

The Aesthetic Values of Transparency in Modern Fashion
- Focused on the Transparency Theory -

Young Sam Kim*, Chung-Ang University, Korea

Keywords: Transparency theory, Aesthetic values, Modern fashion

The postmodernism era has freed fashion sectors from using fiber as well as extended the area of expressing modern fashion by enabling the creation of new images through the integration of materials with diverse properties. The use of transparent material has shown its significance through common practical concepts of the observer viewing and the inside of the garment through penetration as well as through a phenomenal concept related to cognitive judgment.

This study considers not only expressive methods of transparency in modern fashion based on the transparency theory but also analysis of characteristics in the transparency. The transparency theory was applied to the modern architecture in the early 20th century, and it has been gradually developed by various architectural theorists, particularly starting with the scholar of architecture, Siegfried Giedion(1982). Architecture represents aesthetic values and the human's psyche in an era with spatial forms that carry a similar meaning to garments. In the same line, they also create an aesthetic space in order to mediate the body and the outside world. Furthermore, the theory utilized in architecture as a standard for analysis, and it is also appropriate for the study in order to speculate the qualitative aspects of artistry and expressiveness of transparency. As it comes to use in a diverse ways in modern fashion, it produces through amalgamative and creative thoughts. In other fields of modern fashion, the introduction and application of the transparency theory used has significantly proposed a new theoretical approach and broader perspective to grasp new characteristics and nuances of fashion.

The methodology and scope of study is to examine the scholars who have suggested various concepts about transparency in order to establish the framework for transparency and an analysis standard for the study. For this study, case study was conducted based on related images shown in the fashion collection in the recent 5 years.

The results of research are as follows. First, through the contemplation of transparency theory, transparency contains visible transparency which is represented physical characteristic of the material as well as phenomenal transparency which is recognized a spatial order of existence in a different dimension in terms of the structural aspect of the space.

Second, the type of first expression for visible transparency utilizes the physical properties of the material in the modern fashion for the synchronicity. It specifically utilizes inherent characteristics from transparent material. The incorporation of transparent materials such as vinyl, PVC, and acryl enables observers to directly see an undergarment or the body shape. It instantly replaces the information of the transparent material on the outside as an immaterial form. It creates simile-like cognitive effects of the interior form in a place, and it is simultaneously recognized because the physical properties of a transparent material offset external and internal boundaries. Additionally, it utilizes the properties of a translucent material. For example,

materials such as chiffons, tulle, and organza have translucent characteristics; consequently, their application to garments creates a silhouette, material or color of the undergarment that is not directly exposed but rather obscure, creating a transparency of uncertainty by removing visible and perceptual transparency. It is also a partial openness through the structural modification of the clothing material. The structural modification of the clothing material means utilizing handicraft techniques such as making a slit, cut or slash on the clothing material to give man-made alteration on the material, or utilizing material that contains a specific mesh structure to partially expose the interior shape to the outside. The formation of a partial space in the material through the use of external force plays a mediating role in creating a visual communication between the internal forms exposed through space and an external environment.

Third, the first type of phenomenal transparency is recognized as space-centered in the modern fashion. It is the expansion of space through the utilization of materials that react to light. Materials such as spangles, crystals or metallic covering either the whole or partial part of garment expand the space of the garment by creating indirect light through the reflection of external light. The expansion of space through light is a non-physical and an implied space formed through an observer's inference that recognizes the order of transparent space from a metaphorical perspective. In addition, it is the stereogram of the garment grafting on a two-dimensional plane that creates depth in space that describes a line. It also separates single elements on top of a two-dimensional garment or by printing a flat image on a three-dimensional one. From the status, it creates a depth perception of space where the observer does not view the garment as is, but views the garment from plural points that recognizes an ideological transparency in the three-dimensional concept. Furthermore, It could be produced an ambiguity of boundaries due to overlapping materials. Transparency is achieved as it gradually offsets spatial boundaries between the interior and exterior due to an ideological significance recognized in the spatial structure. Additionally, it speculates the depth of space with a sense of direction created through the continuous layering effects of the clothing material and mutual interpretation.

References

- Giedion, S. (1954). *Space time & architecture: The growth of a new tradition*, 3rd Edition, MA : Harvard University Press.
- Kepes, G.(1995). *Language of vision*, NY : Dover Publication.
- Rowe, C. (1979). *The mathematics of the ideal villa and other essays*, MA : The MIT Press.
- Vider, A. (1982). *The architectural uncanny: Essays in the modern unhomey*, MA : The MIT Press.