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Connecting Across Boundaries: The Use of Chinese Images in Late Chosŏn Court Art from Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

by

Yoonjung Seo

2014
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Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Burglind Jungmann, Chair

Connecting Across Boundaries: The Use of Chinese Images in Chosŏn Court Art from Transcultural and Interdisciplinary Perspectives examines how visual objects derived from China were represented and manipulated for royal court rites and palaces in Chosŏn Korea. This study investigates the importance of art in understanding cultural transmission and intercultural connections as well as the manifold relationship among artistic agents and objects in the ritual, political, socio-economical, and intellectual contexts of the Chosŏn dynasty. Focusing on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Chosŏn court screens, which depict themes deriving from Chinese textual and pictorial sources that were widely appreciated in Korea and Japan, this dissertation explores the perception and circulation of images, the dissemination of knowledge and social customs, the ritual use of visual objects, the deployment of art in palatial structures, and the role of artistic agents in the consumption and production of court art. It encompasses examination of the ways in which meaning is constructed, modified, and reinstated both in
textual and visual forms, and what may happen when themes from a literary text are adapted to painting as well as moving across time and cultures.

While challenging the idea of a unilateral Chinese ‘influence’ on Korean culture, which neglects the role of Korean artists, patrons, and beholders as active agents, this study aims to unveil the process of appropriation of Chinese themes and the causes that affected this process, whether political, socio-economic, intellectual, or artistic. In order to identify the dynamics between human agents, institutional systems, and objects and to analyze the cultural transmissions from China and the eclecticism reflected in Chosŏn art, I use two important theoretical concepts, “agency” and “cultural translation.”

Emphasizing the political functions of court art, I use three case studies of court paintings produced to decorate palace buildings and to commemorate court rituals. First, I examine commemorative court screens in which stories of celebrated figures from Chinese literature and lore are fused with actual Chosŏn court events. These paintings successfully satisfied the demands of agents who wanted to elevate contemporary events by superimposing well-known exemplary ancient images on current secular occasions. Second, I analyze paintings depicting two legendary banquets of Chinese mythical and historical figures, which were produced to celebrate festive court rites in the nineteenth century. By identifying the patrons, their political standing, and the purpose of the paintings, I explore the way these paintings constructed a symbolic space pertaining to state rituals and expressed the agendas of a particular political party. I further explore how these paintings expressed the social values and political agendas of their patrons in a ritualistic way by examining the interplay between visual and non-visual forms of art in court rites. Third, I use screen paintings depicting Chinese sage rulers and idealized images of Chinese antiquity to explore how Chinese rulership and ideal society was represented.
at the Chosŏn court and how the current material culture and knowledge introduced from outside were integrated in the representation of an imaginary, ancient Chinese empire.
The dissertation of Yoonjung Seo is approved.

Hui-shu Lee

John Duncan

Burglind Jungmann, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014
To my parents
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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS


Yoonjung Seo. “Delegation Paying Tribute to the Court: Images, Ideas and the Representation of Empire in the Late Chosŏn Court,” Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, San Diego, March 2013


Yoonjung Seo. “Materiality, the Artist, and the Biography of an Object: Reconsidering Nineteenth Century Chosŏn Court Painting.” College Art Association Annual Conference, Chicago, February 2014
INTRODUCTION

“If you think of culture always as a return to roots — R-O-O-T-S — you’re missing the point. I think of culture as routes — R-O-U-T-E-S — the various routes by which people travel, culture travels, culture moves, culture develops, culture changes, cultures migrate, etc.”

Stuart Hall¹

1. Issues and Objectives

This dissertation examines the transcultural relationship reflected in the circulation of visual motifs and narratives in East Asia through an interdisciplinary perspective and through the changes in the function and meaning of art that occur in conjunction with changes in socio-political circumstances. The rich examples from existing Chosŏn court screens produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries will be thoroughly explored to illustrate the processes of circulation of images and changes in perception and meaning of a certain pictorial theme. In particular, I explore the socio-political importance and ritual context of court paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910) that depict themes, which originated in Chinese historical texts and literature and widely spread to Korea and Japan. Court paintings portraying Chinese lore and myth, the historical past, cultural heroes, legendary rulers, and utopian golden ages long past serve as primary sources for my study.

Along with an examination of ‘shared meaning’ or ‘general symbolism’ of a particular subject of painting, which are assumed to be innately attributed to a subject in previous research, my study examines the ways in which meaning is constructed, modified, and reinstated in and beyond works of art, corresponding to temporal and spatial factors as well as socio-political demands, artistic conventions and ritual functions. Further, I investigate what may happen when

themes from a literary text were adapted to painting or other forms of art and moved across time and cultures. This inquiry further opens onto key cultural issues such as how Chinese antiquity has been appropriated and manipulated by posterity in East Asia for self-fashioning, the celebration of contemporary events, or the expression of societies’ discontent and aspirations. In this procedure of the transmission and circulation of images, their meanings do not remain intact; rather they are changed according to historical circumstances. Chosŏn agents, artists, and audiences become active participants in this process by constructing meaning and defining the function of art, and thus my study aims to unveil the role of Korean participants in the process of appropriating Chinese themes and the causes that affected this process, whether political, socio-economic, intellectual, or artistic.

With emphasis on the active role of Chosŏn agents, the historical specificity of a particular form of representation is another important concern of this study. It is not about the interpretation of an image merely as a generic symbol of auspiciousness, but about its specific context and meanings discovered through a historical lens, and through the questions of how art was commissioned by a certain group of patrons with common interests and how it was employed at a particular time and place. This view reveals another layer of complexity of cultural and artistic exchanges and draws our attention to historical specificity, “the way representational practices operate in concrete historical situations, in actual practice.”

In order to historicize the discourse on Chosŏn court art, I use three different types of court paintings as case studies and investigate the reasons behind their commission for and deployment at court ceremonies. This approach will demonstrate the role court art played in promoting legitimacy and rulership, in satisfying the agent’s aesthetic tastes, in constructing

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symbolic spaces pertaining to state rites, and in expressing aspirations for a peaceful society and a long and prosperous life. In addition, to elucidate the production and consumption of court art in a ritualistic context, I adopt an interdisciplinary approach to analyze the way in which the visual objects functioned as ritual paraphernalia and interacted with ceremonial dance and music in a given space to create a theatrical frame for court ritual. Combined with these non-visual forms of art, the paintings not only functioned as a tool to supplement textual records but also created an integrated experiential world, beyond what text alone could convey to audiences.

Emphasizing the cultural transmissions and intercultural relations reflected in the adaptation of foreign elements to indigenous artistic and social conventions, I discuss art in the context of materiality and its social relationship with human agents and viewers. I draw out the significance of a painting’s materiality within the socio-cultural matrix by examining the functional physicality of the format of a painting; the process of objectifying the subject and content through stylistic formulas; and the biography of a work of art. The study of the afterlife of an object benefits from recent anthropological analyses that emphasize the process of “reception” of an object throughout time, including the complexity of cultural changes that affects the said object. This encompasses a striking shift in the perception and manipulation of traditional themes in art during the early modern era, when westernization and colonialism began to challenge the Sinocentric world order sustained by the traditional Confucian episteme.

2. State of the field

The court screens discussed in this dissertation were produced to satisfy the symbolic and ritual demands of the king and the royal family in their official and private court lives. In spite of
their political and ritualistic significance, the study of them has long been conducted within a subcategory of decorative paintings focusing on the stylistic elements and symbolic meaning, or even misclassified as folk painting due to similarities in subject matter, mode of representation, and the use of a bright palette. 

Insufficient consideration and misconceptions of court art primarily derive from the fact that the works are undated and executed by anonymous court painters of relatively low social standing who displayed little stylistic innovation and tended to conform to convention. In addition, the limitations of written accounts, which were so often filled with the biased perspectives of literati, has caused a neglect of deeper research on court screens.

Although still inadequately studied, two exhibitions recently held in Korea and abroad reflect an increased interest in court art and attempt to apprehend it from a variety of perspectives. The exhibition *The Court Painters of the Chosŏn Dynasty* organized by the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art in 2011 presents a wide range of works by court painters, such as portraiture, documentary paintings, decorative paintings, and maps commissioned by the court, and landscape, bird-and-flower and figure painting for private patrons. The articles included in the exhibition catalogue offer an overview of the status quo of Korean scholarship on Chosŏn court art; these shed light on the institutional system of the production of court art and the social status and economic condition of court painters, which illuminate various factors that influenced the production and circulation of art. 

In *Grand Style*, an exhibition displayed at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, paves the way for thematic approaches to Chosŏn court art and

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3 Court paintings such as screens of the *Sun, Moon and Five Peaks*, and the *Ten Symbols of Longevity* have often been regarded as examples of folk painting, for instance by Cho Cha-yong and Yi U-hwan, *Traditional Korean Painting: A Lost Art Rediscovered* (Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1990); Yun Yŏlsu 尹烈秀, *Minhwa: Tales of Korean Folk Paintings* (Seoul: Design House Publishers, 2005).

4 *Chŏsŏn hwawŏn taejŏn* 조선화원대전 [Court painters of the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art, 2011).
highlights the propagandistic role of commemorative, documentary court painting and its role at court ceremonies and banquets. As a forerunner, *Korean Arts of the Eighteenth Century: Splendor and Simplicity* initiated by Kim Hongnam in 1993 drew attention to diverse aspects of court painting including major themes in court art, symbolic meanings of celebrated motifs, the tasks of court painters, and decorative court painting used for rituals and palace architecture.

In order to lay the groundwork for my investigation of Chosŏn court art, I introduce critical issues and questions raised by pioneering scholars who have provided a foundation for research on this topic. From the early stages of this field, strong scholarly attention has been devoted to royal portraiture and documentary paintings, genres for which textual evidence is relatively well preserved in official historical records and royal protocol of state ceremonies. Yi Sŏngmi 李成美, Cho Sŏnmi 趙善美, and Cho Insu 趙仁秀 meticulously investigate the production, function, and preservation of royal portraiture and related rituals of its enshrinement in their recent publications.

Yi Sŏngmi’s research contains extensive examination of court archival materials such as *Royal Protocol of Superintendency for Copying the King’s Portraits (Yŏngjong mosa togam 影幀模寫都監儀軌)*, *Royal Protocol of Superintendency for Painting the...*
King’s Portrait (Ŏyong tosa togam 御容圖寫都監儀軌), and Protocol of the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies (Karye togam ŭigwe (嘉禮都監儀軌). Yi’s accounts not only provide the information on the contents and structure of royal protocol as textual records but also present diverse court paintings and illustrations prepared for state rituals. 8

Pak Chŏnghye’s 朴廷蕙, research serves as a comprehensive and prominent source for a substantial body of surviving documentary paintings, with intensive information on their historical development, stylistic elements, and process of production. 9 Burglind Jungmann’s thought-provoking research points us toward multifaceted aspects of documentary paintings: hybrid functionality, relationship to woodblock print illustrations included in royal protocols, peculiarity of screen format, and aniconic representation of key figures in the tradition of Chosŏn court art. 10

Kim Hongnam and Kumja Paek Kim are leading scholars whose research sheds light on our understanding of court screens and color paintings in the late Chosŏn period. The definition of decorative court paintings, their ritualistic functions and political connotations, and the analysis of style and iconography rely on these scholars’ constant efforts to unveil the practices related to the production and consumption of court art. Kim Hongnam analyzes the


iconographical traits and ideological background of the *Sun, Moon, and Five Peaks* screen by highlighting the political situation of the early Chosŏn period. She argues that the archaic style used in court painting was a metaphor for the kingdoms of ancient sages. In addition, Kim’s case study of the *Peonies* screen reconsiders the categorization of court paintings and the distinction between folk and court art.\(^{11}\) A few inquisitive minds have questioned the fact that colorful paintings with decorative elements have collectively been called folk painting (民畵 *minhwa*) regardless of the quality, materials, or painters. In her recent article, Kumja Paik Kim points out that a large body of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century unsigned court paintings rendered in a bright color scheme are misclassified as *minhwa*.\(^{12}\)

More recently, scholars have investigated the functions of art in court rituals through in-depth discussions of specific court painting themes.\(^{13}\) Although this approach has the advantage of allowing for the cataloguing of a number of paintings depicting the same theme and for explaining stylistic developments and variations over time, these studies inevitably disengage the

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art object from the original circumstances in which it was produced and consumed. Moreover, the attempt to connect a particular motif with a single, specific meaning limits interpretation to a conventionally fixed perspective. Court art and its symbolism cannot be fully understood without contemplating its interplay with spatial and temporal circumstances. Thus, it is necessary to explore these temporal and spatial contexts in order to overcome the limitations of previous scholarship on Chosŏn court art. In addition, consideration of significant developments in the fields of court rituals, dance, and performance during the Chosŏn dynasty enable me to investigate how visual materials interacted with other types of art to convey political intentions and to create majestic views appropriate for state ceremonies.¹⁴

Further important aspects regarding court painting comprise the institutional system of the Royal Bureau of Painting (Tohwasŏ 圖畫署), the social status of court painters, and the economic dimensions of art production and commission. Studies on the governmental institution of painting by Ahn Hwi-joon 安輝濬 and Kang Kwansik 姜寬植 have contributed to reconstructing our understanding of the formation and institutional systems of the Royal Bureau of Painting and the “Painters-in-waiting to the Court” (chabi taeryŏng hwawŏn 差備待令畫員) system, as well as their rise and decline, the recruitment and evaluation of court painters, a specific themes requested by the court, and their influence on the artistic sphere in the Chosŏn dynasty.¹⁵ Along with academic interest in the institutional system, the social status and

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¹⁴ Among many publications, Yi Chaesuk’s 이재석 Chosŏn cho kungjung ūrye wa ūmak 조선조 궁중의례와 음악 [Court ritual and music of the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1998) and Yi Hŭngku 이홍구 and Son Kyŏngsun 손경순, Han’guk kungjung muyong ch’ongsŏ 한국 궁중 무용 총서 [A collection of Korean court dance] (Seoul: Pogosa, 2008) serve as a convenient and comprehensive source of information on court music and dance during the Chosŏn dynasty. Pak Chŏnghye investigates how court music and dance performances during royal banquets were represented in documentary paintings in her article, “The Court Music and Dance in the Royal Banquet Paintings of the Chosŏn Dynasty,” *Korea Journal* 37: 3 (Autumn, 1997): 123-144.

economic conditions of court painters also draw scholarly attention, as demonstrated in the research by Chang Chin-sung 張辰城 on court painter’s monetary problems and their engagement in the art market.16

3. Approaches and Methodological Background

In addition to the preceding studies on Chosŏn court art, my research considerably benefits from well-established scholarship on artistic patronage, political propaganda, the ritual use of court art, and the practice of court painters in imperial China.17 Considering that Chosŏn court culture was constructed complying with the rules of Confucian ideology deriving from China, my comparative study of court art in Korea and China expands the understanding of visual culture at the Chosŏn court and positions Korean art within the cross-cultural context of East Asia. Studies of strategies for the arrangement of art within palace complexes in Japan and China offer insights into my analysis on the relationship between art and space. The approaches applied by scholars such as Wu Hung and Karen M. Gerhart, with their analyses of paintings in


relation to the space within which they belonged, have broadened my perspective of court art settings.  

Moreover, research on material culture and materiality by scholars who are engaged in cross-disciplinary approaches in the field of East Asian art history, such as Wu Hung and Martin Powers, provides a theoretical tool to elucidate the cultural milieu and new visuality of the early modern period in Korea, particularly within the network of the social relationships between human agents and viewers that surrounded particular objects in a specific interactive setting. I address diverse topics such as format, medium, technique, artistic practice, the artist as agent, and the biography of artifacts by employing the concept of materiality. This perspective sheds light on the dynamic between external and internal components of art by providing a balanced interpretative frame to synthesize both human action and the material context behind the production and consumption of art.

Problematising the claims of ‘influence,’ ‘essential, true origin,’ and ‘center-periphery model’ in analyzing the subject matters of art transmitted from China into Korea, my research attempts to recognize the role of Korean artists, patrons, and beholders as active agents in charge of constructing the meaning and function of art. In Michael Baxandall’s critical point of view, ‘influence’ is a curse of art criticism primarily because of its wrong-headed grammatical prejudice about who is the agent and who is the patient: it seems to reverse the active/passive relation which the historical actor experiences and the inferential beholder will wish to take into

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19 According to Martin Powers’ analysis, ornamentation offers a material substrate for social relationships. By manipulating scale and material referents, ornaments can shape the way status, identity, and social roles are constructed and reinforced. Much like crafted artifacts, decorative quality of court paintings as precious material object serves as a template for a scale of values and of social order. Through control over materials, skillful craftsmanship, and the use of specific symbols, the owners of decorative court art manifest their social order and the status. For details, see Martin Powers, Pattern and Person: Ornament, Society and Self in Classical China (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).
account.” Saying that X influenced Y, we need to think of Y rather than X as the agent in order to diversify the vocabulary describing the process and cause for selection of adaptation. 20

Defying one, true meaning is by no means the rejection of all essences or identities with emphasis on polysemy and undecidability. I rather argue that the meaning is not intrinsic or historically fixed to objects but effectively and contextually changed and determined. In this sense, my study is concerned less with questions of origin or stylistic development than with questions of conditions and causality of selection and adaptation, which might foster a larger or lesser transmission of cultural items. Two important concepts, “cultural translation,” and “agency,” developed in the disciplines of cultural history and anthropology, offer insightful models for my analysis of the use of Chinese themes in late Chosôn court art.

In its fullest sense, ‘translation’ is the most appropriate term for the comprehensive and conceptually rich visual and thematic elements of the Chosôn court painters’ adaptation of Chinese subject matter, more so than terms influence, imitation, or copy. When themes or motifs of foreign origin are recast into a local idiom, their semantic units of meaning and their paradigmatic, and structural order are preserved to the extent to which the recipient’s culture apprehends. 21 As Stuart Hall aptly argues, however, there is no perfect rendering of translation from one space or one language to another due to the acceptance of a degree of cultural relativism between one culture and another and a certain lack of equivalence. 22 So one important idea about translation is that there is always something, which cannot be translated, is left out, or mistranslated, which is the result of lack of knowledge, misunderstanding, or intentional choice.

22 Stuart Hall, Representation, 61.
Aware of the “untranslatability of the other,” I explore that which gets lost or excluded in the process of translation and how this mechanism works with the preexisting system of visual culture.

Chosŏn agents might not fail to produce an accurate copy of their Chinese counterparts, but might re-invent it by relying on their distinctive formal treatment and on appeasing the needs and aspirations of audiences and patrons, who were far removed from the sphere of Chinese art. Even in the case that an ‘original’ Chinese work of art was transmitted directly to Korea, its meaning and function were not readily communicated to Chosŏn viewers, and this created more complex cross-cultural border crossings. Burglind Jungmann’s analysis on the integration of European elements into Korean painting from the late Chosŏn dynasty using the concept of “cultural translation” is equally applicable to the cases in this dissertation. As she demonstrates, the meaning, stylistic choice, knowledge, and painting techniques were carefully chosen and manipulated according to the local context.

Of seminal importance in the discussion of the process of cultural translation are the roles of agents involved in the production and interpretation of culture and of their network of relationships in the vicinity of works of art. First, I identify key figures in the introduction and dissemination of new styles and motifs and examine sources of information obtained through exchanges of people, goods, and ideas. In particular, the print culture thriving in Ming-Qing

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China will be scrutinized as a phenomenal disseminator of artistic knowledge and subject matter. Second, select art works will be analyzed as case studies to illustrate shared iconographic traditions and artistic conventions. To clarify shared features and peculiar characteristics that can uniquely be attributed to Korean works, some examples of Chinese and Japanese art will be introduced. Third, along with individual paintings, written sources will be discussed in search of contemporary attitudes towards and perceptions of “foreign elements,” in particular of “Chinese-ness.” Court archives, official histories, writings and poems composed by patrons and viewers serve as complementary sources to support the study of the objects themselves.

I employ the concept of “agency” in order to identify key figures exerting agency on the production and circulation of art and to elucidate the function of institutional systems and objects with agency. Alfred Gell’s model of the agencies of art and of art’s agency offers the most comprehensive account of the open range and complex relationship among highly differentiated and ramifying agencies of art.25 In some cases, it suffices to abduct the most proximate causal agency of the artists in relation to a work of art; it would be the most general and longest tradition in the culture of “artistic genius.” In art historical narratives, the role of the patron who commissioned a work of art has been most frequently investigated, but the emphasis on patronage tends to neglect the role of the artist’ agency in potentially destabilizing and undermining the agendas of patrons, or the role of the anticipated viewers in constructing and proliferating the meaning of the art. In other words, artists, instead of patrons, can have dominant agency over artistic raw materials, and/or work of art’s material qualities constitute the viewer’s pictorial experience and reception of the art.26 If we use Gell’s model, we might address the agency of materials putatively acting on an artist, and the agency of the depicted object acting on

a patron, artist, or viewers. In the same logic, the agency of the intended viewers and the recipient(s) of the art may exert an impact on the agency of a patron or artist. For example, the following chapters present an in-depth discussion of court art that was executed by court painters, commissioned by high officials, and offered to the king or the queen dowager, from which we can delve into the multiple agencies of patrons, artists, and viewers throughout the life trajectory of the art. The diversifying and prioritizing of agencies tracks the causal nexus within which art was actually made and used.

4. Chapter Outlines

Chapter One aims to provide background information for the more focused analysis of the following chapters by exploring the cultural and social dimensions of the production and commission of artworks at court. The focus of this chapter is on the role of diverse agents, not only human agents such as the king, queen, and royal relatives, government officials, and artists as producers and recipients, but also bureaucratic institutions involved in the commissioning and consuming of art. Key questions raised in this chapter include how the artistic agencies of court painters, royal and aristocratic patrons, and recipients were exercised, and how they competed and negotiated with each other; also how the artist’s physical engagement impacted the patterns of art production and the invention of peculiar visual idioms collectively designated as “court painting style” as representing Chinese myth, history, and an idealized past. Along with the study of institutional systems and the role of agents, the latter half of this chapter is devoted to the examination of the newly emerging artistic trend of commissioning commemorative screens, their socio-political function, and the adaptation of Chinese subject matters in late seventeenth-
century Chosŏn art, as a precursor of court screens used for state events and royal viewership in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Chapter Two is concerned with eighteenth-century Chosŏn court paintings which were commissioned to commemorate political events, and which incorporate Chinese figural motifs as their subject, such as the Orchid Pavilion Gathering and palace ladies. The two screens, *King Kyŏngjong’s (r. 1720-1724) Selection of Government Officials in 1721* 景宗辛丑親政契屛 and *King Yŏngjo’s (r.1725-1776) Royal Banquet of 1766* 英祖丙戌進宴圖屛, were produced in relation to a political affair and a royal banquet. Using them for case studies, I investigate the political significance of such commemorative court paintings, the relationship of text to image, and the role of gender in the production and consumption of court art in eighteenth-century Chosŏn society. Pointing out the ink-rubbing versions of drawings, illustrations, and texts of vernacular novels imported from China to Korea as possible sources of pictorial representation appearing in the Chosŏn court screens, I investigate the evolution, dissemination, and modification of a specific theme in terms of style, iconography, symbolic meaning, and socio-political connotation. By identifying agents and assuming anticipated viewers of the two screens, I explicate the visual strategies and methods Chosŏn elites employed to celebrate current events and their social standing and uncover the factional conflicts and power struggles reflected in the commission and dissemination of specific works of art at that time.

In Chapter Three, I explore how auspicious images depicting a banquet of Chinese mythical and historical figures are appropriated and manipulated with local visual languages for Chosŏn court art in accordance with ritual demands, and how this visual representation or vision of a desirable ‘Chinese’ society interacted with contemporary Chosŏn cultural and ritual practices. Screens of *The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond* 瑤池
宴圖 and The Banquet of Guo Ziyi 郭汾陽行樂圖 are cases in point here. Referencing previous scholarship on the stylistic development, the iconographic traditions, and the symbolism associated with auspiciousness, my research expands on the propagandistic role of the theme by emphasizing the increased significance of court ceremonies and the interrelation between ritual performances and visual art.

Finally, in Chapter Four I analyze how Chinese history, politics, and civilization were reinvented by the Chosŏn ruling class and how “Chines-ness,” that is the utopian rhetoric of a prosperous and peaceful ancient empire of China were successfully visualized. Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court 王會圖 and Han Palace 漢宮圖, paintings produced in late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are the foci of this chapter. The richness of their iconography and motifs reveals the East Asian interregional cultural exchanges with China as the center, while Western painting techniques and materials foretell the advent of a new visuality and innovative artistic practices in Chosŏn court art.

The treatment of cultural transmissions, socio-political connotations, and the ritual use of art in my study provides key theoretical concepts for formulating general propositions about the conditions under which intercultural exchanges accelerate or decelerate. This will bring new perspectives and insights to the understanding of the complexity and dynamism that occurred through the process of the spread of knowledge, belief, and social values in East Asia. My study contributes to expanding the scope of research on Korean court paintings beyond the analyses of style and iconography and leads to a more nuanced appreciation of the roles art can play in the complex network of relationships surrounding a particular work in specific, interactive settings. In addition, I expect the individual paintings discussed as case studies in each chapter to serve as specimens, which show that certain cultural products or expressions can be at once local and
transcultural. My hope is that ultimately this study paves a way to viable alternative readings of Chosŏn court art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: readings that encourage object-based, methodological and theoretical discussion to sharpen our understanding of the multifaceted issues of transculturalism reflected in Korean art and to urge the use of interdisciplinary approaches in future studies.
CHAPTER 1. Prelude to Analysis of Late Chosŏn Court Art

1. Art and Agency in the Chosŏn Court

1) Introduction

Previous studies of court painting in the Chosŏn dynasty have contributed to the reconstruction of the formation of the Royal Bureau of Painting and its institutional systems, and its rise and decline as well as the recruitment and evaluation of court painters. There are two approaches to investigating the production of court painting: institutional- and person-oriented approaches. The former elucidates the institutional system of a painting bureau within the bureaucratic hierarchy of the Chosŏn society and its historical changes through the examination of state statues and legal codes. Despite the considerable contribution, the institution-centered approach and its historical description are likely to neglect social interactions and networks, personal dimensions in the vicinity of artworks and to simplify the dynamics surrounding the production, circulation, and reception of art.

27 The scholarship on the court art in the Chosŏn dynasty is far too voluminous to cite its entirety. For noteworthy studies on this topic, see An Hwijun, “Chosŏn wangjo sidae ŭi hwawŏn”; Kim Chiyŏng 김지영, “18 segi hwawŏn ŭi hwaltong kwa hwawŏnhwa ŭi pyŏnhwa” 18 세기畫員의 활동과畫員畫의 변화 [Artistic activities of court painters and the changes in court art], Han’guk sahak 32 (1994): 1-68; Pak Chŏnghye, “Ŭigwe rŭl t’onghae pon Chosŏn sidae ŭi hwawŏn” 儀軌를 통해 본 朝鮮時代의畫員 [Court painters through the examination of ŭigwe, Protocol of State Rituals], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 9 (1995): 203-290; Chin Chunhyŏn 陳準鉉, “Sukchong tae ŭin tosa wa hwaga túl” 肅宗代 御真圖寫와御家들 [Painting the royal portrait and portrait painters in the reign of King Sukchong], Komunhwa 46 (1995): 89-119; Yi Sŏngmi et al., Chosŏn sidae ŭin kwangye togam; Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn; Pae Chongmin 배종민, “Chosŏn ch’ogi tohwa kigu wa hwawŏn” 朝鮮初期 圖畵機構와畫員 [Royal institutions of painting and court painters in the early Chosŏn period] (PhD.diss., Chonnam National University, 2005); Pak Ûnsun 朴銀順, “Hwawŏn kwa kungjung hoehwa: Chosŏn ch’ogi kungjung hoehwa ŭi yangsang kwa kinŭng” 畫員과宮中繪畵- 조선 초기궁중繪畵의양상과기능 [Aspects and functions of court painting in the early Chosŏn period], Kangiwa misulsa 26:2 (2006): 1015-1044; Yu Mina 유미나, “Mango kigwanch’ŏp” kwa 18 segi Chŏnban ŭi hwawŏn hoehwa” 萬古奇觀帖과 18 세기 전반의畫員繪畵 [Album of Wonderful Ancient Scenes and court paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty in the early 18th century], Kangiwa misulsa 28 (2007): 177-208.
The latter approach emphasizes individuals involved in the process of production, such as the king and court painters. By highlighting the roles of the king as a patron and of painters as talented originators of artwork, artistic accomplishments were ascribed to a small number of members of the elite and to artistic geniuses and interpreted within the context of personal relations and tastes, preferences, and desire of individuals. The problem lies therein, for these individuals appear isolated from the rest of society and are somehow ahistorical in character. Furthermore, this approach often stresses a unilateral relation between the king and court painters assuming that the king ordered artists to execute paintings in accordance with his intentions and exerted authority over every process of the works. By doing this, we tend to ignore “the crucial mediating factors that link art with the needs or interest of society.”\textsuperscript{28}

Considering that the creation and maintenance of court art was an exercise in power, persuasions, and negotiation among diverse personalities, and art objects functioned within this social-relational matrix, it is naïve to assert that the king’s enthusiastic attitude to and interest in art and the artists’ creativity are solely responsible for the complex patterns of production and consumption of art at court. Such an interpretive framework does not capture the shifting, negotiated, and multifaceted dimensions of the production of court art. To overcome these limitations, recent scholarship has thrown much light on the social status and economic conditions of court painters in an attempt to place artists in their social contexts, which illuminates various factors that influenced the production and circulation of art.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{28} As aptly noted by Paul Hirschfeld, the limitation of focusing on the role of the patron is that the only conclusion that can be generalized is that “between patron and artist there must be a human relationship.” If there were no more to it than that, art history would be reduced to a series of double biographies of patron and artist. Hirschfeld’s remark is cited in Martin Warnke, \textit{The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1993), 15.

\textsuperscript{29} For examples, see Yu Mina, “17 segi In, Sukchong ki üi Tohwasŏ wa hwawŏn” 17 세기 인, 숙종기의 图畵署와 화원 [The Royal Bureau of Painting and the court painters in the 17th century], \textit{Kangiwa misulsa} 34 (2010): 141-176; Chang Chinsŏng (Chang Chin-Sung), “Chosŏn hwawŏn üi kyŏngjejŏk yŏkŏn”; Sung Lim Kim, “From
Incorporating preceding studies into my analysis, I use the concept of “agency” to provide a theoretical framework that encompasses the cultural and social dimensions of the creation and use of artworks at court. This framework serves as a productive analytical apparatus to investigate the widespread pattern of the production of court art in the late Chosŏn dynasty roughly ranging from the reign of King Sukchong 鞑宗 (r. 1674-1720) to King Kojong’s rule 高宗 (r. 1863-1907), the period mainly discussed throughout my dissertation. In this chapter, I extend my focus not only to bureaucratic institutions but also to human agents, including the king, queen and royal relatives, government officials, and artists. I examine how artistic agency was exercised, how it shaped particular artistic practices, and how the network of relationships surrounding artworks affected the pattern of production and consumption of court art.  

