but also fixed elements on the whole and various designs of form expressions were found.

During the first half of the 2000s, wide fit pants were seen but generally natural or fitted pants formed the majority, and bell-bottom pants with enlarged bottom ends could also be observed. There were no single popular lengths, various lengths were observed from lengths covering feet to knee high, or short shorts coming down to just under the crotch. Tucks were rare and middle pleats were maintained and as in men's suits, cuffs could be found occasionally.

IV. Result and Conclusion

Formative characteristics of men and women's suits

since the 1980s are summarized in <Table 5>.

Research results showed that in the 1980s suits pursued a more comfortable and natural fit based on its original properties of simplicity, modernity, and practicality, and women's suits had a tendency of using

excessive shoulder pads due to the power-look influence. In the early 1990s exaggerated shoulders and boxy straight silhouettes were in fashion but towards the later years suit designs gradually started to fit the body and established a skinny versus slouch conflict.

Table 5. Formative characteristics of men's and women's suits since the 1980s

Year	Formative Characteristics		Men's Suit	Women's Suit
1980	Silhouette, Color, Texture		H-silhouette jacket and straight-silhouette pants, mostly achromatic color, but also navy, brown used, basic material such as cotton and wool used	X-silhouette jackets and narrowing bottom-ends of pants, various use of color and material
	Form	Shoulder	Basic shoulder pad used	Broad shoulders and excessive shoulder pads used
		Sleeve	Set-in sleeves	Set-in sleeve, puff
		Waist	Slightly slim waist	Emphasis on waist
		Fit	Natural and loose fit	Loose fit
		Length	Normal length jackets, Pants length covering shoes	More short jackets Various lengths of pants such as ankle length
	Detail	Lapel and Collar	Slightly narrower lapel, Notched and peaked collars	Various forms
		Fastening	Single/Double breast co-exist	Single/Double breast co-exist
		Button	2×3	2×2, 2×3
1990	Silhouette, Color, Texture		H, Y silhouette jackets, and pants with bottom ends that grow narrower, unlimited use of color and material	Jackets with both H and X silhouettes and bottom end narrowing silhouette pants, unlimited use of color and material
	Form	Shoulder	Basic shoulder pads	Exaggerated and natural fit shoulders
		Sleeve	Set-in sleeves	Set-in sleeves, fitted sleeves
		Waist	Slightly slim waist	Fitted waist
		Fit	Natural fit	Slightly loose fit → Fitted fit
		Length	Normal length jacket and pants covering shoes	Various lengths (jacket, pants)
	Detail	Lapel and Collar	Introduction of slim, shawl collars	Various collars and lapels
		Fastening	Single breast preferred	Single breast preferred
		Button	More one button suits	Various numbers of buttons
2000	Silhouette, Color, Texture		Mainstream H-silhouette and increasing use of X-silhouettes, slim pants, unlimited use of color and material	H, X silhouette co-exist (jackets), slim pants, unlimited use of color and material
	Form	Shoulder	Basic shoulder pads	Exaggerated, naturally fitted shoulders
		Sleeve	Set-in sleeves	Set-in sleeves, fitted sleeves
		Waist	Emphasized waist	Fitted waist
		Fit	Fitted	Slightly loose fit → Fitted
		Length	Slightly shorter jackets, pants of various length	Various length (jacket, pants)
	Detail	Lapel and Collar	Various collars and lapels	Various collars and lapels
		Fastening	Single breast preferred	Single breast preferred
		Button	Various numbers of buttons	Various numbers of buttons

Women's suits gradually began to show more curvy body lines, and men's suits became more feminine on the surface in terms of color and material. In the 2000s suits have become more feminine and sensual than the 1990s, design focuses of both men's and women's suits moved on to the waistline, and skinny and long styles became the ideal silhouette and differences between formative characteristics of the two genders decreased. Fashion elements of men's and women's suits are seen to have changed with mutual intimate connection under the influence of the same societal environment.

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