Although my following chapters concentrate on the later half of the dynasty, for better understanding of the situation of late Chosŏn court art, I will trace the development of the administrative system of artistic institutions from the beginning of the dynasty.

2) The Concept of “Agency” in Chosŏn Court Art

To apply the conceptual framework of “agency” to Chosŏn court art, I want to define

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30 There has been extensive discussion in the social sciences, known as the “structure-agency” debate. The critical issues are related to the primacy of structure or agency in shaping human behavior and determining social phenomena and the tension between agency and structure. Social structure refers to larger and enduring features of society, which exerts control over human agents. On the other hand, agency refers to individuals’ autonomy to make their own free choice and the volitional nature of human activities. Structuralism and Marxism emphasize the dominant position of social structure that determines human actions while phenomenological sociology and ethnomethodology assert that the individual’s free constructs the meaning of society. However, as indicated by most branches of sociology, the relationship between structure and agency is complementary. Society forms the individuals who create society and structure constrains and enables agency’s activity. For various sociological discourses on structure and agency, see Piotr Sztompka ed., Agency and Structure: Reorienting Social Theory (Yverdon, Switzerland: Gordon and Breach, 1994).
certain terms related to art production. According to Alfred Gell, “an agent is defined as one who has the capacity to initiate causal events in his/her vicinity, which cannot be ascribed to the current state of the physical cosmos, but only to a special category of mental states; that is, intentions.”31 In this definition, he aptly points out three important attributes related to the concept of agency: capability, causality, and intention.

Agency is an action-centered concept that connotes the ability of a person who has power and authority to bring about action and to transform one thing into another in the way he or she wants. A series of an agent’s actions result in certain effects on art objects and recipients. Recipients, or the audience of the artwork, are deemed either “patients” or “agents.”32 Recipients as patients are impacted by the agent and the artwork reflective of the agent’s intention. In this case, recipients play a passive role in art production, but this does not necessarily mean they are a subordinate group solely influenced by the agent’s intention. Recipients also have the capability to negotiate and change the meaning of the artwork in accordance with their ideological and social stances. Recipients as agents are close to a traditional concept of patron who commands/commissions an artist to create specified works of art. In either case, an agent has causal responsibility for the existence and characteristics of artwork and exerts influence on recipients via the artwork. Hence, causality defines the relationship among agent, artwork, and recipient.

An agent has intentions and subjectivities when he or she wields an effect on art and recipient. The causal relationship between art objects, agent, and recipient are attributed to this special category of mental states. The intentions of an agent are necessarily formed within social and ideological structures because an agent is a social being placed in interactive settings and

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within network of complex relationships. The agent’s intention is represented in art through its artistic expression and form. Although there is a possibility that the agent’s intention embedded in the artworks goes unnoticed, is lost, or is misunderstood, the viewers are aware that some sort of agency is at work.

When applying the concept of agency to the production of Chosŏn court painting, various types of agents should be taken into consideration. I discuss bureaucratic institutions as social agents and persons as human agents. Institutional approaches are useful to the Chosŏn society, where the system of art production was clearly defined as part of the bureaucracy and tasks were undertaken by anonymous professional painters complying with ritual and legal regulations. Unlike individual patrons, institutions have a mediating function by accommodating the needs of various agents with differing interests. The purpose and function of such institutions change according to historical circumstances, yet in general the framework remains stable throughout the Chosŏn dynasty and determines the conduct of individuals who operate within its system.

The production of documentary paintings and royal portraits exemplifies the importance of the role the institutional system played.33 Due to their importance for the state, a group of court painters and scholar-officials well versed in art were involved in projects of producing commemorative paintings and portraiture as working-level professionals and as administrators. The Royal Bureau of Painting as a subordinate organ of the Ministry of Rites (Yejo 禮曹) operated within a complex bureaucratic system under state supervision. Once artworks were produced for ritual functions, the state statues and ritual protocols strictly controlled their production, and bureaucrats administered the process. Under these circumstances, art institutions were able to assert their own autonomy. Not only the Royal Bureau of Painting but also other

33 For recent study of king’s portrait in the Chosŏn dynasty, see Yi Sŏng-mi, “The Making of Royal Portraits,” 363-386; Ŭjin ŭigwe wa misula; Cho Insoo, “Transmitting the Sprit: Korean Portraits of the Late Chosŏn Period,” 565-575; Cho Sŏn-mi, Great Korean Portraits.
government organs that commissioned paintings functioned as primary agents. However, this institutionalized procedure of art production did not allow professional painters’ artistic liberty and thus minimized the individual touch of human participants.

In the second part of this chapter, I analyze the role of kings, queens and royal relatives, and scholar-officials as human agents of court art. Although Confucian ethics emphasized the virtue of frugality of the ruler and the function of art as a practical tool to educate people, thus discouraging the king from making private commissions in art production, the monarch still played a key role as an artistic agent. The king commanded his favorite artist to paint landscapes and bird-and-flower paintings for his own aesthetic appreciation and enjoyment and to copy famous ancient paintings owned by private collectors outside the court. He ordered didactic images relating to historical narratives in order to instruct young heirs to the throne, the queen, and consorts and to construct a public persona of him. These paintings were used for political purposes to express the king’s agenda and legitimacy. Allegorical paintings with the king’s writing on them were used as an effective vehicle for communication between the king and officials, much like a royal edict or decree.

After suffering internal political turmoil and conflict regarding the succession to the throne in early Chosŏn, members of the royal family were prohibited political involvement but they still maintained their social dominance, being financially supported by the state. The political constraints of the royal relatives turned their attention to self-cultivation through art. Valuable paintings in the royal collection were gifted to them as a favor of the king, and ancient paintings were handed down from generation to generation as family treasures. In particular, the Office of the Royal Relatives (Chongch’ınbu 宗親府), a government body formed to represent

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34 For a comprehensive study of the Confucian’s understanding of the role of art, which dominated Chosŏn society, refer to Hong Sŏnp’yo 洪善杓, Chosŏn sidae hoehwa saron 朝鮮時代繪畫史論 [Treatise on the history of painting in the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Munye Ch’ulp’ansa: 2004), 192-230.
the royal family, was an important agent of court painting. In addition, the queen dowager and the queen were influential agents throughout the dynasty. Even though their commissions of art were related to private wishes, such as health, longevity, conjugality, and prosperity of the royal household, they possessed a certain degree of autonomy under the approval and support of the king and their male royal relatives.

Scholar-officials, including retainers of the Office of the Censor-General (Saganwŏn 司諫院) and the Royal Secretariat (Sŭngjŏngwŏn 承政院), as well as high-level officials of the Six Ministries, acted as agents on several occasions. They addressed memorials to the king to request paintings. The majority of these paintings was purely functional and related to the performance of their official duties, for example, topographical paintings of strategic sites for military purpose, drawings of chariots and palace architecture, paintings of Korean scenery for foreign envoys, and portraits of merit subjects. Sometimes the king sent court painters to different locales upon the suggestion of provincial government officials. Literati officials talented in art were summoned to the court to help recruit court painters, to administer the procedure of art production, and to evaluate paintings. In this case, literati officials’ artistic agency was exercised in a less defined way, yet they wielded pivotal influence in the production of court art by initiating the commission.

Last but not least, the court painter’s role should be taken into consideration as the person who was immediately responsible for the existence and characteristics of the art work. When examining a court painter’s artistic activities, the socio-cultural context unique to the Chosŏn society, wherein an artist may function as a vehicle of the agency of others, must be borne in
mind. Contrary to the contemporary art world, in which artists can be independent and serve as creative agents with distinct and known identities, most court painters of the Chosŏn dynasty remained obscure. Court painters were not allowed to leave their names or seals to indicate their authorship on their product, and many court paintings were results of collaborative work, similar to manufactured products. This fact suggests the relatively weak position of artists in the dynamics of court painting production.

It is clear that court painters collectively contributed to creating specific artistic formulas and visual idioms that can be labeled “court painting style.” However, it is difficult to discern individualistic touches and creativity in paintings officially commissioned by the court. It is also most likely that the viewers of court art were not aware of the role of the artist. The subject of a given work of art, or the institutional or human agent behind the production of art, was thought to have had direct agency in many cases, much more effective than that of the painters. The weak role of the artist as agent resulted in a collective style of court painting devoid of any personal artistic creativity. In fact, this collective style served as a visual indication of court production.

In many cases, court painters were mainly the executive organs of principal agents such as yangban elite and royalty. Yet, some portion of agency was left to hand of the artist, taking the form of subversion but probably being rarely in practice. It is challenging to investigate how court painter’s agency operated with/against that of their superior supervisors and patrons possessing political power and high social status. The theoretical concept of “subalternity” suggested by Subaltern Studies Group including Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, might be useful to locate court painter’s agency within structure of subordination. Beyond the notion that court painters are passive and submissive takers of patron’s commissions, this approach helps to restore the absent voice of non-yangban class artisans and to show artists as active agents who live more complex and richer existence than described in historical texts dominated by yangban writers. For further study on the concept, see Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Selected Subaltern Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). I owe my sincere gratitude to Lothar von Falkenhausen to draw my attention to a large body of theoretical literature on subaltern studies.

The only exception to the rule that court painters were not allowed to sign on court-commissioned paintings, known so far, is Kim Hongdo’s 金弘道 (1745- ca.1806) Kyujanggak 奎章閣 (fig. 1-1).

Adapting Gell’s concept of “agency,” Jessica Rawson analyzes the weak role of artists in the Chinese context, particularly in the case of ritual portraiture. According to Rawson’s argument, while modern Western artists’ agency was clearly recognized by viewers, Chinese court painters who worked in the workshops regulated by the institutionalized system did not enjoy artistic autonomy. In the minds of viewers, the artist played no role as author of the art. Instead, the emperor, the subject of the portrait, exerted agency directly on the recipients of the painting. For a detailed account, see Jessica Rawson, “The Agency of, and the Agency for, the Wanli Emperor,” in Art’s Agency and Art History, ed. Robin Osborne and Jeremy Tanner (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publisher, 2007), 95-113.
In the early nineteenth century, the Royal Bureau of Painting managed by the government collapsed due to a financial crisis of the state and the growth of a reciprocal economy. These changes influenced the social status and economic conditions of the court painters, which will be discussed in detail the last part of this chapter. Many court painters actively engaged in private commissions to support themselves and produced their art to sell to anonymous customers at market. Increasing demand from emerging wealthy merchants and middle-class consumers enabled professional artists to exercise more artistic liberty than their predecessors as bureaucratic tutelage in the arts was diminished. Court painters’ artistic activities beyond the confines of the royal palace led to the spread of court culture outside the court and the fusion of court images and popular culture in the late Chosŏn dynasty.

3) **Institutions of Painting at the Chosŏn Court**

3-1) **Establishment of the Royal Bureau of Painting in the Fifteenth Century**

Predecessors of the Royal Bureau of Painting in the Chosŏn dynasty can be found the Department of Painting (*Ch’aejŏn* 彩典) of the Silla dynasty 新羅 (57 BC-668 AD) of the Three Kingdoms period 三國時代. The tradition continued to the Bureau of Painting (*Chŏnch’aesŏ* 典彩署) in the Later Silla period (668-935). The Department of Painting (*Hwaguk* 畫局) and the Academy of Painting (*Tohwawŏn* 圖畫院) were two significant government bodies responsible for the production of artifacts upon demands from the state during the Koryŏ dynasty 高麗 (918-1392). At the beginning of the Chosŏn dynasty, the painting academy *Tohwawŏn* was established
as an official organ of court painting, named after the Koryŏ painting institution.\(^{38}\) It inherited and maintained many features of the Koryŏ Tohwawŏn, which had been established following the imperial-centered painting academy of the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127).\(^ {39}\) Consequently, following Koryŏ practice, the Chosŏn Tohwawŏn existed as a royal institute closely controlled by the king and his close officials.\(^{40}\)

The director (chejo 提調) and the assistant proctor (pyŏljwa 別座) of the institution held official positions of the third and fifth rank. These posts are relatively high ranks considering the regulation of the late fifteenth century when the highest position court painters of the Royal Burea of Painting might expect to attain was the sixth rank.\(^ {41}\) The king’s direct involvement in the Tohwawŏn and the court painter’s appointment to high positions reflect the political circumstances of the beginning of the dynasty; the institutional and legal reforms and the rigid stratification based on Confucian ideology introduced as foundation for the new dynasty had not yet been completely established.\(^ {42}\) In this early period, the king and court painters enjoyed a fair amount of autonomy and agency in the bureau, whereas these were limited step by step by

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38 The appellation first appeared in the *Veritable Records of King Chŏngjong*, vol. 4, year of 1400, the 4th month, the 6th day.
39 The institutional system of the Koryŏ Tohwawŏn is discussed at length by O Yongsam, “Koryŏ-ui hwawŏn kwa hwasa: Song che wa ŭi pigyo rul chungsim ūro” 고려의畫院과畫師: 宋制와의 비교를 중심으로 [The royal institution of painting and court painters in the Koryǒ dynasty: A comparative study with the Imperial Painting Academy of Northern Song], *Misulsa hakpo* 35 (2010): 213-246.
40 Three top officials and the Chief Royal Secretary (Chisinsa 知申事), who were the most prestigious bureaucrats assisting the king in his vicinity, were appointed as the director and deputy director in four organs among many royal institutions. They are Insunbu 仁順府 and Insubu 人壽府 in charge of affairs of the crown prince, the Royal Secretariat, and Tohwasŏ. With their focus on the court, Insunbu, Insubu and Sŏngjŏngwŏn were the core organs staffed with officials close to the king and thus were placed under the strong influence the king. Considering the fact that officials closest to the king occupied directorship of Tohwasŏ, Tohwasŏ is likely to have been a royal institution directly controlled by the king, along with the aforementioned three institutions. For details, see Kang Kwansik, “Chosŏn sidae Tohwasŏ hwawŏn chedo” 조선시대 도화서 화원 제도 [The court painting system of the Chosŏn dynasty], in *Chosŏn hwawŏn taejŏn*, 261-265.
41 Kang Kwansik, “Chosŏn sidae Tohwasŏ,” 262-265. Although the limitation of promotion of court painter was codified in the *Kyongguk taejŏn* 經國大典 [National Code] compiled in 1484, exceptions were made throughout the dynasty by favor of the king.
officials mediating ritual protocols and bureaucratic procedures from the mid-fifteenth century onward.

In order to emphasize governance through Confucian ritual and the bureaucratic system the affiliation of the painting bureau was transferred from the Ministry of Works (Kongjo 工曹) to the Ministry of Rites in 1405. This reveals the Confucian idea of art as a tool for performing proper rituals and for edifying the people to comply with Confucian ideology, suggesting a departure from the old Koryŏ system. As government organizations were reconstructed based on political principles centering on the dominance of civil officials in the mid-fifteenth century, the power of the king and court painters decreased significantly. The position of deputy director (Siran pujejo 實案副提調), which had been held by high officials above the third rank, was abolished and a Minister of Rites concurrently served as the director of the bureau.

From the reign of King Sejong 世宗 (r. 1418-1450) in the early fifteenth century onward, court painters were more and more controlled by civil and military officials and regarded as mere ‘technicians’ occupying a lower status. Court painters were no longer eligible for the fifth-rank position of the bureau. Instead, literati officials occupied the position and managed the examination, evaluation, and education of court painters. The exclusion of court painters from the practical operation of the bureau led to the downgrade of court painters to an inferior status, which meant that they were excluded from the mainstream of bureaucratic advancement. This development continued into the late fifteenth century and was completed by the change of the name of the institution. Its suffix was changed from ‘wŏn 院,’ used for a fifth-ranked government organization, to ‘sŏ 暑,’ for a sixth-ranked bureau, during the reign of King

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43 Veritable Records of King T’aejong, vol. 9, year of 1405, the 3rd month, the 1st day.
44 Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 32, year of 1426, the 5th month, the 21st day.
45 Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 69, year of 1435, the 9th month, the 3rd day; Veritable Records of King Sejo, vol. 1, year of 1455, the 7th month, the 5th day.
Chŏngjong 正祖 (r. 1398-1400), and the name of the painting bureau became *Tohwasŏ*.⁴⁶ This name and marginalized status were maintained throughout the rest of the dynasty. The change was codified with the promulgation of the *National Code* in 1485. It implicates a victory of high officials in their competition for hegemony in art over the royal court as represented by the king.

The *National Code* details the structure and organization of the bureau, and the recruitment of court painters.⁴⁷ The positions of the bureau are divided into two categories: regular official posts in the capital (*kyŏngwanjik* 京官職) and miscellaneous posts (*chapchik* 雑職). The three supervisor positions of higher ranks, one director and two deputy directors, were held by *yangban*, while the lower, vocational positions were assigned to court painters who belonged to a class of secondary status, also known as *chungin* (中人 middle men), since the seventeenth century. The Minister of Rites, or at times the Minister of Works, concurrently served as the director, and literati officials from the Ministry of Rites, with few exceptions, were appointed to a sixth-rank position in order to supervise the painters. The early fifteenth-century still witnessed eminent court painters who stepped into the regular system of civil service by the king’s exceptional promotions, as seen in the case of An Kyŏn 安堅 and Ch’oe Kyŏng 崔涇.⁴⁸ However, it became almost impossible for a court painter to receive a rank higher than the sixth grade since the *National Code* of 1485 articulated the upper limit of a court painter’s rank.

Regular professional staff of the bureau consisted of twenty court painters (*hwawŏn* 畫員), fifteen student painters (*hwahak saengdo* 畫學生徒), five slaves-in-attendance and two servants, and two craftsmen for mounting. Of the twenty court painters, only five maintained

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⁴⁶ The term, *Tohwasŏ* first appears in *Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo*, vol. 4, year of 1400, the 4th month, the 6th day.
⁴⁸ An Kyŏn held the military title of Brigadier General (*hogun*) in the senior fourth rank, and Ch’oe Kyŏng who gained a position in the senior third rank.
salaried positions: one sixth-ranked principal draftsman (sŏnhwa 善畫), one seventh-ranked principal painter (sŏnhoe 善繪), one eighth-ranked draftsman (hwasa 畫史), and two ninth-ranked painters (hoesa 畫史). As the system restricted the promotion of court painters to the sixth rank, many painters who had already reached the sixth rank departed from the bureau. To avoid the loss of experienced painters, positions for retiring painters (yingsa hwawŏn 仍仕畫員) were arranged, and three salaried posts from the military division (one each from the sixth, seventh, and eighth ranks) were allocated to these artists during the reign of King Sejong. 49

Painters were recruited through examinations in five painting categories, of which the candidates chose two to be tested in. Bamboo was the top-ranked, landscape ranked second, figures and bird-and-animal paintings were listed third, and flower paintings were placed at the low end. 50 The hierarchical order of the five genres and the top priority of bamboo painting reveal that the institutional system was shaped by the aesthetics of scholar-officials in favor of Northern Song ideas of literati painting. 51 Fifteen young boys selected for apprenticeship in the bureau became qualified candidates for the painting examination after receiving training for a number of years.

In Chosŏn society where art production was part of the complex bureaucracy of the court, how did the agent operate? Although the king influenced art production to a certain degree, he was only able to access court painters through the mediation of the civil officials in the Royal Bureau of Painting. This administrative procedure involved dynamics of competition and

49 Veritable Records of King Sejong, year of 1429, the 11th month, the 23rd day; “Chapchik” of Yiŏn 史典 [Personnel code] in Kŏngguk taejŏn, vol. 1.
50 Entry in Towhasŏ, in “Kyŏnggwajanjk”; “Chapchik”, in Kŏngguk taejŏn, vol. 3. Before the promulgation of Kŏngguk taejŏn bamboo painting was a subcategory of flower painting but it emerged as the most important topic of the painting examinations.
51 Su Shi (1037-1101), in particular, was a role model for the cultured elite of the Chosŏn dynasty. For the significance of Su Shi’s theory on art in the Chosŏn dynasty, see Burglind Jungmann, “Sin Sukju’s Record on the Painting Collection of Prince Anpyeong and Early Joseon Antiquarianism,” Archives of Asian Art 61 (2011): 107-126.
negotiation between the king and bureaucrats within an institutional framework which shaped the protocol and style of court art. It is difficult to determine who exerted primary agency in this process since it varied depending on social, political, and cultural interactions between personal agencies and the system involved in art production. However, it is obvious that the Chosŏn dynasty aimed to establish the Royal Bureau of Painting as an official government organ operating within a larger bureaucratic structure, rather than an organization to provide for the king’s personal demands. Thus the modes of operation of the Royal Bureau of Painting within the administrative system are characteristic of the Chosŏn bureaucracy with Neo-Confucianism as its official state ideology in the way they emphasized the role of civil officials and diminished the autonomy of the king and the artistic flexibility of the court painters.

3-2) The Reform of the Royal Bureau of Painting in the Seventeenth Century

The Japanese invasion of 1592 (Imjin Waeran 壬辰倭亂) and Manchu attacks in 1627 and 1636 (Chŏngmyo Horan 丁卯胡亂 and Pyŏngja Horan 丙子胡亂) devastated the Korean peninsula. They resulted in political turmoil and economic deterioration. In addition, in their aftermath famines and epidemic diseases led to further impoverishment. The government-imposed austerity budget caused by the worsening deficit forced a number of court-sponsored artistic activities to be discontinued. For example, the production of kings’ portraits and New Year’s paintings (sehwa 岁畵) were abandoned until King Sukchong’s reign and painters were excluded from delegations dispatched to China in the seventeenth century.52

52 Production of New Year’s paintings ceased in the reign of King Hyŏnjong 顯宗 (r. 1659-1674) and king’s portraits were no longer created in the rule of King Sŏnjo 宣祖 (r. 1567-1608). During the reigns of Kings Hyojong 孝宗 (r. 1649-1659) and Hyŏnjong the dispatch of a court painter as envoy to China was discontinued to
issued a decree to reduce the salary of minor functionaries in 1662, which aggravated the already strained financial situation of court painters.\textsuperscript{53} Facilities of the Royal Bureau of Painting that boasted of a fair-sized building of 800-kan in Kyŏnp’yong district 堅平坊 (present-day Kwanhun-dong of Chongno-gu) in the middle of the capital were burned in the wake of the Japanese invasion. The building remained destroyed and King Sukchong bestowed the site of the bureau to his younger sister, Princess Myŏng’an (明安公主, 1667-1687), in 1676. Consequently, the bureau temporarily used vacant government buildings and a house confiscated from people executed for political reasons until an official building was constructed in the Taep’yŏng district 太平坊 (present-day Suha-dong of Chongno-gu) in the southern part of the capital in the early eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{54}

The government’s effort to restore the facility started with securing the position of teacher (kyosu 敎授) and adjunct teacher (kŏm kyosu 兼敎授) to train apprentices during King Injo’s reign 仁祖 (r. 1623-1649).\textsuperscript{55} With King Sukchong’s support, the creation of royal portraits and New Year’s paintings were recommenced and many policies were implemented to improve the working condition for court painters and to nurture young talents.\textsuperscript{56} These included offering salaried positions and promoting court painters to a higher rank. Additional wages for three court painters were created in 1689, and servants and two paid positions of sixth-ranked administrative

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\textsuperscript{53} Revised Veritable Records of King Hyŏnjong, vol. 6, year of 1662, the 1st month, the 16th day.
\textsuperscript{54} Yu Mina, “17 segi In, Sukchong gi,” 147-157.
\textsuperscript{55} The title of kyŏm kyosu first appears in Sŏngjŏnggwŏn ilgi 承政院日記 [Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat], year of 1625, the 9th month, the 18th day. According to this record, Yi Jing was appointed as a joint teacher of the Royal Bureau of Painting.
\textsuperscript{56} The number of court painters increased steadily towards the late eighteenth century. While the National Codes gives the number of court painters as 20, it increased to 30 in Taejŏn t’ongp’yŏn 大典通編 [Comprehensive National Code] in 1785. New Year’s paintings were commissioned again in 1689 in response to a petition by court painters. See Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hwawŏn ūi kyŏngjejŏk yŏkkŏn”, 297; Hong Sŏn’yo, “Hwawŏn ūi hyŏngsŏng kwa chikmu mit yŏkkal” 화원의 형성과 직무 및 역할 [The emergence, role, and activity of court painters] in Chosŏn hwawŏn taejŏn, (2011), 297.
assistant (sagwa 司果) were added in 1692 to the Royal Bureau of Painting. The position was given to painters who reached the sixth rank and thus had to depart the bureau. The establishment of salaried positions provided an incentive for experienced painters to stay at the bureau. Some painters who created royal portraits were awarded with the sixth-rank position of sagwa or even promoted to higher military positions of third- or second-grade ranking.

Only ten out of twenty court painters received regular salaries while the rest of them were given a per diem and meals only for the days they worked during King Sukchong’s reign. In the late eighteenth century eleven of thirty court painters took turns receiving a salary in every sixth months. Consequently, many skillful court painters left the bureau because of financial difficulties caused by the lack of paid positions. To solve this problem, the government added more salaried positions and established the “Painters at Military Posts” (hwasa kungwan 藝師軍官) system, which dispatched painters from the Royal Bureau of Painting to administrative and strategic points in local areas. Military official titles were given to these court painters and they

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57 In 1682, Nam Yongik 南龍翼 (1629-1692) suggested that five more paid positions should be secured for the Royal Bureau of Painting, yet his proposal did not materialize due to the lack of finances. It was not until 1689 that financial resources for three court painters were secured. In 1690 seven or eight official slaves were allocated to assist in doing chores for the bureau. For further study of supportive polices for the Royal Bureau of Painting in the reign of King Sukchong, see Yu Mina, “17 segi In, Sukchong gi,” 157-165.

58 Exceptional promotions and remuneration offered to painters of royal portraiture continued for the rest of dynasty. Paek Ŭnbae 白殷培 (1820~?) reached a junior first rank when he painted a royal portrait in 1900. Court painters who attained positions higher than third rank are listed in Pak Chŏnkhyŏng, “Ŭigwe rŭl tonghaesŏn Chosŏn sidae,” 215-217.

59 Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hwawŏn ui kyŏngjejŏk yŏkŏn,” 297; Hong Sŏnp’yo, “Hwawŏn ui hyŏngsŏng kwa chikmu,” 338-339. The salaries of court painters and their economic conditions are fully discussed in the last part of this chapter. See this chapter, 77-83.

60 This is different from the honorary military ranks given to court painters from the beginning of the dynasty as an award for special merit. The “Painters at Military Posts” system has been explored in recent studies by Yi Hunsang 이훈상 and Yi Hyŏnchu 이현주. See Yi Hyŏnchu, “Chosŏn hugi T’ongjejong hwawŏn yŏn’gu 조선 후기(朝鮮後期) 통제영(統制營) 漢員(畫員) 연구(研究), Ch’okch’ŏngnonch’ong (2007): 289-327; Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn t’il kwa kŭ chedo, kŭirigo yidul ui chibang hyŏngsanghwa” 조선 후기 지방 파견 화원들과 그 제도, 그리고 이들의 지방 형상화 [Painters dispatched to local areas, the system of the Painters at Military Posts, and their configuration of local areas in late Chosŏn dynasty], Tongbanghakchi (2008): 305-366. Since the sixteenth year of the reign of King Yŏngjo (1740), about twenty-one court painters were annually sent out to military and provincial government offices. This was stipulated in the Comprehensive National Code of 1785, and detailed regulation and enforcement acts were recorded in the Yukchŏn chorye 六典條例 [Regulations for the six boards] of
thereby received regular wages from provincial governments. The system was partially initiated in 1703, then expanded to encompass the whole country during King Yŏngjo’s rule (r. 1725-1776), and it continued until 1894, when the Royal Bureau of Painting was abolished.

3-3) The Establishment of “Painters-in-waiting to the Court” in the Eighteenth Century

Royal patronage of painting and the ruler’s direct involvement in supervising production and in training court painters reached its zenith in the reign of King Chŏngjo while he established the “Painters-in-waiting to the Court” system in 1783. Painters-in-waiting were affiliated with the Kyujanggak, which functioned as the royal library, a major political organ for academic and policy research, and the center for government publication. Corresponding with the cultural policy of King Chŏngjo, Painters-in-waiting of the Kyujanggak were involved in publication projects directed by the king, for instance, by drawing the line-grid for the text of court-sponsored books and designing illustrations for woodblock print.  

The establishment of a painting institution under direct control of the king can be understood as part of a series of reforms made by King Chŏngjo in order to transfer power from a bureaucracy, which was dominated by factional strife, to the monarch. Until the system was abolished in the late nineteenth century, a total of 103 court painters held posts as Painters-in-waiting to satisfy the demands of the king and of his closest courtiers. The ten most outstanding painters were recruited from the Royal Bureau of Painting based on the results of a special

1865.  
examination organized by the king and Kyujanggak officials. Being exempt from ordinary duties imposed on painters of the Royal Bureau, Painters-in-waiting undertook significant tasks commissioned by and related to state rituals presided by the king. They were responsible for paintings of royal processions and court ceremonies as well as illustrations of royal protocol, called ŭigwe 儀軌. Furthermore, the king’s portraits, which had been done by painters of the Superintendency for Painting the King’s Portrait (Ŏyong tosa togam 御容圖寫都監), were hence created by Painters-in-waiting.⁶²

King Chŏngjo’s attempts to reform the court painting institution led to a number of changes in its organization and its function within the larger administrative structure. While the Royal Bureau of Painting, under the control of the Ministry of Rites, was located outside of the palace grounds and thus was even physically difficult to access by the king, Painters-in-waiting were directly involved with the king and his close officials, working at a subsidiary facility of the Kyujanggak near Injŏng Hall of Ch’angdŏk Palace. Thus they were able to respond to the king’s requests immediately. While the king was not allowed to address court painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting without procedures administered by the Ministry of Rites, the king commissioned paintings at his disposal under this new system. The painters were selected and appointed by consent of the king. In addition, the king reeducated these painters through a special examination known as Nokch ’wijae (祿取才 salaried post selection), which was held every three months. The Painters-in-waiting were requested to submit their paintings on given topics, and the two painters who scored highest in the examination were rewarded with the additional salaries of one sixth-ranked sagwa and one seventh-ranked administrative associate.

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⁶² Kang Kwansik’s research is the standard reference here, both in his excellent account of the operational system and through his analysis of its impact on artistic trends in the late Chosŏn period. See Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kungiung hwawŏn, 27-136; 511-612.
(sajŏng 司正). The examinations were executed and graded by the king himself and his core officials at Kyujanggak, unlike the examination for the Royal Bureau of Painting, which was managed by the officials of the Ministry of Rites. Consequently, the implementation of the Painters-in-waiting system marks a watershed in the production of court painting. It suggests that the central operating body that held hegemony over art production changed from bureaucrats of the Ministry of Rites to the king and his close officials.

3-4) Government Organs as Agents of Court Art

In addition to the Royal Bureau of Painting, which was directly involved with the production of art, there were a number of government bodies that exerted agency on court art, such as temporary offices in charge of the preparation of court events and rites known as togam (都監 Superintendency of State Rituals and Events), central and provincial government offices, and military outposts. Although the production of art was not a major concern of these government agencies, their tasks required visual material and they thus acted as agents by commissioning and using paintings, charts, sketches, and maps.

It was customary to establish a togam at court under royal auspices prior to the commencement of a state-sponsored construction project or the implementation of major court rituals and ceremonies. Occasions for togam included the following: the construction of palaces and royal tombs; the compilation of Veritable Records of the Chosŏn dynasty (Chosŏn wangjo sillok 朝鮮王朝實錄) and national codes; the production of king’s portraits; court ceremonies for sericulture and agriculture; royal weddings; investitures; funerals; awarding posthumous titles for the king and queen; royal banquets; and the granting of honorary titles for loyal officials. Among
these many court events, three *togam*, Superintendency for Copying the King’s Portraits (*Yŏngjong mosa togam* 影幀模寫都監), Superintendency for Painting the King’s Portraits, Superintendency for Merit Subjects (*Kongsin togam* 功臣都監), are important in relation to the focus of this chapter since their primary duty was to produce portraits of the king and of high officials who were honored for their loyalty.

The task of painting portraits of kings and merit subjects was considered more important than that of, for instance, drawing of ritual objects, or palanquins, textile designs for book covers, or on-site sketches for the construction of palaces and tombs. Therefore, the king and high officials paid more attention to the recruitment and selection of portraitists. In particular, the king’s portrait was remarkably significant not only because of its efficacy as a ritual object in ancestral worship but also for its symbolic meaning associated with the sovereignty of the ruler. Skillful painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting, professional painters with a local reputation, and the most talented literati painters were recommended by the king and high officials in the superintendency and then summoned examining their skills.63

Similarly, portraits of merit subjects were executed by painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting or locally known masters. If the sitter of a portrait held a post outside the capital, court painters were dispatched to his residence for a sketch, or local painters and minor functionaries in the local government were employed. The Superintendency for Merit Subjects and the

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63 Professional painters were supposed to copy portraits of merit subjects for the examination and based on the results of this, select the most suitable candidate. Literature painter” refers to painters of the *yangban* class who did not necessarily hold a government position. They were assigned to be directors of superintendencies or to proctors’ positions without examination. For example, literati scholars Cho Chiun 趙之耘 (1637-?) and Chŏng Yusŏng 鄭維升 served as proctors in the production of King T’aejo’s portrait in 1688 and King Sukchong’s portrait in 1713, respectively. Kim Chinkyu 金鎮圭 (1658-1716) was appointed director of *togam* for painting King Sukchong’s portrait in 1713. The selection process and the role of professional and literati painters in painting king’s portraits are detailed in Yi Sŏngmi, *Chosŏn sidae ŏjin kwangye togam*, 69-83; Cho Insu, “Chosŏn wangsil e sŏ hwalyak han hwawŏn tŭl: Ŭ’in chejak ŭl chungsim ŭrŏ” 조선 왕실에서 활약한 화원들: 여진 제작을 중심으로 활동 [Chosŏn dynasty court painters and royal portraits], in *Chosŏn hwawŏn taejŏn*, 285-290.
Department of Merit Subjects (Ch’unggunbu 忠勳府) which was in charge of the service for merit subjects and their descendants were conventionally responsible for administering the production of the loyal officials’ portraits.  

Upon the completion of state rituals and projects, the Office of Royal Protocol (ŭigwech’ŏng 禮軌廳) was established to publish ŭigwe, comprehensive records of every detail of the performed rituals and implementation of projects. Court painters were usually included in the office and charged with drawing and painting; they drew vertical lines for texts and painted illustrations of ŭigwe. They produced various images to be included as complementary visual material in ŭigwe, for instance, of ritual objects and of the buildings where the events were carried out, in addition to illustrations of royal processions, and depictions of scenes from the event. Moreover, court painters produced commemorative paintings to document court events, which were later distributed to the king and other major participants of the rituals.

Court painters worked to satisfy demands not only from the various togam, but also from regular offices of the Six Ministries. The officials commissioned paintings and drawings, most of which were produced for practical purposes related to their official tasks. For example, the government offices responsible for national defense and state rites commissioned topographical paintings and maps of military camps and strategic points, paintings depicting auspicious sites

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64 For a study of the role of the Superintendency for Painting Merit Subjects and the Department of Merit Subjects in producing portraits of merit subjects, see Kwŏn Hyŏksan 權赫山, “Chosŏn chunggi Nokhun togam ŭigwe wa kongsin hwasang e kwanhan yŏn’gu 朝鮮中期『錄勳都監儀軌』와 功臣畫像에 관한 研究 [A study of Records of Meritorious Deeds and portraits of merit subjects in the mid-Chosŏn dynasty], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 8 (2004): 63-92.
65 Commemorative paintings were commissioned by government officials to foster comradeship among the participants at the beginning of the dynasty. However, this convention notably changed in the eighteenth century during reigns of King Yongjo’s and Chŏngjo. Instead of private funding, government funds were used in the production of commemorative paintings and the king directly engaged in the commission. This indicates a radical change in agency from scholar-officials for the purpose of private memento, to government and king for the political purpose of expressing royal authority and prosperity. The commission and purpose of commemorative paintings in the Chosŏn society will be thoroughly discussed in chapter 2.
for the selection of royal tombs, and drawings and illustrations for reports to the king. The Ministry of Taxation (Hojo 戶曹), responsible for collecting local tributes to be used for the diplomatic exchange with foreign countries, also had painters create a design pattern of dragons for a straw mat presented to the Chinese emperor and distributed them to the producing regions in order to ensure the quality of the product. Although the king’s approval was required for the commencement of paintings, government officials held the initiative to mobilize court painters. In some cases commissioning paintings was left to the officials’ discretion. For example, the Office of Special Counselors (Hongmungwan 弘文館) summoned court painters to copy King Sŏnjo’s calligraphy that had been bestowed to the office. Didactic paintings such as a screen of Filial Piety 孝行錄屏風 and a painting of Monthly Duties of Farming 月令圖 were commissioned by scholars of the Office of Special Counselors and the crown prince’s tutors in order to offer them to the crown prince and the king for instructive purposes. Such didactic paintings were commissioned to present illustrious anecdotes of devoted sons and the daily lives of commoners in order to inspire filial piety in a young heir to the throne and remind royalty of the hard labor of the common people. Even though there are no records on the painters of these two works, we may presume that painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting produced such paintings for royal perusal. Many government authorities mobilized court painters at their disposal, often keeping the painters from conducting their official duties. King Kwanghaegun’s 光海君 (r. 1608-1623) decree issued in 1618 to prevent arbitrary summonses of court painters by

66 Veritable Records of King Injo, vol. 41, year of 1640, the 8th month, the 2nd day; Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 30, year of 1696, the 12th month, the 25th day; Veritable Records of King Chŏnjong, vol. 12, year of 1781, the 7th month, the 23rd day.
67 Daily Records of King Kwanghaegun, vol. 103, year of 1616, the 5th month, the 16th day.
68 Veritable Records of King Sŏnjong, vol. 61, year of 1573, the 4th month, the 14th day.
69 Veritable Records of King T’aejong, vol. 26, year of 1413, the 12th month, the 13th day; Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 13, year of 1682, the 4th month, the 11th day.
high officials attests to the fact that unauthorized use of court paintings by high government officials was prevalent at the time.\textsuperscript{70}

Finally, military posts and provincial governments where painters were dispatched were government organs involved in commissioning art. Since the establishment of the “Painters at Military Posts” system in the early eighteenth century, twenty-one painters residing in the capital city were sent out to provincial governments for two year-terms. On completion of their duties, the painters returned to the court and continued their work there. A question requiring further study is whether their experience with local culture and customs might have influenced their later artistic activities in the capital.\textsuperscript{71}

These painters were responsible for making maps of counties, charts for military drills, drawings for submission to higher officials and the king, and decorative and commemorative paintings for provincial governors. Their works were largely done in response to two agencies, the central government and local authorities. The paintings ordered by the central government were mainly landscape paintings of the provinces and scenes of the customs and the daily life of local people. These were produced for the king, who wanted to observe the situation in the different regions of his kingdom. For example, King Yŏngho ordered the governor of Kyŏngsang Province to submit landscapes of Yean Township and of Tosan Private Academy in 1733. He also requested landscapes depicting local scenic sites from the governor of Hamgyŏng Province in 1771.\textsuperscript{72} Because these were commissioned by the king, they were probably made by the court painters dispatched to those local governments. In this case, the king and central government played a significant role as the primary agent.

On the other hand, local administrative bodies commissioned paintings as visual

\textsuperscript{70} Daily Records of King Kwanghaegun, vol. 128, year of 1618, the 5th month, the 10th day.
\textsuperscript{71} See Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn,” 330-366.
\textsuperscript{72} Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn,” 337-338.
supplements to attach to their reports to the central government institutions. In particular, sketches of construction sites were made as a reference for state construction projects. These painters also participated in state-sponsored construction project, such as building a pavilion in Hamhŭng Palace, establishing steles at the historical sites and royal tombs, and restoring ancestral shrines in local areas. Creating maps for military purposes, New Year’s paintings, and screens depicting the topography of the region to embellish local offices were their most important tasks. Paintings of the provincial governor’s inspection tour are examples of art done by these painters in compliance with the local authority’s request. These paintings make magnificent spectacles of the governor’s procession in order to display his authority and power. Occasionally, paintings commissioned by local governors were presented to the king to express his loyalty and to eulogize the king’s virtue.

The system of the “Painters at Military Posts” sheds light on the multiple interactions of the central government with local administration and on the dynamics between local and central organizations as influential agencies of art. The study of this system questions the prevailing view of a court-country dichotomy and of a unilateral flow of influence from center to periphery by revealing the interplay between the court and wider spheres of tastes, materials, and personnel and capturing the shifting, negotiated, and multivalent dimensions of cultural production simultaneously executed in central and regional districts. Significantly, it modifies our understanding of court painters’ official activities beyond the confines of the palace.

73 Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn,” 339-345.
74 For instance, the governor of Hamgyŏng Province, Cho Byŏngsik had Cho Chungmuk, a painter dispatched to the Hangyŏng provincial administration, paint the Palace of Hamhŭng 咸興本宮圖 (fig. 1-2) where the founder of the dynasty, King T’aeso 太祖 (1392-1398), had resided before his enthronement. This painting was produced in 1890 to celebrate the achievements of King T’aeso and the birth of male royal offspring. After its completion, it was sent to the king. This piece is now owned by the National Museum of Korea. The inscription reading “A Painter at Military Post of Hamhŭng, Subject Cho Chungmuk” 咸興軍官畫員臣 趙重默, on the lower left corner of the painting, indicates this painting was done by a court painter dispatched to a provincial government office. Cho Chungmuk was an artist versed in landscape, figures and fish and crab paintings. He was known as a student of Kim Chŏnghŭi (1786-1856).
4) Members of the Royal Family and Literati Officials as Agents of Court Art

4-1) The King as an Agent of Court Art

The court was an institution with many internal tensions, in which the king, queen and royal relatives, high officials, and minor functionaries were involved. Among them, the king was positioned as the central power of the dynasty at the top of the bureaucratic hierarchy. The king as a recipient of the Mandate of Heaven theoretically was endowed with absolute power to rule over the state and decide all state affairs. He played the primary role in state affairs such as policy making, administering laws, recruiting officials, and presiding over court ceremonies. However, this did not mean the king wielded such absolute power in reality. All aspects of the king’s life were open to the potential scrutiny and critique of officialdom, and every aspect of the king’s exercise of power was checked by literati officials. Just as in the case of politics and economics, the power of the king in exerting influence on artistic developments depended on the strength of his position at court and on his personality.

A strong king was also an influential agent and decision maker in the realm of art. Kings commissioned landscapes and bird-and-flower paintings for their personal appreciation and collected famous ancient paintings. For educational and political purposes, the king commissioned didactic images of historical narratives. However, the king’s commissions were monitored and sometimes criticized by bureaucrats. The emphasis Confucian ethics placed on frugality and morality in a ruler and the Confucian view of the function of art as a tool to educate men and to reform society discouraged the king’s private engagement in art production. In many cases, the king’s private commissions of art were considered an indulgence in pleasure and
indolence resulting in corruption. The king was able to mobilize resources for artistic activity and commission paintings according to his wishes if he complied with the regulations and administrative procedures provided by the bureaucratic system. If the king ignored the rules and commissioned paintings at his disposal, he was censored by a surveillance organ.

The king exercised agency in art in his public and private capacity, which was not necessarily clearly delineated but inevitably interactional. The king utilized art to establish his social and political persona as Son of Heaven and virtuous ruler in public and he commissioned works according to his interest in art. In his public capacity, the king exerted his agency through the administrative procedures, the way acceptable to his ministers, while for private use he would personally summon his favorite court painters to his residence and order them to produce paintings that satisfied his artistic taste.

The preferable way for the king to commission paintings was that authorized government agencies would convey the king’s orders to the Royal Bureau of Painting and administer the production of paintings. Theoretically, the king was neither supposed to directly contact court painters, who were low-ranked functionaries, nor to engage in the production of paintings, which were disdained by literati officials as the vocation of craftsman. As the Royal Bureau of Painting was a subordinate institution supervised by the Ministry of Rites, a high official of the ministry—in particular, the Minister of Rites who was assigned a concurrent position as director of the Royal Bureau—acted as an intermediary communicating between the king and court painters. In addition to the mediation of officials from the Ministry of Rites, the Royal

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75 Hong Sŏnp’yo, Chosŏn sidae hoehwasa ron, 192-205.
76 Veritable Records of King T’aeto, vol. 3, year of 1402, the 4th month, the 23rd day; Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 80, year of 1438, the 2nd month, the 19th day; Daily Records of King Yŏnsan’gun, vol. 13, year of 1496, the 3rd month, the 26th day; vol. 20, year of 1496, the 12th month, the 2nd day. Comparing with the Chosŏn king’s agency in the production of art, the emperor of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) exerted relatively a strong power by his direct engagement in educating painters and supervising production. In particular, imperial patronage of art and direct involvement by the ruler in the production of art reached its zenith under the reign of Emperor Qianlong (r.
Secretariat took care of the king’s orders for paintings. Given that it was customary for all of the king’s official orders to be delivered to the concerned authorities through the Royal Secretariat, it is not surprising that the king’s request for paintings was also transmitted to the Royal Bureau by them. Occasionally eunuchs (Sŏngjŏnsaek 承傳色) from the Department of Eunuchs (Naesibu 内侍府), who usually ran miscellaneous errands for the king, also served as go-betweens in the production of court paintings.

Other than the above-mentioned officials, royal lecturers and prestigious courtiers from the Hall of Worthies (Chip’ŏnjŏn 集賢殿) and its successor, the Office of Special Counselors, also engaged in procuring court paintings on behalf of the king. For instance, King Sejong ordered Pak P’aengnyŏn 朴彭年 (1417-1456) and Yi Kae 李塏 (1417-1456), sixth- and eighth-ranked officials of the Hall of Worthies, to compile a commentary on Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712-756) of the Tang dynasty and his favorite consort Yang Guifei 楊貴妃 (719-756) and to add illustrations to the compilation. While attending a royal lecture, King Sŏngjong 成宗 (r. 1469-1494) ordered the paintings of The Odes on the State of Bin 鄉風圖 and Painting of a Busy Life 無逸圖 for the didactic purpose of instructing royalty on the life of commoners in order to evoke

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77 Veritable Records of King Chungjong, vol. 32, year of 1537, the 4th month, the 7th day; Veritable Records of King Myŏngjong, vol. 26, year of 1560, the 6th month, the 2nd day.
78 Veritable Records of King Myŏngjong, vol. 26, year of 1560, the 6th month, the 2nd day; Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 3, year of 1675, the 4th month, the 16th day.
79 The Hall of Worthies and its successor, the Office of Special Counselors functioned as a significant political structure for academic and policy research to search out administrative and legal precedents, to author major state documents. Thus it undertook the role of an advisory organ to the king. As the king’s consultative body, the officials prepared the royal lecture, in which the king studied Confucian classics and literature with them and set up policies. The historically-based tales from Confucian texts were foci of their discussion, and the exemplary conduct of virtuous monarchs and culpable behavior of vicious emperors were frequently cited to address current political issues.
80 Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 93, year of 1441, the 9th month, the 29th day.
the ruler’s sympathy for their difficult lives. When King Sukchong wanted screens depicting eight virtuous and eight vicious Chinese emperors in 1691, he ordered the Office of Special Counselors to oversee the production of the paintings.

Didactic paintings of Chinese historical figures and those based on Confucian texts became popular, and the king commissioned many paintings of these themes, usually initiated by a face-to-face interaction between him and officials during the royal lecture. At first, these paintings were produced for the king’s self-cultivation and reflection, but their function reached far beyond. After a painting was completed, the king ordered his officials to compose poems related to the theme and to inscribe them on the painting. In turn, the officials were rewarded by the king. In this process, paintings were displayed for the king and his close circle and served as a medium for interaction between the king and scholar-officials.

The tradition of commissioning didactic paintings depicting Chinese historical figures and illustrating Confucian texts continued into the late Chosŏn period, but their meanings and functions changed in the reign of King Sukchong. Along with their didactic narratives, these paintings were used to propagate the political agenda of the king and strengthen royal authority.

An important example is *A Boat and Water* 舟水圖 commissioned by Sukchong. According to the *Veritable Records*, the king instructed a court painter to produce this painting and then showed it to two political rivals. In his colophon, King Sukchong explained the symbolic meaning of the motifs, thus expressing his view on the righteous relationship between lord and

81 *Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong*, vol. 62, year of 1475, the 12th month, the 25th day.
82 *Veritable Records of King Sukchong*, vol. 23, year of 1691, the 11th month, the 12th day.
83 King Sŏngjong’s commission of screens of wise Chinese empresses and virtuous and vicious Chinese emperors is a representative example to show how painting was used as a tool for mutual communication at court. After the completion of paintings, the king made his close officials compose poems on each theme and then offered drinks and clothes to them. For details, see *Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong*, vol. 72, year of 1476, the 10th month, the 21st day.
84 “Explanation of a Boat and Water”舟水圖說, Kyujanggak ed., *Yŏlsŏng ūje 列聖御製 [Royal Writing of Successive Kings]* vol. 3 (Seoul: Seoul National University, Kyujanggak, 2002), 27-31; *Veritable Records of King Sukchong*, vol. 4, year of 1675, the 11th month, the 8th day.
vassal. In this way, King Sukchong used court paintings as an indirect but effective vehicle of remonstrance of his officials, much like a royal edict. The shift in the function of court art that occurred in the reign of King Sukchong was continued by his successors, Kings Yŏngjo and Chŏngjo, who emulated their predecessor by establishing their political legitimacy using visual material. Thatched Hut in Zhangzhou 漳州節庵圖 demonstrates how King Yŏngjo exerted agency in producing a painting that elicited political discourse between the king and his bureaucrats. The painting illustrates the hermitage built by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), the most influential Neo-Confucian scholar of the Song dynasty (960-1279), who was highly admired by the Chosŏn elite. Court archives demonstrate that King Yŏngjo wrote a poem on Zhu Xi’s thatched hut after he read Thematic Discourse of Master Zhu (Zhuzi yulu 朱子語類) with his close officials in 1746. In the royal meeting the next day, King Yŏngjo showed his poem to scholar-officials and commissioned a painting depicting the subject. He also gave detailed directions on the painting. Complying with the king’s wishes, the painting is divided into three sections that consist of Yŏngjo’s poem, lines excerpted from Zhu Xi’s original text, and the illustration. King Yŏngjo also had Yun Kŭp 尹汲 (1697-1770), the senior third-rank counselor of the Office of Special Counselors (pujehak

85 Veritable Records of King Sukchong, year of 1675, the 11th month, the 8th day; the 16th day; the 25th day. For an extended discussion of politically charged paintings produced at King Sukchong’s court, refer to Yi Sŏnghun 이성훈, “Sukchondae yŏksa kosado chejak kwa Sahyŏn p’a Chин paengmanbyŏngdo ui chŏngch’ijŏk sŏngkyŏk” 숭종대 역사고사도 제작과 <謝玄破秦百萬兵圖>의 정치적 성격 [History paintings during King Sukchong’s reign and the political subtext of Xie Xuan’s Defeats Fu Jian’s One Million-strong Force], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 262 (2009): 33-68.
86 Thatched Hut in Zhangzhou was first introduced to the public in the exhibition Paintings and Calligraphy of the Late Chosŏn Dynasty held by Hakkojae gallery in 1992. Yi T’aeho 이태호 provides historical records that explain the background of the production of this painting and examines its stylistic features by comparing Chŏng Sŏn’s other paintings. For details, see Yi T’aeho, “Yŏngjo iui yo’ch’ông ŭro kūrin Changju myoamdo e taehan koch’al” 영祖의 요청으로 그린 <漳州節庵圖>에 대한 고찰 [A study of Thatched Hut in Zhangzhou commissioned by King Yŏngjo], in Chosŏn hugi kūrim kwa kālsı 조선후기 그림과 글씨 [ Paintings and Calligraphy of the Late Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Hakkojae, 1992), 109-122.
87 Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, vol. 1007, year of 1746, the 9th month, the 1st day.
88 Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, vol. 1007, year of 1746, the 9th month, the 2nd day; Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 64, year of 1746, the 9th month, the 2nd day.
inscribe the poem on the painting. Like other didactic paintings commissioned by kings in previous periods, this painting was initiated by the king, who was inspired by the discussion with his close officials, and used as a tool for the interaction.

In fact, King Yŏngjo exerted agency in art in a more active way than any of his predecessors and successfully conveyed his political intentions to the audience of the painting. The poem reveals that Yŏngjo commissioned this painting for himself to cultivate his morality and for the young crown prince to instruct him to become a virtuous monarch.\(^8^9\) In addition, he had his bureaucrats involved in the production process, through which officials were able to see the painting. In that sense, the intended viewers of this painting are threefold: the king, the young crown prince, and high officials. The painting’s function for the king and crown prince was to illuminate the deeds or ways of thinking expected of an ideal ruler. For the third audience, it became a tool to address current political issues. A recent study of the painting elucidates the king’s political messages toward his officials. It convincingly argues that the painting symbolizes harmony among political entities and communication between the ruler and his officials, a concept fundamentally associated with the Policy of Impartiality (\textit{T’angp’yŏngch’aek} 蕩平策) pursued by King Yŏngjo who reinstated the royal authority that had been damaged by long-lasting factional fights.\(^9^0\) King Yŏngjo presumably intended to persuade his powerful opponents of the validity of this policy through the painting.

\(^{8^9}\) The translation of the poem is in Yi T’aeho, “Yŏngjo ŭi yoch’ŏng ūro kŭrin \textit{Changju myoamdo},” 110. In the poem, the king links this painting to his \textit{Writing of Self-Reflection} (\textit{Chasŏngp’yŏn}), which was compiled to instruct the young crown prince to become a virtuous Confucian monarch.\(^{9^0}\) Yi Minsŏn 이민선, “Yŏngjo ŭi kunju úisik kwa \textit{Changjiunyoamdo}” 영조의 군주의식과 <장기운요도> [King Yŏngjo’s statesmanship and \textit{Thatched Hut in Zhangzhou}] (master’s thesis, Seoul National University, Seoul: 2012), 40-59. It is worthwhile to point out that the king chose Yun Kŭp to inscribe his poem on the painting because he was the leader of the Old Doctrine, who strongly opposed the Policy of Impartiality. For the political significance of the implement of the Policy of Impartiality at King Yŏngjo’s court, see
Kim Hongdo’s Painting after Zhu Xi’s Poems (朱夫子詩意圖, fig. 1-4) is another example illustrating a Chosŏn king’s use of art in propagating his political agenda. It is an eight-panel screen done for King Chŏngjo on New Year’s Day in 1800. On this painting, Kim inscribed eight pieces of poetry by Zhu Xi and added a comment by the Yuan Confucian scholar Xiong He (熊鉌, 1247-1312) which links the eight poems to eight steps in the Great Learning (Daxue 大學): investigation of things, extension of knowledge, sincerity of will, rectification of mind, cultivation of personal life, regulation of family, national order, and world peace. King Chŏngjo was impressed by Kim’s talent in demonstrating the teachings of Zhu Xi in his painting; in turn, the king composed eight poems responding to Zhu Xi’s poetry.⁹¹

Chŏngjo’s sponsorship of this painting derived from his interest in the concept of Confucian kingship rooted in the Great Learning and his emphasis on Zhu Xi’s commentaries on Confucian texts. Moreover, the painting corresponds with the cultural policy and the publication projects of the Kyujanggak that were directed by King Chŏngjo.⁹² Art historian O Chusŏk (吳柱錫) argues that the compilation of the Comprehensive Compilation of Abundant Meanings of the Great Learning by the King (御定大學類義), which was completed a year before the painting on Zhu Xi’s poetry was completed, was a direct motivation for Chŏngjo’s commission of Kim Hongdo’s painting. The compilation was the result of King

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⁹¹ Zhu Xi’s poems, Xiong He’s commentary, and King Chŏngjo’s responsive poems are recorded in Hongjae chŏnsŏ 弘齋全書 [Collected works of King Chŏngjo], vol. 7, 30-33.
⁹² List of the Royal Orders and Works of King Chŏngjo ( 연구정조년서기) contains 151 compilations that demonstrate Chŏngjo’s political philosophy and cultural policies. Among the books included in the list, the Great Learning was highly valued as a guidebook for Confucian monarchs and as a Confucian treatise on statecraft, and was one of the Confucian texts most frequently complied and edited by the king himself. For a meticulous study of King Chŏngjo’s interest in Zhu Xi’s commentary and his publication project related to the Cheng-Zhu School, see Kim Munsik (金文植), “Chŏngjoŭi Chujasŏ p’yŏnch’an kwa kū ūūi” 정조의 주자서 편찬과 그 의의 [King Chŏngjo’s publication of Zhu Xi’s Books and its meaning], in Chŏngjo sidae ŭi sasang kwa munhwaha 정조시대의 사상과 문화 [Ideology and culture in the reign of King Chŏngjo], ed. Chŏng Okja et al. (Seoul: Tolbegae, 1999), 113-166.
Chŏngjo’s lifetime study of the *Great Learning* as a ruling principle, and the painting served as a reminder of the essential parts of that great teaching. In sum, this painting, along with *Thatched Hut in Zhangzhou*, exhibits how works of art acted as a conduit for political ideology in the Chosŏn court.

Inscriptions and seals on paintings provide most significant evidence of the king’s artistic agency. They indicate that the king appreciated or owned paintings, through which posterity recognized his royal presence and authority. Although King Sukchong was not the first king who left inscriptions and seals on paintings, his extensive use of paintings to serve his political purposes provided a reference for his successors. Five extant paintings with King Sukchong’s inscriptions (figs. 1-5-9) give an idea of the pattern that he established. In all cases his colophon begins with an explanation of the theme followed by his comment on the subject. The inscriptions are written in regular script and end with dates and a royal seal reading “*Sinjang* 寔章 (Seal of the Palace). Inscription and seal occupy a conspicuous spot, the upper right or left part of the painting close to the margin. Apparently this prominent section of the painting surface had been reserved for the king’s colophon. The presence of the king indicated by his inscription

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94 I am deeply inspired by Wang Cheng-hua’s the concept of an “imperial place” to explain how the medium of painting were politicized and how the Ming emperor Xuanzong 宣宗 established his emperorship by leaving his mark on paintings. For details, see Wang Cheng-hua 王正華, “Material Culture and Emperorship: The Shaping of Imperial Roles at the Court of Xuanzong (r. 1426-35)” (PhD diss., Yale University, 1998), 274-307.
95 The five paintings are as follows: *Sericulture and Weaving* 蚕織圖 (fig. 1-5), *Dialogue between a Fisherman and a Wood Cutter* 渔樵問答圖 (fig. 1-6), *Chen Duan Falls off a Donkey* 陳僑塗履圖(fig. 1-7), *Portrait of Martial Marquis Zhuge Liang* 諸葛武侯圖 (fig. 1-8), and *Xie Xuan’s Defeats Fu Jian’s One Million Force* 謝玄破秦百萬大兵圖 (fig. 1-9). For the details, see National Museum of Korea, *Wang ŭi kŭl i innûn kûrim* 闕의 글이 있는 그림 [Paintings with Royal Colophons], (Seoul: National Museum of Korea, 2008), pls. 6, 8, 9,14, and 18.
and seal far outweighs the significance of the painting itself, and the agency of the king overwhelms that of the artist.  

Keeping painters in the immediate vicinity of the king and summoning them to the court for the king’s personal purposes was fodder for criticism in the Chosŏn dynasty. Literati officials in the Office of Special Counselors and the Office of the Censor-General examined and censured the conduct of the king and wrote memorials condemning the king’s behavior whenever he ignored the proper procedures for ordering paintings. A considerable number of historical records reveal the conflicts between the king and bureaucrats regarding this problem. For instance, when King Sŏngjong called painters in the Kuhyŏn Pavilion and let them sketch living birds and plants, officials claimed that it was inappropriate to summon painters to the king’s residence. They asserted that the work of painting should be done at the Royal Bureau of Painting located outside the palace, and artisans belonging to a low social stratum should not be allowed to enter the palace, a space that ought to be accessible only to the more prestigious court officials conducting state affairs.

In spite of restriction of procedure, kings occasionally summoned court painters to the palace and ordered paintings for their personal enjoyment. These included landscapes and paintings of birds-and-flowers, insects, and plants. In the Confucian view, art should serve a primarily moral and didactic purpose in society and thus the monarch had to prevent from indulging himself in art pursuing secular pleasure. Officials feared that such a pastime would result in neglect of his duties and betray a lack of virtue in his governing. The prohibition against

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96 Kings Yŏngjo and Chŏngjo left some inscriptions on paintings, following Sukchong’s examples. Although royal inscriptions were not necessarily written by the king himself—they were more frequently inscribed by scholar-officials on behalf of the king—the king excised actual agency being responsible for the inscription and painting.  
97 *Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong*, vol. 95, year of 1478, the 8th month, the 4th day.
a king’s personal commissions of art can be considered part of the measures taken to protect against abuses in the exercise of political and administrative authority by the monarch.

Kings Yŏnsan’gun 燕山君 (r. 1494-1506), Myŏngjong 明宗 (r. 1545-1567), Injo, and Sukchong were criticized for the same reason. King Yŏnsan’gun even established a painting institution within the palace called Naehwach’ŏng 内畵廳 (Inner Court Painting Office) to meet with his personal wishes for paintings. He sought direct access to court painters in order to avoid intrusion from literati officials and the complicated administrative process but Censor-official Yi Úison 李懿孫 petitioned for the abolishment of the inner court painting office.\(^98\) The king’s direct engagement also caused the condemnation of his other officials.\(^99\)

King Myŏngjong was blamed for having painters waiting in a nearby hall to immediately respond to his requests and for ordering them to paint birds, plants, and insects.\(^100\) Moreover, King Injo was criticized for calling the court painter Yi Ching 李澄 (1581-?) into the palace to create landscape and bird-and-flower paintings, and King Sukchong was criticized for allowing court painters to stay at the palace for more than a month.\(^101\) The fact that King Sukchong’s request for a portrait of Queen Inhyŏn 仁顯王后 (1667-1701) was vetoed by officials demonstrates that the king’s agency in art operated within a restricted space when exerted with proper administrative procedure.\(^102\)

Thus was the king’s agency in art controlled and checked by the bureaucratic system. However, he was able to assert limited autonomy vis-à-vis his officials. For instance, the king

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\(^{98}\) *Daily Records of King Yŏnsan’gun*, vol. 47, years of 1502, the 12th month, the 13rd day; vol. 48, years of 1503, the 2nd month, the 19th day.

\(^{99}\) *Daily Records of King Yŏnsan’gun*, vol. 20, years of 1496, the 12th month, the 2nd day.

\(^{100}\) *Veritable Records of King Myŏngjong*, vol. 28, year of 1562, the 4th month, the 2nd day.

\(^{101}\) *Veritable Records of King Injo*, vol. 37, year of 1638, the 12th month, the 25th day; *Veritable Records of King Sukchong*, vol. 31, year of 1697, the 10th month, the 21st day.

\(^{102}\) *Veritable Records of King Sukchong*, vol. 29, year of 1695, the 7th month, the 27th day.
commanded his favorite artist to copy famous ancient paintings outside the court for his own aesthetic appreciation and he selected painters for royal portraits.\textsuperscript{103} The king was one of the most influential agencies of court art in many aspects. The political authority and immense wealth of the king made it possible to assert his own autonomy, albeit only to a certain degree and in a limited way within a restrictive political and social structure.

4-2) The Queen and the Royal Relatives as Agents of Court Art

The story that Queen Chŏnghŭi 貞熹王后 (1418-1483) had a New Year’s painting depicting the daily life and chores of scholars, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants hung on the palace wall highlights the role of women at court as important consumers of court art.\textsuperscript{104} This story does not necessarily mean that the queen was an agent of New Year’s paintings. However, considering that the record of court women’ political and cultural activities are scattered and sporadic and even elided from the traditional historical narrative written by male Confucian historians, this anecdote alludes to the possibility that royal women took part in the production and circulation of court art in considerable ways.

The overt expression of female agency is barely visible in the history of Chosŏn society, which was dominated by patriarchal values. Instead, female agency emerged in a more nuanced way and thus often remains unnoticed or lost. However, female royalty exerted agency on and engaged in court-sponsored cultural enterprises despite restrictions by patriarchal mores. The

\textsuperscript{103} King Sejo 世祖 (r. 1455-1468) ordered court painters to copy a bamboo painting done by Kim Sik 金湜 (1482-1520), and King Sukchong commanded a copy of \textit{Album of Famous Paintings of Korea} 海東名畵帖, owned by Yi U 李瑀 (1637-1693). In particular, King Sukchong explained that he ordered court painters to copy Yi U’s painting album because of his love for art. See \textit{Veritable Records of King Sejo}, vol. 33, year of 1464, the 5th month, the 20th day; “Che Haedong myŏngwha mosach’ŏp” 題海東名畵模寫帖 [Inscription on a copy of \textit{Famous Paintings of Korea}], \textit{Royal Writing of Successive Kings}, vol.15-7.

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Veritable Records of King Sejo}, vol. 3, year of 1456, the 1st month, the 2nd day.
role of palace women in the production of art is exemplified by Buddhist paintings produced in the sixteenth century as a result of commissions by court women, and documentary paintings depicting royal banquets dedicated to the queen regent in the nineteenth century. Women of the palace, including the queen dowager, royal concubines, and princess, enjoyed wealth, privilege, and power that allowed them to patronize art.

Of a few surviving examples of court art in the early Chosŏn period, the Buddhist paintings commissioned by the queen and other high-ranking palace women are the most prominent works. Queens Munjong 文定王后 (1501-1565) and Insŏng 仁聖王后 (1514-1577) contributed to these splendid cultural achievements. When Neo-Confucianism was adopted as the state ideology, Buddhism was suppressed and banished from public spaces. Despite Confucian intolerance of a public role for Buddhism, Buddhist practice and religious expression was maintained in private spaces. In private, even monarchs such as Kings Sejong and Sejo sponsored Buddhism by supporting Buddhist shrines and performing Buddhist rituals at court. However, the ruler’s sponsorship of Buddhism became a focus of public censure and thus he refrained from commissioning Buddhist art. On the other hand, palace ladies were less restricted by Confucian regulations and actively engaged in promoting Buddhism. Their patronage of Buddhist art was considered socially acceptable in their private realms. Their claim that their religious behavior benefitted the royal family’s health, longevity, and fecundity served to justify their patronage of Buddhism.

The role of female royalty as patrons was especially significant in the sixteenth century. Queen Munjong, a widowed consort of King Chungjong 中宗 (r.1506-1544), was the most

105 King T’aeyo sponsored the construction of Hŭngch’ŏnsa in 1397. It was built as a royal Buddhist temple for the departed Queen Sindŏk 神德王后 (1356-1396), the consort of the king. King Sejong established a Buddhist shrine (Naebultang 内佛堂) in Kyŏngbok Place in 1448 and worshiped Buddhist statues there. Despite objections to pro-Buddhist policies by Confucian scholars, the Buddhist prayer hall remained at court. It was finally abolished in the reign of King Yŏnsan’gun.
influential supporter of Buddhism and an enthusiastic patron of Buddhist art in the sixteenth century. Since she became the de facto power behind the throne as an official regent of her young son King Myŏngjong, she deregulated anti-Buddhism policies and instigated an impressive revival of Buddhist art. Queen Munjŏng’s massive undertaking includes the seven paintings of Bhaishajyaguru in 1561, the two hundred paintings of Arhat devoted to Hyangnimsa in 1562 (fig. 1-10), and the set of four hundred scrolls of the Sakyamuni, Maitreya, Amitabha, and Bhaishajyaguru dedicated to Hoeamsa in 1565 (fig. 1-11, 1-12). Most Buddhist paintings in this period were created to wish for the health and longevity of her invalid son, King Myŏngjong and for securing the succession to the throne and prosperity of offspring.

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107 For a list of Buddhist paintings commissioned by Queen Munjŏng, see Kim Chŏnghŭi, “Munjŏng wanghu ŭi chunghŭng pulsa,” 12. Kim also offers reproduced images of the surviving eight paintings in her article, figs. 2-9. See also Kim Hongnam, The Story of a Painting, figs. 15, 20, and 21. One of the seven paintings of Bhaishajyaguru in 1561 is now owned by Entsūji Temple in Japan and one of the 200 scrolls of Arhats enshrined at Hyangnimsa is now in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Among the original set of 400 scrolls done in 1565, two paintings of the Sakyamuni triad and four of the Bhaishajyaguru triad in color and gold on silk have survived in the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation, the National Museum of Korea, and in Kōzen Temple, Ryūjōin Temple, Bōjun Temple, and the Tokugawa Art Museum in Japan.

108 The purpose of these massive commissions is explained in the inscriptions of the surviving paintings. For example, inscriptions on Sakyamuni Triad (1565) in the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation and on the Arhat (1562) in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art articulate why the queen sponsored these Buddhist paintings. For the full text and English translation of the Sakyamuni Triad, see Kim Hongnam, The Story of a Painting, 17. The inscription on the Arhat reads “Dŏksewi, the 153rd arhat, the fifth month of the Imo year (1562) in the reign of Jiaying, Grand Queen Dowager Sŏnyŏl inmyŏng (posthumously named Queen Munjong) wishes for peace in the country and the well-being of the people and hopes that His Nobel Majesty the King will enjoy good health and long
Yi Chasil’s *Thirty-two Responsive Manifestations of Avalokiteshvara* 觀音三十二應身圖

(fig. 1-13) is another significant example of Buddhist paintings sponsored by female patrons. Its inscription states that Queen Insŏng, the consort of King Injong 仁宗 (r. 1544-1545), ordered this painting to pray for the happiness of her dead husband’s afterlife in 1550.¹⁰⁹ *Painting of Dragon-flower Assembly* of 1568 was also her commission as a prayer for the repose of the deceased King Myŏngjong.¹¹⁰ In addition to these queens, high-ranking palace women such as Princess Myŏngsuk 明淑公主 (1455-1482) and Lady Yun commissioned Buddhist paintings.¹¹¹ Princess Myŏngsuk, an elder sister of King Sŏnjong, patronized *Bhaisajyaguru Triad with Twelve Guardians* in 1447 (fig. 1-14).¹¹² Lady Yun commissioned *Ksitigarbha and the Ten Kings of Hell* in the 1570s in order to pray for the deceased Queen Insun 仁順王后 (1532-1575) and the longevity of the royal family, including King Sŏnjong and his queen.

Court-sponsored Buddhist paintings in the early Chosŏn period are meticulously executed in silk with gold pigments and color, which requires huge sums of money and the mobilization of skillful painters. The inscriptions on those paintings and historical records indicate that Buddhist paintings in this period were produced at the court and the expenses provided by the Royal Treasury (*Naesusa* 内需司). The Royal Treasury became a powerful organ during the regency of Queen Munjŏng, and its funds were appropriated at her disposal. Consequently, the office functioned as a source of funds as well as an agent to help bring about the queen’s commission life for ten thousands years and his royal descendants will live prosperous lives. Hoping these wishes will be fulfilled, I make new paintings and enshrine paintings of two hundred arhats in Hyangnimsa on Mount Samgak.”¹⁰⁹ For a meticulous study of Yi Chasil’s *Thirty-two Responsive Manifestations of Avalokiteshvara*, see Yu Kyŏnhŭi, “*Togapsa Kwanseŭm posal samsibī ūng chŏng ūi tosang yŏn’gu*” 道岬寺觀世菩薩三十二應身匍匐圖像研究 [A study of the iconography of Thirty-two Responsive Manifestations of Avalokiteshvara enshrined in Togapsa], *Misulsa yŏn’gu* 240 (2003): 149-179.

¹¹⁰ Lady Yun is presumably one of concubines of King Sŏnjong, and Princess Myŏngsuk is an elder sister of King Sŏnjong.
¹¹¹ For illustrations of these two scrolls, see Kim Chŏnghŭi Chŏnhŭi, “Munjŏng wanghŭ ūi chunghŭng pulsa,” fig. 10 and Soyoung Lee, “Art and Patronage,” fig. 6.
of Buddhist art.\textsuperscript{113}

Unfortunately, no names of painters appeared in the inscriptions of the Buddhist paintings examined in this chapter, except that of Yi Chasil 李自實. The term “yanggong” 良工, which literally means “skillful craftsman,” is commonly used to indicate painters of such works. Even though the term does not necessarily refer to court painters affiliated with the Royal Bureau of Painting, the exquisite quality of the works, the royal members’ engagement, and the funding from the Royal Treasury suggest that the best court painters were summoned to conduct these tasks. A few examples and some records prove that court painters participated in court-sponsored Buddhist art project. The eminent court painter Yi Maenggün painted \textit{Sixteen Contemplations of the Visualization Sutra} 觀經十六觀變相圖 (fig. 1-15) commissioned by Princes Hyonûng 孝寧大君 (1396-1468) and Wôlsan月山大君 (1454-1488) in 1465, and Paek Chongrin 白終麟 and Yi Changson 李長孫 drew illustrations of a Buddhist Sutra sponsored by Queen Chôôngûi in 1474.\textsuperscript{114}

Although court ladies’ commissions of Buddhist art were regarded as pious acts in the private sector, the mobilization of court painters from the Royal Bureau of Painting was made possible with the king’s consent and was monitored by bureaucrats. For example, Queen Dowagers Insu 仁粹大妃 (1437-1504) and Inhye 仁惠大妃 (ca.1445-1498) submitted a letter to

\textsuperscript{113} The Royal Treasury was responsible for the management of financial affairs for the royal household by collecting rent from royal properties and administering belongings of palaces. It was independent from government finance. The socio-economic background behind the efflorescence of Buddhist art and the role of the Royal Treasury in the sixteenth century is discussed in detail in Sin Kwangûi, “Chosôn chôungi Myôngjong,” 324-341.

\textsuperscript{114} Yi Maenggûk 李孟根 and Paek Chongrin, along with other court painters such as Choe Kyông and An Kûisaeng 安貴生, painted the portraits of Queen Sohyôn 昭憲王后 (1359-1446) and Kings Sejong, Yejong 營宗 (1450-1469) and Tôkchong 德宗 (1438-1457) in 1472. See \textit{Veritable Records of King Sôngjong}, vol. 18, year of 1471, the 5th month, the 25th day. Yi Changsun is known for his landscapes done in the Mi Fu style and his extant paintings reveal the stylistic influence of Gao Kegong 高克恭 (1248-1318), a Yuan painter. It is not clear whether Yi was also a court painter of the Royal Bureau of Painting, but he participated in a number of court-sponsored projects of Buddhist art with other court painters. For more information on these painters, see Yu Kônghûi “Wangsil parwôn purhwa,” 580-588.
the throne to request the restoration of Anamsa by painters and copyists in 1484.\textsuperscript{115} According to their letter, the queen dowagers intended to reconstruct Anamsa as a wish for the reigning king’s welfare. Queen Chŏnghŭi personally donated timbers taken from Sugang Palace for the project, and the two queen dowagers secured finances from their private funds. However, they were not able to employ painters and copyists without the permission of the king. Thus, the queen dowagers asked the king to dispatch court painters and copyists to the temple, but their request was condemned by scholar-officials, who were intolerant of official support for Buddhism. This again demonstrates that the king and bureaucrats acted as official agents of court art through their mediation in mobilizing court painters. Nonetheless, palace women wielded their power behind the scenes, borrowing from the authority of their male relatives, who were mostly high officials of the government.

A similar exercise of female agency in court art, which partly channeled through their male relatives occurred again during the period of in-law government of the nineteenth century. In-law governments took shape in the political circumstances of an uncertain succession to the throne, for instance, when a young king succeeded the throne or the heir after the ruling king’s death had not yet been chosen. The most senior member of the royal family, in most cases the queen dowager, the mother of a teenage crown prince and consort of the previous ruler, became a regent, a de facto power at a court. Consequently, male relatives from the queen’s lineage seized political power by forming a power base for the regent queen and the young heir. The frequent staging of royal banquets for the queen dowager in the nineteenth century can be understood in this historical context. The royal banquet was considered to be one of the ways to articulate and celebrate the power of female regents.

Numbers alone demonstrate the importance of female regency. Of the 73 ŭigwe known so

\textsuperscript{115} Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong, vol. 18, year of 1472, the 5th month, the 25th day.
far of the nineteenth century, before the Taehan Empire 大韓帝國 (1897-1910) was established in 1897, 49 are records of state ceremonies related to women. If funerary and wedding ceremonies are deducted, 32 rites were dedicated to queen dowagers, including 8 royal banquets for their birthdays and 24 ceremonies for offering honorable titles to them.\(^\text{116}\) After the completion of the rituals, documentary paintings depicting the events were produced by commission of the Office of Royal Banquets (Chinyŏnch'ŏng 進宴廳) and the Office of Royal Feasts (Chinch’anso 進饌所), and then distributed to participants of the event.

The royal banquet paintings of the nineteenth century were highly politically charged and firmly represented female agency expressed through their male relatives. This is attested by the fact that most of royal banquets were dedicated to Queen Dowagers Sunwŏn 純元王后 (1789-1857) (fig. 1-16) and Sinjŏng 神貞王后 (1808-1890) (fig. 1-17), who acted as regents for the teenage heirs to the throne and seized the initiative in designating the royal heir.\(^\text{117}\) For each banquet officials from the lineages of Andong Kim and P’ungyang Cho, who competed for power throughout the nineteenth century and to which the two queen dowagers belonged, participated in the Office of Royal Banquets as superintendents. Not only the queens’ relatives, but also officials from aristocratic families closely tied to the queen dowagers played a pivotal role in the implementation of the royal banquets.\(^\text{118}\) This reveals the networks between royal in-

\(^{116}\) For a list of extant ŭigwe and contents of each record, I refer to Han Yŏngu 韓永愚, Chosŏn wangjo ŭigwe: kukka ŭiryŏ wa kŭ kirok 조선왕조 의궤: 국가 의례와 그 기록 [Ŭigwe of the Chosŏn dynasty: state rituals and their records], (Seoul: Ilchisa, 2005).

\(^{117}\) Queen dowagers Sunwŏn and Sunwŏn acted as regents of King Hŏnjong 憲宗 (r. 1834-1849) and his successor King Ch’ŏlchong 僖宗 (r. 1849-1863). The Ceremonies of Offering Wine at Chagyŏng Hall in 1827 and 1828, and the Royal Feast at T’ongmyŏng Hall in 1848 were dedicated to Queen Dowager Sunwŏn. The Royal Feasts at Kŭnjŏng Hall in 1868, 1877 and 1887 were held for Queen Dowager Sinjŏng.

\(^{118}\) For example, Yi Haŭng 李昰應 (1820-1898), his brother Yi Choeŭng 李最應 (1815-1882), King Kojong’s brother Yi Chaemyŏn 李載冕 (1845-1912) and the king’s cousin Yi Chaewŏn 李載元 (1831-1891) served for the Office of Royal Banquet for Queen Dowager Sinjŏng. These members of the royal Yi lineage maintained close ties with Queen Dowager Sinjŏng of the lineage of P’ungyang Cho, who designated the son of Yi Haŭng (King Kojong)
law families, in which the queen dowager exerted authority. The queen dowager’s direct engagement in the rites and commemorative paintings is barely known due to the Confucian restrictions upon women in traditional society. What can be researched and told in regard to the female agency in producing court paintings is largely fragmentary. Nevertheless, the strong position of the queen in politics, the networks based on the queen’s influence, and the projects supervised by the queen’s relatives and officials standing closely by the queen’s side suffice to verify that these paintings were employed by the queen dowager in order to strengthen her authority.

4-3) Literati Officials as Agents of Court Art

Literati officials’ commissions for paintings were related to their duties at large, and their agency was exerted in consensus with the king and through bureaucratic procedures. Officials’ requests to commission paintings were submitted to the throne in the form of a memorial to the king. Upon the king’s approval, court painters undertook their tasks under the supervision of related authorities. Even though the king was the final decision maker, it was the scholar-officials’ initiative that brought the art into being. The examination of historical records explains how bureaucrats gained a control over the production of painting and expanded their sphere of influence in this process.

Commissions of didactic images, such as a screen of *Filial Piety* 孝行錄屏風, and paintings of *Nourishing Righteousness* 養正圖 and *Accomplishments of Sages* 聖功圖 were submitted to the throne. Queen dowager Sinjong seized power at court after the most senior member of Queen dowager Sunwon, a member of the Andong Kim lineage, the rival of the P’ungyang Cho lineage, passed away in 1857.
initiated by royal tutors for educating the young crown prince.\textsuperscript{119} These examples show that the scholar-officials’ engagement in the production of painting was related to their official tasks. In the same vein, some paintings requested by officials in charge of receiving and escorting Chinese envoys (\textit{Wōnjōpsa 遠接使} and \textit{Pansongsa 伴送使}) were produced for practical purposes while they carried out their duties. For example, in 1537 officials who received Chinese envoys offered letters to the king requesting a painting of a banquet at Kūnjong Hall held for welcoming the delegation in order to present it to the Chinese envoys.\textsuperscript{120} In 1681, bureaucrats escorting Chinese envoys asked the king to dispatch painters to draw landscapes on demand for Chinese diplomats.\textsuperscript{121}

In addition to paintings related to their official tasks, scholar-officials introduced to the king famous ancient calligraphic works and paintings from the private collections outside the court and advised him to have copies made. In many cases, these artworks became famous for their artistic and educational values. For instance, when Chief Royal Secretary (\textit{Tosŭngji 都承旨}) Kim Hŭisu 金希壽 (1475-1527) presented an album of calligraphy by the Yuan dynasty artist, Xian Yushu 鮮于樞 (1257-1302), he advised King Chungjong to have court painters make a copy of it and engrave it on stone tablets.\textsuperscript{122} During the reign of King Sukchong, screen of \textit{The Four Seasons of a Farmer’s Family} 農家四時圖 owned by Yi Suk 李翮 (1626-1688), a Minister of War, was brought to court by the suggestion of the Chief State Councilor (\textit{Yŏngŭijŏng 領議政}) Kim Suhang 金壽恒 (1629-1689), and a copy was made under the superintendency of the Office

\textsuperscript{119} Veritable Records of King T’aejong, vol. 26, year of 1413, the 12th month, the 30th day; Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 43, year of 1737, the 3rd month, the 6th day.
\textsuperscript{120} Veritable Records of King Chungjong, vol. 84, year of 1537, the 4th month, the 7th day.
\textsuperscript{121} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 11, year of 1681, the 4th month, the 19th day.
\textsuperscript{122} Veritable Records of King Chungjong, vol. 50, year of 1524, the 5th month, the 10th day.
of Special Counselors.\textsuperscript{123}

Given the fact that most paintings commissioned by officials exhibited an official or quasi-official character closely related to their work, their engagement in the production of art can also be understood as part of the operation of the bureaucratic system. Nevertheless, some agency was related to the personal engagement of officials in the way that the content and appearance of paintings were selected corresponding to their own responsibilities and Confucian ethics. Their identity and self-consciousness as art agents was not readily distinguishable from their officialdom because the notion of art as a vehicle to morally guide the people was a main principle of Chosŏn society.\textsuperscript{124}

5) The Role, Social Status, and Economic Condition of Court Painters

In a modernist discourse, the traces of the painted brush or other tools left on the surface serve as indexes for the presence of the painter, or material proof of artists’ intention, technical virtuosity and genius. It makes some sense to talk about the artist having agency when we discuss the role of artist in the early modern West, at least from the Renaissance period onward, when artists could be independent to a certain degree and served as creative agents with distinct and known identities.

However, in the case of Korean court painting, we have a different context; although the court painter played a significant role as a producer who was immediately responsible for the

\textsuperscript{123} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 12, the year of 1681, the 10th month, 12th day; vol. 13, year of 1682, the 4th month, the 11th day.

\textsuperscript{124} Besides paintings produced for practical function, government officials were primary patrons of commemorative paintings to celebrate court events and rites. Upon the completion of memorable events they participated in, multiple copie of paintings depicting their current events or mythical themes imbued with auspicious symbols were produced by request of the government officials and then disseminated to them. For detailed discussion of the role of literati officials in commissioning commemorative court screens, see chapter 2.
existence and characteristics of works of art, his subjectivity and intentions were extremely restricted by social practices and convention. In many cases, the artist’s presence and agency were overwhelmed or controlled by other social agents such as bureaucratic institutions and more powerful human agents of privileged elite groups. Consequently, artists functioned as a vehicle of agency for others. As already mentioned, the artists worked as officials of the Royal Bureau of Painting, a subordinate organ of the Ministry of Rites, and their painting production was institutionalized within a complex bureaucratic system under state supervision. Under these circumstances, court painters did not figure in the modernist notion of an artist having artistic liberty and autonomy. Therefore, an alternative framework is needed to explore questions of court painters’ agency: how was an artist’s agency realized and involved in the production and consumption of court art, and how did these aspects impact the materiality of factures?

Court paintings discussed in this paper typically suppress any sign of a brushstroke, the utmost trace of ‘individuality,’ are devoid of any evidence that the images were made and handled by individual artists. The artists’ touch was effaced by a codified visual aesthetic, a restricted set of stereotyped images, and limited color schemes. The court painter’s subjectivity and identity were concealed as they were not allowed to leave their names or seals to indicate their authorship of their product, and many court paintings were the result of collaborative work similar to manufactured products. These facts suggest the relatively weak position of artists in the dynamics of the production of court paintings.  

However, the absence of individual touch and texture is not always without meaning; the concealment of the artist’s hand can indicate the patterns of articulation and consumption of 

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125 This is partially due to the court painter’s marginalized social status. Court painters were minor functionaries belonging to the secondary class, which later constituted the chungin (middle men). They were usually awarded a nominal military position, and because their promotions were stringently regulated, under normal conditions the highest position they might attain was a sixth junior rank.
materiality in the given time and space, which can shape the practice of production, or bundle of related practices. It is clear that court painters collectively contributed to creating specific artistic formulas and visual idioms that can be labeled “court painting style” (kungjung hoehwa 併中繪畫), which features graphical clarity, marked flatness, and a bright color scheme restricted to primary colors. Yet, these characteristics cannot be solely be attributed to the agency of artists. Rather, this homogeneity of style is the result of a coherent set of negotiations between different social agents and the cultural body. It can be considered a material proof codified in visual forms complying with an internal royal vision celebrating the Chosŏn king’s rulership and stabilizing the social hierarchy.\(^{126}\)

5-1) The Role of Court Painters

In the first half of the Chosŏn dynasty, court painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting held lower miscellaneous positions in the bureaucratic structure. In a rigidly stratified Chosŏn society, only a small group of yangban elites was eligible for higher positions in the bureaucracy, and subordinates obtained restricted or little access to government or high society.\(^{127}\) Another

\(^{126}\) Adapting Gell’s concept of “agency,” Jessica Rawson analyzes the weak role of artists in the Chinese context, particularly in the case of ritual portraiture. According to Rawson’s argument, while modern Western artists’ agency was clearly recognized by viewers, Chinese court painters who worked in the workshops regulated by the institutionalized system did not enjoy artistic autonomy. In the minds of viewers, the artist played no role as author of the art. Instead, the emperor, the subject of the portrait, exerted agency directly on the recipients of the painting. For a detailed account, see Jessica Rawson, “The Agency of,” 95-113.

\(^{127}\) Upholding the Confucian social order, Chosŏn leaders stratified society into rigid status levels with specific duties and privileges. At the top of the social hierarchy were member of the royal family, who had, in theory, absolute power. Yangban, the “two orders” of officialdom who served in the bureaucracy as civil or military officials, seized actual power. Below the yangban were chung’in, who passed miscellaneous civil examination called chapkwa, and possessed specific professional skills. Lower in social standing than the chung’in, but still socially acceptable, were the sangmin, or commoners, such as peasant-farmers, fishermen, artisans and merchants. The lowest rungs of society consist of ch’ŏnmin, the lowborn. They were slaves, butchers, tanners, actor, acrobats, shamans, and kisaengs (female entertainer). The social status of court painters changed in the second half of the dynasty, when special promotion and economic benefits were bestowed upon counts painters producing royal portrait. See following section 4-2 for the changes in court painter’s social status throughout time.
reason for court painter’s low social status is related to the nature of the work of court painters. Their tasks required physical labor and craftsmanship, and thereby they were considered craftsmen and technicians equivalent to leather-craftsmen, tile makers, stonemasons, and craftsmen of jade and gold. For the same reason, the Royal Bureau of Painting was affiliated with the Ministry of Work in charge of “crafting” and “creation” at the beginning of the dynasty.\(^\text{128}\)

Court painters of the Chosŏn dynasty were responsible for a wide range of tasks related to painting and drawing that do not necessarily meet the criteria of what may be considered art by modern audiences. Their duties included painting portraits of the king and merit subjects, documentary paintings of court events, maps and topographical landscapes for military and administrative purposes, illustrations for ʻūigwe, designs of ritual objects, drawing of palace architecture, didactic images for a royal audience, and decorative and seasonal paintings for the palaces.

*Regulations for the Six Boards* delineated the official duties of court painters, in which more emphasis was placed on drawings for practical purposes rather than on artistic works for appreciation.\(^\text{129}\) The book lists three categories of court painters’ responsibilities: copying (mosa 模寫), offering (chinsang 進上), and dispatching (punch’a 分差). Mosa refers to various acts of drawing and painting such as creating royal portraits and decorating the surfaces of ritual objects. It also includes copying royal seals used for state rites and diplomatic documents, creating

\(^{128}\) This point of view is reflected in Chŏng Tochŏn 鄭道傳 (1342-1398), entry of “Kongchŏn” 工典 [Laws of works], in “Chosŏn kyŏnggukchŏn ha” 朝鮮經國典下 [Administrative Codes of Chosŏn, 2nd volume], *Sambongjip* 三峰集, vol. 14, in *Han’guk munjip ch’onggan* 韓國文集叢刊, vol. 5 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1990), 441d. In this record, Chŏng refers to court painters as artisans who were responsible for the crafting and creating and sorts them under the entry “Public Works,” along with other craftsmen.

\(^{129}\) *Regulations for the Six Boards* was completed in 1866 and promulgated in 1867 during King Kojong’s reign. Although this national code was compiled in the nineteenth century, it codifies what had been practiced in the earlier period. My account is based on information included in the entry of “Tohwasŏ” under “Laws of Rites” 禮典 [Laws of rites], *Yukchŏn chorye*. 

replicas of calligraphy for transference onto stone tablets, and filling carved characters on bamboo and jade investiture books with gold and red pigments. Skillful court painters were responsible for producing topographical images of possible tomb sites and drawings for stone statues installed in front of a royal tomb. The designing of funerary clothing and textiles for the royal families was also an important task. In addition, painting screens used in court and state rites is considered one of the *mosa* activities.

The second category, *chinsang*, includes the creation of New Year’s paintings wishing longevity and health for the royal family and wading off evil spirits. Court painters were expected to submit twenty paintings, and Painters-in-waiting painted thirty paintings per person by the twentieth day of the twelfth month. Painting *Door Gods* to be attached to a door as a charm against evil influence was also their duty. These paintings were offered to the court and distributed to royal relatives and high officials. The last category, *punch’a*, related to the appointment of court painters to accompany envoys sent to China and Japan. Dispatched court painters produced topographic images during their journey, documentary paintings depicting special events, and landscape paintings of historical sites and famous scenery on their journey. They also created paintings for cultural and diplomatic exchanges with the Chinese and Japanese guests. Painters sent to China were charged with obtaining mineral pigments used for screens and palace architecture.¹³⁰

5-2) The Social Status of Court Painter

The term “hwawŏn” was a unique creation of the Chosŏn dynasty referring to painters who worked for the court. Its literal meaning is “a painting official,” but the term, like other words indicating professional painters such as hwagong (畵工 artisan painter), hwasa (畵師 painting master), and hwasu (畵手 skilled painter), was extensively used to designate individuals who engaged in painting at the professional level. However, there is a slight difference in the meaning of “hwagong” and “hwawŏn.” The former emphasizes craftsmanship and thus tends to link a professional painter to lowborn people, while the latter describes a painter as an official who has obtained a post in the government bureaucracy.131

Hwawŏn were a group of painters with the lowest official rank in the Ministry of Rites. They were not a part of the established, official post and rank system because they were recruited through ch’wijae (取材 examining talent), meaning they were tested within the Royal Bureau of Painting. This exam was considered lower in level than other miscellaneous exams (chapkwa 雜科) of chungin officials. Accordingly, they were separated from the post administration system for civil and military officials who passed the state examination (kwagŏ 科擧) and thus were limited to low-level miscellaneous status posts. Yet this does not mean hwawŏn were lowborn people.132 Rather, they belonged to the commoners, or secondary status group below the yangban

131 For a study of the various terms referring to professional painters in the Chosŏn society, see Hong Sŏnp’yo “Hwawŏn ǔi hyŏngsŏng,” 346.
132 Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 59, year of 1433, the 2nd month, the 14th day; vol. 114, year of 1446, the 12th month, the 1st day. Upholding the Confucian social order, Chosŏn leaders stratified society into rigid status levels with specific duties and privileges. At the top of the social hierarchy were member of the royal family, who had, in theory, absolute power. Yangban, the “two orders” of officialdom who served in the bureaucracy as civil or military officials, seized actual power. Below the yangban were chung’in, who passed miscellaneous civil examination called chapkwa, and possessed specific professional skills. Lower in social standing than the chung’in, but still socially acceptable, were the sangmin, or commoners, such as peasant-farmers, fishermen, artisans and
class and were legally eligible for state examination.

Before the National Code was established and its limitation on the rank of court painters to the junior sixth grade came into effect in the late fifteenth century, court painters had been given prestigious posts reaching the senior third rank. For example, An Kyŏn was appointed to the senior fourth rank in the military official hierarchy (hogun 護軍), and Ch’oe Kyŏng held a position in the senior third rank of tongjong taebu 通政大夫. In this early period, there were ambiguities and disagreements over the painters’ status. The conversation between the Third State Councilor (Uŭijŏng 右議政) Ha Yŏn 河演 (1376-1453) and the Fifth State Councilor (Uch’ansŏng 右贊成) Kim Chongsŏ 金宗瑞 (1383-1453) illustrates this conflict. When King Sejong asked whether technicians, including painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting, were appointed to higher ranks or not, Ha Yŏn claimed that it was not necessary to open higher positions to minor functionaries. Contrarily, Kim Chongsŏ asserted that their high-level talents and skills merited them a higher rank. This dispute reflects the conflicting tendencies of heredity and Confucian meritocracy in the formation of the bureaucratic system. However, this flexible attitude disappeared with the advent of a rigidly stratified social hierarchy, and efforts to impose restrictions on the positions of court painters became dominant at King Sejo’s court. The ruling officials strongly insisted that officials with petty skills should not enjoy any semblance of parity merchants. The lowest rungs of society consist of ch ‘onmin, the lowborn. They were slaves, butchers, tanners, actor, acrobats, shamans, and kisaengs (female entertainer).

133 In many ways the position of court painters was unstructured and unsettled throughout Chosŏn dynasty and thus their social standing was neither absolutely fixed nor unchanging. Although the legal code stipulates the upper limit of promotion in bureaucratic organizations and regulate social status of court painters, exceptions were made where there was room for negotiation.

134 According to Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 119, year of 1448, the 3rd month, the 5th day, An Gyŏn’s position was a senior forth rank of Five Military Commands (hogun) in 1448 when he was ordered to create drawings of the crown prince’s ritual objects. Ch’oe Kyŏng was a junior fifth rank military official of Five Military Commands (pusajik) in 1455 when he was rewarded the title of a third-rank merit subject. Before he was dismissed from office in 1463, his position reached the senior third rank of tongjong taebu. For details, see Veritable Records of King Sejo, vol. 2, year of 1455, the 12th month, the 3rd day; vol. 30, year of 1463, the 3rd month, the 2nd day.

135 Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 114, year of 1446, the 12th month, the 1st day.
with civil and military officials. This change is reflected in literati officials’ diatribe against the promotions of Ch’oe Kyŏng and An Kūisaeng to senior third ranks (tangsanggwan 堂上官), which were considered upper scale positions.  

As individual status was determined at birth based on the parent’s ascribed status in Chosŏn society, a painter’s family background predetermined his social conditions. A few fragmentary writings allow us to investigate the class to which court painters belonged in the early Chosŏn period. An Kyŏn, a prominent court painter in the early fifteenth century, is assumed to have been a commoner given that his son An Sohŭi was able to take the highest civil examination (munkwa 文科) in 1478. Ch’oe Kyŏng’s father was known as a salt producer who was considered to be a commoner engaged in menial labor (silyang yŏkch’ŏn 身良役賤). Pae Ryŏn 裵連, Ch’oe Kyŏng’s colleague, painted portraits of Queen Sohŏn and Kings Sejo, Yejong and Tŏkchong in 1472 and was probably a commoner, like An Kyŏn. The Veritable Records state that the status of his son Pae Maenggŏn was a “yuhak” 幼學 (student) when he took the literary licentiate examination (chinsasi 進士試) in 1489. Yuhak refers to students of the Four Schools in the capital or of country schools, which usually served the educational institutions of higher-class commoners or yangban aristocrats. Yi Insŏk 李引錫, who also painted royal portraits in 1472 together with Ch’oe Kyŏng, An Kūisaeng, and Pae Ryŏn, was an illegitimate

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136 When King Sŏngjong wanted to promote Ch’oe Kyŏng and An Kūisaeng to the senior third rank as a reword for their participation in painting the king’s portraits in 1472, Inspector-General Kim Chigyŏng (1419-1485) offered a letter to the throne criticizing the decision. See Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong, vol. 18, year of 1472, the 5th month, the 2nd day. Tangsanggwan refers to higher-level officials of a senior third or higher, who are authorized to participate in discussions or parties with the king at palace halls.

137 The family backgrounds of An Kyŏn and Ch’oe Kyŏng are discussed at length in An Hwijun, “Chosŏn wangjo sidae ìi hwawŏn,” 159-167.

138 Veritable Records of King Sŏngjong, vol. 224, year of 1489, the 1st month, the 4th day.
son of the *yangban* (*sŏöl* 庶孼). In sum, court painters active in the early Chosŏn period were commoners belonging to the secondary status group, marginalized but still gaining access to posts in the bureaucratic system.\(^{140}\)

In the seventeenth century *chungin* emerged as a distinct hereditary status group occupying specialist bureaucratic positions in Seoul. *Chungin* now occupied a social standing between the ruling *yangban* and commoners, filling government posts responsible for interpreting, medicine, law, astronomy, accounting and mathematics, document preparation, painting, and copying calligraphy.\(^{141}\) Arguably, painters and copyists occupied the lowest status positions among the *chungin* since they had no official examination to pass outside the Royal Bureau of Painting, and their craft most closely resembled the kind of artistically oriented work assigned to low-born status groups such as *kisaeng* and wandering musical troupes.\(^{142}\)

The *Supplement to the National Code* (*Sok taejŏn* 續大典) promulgated in 1746 stipulates the hierarchy of court painters within the *chungin* group. According to its “Code for Identification Law” (*hopae samok* 報牌事目), painters, along with secondary sons and local clerks, were bestowed *somok pangp’ae* (small wood identification tag 小木方牌), which was a rank below *kakp’ae* (horn identification tags 角牌), given to the *chapkwa* miscellaneous examination passers

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\(^{139}\) For further study of the family background of Pae Ryŏn and Yi Insŏk, see Pae Chongmin, “Chosŏn ch’ogi tohwa kigu,” 81-87. *Sŏöl* refers to the offspring of secondary wives of the *yangban* and their descendants, usually of *yangban* fathers and lower class females.

\(^{140}\) There was the exceptional case of Yi Sangjwa, who was a versatile painter in the early sixteenth century. When he entered the Royal Bureau of Painting, his status was a slave.

\(^{141}\) The social hierarchy of *chungin* and their tasks in the government offices has been thoroughly examined in Kyung Moon Hwang, *Beyond Birth: Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 19-34; 108-118; Burglind Jungmann, “Literati Ideals and Social Reorganisation in the Early Chosŏn Period,” in *Shifting Paradigms in East Asian Visual Culture: a Festschrift in Honour of Lothar Ledderose*, eds., Burglind Jungmann et al. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag GmbH, 2012), 313-329. Court painters were minor functionaries belonging to the secondary class, which constituted the *chungin* during the seventeenth century. They were sometimes awarded a nominal military position and as their promotions were stringently regulated, under normal conditions the highest position they might attain was a sixth junior rank.

\(^{142}\) Kyung Moon Hwang, *Beyond Birth*, 112-113.
such as translators and physicians.\textsuperscript{143}

Upward mobility of court painters inside the *chungin* group was achieved partially through marriage ties with more powerful members of the *chungin* class and more importantly, through special promotions to the high position awarded to painters in charge of king’s portraits in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{144} These were promoted to a high rank often solely consigned to *yangban* officials. For example, court painters such as Hŏ Tam 許僩 (1710-?), Chang Chullyang 張駿良 (1802-1870), and Kim Mujong 金茂種 reached junior second rank, and Paek Ŭnbae held a junior first rank when he was summoned to the court to paint royal portraits in 1900.\textsuperscript{145} Moreover, royal portrait painters were often assigned to regular salaried positions of civil officialdom (*tongban chŏnjik* 東班正職) and government posts outside the capital, including *Country Magistrates* (*hyŏngam* 縣監) and *Official of the Post-station* (*ch’albang* 察訪).\textsuperscript{146} When the painters’ ranks and positions were elevated, the *hwawŏn* position, formerly classified as “miscellaneous post”, was transferred to “official posts in the capital” that were usually conferred to *yangban* officials.\textsuperscript{147} In addition, court painters were allowed to attain supervisor posts in the *Royal Bureau of Painting* again, which had been occupied by civil officials from the early fifteenth century onward.

The increased demands for royal portraits, and in turn painters’ promotions to higher

\textsuperscript{143} Hong Sŏnp’yo, “Hwawŏn ūi hyŏngsŏng.,” 337-338.

\textsuperscript{144} Notwithstanding the hierarchy inside the *chunin* class, painters were allowed to form marriage ties with higher *chungin*, including translators and physicians. Through this kind of endogamy within the same *chungin* group, painters finally achieved the same status as others in the higher *chungin* group.

\textsuperscript{145} Pak Chŏnghye, “Ŭigwe rŭl t’onghaesŏ pon Chosŏn sidae,” 215-217.

\textsuperscript{146} For example, Chang Chauk 張子旭 and Ham Taesŏk 咸泰錫 were promoted to the sixth rank in civil officialdom and Chin Chaehae 崔再冕 (1691-1769) was assigned to the junior third rank of military officialdom in the reign of King Sukchong. Pyŏn Sangbyŏk 卡相壁 and Kim Hongdo were designated as county magistrates during the Yŏngjo’s rule. See Kang Kwansik, “Chosŏn sidae Tohwasŏ hwawŏn chedo,” 266.

\textsuperscript{147} Entry of “Tohwasŏ,” Kyŏnggwanjik, under “Yijŏn” 史典 [code on personnel], *Comprehensive National Code*, vol. 1 (1785).
ranks and posts raised the social status of court painters in the late Chosŏn period.\textsuperscript{148} Along with the expanding market for art, the painters’ improved social standings presumably contributed to the emergence of court painters who enjoyed more artistic autonomy than their predecessors. These painters active in late Chosŏn exerted artistic agency in creating their work as well as developing self-consciousness as an artist, albeit the artist’s assertion of autonomy was mostly limited to the private realm.\textsuperscript{149}

5-3) The Economic Conditions of Court Painter

Competition for hegemony in the production of court art took place principally between the king and literati scholars, but even professional artists were able to expand their sphere of control as they produced their work for the art market independent from aristocratic tutelage in the late eighteenth century. While socio-economic changes led to a paradigm shift from the social system based on a wholly agrarian economy to the beginnings of modern society based on commercial economy, many artisans, including court painters, actively participated in independent production activities.\textsuperscript{150} As professional painters started producing their works first and selling them later to anonymous market, they asserted their autonomy to an unprecedented degree. Before the reciprocal economy flourished in the late Chosŏn era, court painters produced paintings for private patrons and clients. In this case, the control of art production fell into the

\textsuperscript{148} The position of court painters was unstructured and unsettled throughout the Chosŏn dynasty. From the eighteenth century onward, the social and economic status of court painters was gradually improved but they were still lower in the Chosŏn social hierarchy.

\textsuperscript{149} For a study of the changes in chungin professional painters’ artistic activities in the late Chosŏn period, see Jiyeon Kim, “Gathering Paintings of Chungin in Late Chosŏn (1392-1910), Korea” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2009); “Kim Hongdo’s Sandalwood Garden: A Self-Image of a Late-Chosŏn Court Painter,” \textit{Archives of Asian Art} 62 (2012): 47-67.

\textsuperscript{150} Ko Dong-hwan 高東煥, “Development of commerce and commercial policy during the reign of King Chŏngjo,” \textit{Korea Journal} 40:4 (2000), 202-226.
hands of the patrons, usually upper class elites, but it seems that the artist had rather more artistic autonomy to respond to private commissions than when they served their official duties at court.

The court painter’s engagement in private commissions was primarily caused by financial difficulties. In the early Chosŏn period only five of the twenty court painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting were assigned salaried positions and received regular salaries. Court painters were designated to these paid positions based on the painting examination results every three months. In other words, the three-month wages were distributed in turns to the artists who gained a high score on the exam. Painters in unpaid positions were given a per diem and meals only for the days on which they worked.¹⁵¹ Fifteen young students in apprenticeship received an exemption from military service obligations and a partial reduction of corvee labor for their families.¹⁵² In addition, salaries of ninth- and eighth-ranked military division positions were shared by these students.¹⁵³ Overall, the court painters encountered financial difficulties for insufficient monetary compensation. Consequently, they sought for supplementary income by creating paintings for patrons and clients.

To improve poor wages and working conditions, three salaried posts from the military division were allocated to senior court painters already during the reign of King Sejong.¹⁵⁴ Since then, eight salaried positions were given in turns to the court painters in rotation every six months. Despite this action to improve the economic conditions of court painters, they suffered from poverty to the extent that they were not able to feed their families. During King Sukchong’s reign, only ten among twenty court painters obtained a salary.¹⁵⁵ The court painter’s salary

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¹⁵² Veritable Records of King Sejo, vol. 34, year of 1464, the 10th month, the 15th day; vol. 38, year of 1466, the 1st month, the 19th day.
¹⁵³ Pae Chongmin, “Chosŏn ch’ogi tohwa kigu,” 122.
¹⁵⁴ Entry of Towhasŏ in Chapchik under “Yijŏn,” in Kŏngguk taejŏn, vol. 3; Veritable Records of King Sejong, vol. 46, year of 1429, the 11th month, the 23rd day.
¹⁵⁵ Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, year of 1682, the 9th month, the 4th day.
problem was still unsolved during the reign of King Chŏngjo. According to Han Chongyu’s 韓宗裕 (1737-?) writing, there were only eleven positions on the payroll for thirty court painters, thus for half a year, court painters received no salary.\footnote{Han Chongyu, “Opinions of Han Chongyu, a teacher of the Royal Bureau of Painting,” Records of Opinions in the Pyŏngyo year of King Chŏngjo’s reign. For English translation of the text, see Oh Ju-seok, The Art of Kim Hong-do (Ill.: Art Media Resource, 2005), 130-131.} The implements of Painters-in-waiting to the Court slightly mitigated the court painter’s economic problems by providing special promotions and bonuses. One sixth-ranked sagwa and one seventh-ranked sajŏng position were given to Painters-in-waiting who obtained the highest two marks in the painting examination, which was held three times a season. The wages of three sajŏng positions were distributed to the ten painters in rotation every six months. Considering only eight paid posts were given to the thirty painters in the Royal Bureau of Painting, the five salaried positions granted to ten Painters-in-waiting is a considerable increase in economic benefits. In this way, the Painters-in-waiting enjoyed a more stable financial situation and social standing due to the proximity to the king than ordinary court painters.\footnote{Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn, 45-46. One sixth-ranked sagwa position and four seventh-ranked sajŏng positions were given to the painters-in-waiting. Of the four sajŏng positions, three were jointly shared by the ten painters. The result of the painting examination determined who received one sagwa and one sajŏng position. The two painters who obtained the highest two marks in the painting examination held three times a season were assigned the positions. Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn tŭl,” 308-317.} In addition, after the “Painters at Military Posts” system took effect in the eighteenth century, twenty-one salaried positions were allocated to court painters. In total, thirty-seven salaried posts were secured for court painters from the eighteenth century onward. As these painters received regular wages from local army and administrative governments, they maintained relatively stable livelihoods. This is attested by the fact that senior court painters who had been long in service and even some Painters-in-waiting who had already gained decent salaries served in these posts.\footnote{Yi Hunsang, “Chosŏn hugi chibang hwawŏn tŭl,” 308-317.}
Despite government efforts to reduce the poverty of the court painters, their wages remained insufficient. Using the wages of Hwang Yunsŏk 黃胤錫 (1729-1791), a lower government official in the late eighteenth century, we can reckon the salary scale of court painters who occupied posts from the lower ninth to the lower sixth ranks. According to Hwang’s diary, he received 58 nyang of copper coins for one year of service as a seventh-rank official in the Office of the Royal Genealogy (Chongbusi 宗簿寺) in 1769, which is approximately 4.8 nyang as monthly salary. Court painters in the same rank, junior seventh, took sixth-month turns in receiving salaries. Thus, they received half of Hwang’s amount, or 2.4 nyang, as a monthly wage. Given that Hwang received financial support from his family because his low salary did not cover living expenses in Seoul, we can imagine the financial distress court painters were in.\(^\text{159}\)

Besides their regular salary, court painters were given some reward for their extra work such as creating New Year’s paintings, king’s portraits and documentary paintings of state rites. For example, the *Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat* describes that the government had saved 46 rolls of cotton to pay for court painters to produce New Year’s paintings when it decided to discontinue New Year’s paintings as an effort to diminish the budget in 1662.\(^\text{160}\) If the compensation was evenly distributed to 20 painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting, each painter was given 2.3 rolls of cotton cloth, equivalent to 4.6 nyang.\(^\text{161}\) Court painters, who were engaged

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\(^{159}\) Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hawŏn ūi kyŏngjejŏk yŏgŏn,” 299. *Ijae nan’go 益齋亂藁* written by Hwang Yunsŏk offers detailed information on economic dimensions of the eighteenth-century Chosŏn society, such as the scale of court officials’ salary, prices of rice, beans, silk and cotton, and rent. For further study of this record, see Yi Hŏnch’ang 李憲昶, “18 segi Hwang Yunsŏk ka ūi kyŏngje saenghwal 18세기 황윤석가의 경제생활 [Economic life of Hwang Yunsŏk’s family in the eighteenth century]”, in *Ijae nango ro ponŭn Chosŏn chisigini ūi saenghwalsa* 이재난고로 보는 조선 지식인의 생활사 [Life History of the Chosŏn elites focusing on *Ijae nango*], Kang Sinhang et al. (Sŏngnam: Academy of Korean Studies, 2007), 337-450.

\(^{160}\) *Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat*, vol. 212, year of 1669, the 1st month, the 23rd day.

\(^{161}\) There is no data on the price of cotton in the late seventeenth century. However, the *Supplement to the National Code* in 1746 specifies that the price of a roll of cotton cloth was fixed to two nyang, and this exchange value of
in a wide range of works and projects for *togam*, received wages in the form of rice and cotton based on the level of contribution to the project and the numbers of their working days. The painters in charge of creating and copying the king’s portraits received on average twelve *tu* of rice and one roll of cotton, which can be converted to 5.96 *nyang*.  

In addition, these painters were rewarded with goods such as horses, bows, and cotton.

Court painters working for a *togam* were also responsible for painting screens used for ritual or ceremonial occasions and commemorative paintings depicting the event. These painters were given a per diem and meals for their working days. For example, 15 court painters received 0.22 *nyang* per day for eight days during which they were engaged in painting a large ten-panel folding screen of the *Five Peaks* for the royal feast in 1829. In 1848, the daily wage for the court painters whose job was to apply color to musical instruments and ritual objects for the royal banquet held that year was 0.36 *nyang*. *Transcribed Record of Commemorative Screen of 1744 (Kapja kyebyŏng tūnghok 甲子禊屏瞻錄)* explains that court painters Ham Sehwi and No Sibin painted 4 screens and 36 hanging scrolls depicting the court banquet which was given cotton to money continued to the year of 1884. According to a recent study, one *sŏm* of rice was five *nyang*, one *sŏm* of beans were two and a half *nyang*, a roll of cotton cloth or hemp cloth was two *nyang*, and one silver tael was three *nyang* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For further study of the price of rice and the exchange value of cash crops in the late Chosŏn period, see Pak It’aeक 박이택, “Sŏul-ui sungyŏn mit mi sungyŏn nodongja-ui îmgŭm: 1600-1909 nyŏn ŭigwe charyo rŭl chungsim ŭro,” 서울의 숙련 및 미숙련 노동자의 임금, 1600-1909: 義軌 자료를 중심으로 [Wages of skilled and unskilled laborers in Seoul from 1600-1900: focusing on data of ŭigwe, records of state rituals], in *Suryang köŏnjesa lo pon Chosŏn hugi* 수량 경제사로 본 조선 후기 [A cliometric review of late Chosŏn history], ed. Yi Yŏnhun (Seoul: Taehakkyo Ch’ulp’anbu: 2004), 42-107; Pak Hyesuk 박혜숙, “18-19 segi munhŏn e poinŭn hap’ye pŏnyŏk ŭi munje” 18-19 세기 문헌에 보이는 화폐단위 변역의 문제 [Translation of currency units in literatures from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries], *Minjok munhaksu yŏn’gu* (2008), 203-233.

For a study of wages given to royal portrait painters in the late Chosŏn period, see Yi Sŏngmi, *Chosŏn sidae ŏjin kwangye*, 135. The average wage was not changed until 1837. One *tu*, or *mal* of rice is 0.06 *sŏm* of rice, thus one *tu* of rice is around 0.33 *nyang*. See Pak Hyesuk, “18-19 segi munhŏn,” 214-217.

For a list of incentive goods offered to painters working for the superintendency, see Pak Chŏnghye, “Ŭigwe rŭl t’ŏnghae pon Chosŏn sidae,” 221-267.

“P’ummok” 棄目 [List of consultations to superior authorities], year of 1828, the 12th month and the 3rd day, in (*Sunjo kich’uk)* chinchan ŭigwe (純祖己丑) 進饌儀軌 [Records of the Royal Banquet (in 1829 during King Sunjo’s reign)], vol. 2.

“Akgi p’ungmul” 樂器 風物, (Hŏnjong musin) chinchan ŭigwe (憲宗戊申) 進饌儀軌 [Records of the Royal Banquet (in 1848 during King Hŏnjong’s reign)], vol. 3.
to royal relatives. They received around 0.98 nyang per day and in total 117.6 nyang for four months. In sum, painters involved in court-sponsored projects were given similar, or slightly higher, amounts of daily pay as skilled workers who, on average, earned about 0.28 nyang per day.

In the early period of the dynasty, members of the royal family and yangban were the court painters’ major patrons and clients. With the economic growth in the late eighteenth century, however, affluent middle people emerged as powerful consumers of paintings. A famous story demonstrates that renowned court painters, such as Kim Hongdo, Kim Ûnghwan 金應煥 (1742-1789), Sin Han’yŏng 申漢枰 (1726-?), and Yi Inmun 李寅文 (1745-1821), gathered at the residence of chungin painter Kang Hŭiŏn 姜熙彦 (1710-1784) to work on many public and private painting commissions. There is evidence that in 1795 Kim Hongdo painted Painting Album of the Úlmyo Year 乙卯年畫帖 (fig. 1-18) for Kim Hant’ae 金漢泰 (1726-?), a wealthy court interpreter in Seoul. Thus, the rise of a wealthy middle class explains court painters’ engagement in private commissions.

How much money did court painters receive for producing privately commissioned paintings? A few extant documents record the prices of such paintings. The usual price for Kim Hongdo’s paintings was said to be 30 nyang. Yi Myŏnggi 李命基 who excelled in portraiture in the eighteenth century, received 10 nyang of compensation for Portrait of Kang Sehwang at the Age of 71 (fig. 1-19) As incomes that court painters earned from private commissions were

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166 According to Transcribed Record of Commemorative Screen of 1744, four large screens to be given to the Office of the Royal Genealogy and three higher-level officials, together with 36 scrolls for working-level administrators and royal relatives, were produced to commemorate the royal banquet held for the royal members. The labor charge for a large screen was 11 nyang, and that of one scroll was 2.05 nyang. See Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa, 80; 166; Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hwawŏn ŭi kyŏngjejŏk yŏkŏn,” 299.

167 Pak It’aek, “Sŏul ŭi sungyryŏn,” 85-95. Pak explains that an unskilled worker was paid around 0.25 nyang a day.

much higher than the salary from the Royal Bureau of Painting, more and more court painters entered the art market and engaged in privately commissioned works. The art market highlighted each artist’s individuality and encouraged the artist to leave signatures and seals on their creations as an indication of authorship. The artist’s unique agency in creating the work and their reputation became major factors that decided the price of paintings. The rise of the art market and the increase in private commissions offered a degree of autonomy to the artists to establish their own styles and to control the content and appearance of their art.

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169 Recent scholars such as Chang Chinsŏng, Sung Lim Kim, and Kang Kwansik have paid more attention to the economic dimension of paintings, such as the market prices, circulation and trades of paintings in the Chosŏn dynasty. According to their research on prices of paintings, Chŏng Sŏn’s (1676-1759) paintings were traded for 30 to 70 nyang, and Kim Chŏnghŭi’s (1786-1856) album of calligraphy was priced as high as 100 nyang. The price of Yu Tŏkjang’s painting of Bamboo in Snow was 0.6 nyang and that of Hong Tukwŏn’s eight-leaf album of plum blossoms was 1 nyang. For details, see Sung Lim Kim, “From Middlemen to Center Stage,” 90-99; Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hwawŏnŭi kyŏngjejŏk,” 299-302; Kang Kwansik, “Chosŏn hugi chisinŭi hoehwa kyŏnghŏm kwa insik: Ijae nango rŭl t'onghae pon Hwang Yunsŏk ŭi hoehwa kyŏnghŏm kwa insik ŭl chungsim ŭro” 조선후기 지식인의 회화 경험과 인식: 이재난고를 통해 본 화풍의 회화 경험과 인식을 중심으로 중심으로 [The experience and perception of paintings in the Chosŏn intellectual community: focusing on Hwang Yunsŏk’s experience and perception of painting through the examination of Ijae nango], in Ijae nango ro ponŭn Chosŏn chisin, 630-650.
2. Production of Commemorative Painting in Seventeenth-century Chosŏn: A Case Study of the Andong Kwŏn Lineage’s Commemorative Paintings

1) Introduction

The late seventeenth century marked a watershed in tradition of commemorative painting in the Chosŏn dynasty. In the early period of the dynasty, paintings depicting gathering of literati and government officials were produced for commemorative, social functions. The officials working for the same government organs, those who passed the state examination at the same year, and senior scholars who reached a high age held social gatherings and commissioned paintings to foster their camaraderie among the members. Most paintings produced for commemorative purpose before the seventeenth century depict their social gatherings in the format of a hanging scroll or an album and this convention was continued throughout the dynasty.

The epochal changes that occurred in the nature of Chosŏn commemorative paintings in the seventeenth century have many dimensions, which offered a model for art works created in the later half of the dynasty. It has been characterized by diversity in formats and subjects. The popularity of multi-panel screen format, the incorporation of Chinese themes into the repertoire of commemorative paintings, the application of the lavish style of blue-and-green landscape painting, the growing importance of government offices as artistic agents, and the politically charged motivation for commission are remarkable changes occurring in the late seventeenth century. These noteworthy phenomena are a prelude of the artistic conventions and the development of court paintings in the eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries, which are the foci of
the following chapters.

This section analyzes the socio-political contexts of this change and its contribution to shaping the pattern of production and consumption of the late Chosŏn court paintings, which were produced for and used at state rituals and other events. Three commemorative screens commissioned by the Andong Kwŏn family, a prestige yangban lineage, *Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun of 1689* 權大運耆老宴會圖 (fig. 1-20), *Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture Ceremony of 1690* 景宗王世子冊禮都監契屏 (fig. 1-32), and *Screen to Commemorate King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials of 1691* 肅宗辛未親政契屏 (fig. 1-36), will be examined in depth as a case study to reveal this new trend and its impact on the production of art in the later period.  

From an artistic perspective, the three commemorative screens are worthy of note for the following reasons: First, they illuminate the long lasting convention to commission paintings after social gatherings and court events for commemorative purposes in the late seventeenth century. Second, they offer insights into blue-and-green landscape painting and its symbolic meaning. Third, they epitomize how the Chinese themes, such as ideal landscape related to reclusive life of lofty scholars and figural motifs reminiscent of romanticized Chinese antiquity, were adopted and manipulated in order to satisfy the Chosŏn elite’s artistic taste and socio-political desire. The stylistic elements, visual representation, and physical elements of the screens will be considered to investigate the artistic preference of the scholar-officials. In addition to the analysis of artistic aspects of these works of art, the political strife between the Southerners (*Nam* 南人) and Westerners (*Sŏin* 西人) and

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170 For a study of political and art historical significance of these three works, see Sŏ Yunjŏng (Seo Yoonjung) 徐胤晶, “17 segi huban Andong Kwŏn ssi ū kinyŏm hoehwa wa Namin ū chŏngch,” 17세기 후반 안동권씨의 기념 회화와 남인의 정치 [The Andong Kwŏn Lineage and their commission of commemorative painting: art and politics of Southerner literati-officials in the late 17th century], *Andonghak yŏn’gu* 11 (2012): 259-294. Kyŏngjong 景宗 (r. 1720-1724) is the temple or posthumous name given to Crwon Prince Yi Yun 李昀.
their social networks and bonds based on region and kinship will be scrutinized in order to elucidate the political significance of commemorative art in Chosŏn society.

I briefly introduce the family history of the Andong Kwŏn lineage 安東 權氏, focusing on biographies of the three Kwŏns, Kwŏn Taeun 權大運 (1612-1699), Kwŏn Kyu 權珪 (1648-1723), and Kwŏn Chunggyŏng 權重經 (1658-1728) and investigate the historical and political situation of the Southerners to which the three main agents belonged. This includes an examination of the rivalry between the two political factions, the Westerners and Southerners, and the tension between the monarch and civil officials struggling to seize the political initiative throughout King Sukchong’s reign. The list of participants and preface as recorded on the screens, as well as relevant royal archives and literary collections allow for scrutiny of the political orientation of the participants and the purposes for commissioning the paintings. They also help reconstruct the socio-political circumstances encompassing the commission, production, and dissemination of the commemorative court paintings.

2) A Short History of the Andong Kwŏn Lineage

Kwŏn Taeun, Kwŏn Kyu, and Kwŏn Chunggyŏng, three court officials from the Andong Kwŏn lineage, participated in the commission of the three screens, which reflect their political situation and social networks. Although these three paintings were produced for three different occasions, to commemorate a private banquet honoring statesmen reaching the venerable age, the crown prince’s investiture ceremony, and state affairs conducted by the king, they shared some similarities in terms of purpose and stylistic features. The resemblance found in the three screens

is caused by the initiative of the Southerner faction, which was represented by leading politicians from the Andong Kwŏn lineage. It is thus necessary to investigate the three Kwŏns mentioned above, including their family background and their officialdom, with special attention to the rivalry relations between the Westerners and Southerner factions in the second half of the sixteenth century.

Kwŏn Taeun had two sons, Kwŏn Kyu and Kwŏn Wi. Their family seat was Andong, which was known for its history of local yangban literati leadership and for being the center of T’oegye Yi Hwang 退溪 李滉 (1502-1571) studies, which constituted the philosophical and political identities of the Southerners. The Andong Kwŏn was one of the most prominent yangban lineages rooted in the Andong area, from which important Confucian scholar-officials originated for as many as twenty generations beginning from the mid-Koryŏ to the early Chosŏn dynasty. The Andong Kwŏn lineage was famous as a “starter of four famous things:” they compiled the earliest genealogy surviving today, Sŏnghwabo 成化譜 in 1476; Kwŏn Chunghwa 權仲和 (1322-1408) became the first member of the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age (Kirosŏ 耆老所) in 1394; Kwŏn Kŭn 權近 (1352-1409) was the first Director of the Office of Special Counselors (Taejehak 大提學) in the Chosŏn dynasty; Kwŏn Ch’ae 權採 (1399-1438) was admitted to the Hall of Reading (Toksŏdang 讀書堂) by the recommendation of Pyŏn Kyeryang 卞季良 (1369-1430) when the

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172 The following description of the family history and genealogy of the Andong Kwŏn lineage is based largely on Kwŏn Iyong 권이용, Andong Kwŏn Ssi sagi 안동권씨 사기 [History of Andong Kwŏn lineage] (Seoul: P’ungilsa, 1991) and Kwŏn Yonghan 권영한, Ppuri kip’un Andong Kwŏn ssi: chosang kwa na rŭl paro alja 積裏 깊은 안동 권씨: 조상과 나를 바로 알자 [Deep rooted Andong Kwŏn lineage: knowing myself and my ancestors] (Seoul: Chŏnŏm Munhwasa, 1999).

institute was established in 1426. In addition, the Andong Kwŏn lineage produced 366 chinsa degree holders who passed the literary licentiate examination. Among the fifteen branches of the Andong Kwŏn lineage, the three Kwŏns of interest here belonged to the Ch’umilgong branch, which constituted the majority of the lineage along with the Pogyagong branch. Like other yangban elites based in the countryside, some offspring of the Andong Kwŏn lineage established their political careers and functioned as courtiers by linking themselves with influential families residing in the capital such as royal family members, merit subjects, and high officials. Others remained in their home village and dedicated themselves to educating their descendants and ruling the village community. Kwŏn Taeun, Kwŏn Kyu and Kwŏn Cunggyŏng belonged to the former group and assumed a series of key posts in the central governments in the late seventeenth century.

Most of the local yangban residing in Andong were pupils of Yi Hwang, and therefore yangban elites whose clan seat was Andong were under the strong influence of the Yi Hwang school of thought as well as Yi’s political course. They formed the main body of the Southerners faction, opposing the Westerners throughout the dynasty. Factional lines of division bore a close relationship to the differences in philosophical schools of thought in general and were

177 Besides, many predecessors derived from Andong area such as Kwŏn Pŏl 柳成龍 (1478-1548), Yi Hwang, Yu Sŏngryong 柳成龍 (1542-1607), and Kim Sŏngil 金誠一 (1538-1593) played significant roles in the central government as influential politicians as well as philosophers. The participation of local yangban derived from Andong area in the central government during the mid-Chosŏn period is briefly mentioned in Cho Tongŏl 趙東杰, “Andong yŏksa úi yuga chungsimjŏk chôngae: Chosŏn sidae ihu Andong yŏksa úi kaegwan” 안동 역사의 유가중심적 전개: 조선시대 이후 안동 역사의 개편 [Confucianism in history of Andong region: overview of Andong history in the Chosŏn dynasty], Andonghak yŏn’gu 1 (2002): 42-52.
associated with genealogical affiliation in Chosŏn society. The authority of the Yi Hwang school dominated the Andong yangban circles, right across the subtle differences in the philosophical and political stances of each lineage and family branch.179

In the early years of King Sukchong’s rule, many members of the Andong Kwŏn lineage occupied significant government posts and wielded power. The three Kwŏns from the Andong Kwŏn lineage were no exception. They were leading politicians representing the Southerners in Sukchong’s court. Kwŏn Taeun passed the munkwa literary examination in 1649 and held a series of government posts in the Office of the Censor-General in his early officialdom. After being appointed to Minister of Taxation (Hojo p’ansŏ 戶曹判書) and Minister of Punishment (Hyŏngjo p’ansŏ 刑曹判書) in the early 1670s, he secured his political position and gained ground at court by assuming the post of Minister of Rites (Yejo p’ansŏ 禮曹判書) in 1674 when King Sukchong ascended to the throne.

Kwŏn successively filled various government posts before the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1680 (Kyŏngsin hwanguk 庚申換局) led to his exile in Yŏngil, Kyŏngsang Province, with other important politicians of the Southerners faction. He was reinstated as a Chief State Councilor in the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1689 (Kisa hwanguk 己巳換局) after nearly ten years of political exile and led a successful career again as a leader of the Southerners. He consolidated the Southerners’ power in the following years by throwing his weight behind the investiture of Crown Prince Yi Yun, later King Kyŏngjong. The Reversal of the Political Situation in 1689 occurred when the Westerners strongly opposed King Sukchong’s decision to

179 Sŏl Sŏkkyyu 薛錫圭 investigates the factional lines of division and its relationship with the philosophical school of thought, focusing on the cases of yangban elites in Andong region. For details, see Sŏl Sŏkkyyu, “Andong sarim ū chŏngch’ijŏk punhwa wa honban hyŏngsŏng” 安東士林의 政治的 分化와 婚班形成 [The political spectrum of Scholars and literati in Andong and inter-lineage relationship established through marriage], Andonghak yŏn’gu 1 (2002): 95-147.
invest the newborn son of his favorite concubine, Lady Chang 禧嬪 張氏 (1659-1701), as crown prince. Their opposition drove them from power and the Southerners took their place. This resulted in the collapse of the Westerners faction, which had ruled for a long time, and served as the impetus for the Southerners faction to become the dominant power in the early reign of King Sukchong.180

Kwŏn Kyu, a son of Kwŏn Taeun, received chinsa literary licentiate in 1675 and subsequently passed the munkwa examination the same year. When his father came into power right after King Sukchong’s enthronement, Kwŏn Kyu was also on a fast track to becoming a high-ranking official, being appointed to prestigious and reputable positions called ch’ŏngyojik 清要職 in the Office of the Inspector-General (Sahŏnbu 司憲府) and the Office of the Censor-General, which served as prerequisites to moving forward to a ministerial rank in the central government.181 When his father returned to the court as a Chief State Councilor in 1689, Kwŏn Kyu was listed in the final roster of successful candidates presented to the king for selection (Todangnok 都堂錄). The fact that Kwŏn Kyu was appointed to a high position through the process of selecting prestigious offices guaranteed further advancement on the ladder of

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180 There is a considerable scholarship on factional politics and a series of political reversals of King Sukchong’s reign. For a useful introduction, see Yi Hŭihwan 李煥焕, “Sukchong kwa Kisa hwanguk” 肅宗과己巳換局 [King Sukchong and the Reversal of Political Situation in 1689], Chŏnbuk sahak 8 (1984): 126-167; “Kabsul hwanguk kwa Sukchong” 甲戊換局과 肅宗 [The Reversal of Political Situation in 1694 and King Sukchong], Chŏnbuk sahak 11,12 (1989): 135-176; Hong Sunmin 洪順敏, “Sukchong ch’ogi ūi chŏngch’i kujo wa hwanguk ” 숙종초기의政治構造와「換局」 [The Political structure and the Reversal of Political Situation in the early reign of King Sukchong], Han’guksaron 15 (1983): 129-199; Yi Sangsik 이상식, “Sukchong ch’ogi ūi wangkwŏn anjŏngch’ae kwa Kyŏnsin hwanguk” 숙종 초기의政權安定策과政新換局 [The policy to strengthen the royal authority in the early era of King Sukchong’s rule and the Reversal of Political Situation in 1680], Chosŏn sidae sahaksa 33 (2005): 113-145.

181 The prestigious positions in the central government, so called “ch’ŏngyojik” were admired by scholar-officials because they served in physical proximity to the king and also required great scholarship. The “ch’ŏngyojik” included mid-to-low level positions both in the censorate offices and in offices in charge of recording and writing documents, such as the Office of the Censor General, the Office of the Inspector General, the Office of Special Counselors, and the Office of Royal Decrees (Yemungwan 藝文官). The royal messenger of the Office of the Herald (Sŏnjŏng’gwon 宣傳官) in the military rank also belonged to this category. For details, see Kim Sunjoo, Marginality and Subversion in Korea: The Hong Kyŏngnae Rebellion of 1812 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007): 41-42.
bureaucratic success.\textsuperscript{182} He was promoted to Chief Royal Secretary, Censor-General (\textit{Taesagan} 大司諫), and Inspector-General (\textit{Taesahōn} 大司憲) in the ensuing years. Under the influence of Kwŏn Taeun, members of the younger generation such as Taeun’s cousin, Kwŏn Taejae 權大載 and his nephews Kwŏn Hae 權璣 and Kwŏn Hwan 權瓏, served as officials and expanded the political influence of the Andong Kwŏn lineage in the central government. The authority of the Andong Kwŏn family members soared and was said to exceed the power of Ho Chŏk (1610-1681), the foremost politician and leader of the Southerners faction.\textsuperscript{183}

Kwŏn Chunggyŏng, a grandson of Kwŏn Taeun and a nephew of Kwŏn Kyu, passed the \textit{munkwa} examination in 1689 and was selected as a member of the Hall of Reading the same year.\textsuperscript{184} By entering the institution, Kwŏn Chunggyŏng was recognized as a talented and qualified scholar who deserved prestigious positions in the government. Within a year Kwŏn was listed in the Roster of Candidates for Positions in the Office of Special Counselors (\textit{Hongmunnok 弘文錄}), appointed as a junior fifth-rank official, and promoted to a Section Chief of Ministry of Personnel (\textit{Yijo Chŏngnang 吏曹正郞}).\textsuperscript{185} He served in important government posts in various offices such as the Ministry of Personnel, Office of the Censor- General, Royal Confucian Academy (\textit{Sŏnggyungwan 成均館}), Office of Special Counselors, and Royal Secretariat.

The three Andong Kwŏns actively participated in the politics and formed a social network based on their affiliation with the Southerners faction after the Southerners gained power in 1689. They led successful careers by holding prestigious governmental posts and voiced their political opinions by favoring Crown Prince Yi Yun. However, they lost political

\textsuperscript{182} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 20, the year of 1689, the intercalary 3rd month, the 10th day and 13th day.
\textsuperscript{183} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 4, the year of 1675, the 11th month, the 1st day.
\textsuperscript{184} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 21, the year of 1689, the 12th month, the 19th day.
\textsuperscript{185} Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 22, the year of 1690, the 6th month, the 15th day; the 6th month, the 29th day; the 6th month, the 30th day; vol. 23, the year of 1691, the 6th month, the 25th day.
dominance shortly after another political incident, the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1694 (*Kapsul hwanguk* 甲戌換局). Kwŏn Taeun was divested of his office, and Kwŏn Kyu was exiled in Tangjin, Ch’ungnam Province. Kwŏn Chunggyŏng was banished to Kogunsan Island, Chŏlla Province in 1694, casting his lot with his precedents. In sum, family members of the Andong Kwŏn lineage improved their political position and expanded their power bases relying on social networking established by their aristocratic lineage and affiliation to the Southerner faction in the 1680s. As the Southerners lost their political dominance over the court, the Andong Kwŏns’ power also rapidly decreased.

3) *Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun of 1689*

From art historical point of view, the significance of this work of art lies in its transitional states bridging the gap between the early Chosŏn commemorative paintings and those of the late era of the dynasty. In the early stage, most paintings produced for commemorative purposes were commissioned by individuals who participated in social gatherings and official meetings. Scenes that depict social gathering and performing official duty at work are frequently selected for this kind of commemorative painting until the early seventeenth century. Multiple copies of documentary paintings depicting actual events were created in formats of hanging scroll or album and distributed to participants. Given that these paintings served as a private memento for recollection, it is natural that formats of scroll and album, which offers intimate viewing experience, portability, and easy storage, were favored. In addition, as such paintings were sponsored mainly by officials at their own expense, the formats of scrolls and albums were

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preferred for its affordability.

In the seventeen century, the initiative of commission was shifted from private to public or government divisions. It led noticeable changes in the convention of art production and characteristics of commemorative painting. The temporary office called *togam* that was established for the preparation of court ceremonies played a pivotal role as agent of commemorative paintings and funds from the government organs were allocated for this commission.\(^{187}\) Once a government agency played an essential role in the production of commemorative painting, it assumed a public nature related to the court’s political agenda and court painters of the Royal Bureau of Painting were summoned to conduct this commission. This tendency was reinforced over time and reached its zenith the mid-eighteenth century when such paintings were done by the direct request of the king to legitimize the royal authority and to celebrate the king’s accomplishment.

The changes in formats and themes of commemorative paintings resulted from the increased involvement of *togam* in commission. Instead of hanging scroll and album, large size folding screens in a lavish manner were selected to celebrate the completion of the *togam*’s tasks in court rituals and state events. A multiple-panel screen allows more space for pictorial representation and accommodate more diverse motifs and complicate composition. To fill up enlarged canvas, artists experimented with various methods by incorporating Chinese themes into the repertoire of commemorative paintings, combining the idealized landscape and panting of the stories of cultural heroes with a depiction of actual events, and employing the eye-catching style of blue-and-green landscape.

*Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun of 1689* (fig. 1-20) in the

\(^{187}\) *Daily Records of King Kwanghaegun*, vol. 27, the year of 1610, the intercalary 3rd month, the 12th day; *Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat*, vol. 286, the year of 1681, the 11th month, the 25th day; Nam Yongik, “Yongjŏng mosa dogma kyebyŏng sŏ” 影幀摹寫都監儀軌稧屛序, *Hogokchip* 壺谷集, vol. 15.
collection of the Museum of Seoul National University, was commissioned to commemorate a banquet held by Kwŏn Taeun at his residence just after he was reinstated as a Chief State Councilor. It consists of eight panels that can be divided into three sections: the first panel features a preface to explain the reason for the banquet; the second through seventh panels depict the scene of the banquet in Kwŏn’s garden; and the eighth panel presents a list of participants in the banquet. Although the preface on the first panel, written by Yi Ok 李沃 (1641-1698), is too damaged to identify the written characters, the contents of the preface are documented under the title, “Preface to the Screen Depicting a Gathering of Four Elders (Saro yŏnhoe pyŏng sŏ 四老宴會屏序)” in Yi’s literary collection, Pakchŏnjip 博泉集. The inscription explains the purpose of the commission of this screen at full length as follows.

In the fifth year of King Sukchong’s rule, the king defeated evil offenders and engaged men of virtue, leading to the reestablishment of righteousness. First, former Minister of Personnel (Yijo p’ansŏ 吏曹判書), Mok Naeson 睦來善 (1617-1704) was appointed as Second State Councilor and Yi Kwanjing 李觀徵 (1618-1695) was appointed as Minister of Rites. Three days later, the king summoned Kwŏn Taeun from Andong (lineage) to court and appointed him a Chief State Councilor. After a while, those who had misbehaved were treated according to justice and O Chŏngwi 吳挺緯 (1616-1692) was restored as Minister of Works. The three elders and Yi Kwanjing finally returned to the capital after ten years in exile. All of them reached 70 years old: The Chief State Councilor is 79, the Second State Councilor (Chwaŭijŏng 左議政) is 74, the Minister of Works is 75, and Yi Kwanjing is 73 years old. Their official posts reached that of councilors and they reached the venerable age! How truly splendid this is!

188 For two important previous studies on the Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun of 1689, see Chin Chunhyŏn, “Kwŏn Taeun Kiroyŏnhoedo pyonpyung’ung e taehayŏ” 權大運耆老宴會圖屏風에 대하여 [About Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun], Pangmulghan misulghan hakyesa yŏn’gu nonmunjip 1 (2003): 1-28; Yi Wŏnch’ŏn 이원진, “Kwŏn Taeun Kiroyŏnhoedo” 권대운기로연회도 [Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun], in Yŏksa wa sasang i tangin Chosŏn sidae inmurhwa 艺术与思想的朝鲜时代, eds. An Hwijun et al. (Seoul: Hakkojaje, 2009), 175-197. The National Museum of Korea owns two works (fig. 1-21), which belongs to a multiple panel screen copying after Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun of 1689 in Seoul National University Museum. These two paintings are now mounted separately and titled Three Scholars and Banquet respectively. Use of bright blue and green color and interest in details including textile patterns, motifs decorating utensils alludes they were reproduced after the eighteenth century.
One day the Chief State Councilor held a banquet in his residence located on Namsan Mountain and invited the Second State Councilor Yi Kwanjing and others. He ordered four elders to bring their sons who were in public office to the banquet. The Chief State Councilor and the Second State Councilor took the top seats in the north, and the Minister of Works and Yi Gwanjing were seated in the east and west. I (Yi Ok), Kwŏn Kyu, the governor of Kyŏnggi Province, Mok Ilim 睦林一 (1647-?), a Censor-General, and Kwŏn Chungyŏng, the junior sixth-ranked official of the Ministry of Personnel, sat in the back row. When wine cups had passed halfway around the participants, Kwŏn Taeun sitting in the center said, “Heaven helps us. We were in trouble, being driven in all directions without knowing whether others were alive or not. Fortunately, since our Majesty does not discard old subjects and appoints them to public posts again, we are able to come together and talk to each other with open minds. All of us were born in almost the same year and have been close friends from childhood. We served as reference consultants of the Royal Confucian Academy together. When we grew up and entered into office, all of us finally became high officials and ministers after surmounting a number of troubles. Now we grow old and our hair has turned gray but our everlasting friendship deepens. Fidelity and trust between a monarch and subjects are worthy of note and the trace (of their relationship) is marvelous. If this memorable event is forgotten and not transmitted to posterity, the sons of the four elders will be to blame.”

According to Yi Ok’s preface, Kwŏn Taeun arranged a banquet in his home and invited his old friends and their sons to celebrate the rehabilitation of their political position after the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1689. Many Southerners, including the above four gentlemen, had been ousted from their offices and exiled, while the Westerners held on to power. King Sukchong summoned the banished Southerners and appointed again to the highest posts. The reinstatement of the four elders was immediately conducted at that time. Thus, the gathering

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“十五年春  上黜罪登善 改紀新治 首禦前冢宰泗川睦公為左揆 拜家大夫為大宗伯 禹三日起永嘉權公於徒中 以舊官拜上相 頃之群枉甚仲 福川吳公亦宥還為大司空 三老與家大夫 居外十載始還 年俱大耋 上相今春七十九 左相春秋七十四 大司空春秋七十五 家大夫春秋七十三 位躋卿相齒登敬者之席 猷觥誠哉 一日 上相於終南第置酒 要左相暨家大夫為會.” 又命四家子弟在官者從 世稱終南四老會者是也 上相左相北上坐 大司空家大夫東西坐 不佞與畿伯珪 諫議大夫始禹 吏評員外郎重輕 俱從後侍 酒半雨上相公坐而言曰 夭也 吾德遭迫阨四國 生死存亡不聞 幸而聖主不遺舊官 腹轡而屢起 爲公所稱 老而顧顱星辰而情好愈篤 盡舉平生 無有不同者 澗之而際厚 而跡亦奇矣 若何使此事湮沒而無傳 其責在吾四家子…”

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signals the rehabilitation of their status and the victory of the Southerners over the Westerners at Sukchong’s court.

The four elders (fig. 1-20a) mentioned in the preface who reached the venerable age of 70 and assumed higher-ranked public posts are depicted in the center of the painting in front of a folding screen showing a landscape. On either side of the four gentlemen their five descendants (fig. 1-20b) are seated according to the degree of their official ranks. The four main participants are listed on the eighth panel. The list, along with the image, represents the formidable social networks formed from their factional bonds as well as the transmission of political power and heritages based on bloodlines, which is the most prominent feature of the Chosŏn bureaucratic system.

This painting can be understood on several different levels. First, it exemplifies the practice of producing commemorative paintings to celebrate the gatherings of elders and to honor the virtue of elders in private and on an individual level. This convention derives from a Koryŏ dynasty tradition and became the prevalent fashion among the literati scholars since the fifteenth century of the Chosŏn dynasty. The fact that this gathering and the commission of the painting followed previous conventions is verified by Yi Ok’s preface. Citing legendary gatherings such as Bai Juyi’s 白居易 (772-846) “Gathering of Nine Elders in Xiangshan” 香山九老會 during the Tang dynasty, Wen Yanbo’s 文彦博 (1006-1097) “Gathering of Eminent Elderly in Luoyang” 洛陽耆英會 in the Northern Song period, and Ch’oe Tang’s 崔讜 (1135-190) The list on the eighth panel includes information on the official title, government post, and name of each participant.

1211) “Gathering of Eminent Elders in East of the Sea” 海東耆老會 in the Koryŏ dynasty, Yi Ok explains that he was asked to write a preface and compose a poem for the gathering, emulating the previous examples of literati gatherings.192

This painting is clearly modeled after previous examples depicting a gathering of elders, such as King’s Presentation of Armrest and Staffs to Retired Officials and Banquet in their Honors in 1623 (fig. 1-22), Banquet of the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age in 1621 (fig. 1-23), and Gathering of Statesmen of Venerable Age at the Southern Pond in 1629 (fig. 1-24). Compared to the gathering of elders officially held by the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age shown in King’s Presentation of Armrest and Staffs to Retired Officials and Banquet in their Honors (fig. 1-22), this painting exhibits a close-up view of the main figures in an indoor setting and reflects an interest in the details of figures and their surroundings. These features are somewhat related to earlier paintings depicting gatherings of elders privately organized amongst close friends, such as Banquet of the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age (fig. 1-23) and Gathering of Statesmen of Venerable Age at the Southern Pond (fig.1-24). However, this work distinguishes itself from preceding paintings with its screen format, its greatest emphasis on individuality in depicting the main figures, new visual elements reminiscent of Chinese tradition, and meticulous execution with vivid mineral pigments. These unique characteristics, not found in other extant examples of this genre, raise questions of the patron’s intention and artistic tastes that require further inquiry.

This painting can be understood as a record of family history and heritage as well as a private memento. Entrance into the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age and the endowment of

“…嘗閱古今耆會 在唐履道之會 白傅主之 白傅自記 在宋眞率之會 文潞公主之 邁本記之 在東雙明之會 崔靖安主之 當時學士皆詩之 眞率與雙明皆有圖 落社無之 吾未知唐宋諸公之會 亦有子姪俱顯侍一席否乎 今日之事 兩相公主之 允宜倩丹青播歌詩匹休而燦光 不宜使前人専美於古…”
honorary staff by the king indicate that each person is recognized as a respectable statesman of wisdom and virtue. It is an honor not only for those who affiliated with the office but also to the families that produced such great figures. Thus, the paintings depicting banquets for and gathering of the elders were treasured and handed down from generation to generation to recall their ancestor’s accomplishment and to glorify their family’s legacy. Remembering an ancestor’s influence and emulating his virtuous behavior is a way to conduct filial piety. For these reasons, many paintings of elders’ banquets included descendants attending to their father or grandfather in a scene. This screen is not an exception, but the artist or patron paid more attention to visually representing the lineage and family line. For example, the descendants were painted as large as the four main figures in the center and depicted in detail. Extant portraits of participants attest to the accuracy of the figures’ depiction in detail (figs. 1-25–1-27, 1-20c, 1-20d). Although not naturalistic portraits the facial features of the participants can be discerned, the attempt to convey individuality in this painting is obvious. The artist’s endeavor to capture distinct characters of each figure and the concept of family portrait found in this work is comparable to Portrait of three Cho Brothers (fig. 1-28). Despite discrepancies in pictorial techniques and styles, both images portray individuality and illustrate family history at the same time. They emphasize their subjects’ personal achievement as statesmen by individualized depictions of figures and demonstrate the pride of a lineage and family history, which produced many prominent officials at court. In this sense, this painting effectively conveys the transmission of family heritage and expresses the family’s wishes to perpetuate their own power and glory.

193 The history and function of commemorative paintings to celebrate the endowment of honorary staff by the king has been discussed in detail in Pak Chŏnghye, “Chosŏn sidae Sagwejangdoch’op kwa Yŏnsidoach’op” 朝鮮時代 賜几杖圖帖 延諡圖帖 [A study of album Paintings of King’s Presentation of Armrest and Staff to Retired Officials and of Posthumous Title to Senior Statemen in the Chosŏn dynasty], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 231 (2001): 41-75.
Third, this painting manipulates many visual elements to represent the families’ identity as scholar-officials. Although the gathering was held for private purposes and the commemorative painting was financed by private funds, the participants of the gathering are dressed in official robes and caps. The fully attired officials might have been intended to impose an official or quasi-official character and authority on the private banquet. The staff held by a boy attendant standing behind Kwŏn Taeun (fig. 1-20e) might have been depicted for the same reason. The staff was endowed by King Sukchong to Kwŏn Taeun who wanted to resign from public post on the basis of his old age. To persuade Kwŏn to continue his official duties, the king presented the staff as symbol of a senior’s wisdom and virtue. The staff given to Kwŏn indicates that he was recognized as a loyal subject by the king, and the reinstatement of his political post and the supremacy of the Southerners faction were thus confirmed by the king.

Another interesting aspect of the painting lies in the adoption of Chinese elements and the conspicuous display of luxurious items. A small balustrade and flat bridges, a Chinese-style garden setting (fig. 1-20f), including taihu rocks, peonies, paulownia trees, lotus flowers, as well as maidens wearing Han Chinese costumes, and elaborate vessels and antique bronzes (fig. 1-20g) are reminiscent of the Chinese iconographic tradition associated with paintings of elegant gatherings, such as Elegant Gathering in the Apricot Garden (fig. 1-29) and Enjoying Antiquities (fig. 1-30). In contrast the fairly individualized depictions of the participants, the ladies in Chinese-style dress (fig. 1-20h) lack personal features but they lend an elegant atmosphere to the scene and idealize the contemporary secular event. The slender women with oval heads and narrow shoulders wearing Han Chinese costumes are similar to the female beauties depicted by

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the Chinese painter Qiu Ying 仇英 (ca.1494-1552) (fig. 1-31) and his followers who were active in the Suzhou area in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties.\(^{196}\) The association with Qiu Ying’s style is obvious in the delicate line of the figures, the hair accessories, the detailed rendition of furniture and architecture, and the inclusion of luxurious items such as bronze vessels, tea pots, and vases.\(^{197}\) Judging from the meticulous and skillful rendition of figures and the blue-and-green landscape mode, this painting must have been done by a court painter versed in figure painting and well-acquainted with the trends of Chinese paintings newly imported to the Chosŏn dynasty. Interestingly, the four elders of the gathering were sent to China as a winter solstice embassy. Thus, they might have had a chance to view paintings in the style of Qiu Ying there and therefore could have asked court painters to include the Chinese-style female figures in the painting.\(^{198}\) Whether the images of Chinese women were included by way of the painter’s invention or by the patron’s demands, figures clad in Chinese robes accentuate the splendid atmosphere along with other luxurious items and elaborately depicted architecture.

The conspicuous display of sumptuous items represented in this screen contrasts with the ideals of simplicity and frugality promoted by Confucian literati during the Chosŏn dynasty. Why are these elements depicted in the screen, putting patrons at risk of being criticized by


\(^{198}\) According to Yi Hongju’s study, paintings of *Chinese Beauties* by Qiu Ying were imported to Chosŏn in the seventeenth century and the Chosŏn elite appreciated Qiu Ying’s *Qingming Festival and Elegant Gathering of the Western Garden* in the eighteenth century. See Yi Hongju 이홍주, “17-18 세기 조선의 낡고 천사들의 임금화 연구 [A study of elaborate-style figure painting in seventeenth-and eighteenth-century Chosŏn], *Misulsahak yŏn’gu* 267 (2010): 34-38.
colleagues for pursuing luxury life style? I think it is possible that the patrons intentionally commissioned such items to exaggerate the splendor of their gathering and to show off their successful rehabilitation. The selection of the screen format can be understood in the same vein. While many previous paintings commissioned to commemorate gathering of elders were done in the format of an album, which is more suitable for private and intimate viewing, the screen format was chosen for Kwŏn’s gathering painting. The large-scale, multiple-panel screen is an appropriate format to maximize the magnificence of the motifs and to display political supremacy. Although this screen was commissioned by individuals on the occasion of a private event, the way of representation on a screen and the employment of the blue-and-green landscape style influenced the convention of commemorative painting in successive periods.

4) Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690

The Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690 (fig. 1-32) was commissioned by the Superintendency of the Investiture of the Crown Prince (Ch’aengnye togam 坐禮都監) for commemorative purposes. This eight-panel screen consists of a preface on the first panel, landscape paintings in separate compositions on the second to the seventh panels, and a list of participants on the eighth panel. The preface, written by Yi Kwanjing, director of the superintendency, explains the details of the event and the reason for commissioning the painting. The last panel lists the names, public posts, and clan seats of

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199 Furthermore, Chinese motifs were used to demonstrate the commissioner’s or owner’s knowledge of the ‘center of the world’ and thereby his cultural sophistication.

200 The Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690 was introduced as an example of commemorative painting produced in related to court ritual and containing imaginary landscape by Pak Chŏnghye in her book, Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa, 117-120. This type of commemorative painting predated documentary court paintings to depict a real event for commemorative purpose in the late Chosŏn dynasty.
nineteen officials who participated in or prepared for the investiture ceremony. Panels 2-7 depict six scenes from the *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers* 瀟湘八景圖, a popular painting theme of the early Chosŏn period.

Yi Kwanjing’s inscription states that officials of the Superintendency of the Investiture of the Crown Prince, a body temporarily established for the preparation of the ceremony commissioned the screen to celebrate the completion of their tasks and to commemorate their participation in the state event. The preface describes the members of the Superintendency as having experienced an ordeal in a place of exile for ten years and finally being able to return to the capital in the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1689 when their political faction gained power again. The text states that the fact that officials who were victims of a bloody purge in 1680 by the Westerners were finally summoned by the king and witnessed this auspicious court event as the ways of Heaven. In celebration of the occasion, they recorded this event and left commemorative paintings to perpetuate this memory for posterity.201

Based on its form, including a preface and a list of participants and the reason for its commission, this screen is indebted to tradition of “gathering paintings” (*kyehoedo* 契會圖) flourishing within bureaucratic society since fifteenth century.202 The difference is that a

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201 The preface written by Yi Kwanjing is also included in *Pakch’ŏn* 정, the literary collection of his son, Yi Ok. It is as in the following:

“王世子冊禮都監撰序
上之十四年戊辰王子生 越明年己巳 封為元子 越三季庚午 諸大臣白上曰自有繚斗之慶 區宇延頸 而今元子天表夙彰 宜蚤定位號 以係億兆望 上詰群僚 羣僚合口無異辭 又擧周漢舊制 明朝已行禮對 上可其奏 於是設局置官 以攻縟儀 且永嘉崇公以上相作都提調 余以大宗伯 與大司空暨大司農吳合提調 凡設局戶禮工之官之常典也 載事于四月之望 斷功于六月之旬 是月己亥冊禮成 羣臣既賀畢 將罷局退 朕曰吾儕犯敲無晝晨 董事共勞 勸勤不說 吾儕還追迫 還返四國十季 幸而合集京師 同事一局 覽此盛舉 此非人力 乃天也 易曰聖人作而萬物覩 獨非一人事良 吾儕合作路傍支離鬼矣 何以志慶喜 又何以志無相忘 朕曰叙以謹實 倘以繡素 列之為屏障 寓目而澤手 還謂雲仍 以作永久傳後之圖 畦敢以續繫非愚愚皆我哉 以告上相 上相曰吾意也 諸公屬余為之序 不敢為解 謹述之如右。”

202 An Hwijun’s study and Yun Chinyŏng’s dissertation on gathering paintings in the Chosŏn dynasty provide the most substantial information and significant insights into this genre in that it offers a comprehensive understanding of the characters and history of gathering paintings based on analysis of a number of representative paintings.
temporary government office, *togam*, initiated the commission of this screen and exerted agency upon the production and dissemination of the works. This indicates the significance of this screen as an early example of a government-sponsored commemorative court painting. In addition, it envisions idealistic realm reminiscent of Chinese landscape in the blue-and-green landscape style. Much like earlier commemorative paintings recording social gatherings and official meetings at work this screen corresponds to the government officials’ desire to have a memento of their participation in the state event. In addition, like works in the genre of “gathering paintings,” multiple copies of screens were created and distributed to the participants. This screen was kept by the family of Kwŏn Pŏl, which suggests that it was given to Kwŏn Tuin (1643-1719), one of the participants in the event and a fifth generation offspring of Kwŏn Pŏl, and was handed down by his family.203

What is interesting in this painting is that the preface and the list of participants show their close association with the Southerner faction and their political rehabilitation. Although the most important figure in the investiture ceremony is Crown Prince Yi Yun, the preface does not focus him, rather it puts emphasis on the participants’ recovery of political authority and their pride as statesmen.204 The directors of the Superintendency were the Southerners politicians who supported King Sukchong’s proposal for designating the three-year-old-son of concubine Lady Chang as crown prince. King Sukchong insisted that the newborn son of his favorite concubine should be designated as heir to the throne. However, Song Siyŏl 宋時烈 (1607-1689) and his followers, the Westerners, strongly opposed the king’s decision because they were concerned

combined with thorough investigation of literary sources. For details, see An Hwijun, *Han’guk hoehwa ŭi chŏnt’ong*, 368-392 and Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo.”


about the close relationship between the Southerners and Lady Chang’s family. In this situation, King Sukchong expelled the Westerners from court and brought the Southerners into the Superintendency in order to have his decision supported and to form a strong power group assisting the new crown prince. On the other hand, the Southerners constituted their base of power for their potential reign as influential decision makers by supporting the heir to the throne. By participating in the Superintendency of the Investiture of the Crown Prince, they in turn expected to maintain political dominance in court politics and obtain important government posts.

Kwŏn Taeun played a key role in the Superintendency as a director and tutor of the crown prince, leader of the Southerner faction, and senior member of the Andong Kwŏn lineage. He held the position of royal tutor in the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince (Seja sigangwŏn 世子侍講院) concurrently with that of a Chief State Councilor. Kwŏn attended the investiture ceremony as an honorary guest, the agent of the crown prince, and director of preparation of the ritual. Two groups closely related to Kwŏn Taeun were involved in the ceremony. The first group consists of Kwŏn’s close fellow statesmen from the Southerners faction, including O Chŏngwi, Yi Kwanjing, and Min Changdo 閔章道 (1655-1694). O Chŏngwi and Yi Kwanjing had been invited to Kwŏn’s banquet the year before, and together they had commissioned the Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun (fig. 1-20). In addition, descendants and relatives of the guests invited to Kwŏn’s banquet in 1689 are also included on the list of the Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690. For example, O Sijin 吳始震, the eighth-rank official of the Royal Vegetable Garden (Sap’osŏ 司圃署) is a son of O

205 The Office of Royal Lecture for the Crown Prince was a full-scale education institute established in the court for tutoring young crown princes. Accomplished scholars, high officials of the state council, and royal relatives participated in the Office as tutors and guardians for the young prince. They attended the investiture ceremony as honorary guests, agents of the crown prince, and performers verifying the correct procedure of the ritual. For further study of the function and system of the Office of Royal Lecture for the Crown Prince, see Yuk Suhwa 陸受禾, “Chosŏn sidae Seja sigangwŏn ŭi kyouk kwajŏng” 朝鮮時代 世子侍講院의 教育課程 [Curriculum of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince in the Chosŏn dynasty], Changsŏgak 11 (2004): 129-181.
Chŏngwi and O Sibok 吳始復 (1637-1716), a director of the supreintendency and Minister of Taxation, is a son of the second cousin of O Chŏngwi. Three of them belong to the Manch’wi branch of the Yŏnyan Yi lineage. Yi Kujing 李龜徵, the third-rank official of the National Academy, is the second cousin of Yi Kwanjing. Mok Ch’ŏllin 睦天麟 is the son of Mok Ilim’s cousin. Counting Kwŏn Chun 權琡, a nephew of Kwŏn Taeun, eight people on the list are descendants or relatives of the four elders who participated in Kwŏn’s banquet in 1689.

The second group includes officials who came from the Andong Kwŏn lineage. They are Kwŏn Taeun, Kwŏn Manje 權萬濟, Kwŏn Tuin 權斗寅 and Kwŏn Chun. While Kwŏn Taeun and Kwŏn Chun belonged to the Ch’umilgong branch of the Andong Kwŏn lineage, Kwŏn Manje and Kwŏn Tuin were affiliated with the Ch’umilgong and the Pogyagong branches, respectively.206 Although the latter two Kwŏns are not close relatives of Kwŏn Taeun, he probably had exerted influence on their appointments to central government posts. In fact, Kwŏn Tuin who devoted himself to self-cultivation and education in the countryside, was appointed as an Assistant Caretaker of the Royal Tombs of Hyorūng (Hyorūng ch’ambong 孝陵參奉) by the recommendation of Kwŏn Taeun.207 Along with his link to the Southerners, Kwŏn’s family connection to the prestigious Andong Kwŏn lineage contributed to the establishment of his power at court. In the light of the preface and the list of participants, this painting indicates the political bonds and social networks that were forged between the Kwŏn’s and other Southerners.

If we trust the recent study that identifies the six landscape paintings of the screen as scenes of the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers, the screen is a rare example of the theme

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206 Kwŏn Iyong, Andong Kwŏn ssi sagi, 329; 345.
207 Veritable Records of King Sukchong, vol. 20, the year of 1689, the intercalary 3rd month, the 13th day.
done in the blue-and-green style. Due to a lack of evidence, we do not know the original mounting or the order of the panels. If it is part of the Eight Views, however, the screen might originally consist of eight landscape panels, starting with the Mountain Market in Clearing Mist and ending with River and Sky in Evening Snow. Yet, only six panels are extant. Some paintings show obvious iconographical features associated with the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers while others do not have clearly identifiable motifs. For example, the last four panels obviously link to Rain at Night on the Xiao River, Evening Bell from Misty Temple, Autumn Moon on the Dongting Lake, and River and Sky in Evening Snow, respectively. The figure holding an umbrella in the fourth panel (fig. 1-32a), the two-story buildings and a pagoda within misty mountains in the fifth panel (fig. 1-32b), Yueyang Pavilion standing on the gate of the city wall near Dongting Lake in the sixth panel (fig. 1-32c), and the snowy landscape in the seventh panel (fig. 1-32d) remind viewers of the famous Eight Views of Xiang and Xiang Rivers. The second panel which is said to depict the Fishing Village in Evening Glow, shows fishing boats in the distance and houses at the shore (fig. 1-32e). The most problematic scene is the third panel, which depicts a scholar crossing a bridge in the foreground (fig. 1-32f) and a figure sitting in a pavilion with fishing boats and villages in the distance (fig. 1-32g). Recent scholarship identifies the theme of this panel as Sailing Boats Returning Home. However, the depiction of villages in mountains also links this scene to Mountain Market in Clearing Mist.

Irregular outlines, short texture strokes called tansŏn chŏmjun 短線點皴, and broken brush dots applied to mountains and rocks (fig. 1-32h) are reminiscent of the style of Yi Ching, a

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208 Pak Chŏnghye, Wang kwa kukka ūi hoehwa, 95.
209 For the development and iconography of the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers in Korea, see An Hwijun, Han’guk hoehwa ūi chŏnt’ong 韓國繪畫의 傳統 [Tradition of Korean Painting] (Seoul: Munnye ch’ulp’ansa, 1988), 162-249.
famous court painter active in the seventeenth century (figs. 1-33a, 1-34a). Blue-and-green Landscape attributed to Yi Ching (fig. 1-33) and Painting of a Gathering of Officials from the Ministry of Works in 1650 (fig. 1-34) show visual elements and motifs similar to those found in the screen. However, less elaborate brushstrokes, the stylized depiction of figures and trees, and the lack of representation of space between the landscapes of this screen suggest that it might have been executed by a less skillful painter or may be a later copy of the painting done in the late Chosŏn period. The latter assumption can be supported by the similarities between this screen and the eighteenth-century paintings of Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers (fig. 1-35). For instance, these later works enlarge motifs, such as mountain temples and figures, Yueyang Pavilion, and they add motifs irrelevant to the theme.

The Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690 (fig. 1-20) borrows some iconography from the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers but exhibits noticeable unique features, such as the frequent appearance of the motif of a scholar accompanying a boy attendant on the road and a literatus in a pavilion or house. The motif of a traveling scholar is primarily seen in Evening Bell from Misty Temple in other paintings of the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers. These two motifs, of a scholar visiting his friend and a literatus awaiting his friend, convey the friendship of the literati and their elegant meeting to viewers. Considering this interpretation of the motifs, perhaps they were intentionally selected by the patrons to express their comradeship.

211 Pak Chŏnghye, Wang kwa kukka ūi hoehwa, 95.
212 An Hwijun, Han’guk hoehwa ūi chŏnt’ong, 224-247.
5) Screen to Commemorate King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials of 1691

Screen to Commemorate King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials of 1691 (fig. 1-21) is a rare example of a commemorative screen that combines a depiction of real events with an idealized landscape. Its first panel portrays the scene of the king’s selecting of officials at Hŭngjong Hall (fig. 1-36a) and a list of important participants. The eighth panel depicts a banquet held by the king for the successful candidates and participants (fig. 1-36b). Landscapes of mountains and rivers appear from the second through sixth panels. An explanatory text, “About the Screen of King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials at Hŭngjong Hall” composed by Yi Hyŏnil (1627-1704), one of the participants is inscribed on the back of the screen.

The first and last panels demonstrate state affairs and the royal banquet that took place at Hŭngjong Hall, Kyŏnhŭi Palace on the twenty-first and -second days of the twelfth month in 1691. Each panel includes a title at the top of the painting that explains what the painting is about.

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213 The Screen to Commemorate King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials of 1691 was first introduced by the collector of this painting, Kim Wŏn’gil 김원길. He explains the provenance of the work, the inscription written on the backside of this screen and biographical information of the participants listed in the final panel. For details, see Kim Wŏn’gil, “Chich’on chongt’aek sojang Hŭngjongdang ch’injŏngdo sŏnondo hwabyŏng” 芝村宗宅 所藏 興政堂親政圖 宜醞圖 畫屏 [Screen of King’s Selection of Government Officials and King’s Wine Offering in at Hŭngjong Hall], Andong munhwa yŏn’gu 2 (1987): 3-21.

214 Yi Hyŏnil’s writing is also compiled in his literary collection, Karamjip, vol. 20, in Han’guk munjip ch’ŏnggan, vol. 128 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1993), 205c. For a Korean translation of it, see Kim Wŏn’gil, “Chich’on chongt’aek sojang,” 106-107. The complete text is as follows.

“興政堂親政時畫屏記
上之十七年十二月辛丑。上召吏曹判書柳命賢、兵曹判書閔宗道。詔興政堂。行孝功遷進法。兩銓左
右侍郞。郎中員外郎各若干人。承宣左右史。尙書郎官又若干人。上面諭兩銓臣曰。凡仕途之清不決。罔
不在職初仕。惟爾莅事之臣。其各盡乃心。惟公道。茍賢矣不遐遠。若不才且賢。必有以世族為也。惟時
兩銓臣。莫不承命祗肅。注擬惟謹。翌日壬寅。己於事面諭。上意嘉之。命宣法懸。群臣以次離席伏拜受
爵。酒凡五行而止。一堂之上。怡然穆穆。宛然有三代上君臣相悅之意。鳴呼休哉。既退。相與言曰
。今茲之舉。既稀世盛典。況上揚而惟賢。不以世之數。實符成湯立賢無方之旨。苞諶所以張大其事。
於以侈上賜而篤群僚。又各傳之永久。為後世子孫光寵乎。僉曰允哉。於是各出丹青綴素。貲用糨帖為屏
。令畫工模寫為圖。其右旁悉書當日入侍諸臣官爵姓名。屬玄逸為之記。十八年玄月。潛筟三月甲寅。嘉善
大夫吏曹參判兼光祿大夫侍講院院善李玄逸記。”
about. The first panel, entitled “King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials at Hŭngjŏng Hall” depicts the process of selecting officials by the king (fig. 1-36a). The Ministry of Personnel and the Ministry of War (Pyŏngjo 兵曹), which were responsible of screening candidates of officials, submitted a list of three candidates to the king (pisammang 備三望), who made the final decision by placing a dot beside the name of the candidate of his choice (nakchŏm 落點).

To make the list, officials of Ministry of Personnel and Ministry of War examined the qualifications of each candidate and generated efficiency reports according to the number of years of their service and work performance. This scene represents the king appointing officials based on the roster of three candidates presented by officials from the two ministries. On the day of selection, officials with senior third rank or higher and working-level administrators from the two ministries, along with a Royal Secretary (Sŭngji 承旨) and a scribe of the Royal Secretariat (Chusŏ 注書), were summoned to the court to help the king make decisions. Seventeen officials on the list of participants are seated to the right and left sides of the king’s seat, which is located in the center of Hŭngjŏng Hall. As was the custom in Chosŏn documentary painting, King Sukchong is not depicted but rather indicated by a red chair and two eunuchs in a prone position. The Royal Secretary and the scribe are also seated near the king.

The final panel, entitled “The King’s Wine Offering at Hŭngjŏng Hall,” portrays King Sukchong’s wine-offering ceremony the day after the appointment of government officials (fig. 1-36b). The wine jar bestowed by the king can be seen next to the two central columns, and high officials wearing pale pink robes, and lower-ranked officials in red robes are sitting in rows on either side. The two images, like other documentary paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty, describe the event in detail and use the convention of cartography for the depiction of architecture.

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215 Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhw'a, 117-126.
“About the Screen of King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials at Hŭngjong Hall” inscribed on the back of the screen is also included in Yi Hyŏnil’s literary collection, Karamjip 葛庵集. It recounts the process of the selection of officials and the banquet presented by the king on the following day. King Sukchong asserted that subjects in charge of the process of selecting officials should judge candidates by their talent and qualification, not by their noble origins or family background.\textsuperscript{216} Ironically, the people involved in the process and the candidates were selected mainly based on their family and factional backgrounds.\textsuperscript{217}

After the banquet, participants decided to commemorate the event by commissioning paintings and leaving written records of it. By doing this, they intended to perpetuate their achievement and hand down the honorable memory to descendants.\textsuperscript{218} Multiple copies of paintings were produced by professional painters in order to disseminate one to each participant.

Yi Hyŏnil, who was asked to compose a record of this event, left a long inscription on the fifth day of the third lunar month, 1692. Yi perhaps wrote it when the paintings were completed three months after the event. The painting examined in this paper is in the family collection of the Ŭisŏng Kim lineage, which suggests it is the painting given to Kim Panggŏl 金邦杰 (1623-1695),

\textsuperscript{216} Yi Hyŏnil, “Hŭngjongdang ch’ınjŏng si hwabyŏng gi” 建政堂親政時畫屏, Karamjip, vol. 20, 205c.
\textsuperscript{217} Most of the officials from the two ministries came from the Southerners faction and stood or fell together with Kwŏn Taeun. For example, Mok Ilim, the third Minister of Personnel is a son of Mok Naeson and Yi Ok, the second Minister of War is a son of Yi Kwanjing. Mok Naeson and Yi Ok were close friends of Kwŏn Taeun, and the four people were invited to Kwŏn’s banquet in 1689. The Assistant Section Chief of the Minister of Personnel, Yi Tongp’yo 李東標, was promoted by the recommendation of Kwŏn Taeun. In addition, Yu Myŏnghyŏn (1643-1703), Kang Sŏn 姜鑑 (1645-?), and Chŏng Sasim 丁思愼 (1662-1722) were discharged from office for supporting Kwŏn Taeun and Mok Naeson, and the Southerners faction in the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1694 when the Westerners grasped power again. The Minister of War, Min Congdo 閔宗道 (1633-?) is a nephew of Min Am 閔黯 (1636-1694), a former Chief State Councilor and influential Southerner.
\textsuperscript{218} Yi Hyŏnil, “Hŭngjongdang ch’ınjŏng si hwabyŏng gi.”
one of the participants in the event.219

Detailed information regarding the king’s selection of officials in 1691 cannot be found in other court archives such as *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty*, *Records of the Border Defense Council* and *Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat*. Only *Veritable Records of King Sukchong* briefly mentions that Kwŏn Chunggyŏng was appointed as the junior fourth counselor of the Office of the Censor-General.220 He was consecutively appointed to prominent positions in central government after this promotion, which indicates the Southerners’ seizure of power in court based on family and factional background and networks. In this sense, the screen serves as a valuable document reflecting the peak of this atmosphere, the discussion of which can be also found in written records of the time.

The landscapes on the second through sixth panels of the screen are executed in an elaborate blue-and-green style representative of seventeenth-century court painting. Some motifs, such as a mountain market surrounded by a city wall (fig. 1-36c), fishing boats (fig. 1-36d), and wild geese flying over a riverbank (fig. 1-36e) are loosely related to scenes from the *Eight Views...*219 Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo,” 254.
220 Kwŏn Chunggyŏng, a grandson of Kwŏn Taeun, passed the munkwa examination in 1689 and was invited to Kwŏn’s banquet, as a descendant of the four elders in public service along with his uncle, Kwŏn Kyu. Kwŏn Chunggyŏng was nominated to be a member of the Hall of Reading in the twelfth month of the same year by Min Am, who was the Director of the Office of Special Counselors. Less than six months later Kwŏn was listed on the roster of successful candidates chosen by officials currently holding positions and finally was appointed to the junior fifth rank of the Office of the Censor-General on the 30th day of the sixth month in 1690. Kwŏn quickly progressed to become a Section Chief of Ministry of Personnel through the biannual selection of officials in the sixth month of 1691. Although the position belonged to the senior fifth rank, it was considered a prestigious position in the central government, which was almost a prerequisite for holding a reputable position with ministerial rank. A Section Chief was responsible for personnel administration and had the right to consent to the appointment of three censorate officials. Moreover, they could recommend their successor. Their exclusive power over the screening procedures and appointment of central posts had a profound impact on the success of a certain family and political faction in the bureaucracy. Thus, the ruling party dominated this position and promising young officials from the party were usually appointed to this position. The fact that Kwŏn Chunggyŏng took this position means that he was recognized as a well-qualified candidate and that the Southerners exerted dominant control over the central government at that time. As a member of the Ministry of Personnel, Kwŏn Chunggyŏng participated in the selection of officials in December of 1691 and was even promoted to the junior fourth-rank in the Office of Special Counselors (Pu’nggyo 副應敎). See *Veritable Records of King Sukchong*, vol. 21, the year of 1689, the 12th month, the 19th day; the 12th month, the 22nd day; vol. 22, the year of 1690, the 6th month, the 30th day; vol. 22, the year of 1690, the 6th month, the 30th day.
of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers. This is indicative of the trend of adopting motifs derived from Eight Views into generic landscape painting, which was prevalent in the mid-Chosŏn dynasty. This screen shares some visual elements, including fishing boats, willow trees, a water pavilion and a meandering riverbank, with Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s Investiture of 1690 (fig. 1-32). However, this painting shows more refined brushstrokes, a better compositional balance, and an apt use of shading effects, which imply that the screen was done by a skillful court painter active in the capital. The close stylistic affiliation to Yi Ching’s painting style and Painting of a Gathering of Officials from the Ministry of Works in 1650 (fig. 1-35) proves this screen was done in the seventeenth century by court painters.

According to Yi’s account, the screen was produced with silk and pigments donated by the participants. Considering the three paintings are large-scale multiple panel screens executed in blue-and-green landscape style, we can assume a consistency in the taste, style, and format of commemorative paintings favored by seventeen-century literati officials. It is difficult to discern who played the main role in making such artistic decisions. It might be a mere reflection of the dominant court painting style prevalent at King Sukchong’s court. Yet, the artistic trends and authentic taste reflected in the three screens were accepted by agents, mainly the Southerners active in the late seventeenth century.

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221 Yi Hyŏnil, “Hŭngjongdang ch’ injŏng.”
“…於是各出丹青絹素 資用紙帖為屏 令畫工描寫為圖 其右旁悉書當日入侍諸臣官爵姓名 屬玄逸為之記 …”
222 For a study of the dominant court painting style prevalent at King Sukchong’s court and the popularity of the blue-and-green landscape painting commissioned by the king, see Wang ēi kūl i innūn kūrim, 5-34.
6) Conclusion

The examination of three screens commissioned by Kwŏn Taeun, his descendants, and fellow Southerners officials provides pivotal insights into the understanding of the socio-political functions and artistic innovations of commemorative paintings in the mid-Chosŏn dynasty, the transitional period in history of commemorative painting. The significance of the three commemorative screens can be summarized as follows: first, they functioned as effective tools to perpetuate the individual accomplishments and capabilities of successful statesmen, which fundamentally glorified their noble lineages. Second, they were used to promote comradeship among officials affiliated with the same faction and as propaganda to proclaim their political dominance over the court. At the same time, these three paintings show the mechanism of how complicated networks based on factional and family background worked in the central bureaucracy. This is closely related to the way the yangban elite expanded their political influence from their original base to the central government by using family bonds, and in turn, local yangban remaining in the countryside also entered central politics and formed social-political networks and backups for their relatives active in the capital. The examination of the three paintings and the role of the Andong Kwŏn lineage in their production illuminate the socio-political function of commemorative paintings to rehabilitate and strengthen social standings as well as the private purpose of memento. From this perspective, these works of art exhibit close affinity with literati’s gathering paintings flourishing in previous century.

However, the newly emerging features common to the three screens, such as the large-scale screen format, the blue-and-green landscape style, and idealized images associated with Chinese tradition, give an impression of the taste of the agents, cultured literati officials active in
central government. Although professional painters worked on the commission, those educated men exercised their agency in the choice of style and theme, specifying quite exactly what they wanted. All three screens were conceived by literati officials to serve themselves in social and political realms, and to function long into the future as part of family history. Last but least, these paintings attests to the fact the blue-and-green landscape, defined as court painting style, spread beyond the confines of the palace and resonated with the broader educated society. It reflects the interplay of the court and literati taste and personnel and show considerable common ground in the attitudes held by the court and educated men. In sum, the three commemorative screens are valuable visual materials that deserve scrutiny; they not only reflect the tradition of gathering paintings in previous period but also herald of a new pattern of production and consumption of court art in following centuries.
CHAPTER 2. The Sacred Past and the Celebrated Present: Chinese Figural Subjects in Eighteenth-century Commemorative Court Painting

1. Introduction

This chapter concerns eighteenth-century Chosŏn court paintings commissioned to commemorate historical events that depict Chinese figural themes as their subject. I explore the way in which meaning was constructed in and beyond the paintings and how they served to appease the social demands of the agents and recipients. A thorough examination of two screens, *King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721* (fig. 2-1) and *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766* (fig. 2-20), promises deep insights into the socio-political circumstances surrounding the commission, production, and dissemination of court art in the Chosŏn dynasty. These paintings constitute an idiosyncratic genre peculiar to Chosŏn Korea, serving both documentary and decorative functions and reflecting the culture and education of literati and royalty through the hands of professional court painters.

I provide a detailed reading of the paintings’ themes through visual analysis and iconographical study and attempt to place the two screens into the socio-political context of the eighteenth century. Identifying agents and analyzing their intentions for each commission offers insights into the strategies and methods the Chosŏn ruling elite employed to commemorate current events and accomplishments as well as to justify their legitimacy and privileges during a bloody contest for power, at a time when factional conflicts dominated the Chosŏn court, and power struggles between the monarch and his subjects reached a climax.

This analysis includes an examination of the rivalry between the Old and Young Doctrines (*Noron* 老論 and *Soron* 少論), as well as two prominent royal in-law families, for
wielding power at the eighteenth-century Chosŏn court. My analysis elucidates how these paintings reflect social interactions and networks of relationships among agents and audiences, and how they effectively convey the political agenda of the participants in state ceremonies. This is explained through close readings of the prefaces to the paintings and relevant royal archives, which allow for scrutiny of the political orientation of the participants and the purpose of the events.

In addition to highlighting socio-political backgrounds, comparisons of the paintings’ pictorial themes enable me to examine Chosŏn court art through the lens of gender. *King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721* (fig. 2-1) and *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766* (fig. 2-20) incorporate two distinctive themes inspired by Chinese literature and visual sources into the portrayal of current court events: the famous scene of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering (*Lanting* 蘭亭), related to the most famous Chinese calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-361) of the Eastern Jin dynasty 東晉 (317-420), and Chinese court ladies engaged in domestic activities in a palace garden. The former is a long-standing subject favored by Chosŏn literati scholars as a symbol of elegant gatherings and reclusive life in nature, while the latter theme is a rare example not to be found in any other commemorative painting in the eighteenth century. I chose these two works in order to compare and contrast the conventional use of traditional Chinese figural subjects in a male literati milieu against an exceptional example that can be discussed from different perspectives. By comparing the symbolic and social meanings of these two themes through analyzing possible textual and visual references, this study raises key questions such as how Chinese antiquity was appropriated and manipulated by posterity in East Asian society for self-fashioning and the celebration of its accomplishments, and how female viewership influenced the patterns of production and consumption of art in the late Chosŏn
period.
2. The Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the Screen of King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721

1) King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721 as a historic event

As commemorative albums and scrolls to document literati social gatherings in previous centuries were designed to celebrate memorable events in the honorand’s life, the screen of King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721 (fig. 2-1) was produced for a like reason. Along with the depiction of an actual event on the first panel, the inscribed preface and list of participants effectively convey the historical occasion both in visual and textual forms. This screen consists of ten panels: it begins with a scene of the king selecting officials at Chinsu Hall (fig. 2-1a) and a preface written by the Minister of War Ch’oe Sŏkhang (崔錫恒, 1654-1724), and ends with a list of the names of government officials in attendance. The scene of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering, the famous literary gathering hosted by Wang Xizhi (fig. 2-1b), is depicted from the second through the ninth panels. This screen was commissioned by officials participating in the 1721 event to commemorate their involvement in this important state affair with the king.

223 Since this work was introduced to the public in the exhibition of Chosŏn paintings held by Tongsanbang Gallery in 1982, it has drawn attention from the public and scholars. However, the unknown provenance of this screen can be a major obstacle to scholars wishing to fully examine it. There is a handful research papers on this painting, which explore its significance as an early example of a commemorative painting in screen format and of the adaption of Chinese narratives to court art. For instance, Yu Okkyŏng (유옥경) and Chŏng Taum analyze the screen focusing on the theme of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering, its symbolic meaning, iconography, historical development in China and its spread to Korea. Meanwhile, Pak Chŏnghye and Yun Chinyŏng investigate the format and content of the painting in the light of its close affinity to court documentary and literati gathering paintings. For details, see Yu Okkyŏng, “Hyesan Yu Suk ŏi Suyedogwŏn yŏn’gu” 惠山 刘淑의 <修禊圖卷> 研究 [A study of Scroll of the Purification Ceremony painted by Yu Suk], Misul charyo 59 (1992): 50-81; Chŏng Taum 정다움, “Tong Asia ŏi Nannya sukyedo yŏn’gu” 東亞시아의 蘭亭修禊圖 研究 [A study of paintings of Orchid Pavilion Gathering in East Asia] (master’s thesis, Hongik University, 2012); Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa, 117-154; Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo,” 316-329.
The first and last panels demonstrate state affairs that took place at Chinsu Hall of Ch’angdŏk Palace on the sixth and seventh days of the first lunar month in 1721. The preface explains the occasion for which the screen was commissioned and the names of those involved in its production. The upper part of the first panel (fig. 2-1a) reveals a simple depiction of the architecture of Chinsu Hall and the process of selecting officials by the invisible king. The Ministries of Personnel and War, which were responsible for screening candidates, submitted a list of three candidates to the king, who made the final decision. This scene portrays the king appointing officials based on the roster of three candidates presented by officials of the two ministries.

On the day of selection, officials of senior third rank or higher and working-level administrators from the two ministries attended a royal meeting with two Royal Secretaries and two scribes of the Royal Secretariat, who transcribed the names of the selected officials upon the king’s decisions. In addition, two official historians from the Office for Annals Compilation (Ch’unch’ugwan 春秋館) were summoned in order to record the details of the event. On the left side of the hall the king’s seat is placed, and four eunuchs delivering documents between the king and officials kowtow to the king. Ten officials from the two ministries are seated on either side of the throne. The royal secretaries and historians are seated nearby the throne. As usual, four officials of the Ministry of Personnel, civil workers known as “east rank” officials, are lined up on the right side of the throne, and six officials of the Ministry of War, military men known as

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224 Veritable Records of King Kyŏngjong, vol.3, year of 1721, the 1st month, the 6th day; year of 1721, the 1st month, the 7th day, Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, year of 1721, the 1st month, the 6th day; the 7th day; and the 9th day.

225 Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwagwa, 121-126. The detailed explanation of the selection procedure and configuration of participants is also found in the “Preface” written on the fifth panel of the screen Wine Banquet after King Yŏngjo’s Selection of Officials in 1735. For the complete text and its Korean translation, see Chin Chunhyŏn, “Yŏngjo sinjang yŏnhwasisido yŏkchop’ung e taehayŏ” <英朝宸章聯和詩圖>六疊屏風에 따라 [On the Six-panel Folding Screen of Kin Yŏngjo’s Poem and His Subjects’ Correspondence Poem], Sŏul taeakk yo pangmulgwan yŏnbo 5 (1993): 38-44.
“west rank” officials, are seated by rank in a row to the left of the throne.

King Kyŏngjong is not depicted, but his presence is indicated by a two-tiered dais with eunuchs in a prone position. This “empty place,” or the aniconic representation of the king, is related to an artistic convention of Chosŏn court paintings, wherein the most sacred figures, such as the king, the regent, and the queen dowager, were not represented. Instead, screens, tents, and sitting mats suggest that their occupants were present. This is partially due to the traditional concept of portraiture, which derived from China and was strongly rooted in Chosŏn society. According to this notion, portraiture should transmit the internal “spirit” of the sitter as well as capture the physical verisimilitude of the figure. However, it was extremely difficult to find artists who reached perfection in this regard, thus the commission of portraiture was made cautiously. Portraits lacking veracity and quality would elicit a vehement denunciation. When it came to royal portraits for ancestral worship and state ceremony, even stricter standards applied.

226 The screen of the Sun, Moon and Five Peaks was most frequently used to represent the king in ritual space and in documentary painting. The screen was displayed wherever the king presented himself officially. This screen seems to have been exclusively installed behind the king’s throne as part of a royal emblem during ceremonies until the nineteenth century, but it also was used to decorate the queen dowager’s and queen’s seats at banquets of the inner court. Even after the king’s death, the screen was used to refer symbolically to his presence. Its placement in the Spirit Hall (Honjon 魂殿), the Royal Coffin Hall (Pinjon 殯殿) and the Royal Portrait Shrines (Chinjon 親殿) can be understood in the same vein. The placement of the Sun, Moon, and Five Peaks screen in the Spirit Hall, Royal Coffin Hall and Royal Portrait Shrine has been thoroughly examined in Yi Sŏngmi et al., Chosŏn sidae ŏin kwan’ge togam ūigwe yón’gu; Myŏng Sena, “Chosŏn sidae hungnye togam,” 37-60. Burglind Jungmann was the first to argue that the Sun, Moon, and Five Peaks screen served as aniconic representations of the king in Korean documentary paintings depicting court events. According to her analysis, the screen signified the place of the most honorable participants and was intended to elevate the position of the person sitting in front of it. Likewise, a screen enhanced the importance of a ceremony conducted in front of it. For details, see Burglind Jungmann, “Documentary Record Versus Decorative Representation,” 96-105.


228 The pursuit of physical likeness in portraiture is encapsulated in a famous rule of portraiture; “ilhobulsa p’yŏnsit’ain” 一毫不似便時他人 (If the portrait is different from the actual person even a single hair, it becomes a whole different person) developed in the Chosŏn dynasty. According to Kang Kwansik, this concept imposed such strict restraints on the production of portraits for ritual uses in early and mid-Chosŏn that the tradition of drawing king’s portraits was nearly extinct by the seventeenth century, and only portraits of merit subjects for political and didactic purposes flourished. For an extended discussion of the theory, see Kang Kwansik, “T’ŏl kwa nun: Chosŏn
members of the royal family, high officials, and palace eunuchs, the king’s portraits were only displayed on special occasions and seen by high officials who were granted the honor of attending an event. The king’s visual representation was considered so sacred and valuable that the circulation of royal portraiture was strictly controlled and managed by being concealed much of the time from most of the populace. Considering that screens commissioned by government officials to celebrate their commitment to states affairs were distributed to participants and circulated outside the court, omission of the king’s image is not surprising.

Along with the aniconic representation of the king, the style of this screen is closely associated with traditional Chosŏn court paintings. Two-dimensional representation refraining from neither atmospheric nor a linear perspective or illusionistic effects, little interest in shading effects, a restricted color palette, the combination of birds-eye and frontal views, and a map-like simple rendition of the architecture are commonly shared visual forms and styles prevalent in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century court documentary paintings.

The preface below the painting, written by Minister of War Ch’oe Sŏkhang, explains at length the purpose of the commission of this screen.

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229 Cho Insoo, “Transmitting the Spirit,” 567-568. A number of studies on royal portraiture in the Chosŏn dynasty have appeared in recent years. See Yi Song-mi, “The Making of Royal Portraits,” 363-386; Ŭjin ŭigwe wa misulsa; Cho Sŏn-mi, Great Korean Portraits.

230 In her study of the Sun, the Moon and Five Peaks Screen, Kim Hongnam defines the characteristics of Chosŏn court paintings as “archaic” for the following reasons: “1) the concept is archetypal; 2) the motifs and forms are ideographic, simplistic, and repetitive; 3) the space is two-dimensional; 4) the relational structure of the motifs is superficial and nonrealistic; 5) the representation of forms is conventional and linear; 6) the range of colors employed is limited and schematic, based on the archetypal five colors of the “Five Elements” and the auspicious blue-green scheme; 7) the enduring popularity of the folding-screen format, a time-honored format the use of which began in the Tang dynasty but became almost obsolete except for decorative interior furniture by the time of Ming-Qing China.” For further study, see Kim Hongnam, “Archaism in Joseon Court Painting,” 385-403.
Preface to Screen of the King’s Selection of Officials

On the sixth day of the first month in the first year of the king’s enthronement, His Majesty personally selected talented candidates for the government posts in Chinsu Hall of Ch’angdok Palace. Officials from the Ministries of Personnel and War on either side of the hall proceeded and bowed to the throne. The dignity of his Highness is close at hand and pure luminance is nearby. All subjects attending this meeting are truly likeminded and humbly present to the monarch the report (of candidates). After respectfully drafting and transcribing the list of the three finalists, the officials deliver it to the Royal Secretary and then offered it to the king via eunuchs. Before long, the king marks a dot beside the name of selected one among three candidates recommended by the officials. While attending the king by his side, (I) looked up at the royal throne and viewed the graceful and magnificent countenance of the king. (Our majesty) does not seem to be exhausted until the end of a long day. This is attributable to his constant and daily self-cultivation. How could (we) live up to this? After dark (we) call it a day and go on duty the following day because the selection has not been completed. Only a few lists of candidates for a handful of public posts remain to be decided. The king finishes the official meeting for personnel selection. Hearing from an elder of broad experience, the kings of previous eras had presided over political affairs on the throne without fail, but this custom was abolished long ago. Occasionally the king’s selection of officials has been implemented in the throne hall, but this was very rare and done in a simple way. Now His Highness, who emulates the accomplishments of earlier monarchs, did lead the official meeting for personnel selection. Hearing from an elder of broad experience, the kings of previous eras had presided over political affairs on the throne without fail, but this custom was abolished long ago. Occasionally the king’s selection of officials has been implemented in the throne hall, but this was very rare and done in a simple way. Now His Highness, who emulates the accomplishments of earlier monarchs, did lead the process of the selection for government officials in person. It proclaims his new year’s resolution to diligently devote himself to state affairs. It is worth seeing this. By inheriting this event, we should reinstate the tradition and achievement established by previous rulers. This will be a truly immeasurable, felicitous event in the East for countless years. All subjects attending this occasion unanimously say, “We are lucky to witness this splendid event that happened in a prosperous age. We thus intend to record this event in order to transmit it to posterity. How could we not do this!” This is not for flattering the king. Not following our wish (to hand it down to a later generation) would be unrighteous. Therefore (we) commissioned this screen and wrote down the names of officials of the Ministry of War, Royal Secretaries, and official historians in order. By doing this, (this event) will be transmitted to and appreciated by posterity. Accordingly, relying on (words) from an old subject’s appreciation for this occasion, (we) celebrate it with our utmost sincerity.

Early in the seventh lunar month of the year of xinchoun (1721), Minister of War Ch’ŏe Sŏkhang.  

231 绍示位之元年正月初六日 行親政于昌慶宮之進修堂 時兩銓堂分東西 進伏於箋中 咸尺天威清光密邇 參政諸臣 莫不精白一心 恭敬將事 望單稽寫後 傳于承旨 承旨傳于內侍 內侍達于上 前 不多時落點以下 至於 池留在餘 得以從傍 仰鸞鸞座 天顏肅穆 咸日無能色 斤非平日存養之功有素 何以及此 日署罷出 翌日入侍 僚 未畢政 所餘望單 不過數十度 上命自外開政以舉之 嚴官古事流傳之言祖宗朝凡大小政事 必於榻前行之 中問 廢却盖已久矣 問或有之 亦甚稀聞 今我聖上嗣服之初 首親大政其疑端勤政之意 此可見矣 尤能繼此 漸復祖宗 朝故事 則吾東方億萬年 無疆之休 其在是朕 全席諸公矣吾 們朝 兒際昌辰 稽饋盛舉 繼述傳後之事 烏可已乎 不佞忝居首席 不可孤其意 作冊屏 列書本曹堂郎與承旨官姓名 以為傳訓後人之圖 仍寓老臣感數祈祝之 惶雲爾。 

This is cited from Ch’ŏe Sŏkhang (1654-1724), “Ch’injông kyebŏng sŏ” 親政契屏序, Sonwa yugo 擬窯遺稿, vol. 12, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 169 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1996), 542a.
The preface supplements the simple painting placed above it by delineating the details of King Kyŏngjong’s selection. In addition, it clearly states the reason for the commission of the screen, explaining that officials in charge of administering the selection of talented bureaucrats intended to record the event and to perpetuate the memory of it for posterity. Based on the fact that the screen contains preface and a list of participants and on its purpose, this work is closely associated with “gathering paintings,” which were prevalent within bureaucratic society from at least the beginning of the dynasty. High officials from diverse government institutions working together for special occasions such as investiture, royal weddings, and funeral ceremonies, and officials belonging to the same government organs commissioned paintings that usually depict their official meeting or social gatherings. They aimed to commemorate their social standing and connections as well as to foster comradeship among colleagues.232 At the same time, the screen can be regarded as an early example of “court documentary paintings,” a genre which acquired popularity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Court documentary paintings are paintings depicting court rituals and events sponsored by officials who were engaged in state ceremonies and by kings as a memento to perpetuate their participation in official events and as propaganda to promote royal authority and the ruling ideology.233

2) The Orchid Pavilion Gathering: Formation and Deformation of a Canon

It is not a coincidence that the theme of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering (fig. 2-1b) was selected for this screen. The subject offers powerfully expressive and implicative images that can

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232 For the function and characteristics of literati’s gathering painting in Chosŏn dynasty, see Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo,” 26-45.
233 The origin and definition of court documentary paintings are discussed at length by Pak Chŏnghye in Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa, 24-97.
be easily acknowledged by elite viewers in addressing a limited, particularized current occasion. I attempt to interpret this work of art with special attention to the relationship of beholders to images and the mechanism for converting a communal experience and personal memories into a renowned metaphor for other kinds of social and cultural experiences.

This painting is distinct from other “gathering paintings” and “court documentary paintings” in that it combines the depiction of an actual event with a famous anecdote of a Chinese cultural hero. The Orchid Pavilion Gathering depicted in this screen is based on a historic event, the annual Purification Festival 修禊 held by the eminent calligrapher Wang Xizhi in the Orchid Pavilion in Shaoxing, Zhejiang province, on the third day of the third lunar month in 353 A.D. Forty-two scholar poets were invited to Wang’s gathering and they played a special drinking game that incorporated a poetry competition. Boy pages prepared wine cups and floated them down a winding stream. Each scholar seated on the bank was asked to complete a suitable verse before the cups reached him. If a scholar failed to compose a poem in time, he had to drink three additional cups of wine as a penalty.

This historical event was widely made known by the “Preface to the Orchid Pavilion” (Lanting xu 蘭亭序) composed by Wang Xizhi (fig. 2-2), which in turn inspired many pictorial representations and commentaries throughout the centuries. After Wang Xizhi’s calligraphy obtained canonical status as a refined example of Chinese calligraphy during the reign of Emperor Taizong (r. 626-649) 太宗 of the Tang dynasty 唐 (618-907), the compilation of “Lanting” calligraphic works and its visualization became popular. Collectors and connoisseurs not only in China but also in Korea and Japan treasured these copies. The lofty gathering of

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234 The political and cultural background of Tang Taizong’s promotion of Wang Xizhi’s calligraphy and his fascination with the Orchid pavilion gathering is discussed in Eugene Yuejin Wang, “The Taming of the Shrew: Wang His-chih (303-361) and Calligraphic Gentrification in the Seventh Century,” in Characters and Concept in
scholars became broadly known through both visual and textual forms: in Korea the calligraphy circulated in the form of an album of model calligraphies, the contents of the preface and poems composed at this occasion were transmitted through anthologies of Chinese literary texts, and the images were recognized by the ink rubbings of engraved stones and paintings on this subject.  

The scene of the Orchid Pavilion on this screen reveals the popularity of this theme in the Chosŏn dynasty. It opens with the view of the Orchid Pavilion represented as an elaborate waterside pavilion, where an empty chair and a table of papers and books, an incense burner, and brushes are placed in front of a standing screen with two pageboys standing by (fig. 2-1c). The pavilion, built on stilts, has bamboo blinds hung on all sides and is surrounded by a decorated balustrade. In this idealized setting guests are seated on both sides of the riverbank where cups are floated down. They are engaged in composing poems, conversing with each other, drinking, listening to recitations, and reading a scroll containing other participants’ poems. Others gaze at the water or the blank paper as if they seek inspiration for their poetry.

Scholars wear flowing robes (shenyi 深衣) (fig. 2-1d) with wide sleeves and dark-colored cuffs and fastened with a sash, a style reminiscent of the clothing of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove (fig. 2-3) on the wall of a third-century tomb of the Eastern Jin dynasty. As shown in one scholar’s exposure of his midriff and in his slightly reclined, relaxed posture, the carefree spirit of participants and the congenial ambiance of the gathering are effectively conveyed. Elsewhere, pageboys are attending to the participants and assisting their master, while

\[\text{References:}\]


For a study of the perception and adaptation of Wang Xizhi’s Orchid Pavilion Gathering in Korea, see Pak Ch’olsang 박철상, “Wang Hŭiji Najŏng sugye ŭi suyong yangsang kwa sisa e kkich’in yŏnghyang” 왕희지(王羲之) 난정수계(蘭亭修禊)의 수용 양상과 시사(詩社)에 기친 영향 [Study of the Acceptance of Wang Xizhi’s Orchid Pavilion Gathering and its influence on the literary gathering], Uri hammun hakhoe 26 (2012), 3-14 and Chŏng Taum, “Tong Asia ŭi Nangŏng sukyedo,” 40-59.
some are brewing tea in the pavilion, preparing wine in caves, setting them adrift on lotus leaves, carrying wine cups, or reaching into the water to pick up and to retrieve the wine cups. The scene ends with an arch-shaped stone bridge with carved balustrades.

The screen faithfully visualizes Wang Xizhi’s preface by incorporating motifs described in the text such as high mountains, steep hills, dense woods, tall bamboo, rapid streams, wine cups floating along a meandering water course and young and old men of culture.²³⁶ However, there are some motifs that do not appear in the text or are incongruous with the textual description. For example, willows, pines, and banana trees, swimming geese, and taihu rocks pictured on the screen are not described in the Wang Xizhi’s preface. Further, only forty-one figures among the forty-two participants are depicted in the painting. The discrepancies between the textual and visual representation of the theme may be explained in several ways. First, other sources besides Wang Xizhi’s original textual record, in particular, precedent Chinese examples in visual form, or later commentaries on the texts and their visual representations may have

²³⁶ Wang Xizhi’s Preface to the Orchid Pavilion is as follows (emphasis is added):
永和九年, 岁在癸丑, 暮春之初, 会於会稽山陰之蘭亭, 肄修褅事也。群贤毕至, 少长咸集。此地有崇山峻岭, 茂林脩竹; 又有清流激湍, 映带左右, 引以为流觴曲水, 列坐其次。虽无丝竹管弦之盛, 一觞一詠, 亦足以暢敘幽情。是日也, 天朗气清, 惠風和暢。仰觀宇宙之大, 俯察品類之盛。所以遊目騁懷, 足以極視聽之娱, 信可樂也。夫人之相與, 俯仰一世, 或取諸懷抱, 悟言一室之内; 或因寄所託, 放浪形骸之外。雖趣舍萬殊, 靜躁不同, 當其欣於所遇, 暂得於己, 悻然自足, 不知老之將至; 及其所之既倦, 情随事遷, 感慨系之矣。向之所欣, 俛仰之間, 已為陳迹, 猶不能不以之興懷; 况脩短随化, 终期於尽。古人云: 「死生亦大矣。」豈不痛哉! 每览昔人兴感之由, 若合一契, 未尝不临文嗟悼, 不能已于怀。固知一死生为虚诞, 齐彭殤为妄作。後之视今, 亦犹今之视昔, 悲夫! 故列敘时人, 录其所述, 虽世殊事异, 所以兴怀, 其致一也。後之览者, 亦将有感於斯文。
provided an inspiration for this work. Second, some motifs were modified to suit the purpose of this screen and to appease the artistic conventions of Chosŏn court art.

As possible sources for Kyŏngjong’s screen, important textual and visual versions of Lanting produced in China from the Tang through Ming dynasties must be considered. The Orchid Pavilion is a long-favored subject in both literature and visual art in China. Although the original manuscript of the preface is lost, this elegant gathering of eminent scholars was celebrated and transmitted from generation to generation through a number of tracing copies, engraved stone tablets, and ink rubbings of the calligraphy which was frequently combined with a visual depiction of the theme.237 Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty commissioned his official calligraphers to have Wang Xizhi’s preface traced, copied, and engraved into stone tablets for posterity. Chu Suiliang 褚遂良 (597-658), Yu Shinan 虞世南 (558-638), and Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557-641) participated in this imperial project while creating close copies of the original work collected by Taizong and making ink rubbings of the Lanting xu from engraved stone tablets. Owing to Emperor Taizong’s efforts, Wang Xizhi’s preface was canonized as the greatest work by the greatest calligrapher and formulated as the model calligraphy during Taizong’s reign. During the Song dynasty many copies of the Lanting xu were reproduced on the basis of Ouyang Xun’s copy, which later was called the Dingwu version 定武本 (fig. 2-4).238

237 A catalogue published in conjunction with the exhibition, “Lant ting tu dian” is the most useful compendium for various tracing copies, stone engravings, and ink rubbings of Wang Xizhi’s Preface to the Orchid Pavilion, which were produced from the Tang to Qing dynasties. It includes the earliest surviving calligraphic works, recognized original copies by Yu Shihua, Chu Suiliang, and Feng Chengshu 馮承素 of the Tang dynasty as well as the complete rubbing of the Eight Columns of the Orchid Pavilion collected by Emperor Qianlong in the Qing dynasty 清 (1644-19129). Not only calligraphic works and paintings but a wide range of works inspired by the Lanting gathering, such as wooden screens, writing boxes, ink stones, and jade ornaments, are introduced. For photographs of these art pieces, see Lan ting tu dian 兰亭图典 [Paintings of the Orchid Pavilion] (Beijing: Zi jin cheng chu ban she, 2011).

238 Of the many surviving versions of Lanting xu, the Dingwu version, a stone carving excavated during the reign of the Qingli period 慶曆 (1041-1048) of the Northern Song dynasty, is the most highly acknowledged and most faithful to the original. The Dingwu version was named after the city (Dingzhou, in modern Hebei province, which was called Dingwu in the Song dynasty), where the Governor Song Qi 宋祁 (998-1061) acquired the original
Meanwhile, the pictorial representation of the theme was created in the Song dynasty at the latest, but few paintings predating the Ming dynasty have been preserved. Among the paintings depicting the Orchid Pavilion Gathering produced in the Song dynasty, Li Gonglin’s 李公麟 (ca. 1041-1106) was praised among collectors in his own time and was commented upon in a number of texts. Huang Jin’s 黃縉 (1277-1357) inscription on Zhao Boju’s 趙伯駒 (1123-1173) Orchid Pavilion briefly mentions that Li Gonglin’s painting had already been carved on a stone and circulated during the Yuan dynasty 元 (1271-1368). Although Li Gonglin’s original and the reproduction made in the Yuan dynasty were lost, his painting can be reconstructed through Song Lian’s 宋濂 (1310-1381) extensive description and through the Ming-dynasty ink rubbing illustrations which were created following Li Gonglin’s original painting.

The engravings commissioned by the Ming royal princes contributed to establishing the engravings formerly in the imperial collection of the Tang dynasty. It is said that this stone tablet was engraved from Ouyang Xun’s copy of the original work, which was made for Emperor Taizong of Tang. His successor as Governor, Xue Xiang 薛向, had another set carved during Xining’s reign 熙寧 (1068-1077), and his son Xue Shaopeng 薛紹彭 engraved a third set. Although many copies of the Dingwu version were produced, each set shows slight differences. Sydney L. Moss, Emperor, Scholar, Artisan, Monk: The Creative Personality in Chinese Works of Art (London: Sydney L. Moss Ltd., 1984), 30.

Regarding the Orchid Pavilion paintings prior the Song dynasty, Xuanhe hua pu 宣和畫譜 [Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era] (ca.1120) includes paintings done by Jing Hao 荊浩 (c.855-915), Guan Tong 劉全 (c.906-960), and Dong Yuan 董源 (c. 934-c. 962), famous landscapists of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms Period 五代十國 (907-960). See Landscape, ch.1, Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era, vol. 6, cited in John Calvin Ferguson (Fu kai sen), Li dai zhulu huamu 歷代著錄畫目 (Taipei: Wen shi zhe, 1982), 9, 10, and 101.

Records on Li Gonglin’s Lanting paintings appears in Oinghe Shuhuafang 清河書畵舫, 9:46; Peiwenqi shuhuapu 佩文齋書畵譜, 98:8; Shigutang huagong 式古堂畫考, 32:2; Jiangchu shuhuamu 江村書畵目, 1069; Shanhuwang hualu 珊瑚網畫錄, 47:23; Zhenze rilu 良蹟目錄, 3:10; Zhuiiacang huabu 許家藏畫簿, 10:5. Besides Li Gonglin’s works, Qian Zhongchang 趙仲常 (ac. early 12th century), Zhao Boju, and Zhao Xiaoying 趙孝頤 are recorded in the textual sources. For a list of Orchid Pavilion painting of the Song dynasty found in textual matieras and extant paintings in the Ming and Qing periods, see Kazuko Kameda-Madar, “Pictures of Social Networks: Transforming Visual Representations of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the Tokugawa Period (1615-1868)” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2011), 521-527.


For an English translation of Song Lian’s description of the original painting of the Lanting Gathering by Li Gonglin, see Moss, Emperor, Scholar, Artisan, Monk, reverse of foldout.
pictorial canonization of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. Among them, *Rubbing of the Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering* commissioned by a grandson of Emperor Taizu 太祖 (r. 1368-1398), Prince Zhou 周王 (Zhu Youdun 朱有燉, 1379-1439) in 1417 is noteworthy because it is the first attempt to create a compendium of images and calligraphy related to Wang Xizhi’s Orchid Pavilion Preface, which serves as a model for later generations. He compiled five variant versions of the most authentic calligraphic works available in his time, including the three *Dingwu* versions, the copy of Chu Shuiliang, and the copy made in the Tang dynasty, and added several worthy epilogues and an engraved version of a painting attributed to Li Gonglin. Zhu Youdun’s endeavor to reproduce the engraved version of the Orchid Pavilion was inherited by his successor, Prince Yi 益王 (Zhu Yiyin 朱翊鈏, 1536-1603), who inaugurated a reproduction project of ink rubbings of the Orchid Pavilion in 1592 (fig. 2-5). Based on Zhu Yiyin’s compilation, he added some contents, including his colophons and seals, Zhao Mengfu’s 趙孟頫 (1254-1322) eighteen colophons and Zhu Zhifan’s 朱之蕃 (?-1624) writing. A comparative study of Song Lian’s record and the Ming ink rubbing gives an impression

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243 Wang Yi 王祎 compares four different rubbings of illustrations of the Orchid Pavilion produced under the auspices of Prince Zhou in 1417 and Prince Yi in 1592. In this study, he examines the historical development of the Ming ink rubbings and their influential relationship. For details, see Wang Yi, “Ming dai fanyu ke Lanting tu juan ji qi bianqian” 明代藩府刻《兰亭图》卷及其变迁 [The Ming dynasty Princely-commissioned ink rubbing edition of *Lanting xu* and its evolution], *Gugong bowuyuan kan* 2007, 4: 142-155.

244 Zhu Yiyin’s compilation includes five versions of the *Lanting xu* (three *Dingwu* versions, Chu Shuiliang’s version, and a Tang copy), Zhu Youdun’s colophon, Li Gonlin’s illustration, Sun Zhuo’s 孫绰 (ca. 301-ca.380) epilogue, Liu Gongquan’s 柳公權 (778-865) letter, Mi Fu’s 米芾 (1051-1107) postscript, two letters by the Southern Song Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r.1127-1162), the entire text of the Tang story of He Yannian’s 何延年 “Lanting ji”, the eighteen colophons by Zhao Mengfu, and the concluding remark by Zhu Yiyin. Although Zhu Zhifan’s colophon is omitted in Zhu Youdun’s compilation known as the *Huangnan* 漢南 Large version, currently in the Palace Museum, Beijing, it appears in a large version scroll in the former Robert van Gulik Collection and Qianlong mentioned Zhu Zhifan’s colophon included in the *Huangnan* version in his reproduction of *Lanting xu* in 1780. For the contents of these texts and English translations, see Moss, *Emperor, Scholar, Artisan, Monk*, reverse of foldout. For a discussion of the political dimensions of the Ming royal princes’ involvement in cultural activities such as collecting, conserving, and making copies of works of art, see Craig Clunas, *Screen of Kings: Royal Art and Power in Ming China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2013).
of pictorial representation of the Orchid Pavilion done by Li Gonglin.\textsuperscript{245} Li Gonglin’s painting begins with Wang Xizhi sitting in the water pavilion about to write the preface, gazing at geese swimming in a pond. The artist added some innovative motifs that the original \textit{Lanting} text does not mention, such as three white geese near the pavilion, lotus-leaf shaped saucers to float the wine cups, and an arched stone bridge. These newly added motifs are considered a result of the creativity of the artist, which might have been inspired by the material culture of his time or a preexisting iconography related to Wang Xizhi. For example, Wang Xizhi viewing geese from a pavilion is not found in the \textit{Lanting} narrative but is the most well-known episode of Wang Xizhi.\textsuperscript{246} This episode is visualized as an independent topic of painting in Qian Xuan’s (ca. 1235-1305) \textit{Wang Xizhi Watching Geese} (fig. 2-6).

Although Li Gonglin’s painting is not entirely faithful to the \textit{Lanting} preface, it became a canonical work of the pictorial representation of the Orchid Pavilion and disseminated to Korea and Japan, in which several modifications and variations were made according to their indigenous artistic conventions and socio-political circumstances. Due to the close resemblances between the Kyŏngjong screen (fig. 2-1) and the Ming-dynasty ink rubbings (fig. 2-7), the Ming stone engravings are considered influential sources for Korean artists visualizing this theme. In fact, the Chinese ink rubbings of 1417 and 1592 were immediately introduced on the Korean peninsula in the early fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, respectively. The 1417 version was owned by Crown Prince An’pyŏng 安平大君 (1418-1453), a famous collector, connoisseur, and

\textsuperscript{245} The assumption of Li Gonglin’s original painting made here is largely based on Kameda-Madar’s comparison of Song Lian’s text with the Ming ink rubbing illustrations. In her dissertation, Kameda aptly reconstructs Li Gonglin’s painting, gleaning many hints from the text and the Ming ink rubbings known as the \textit{Xianyuan} 仙原 version, formerly owned by Robert van Gulik. For details, see Kazuko Kameda-Madar, “Pictures of Social Networks,” 35-45.

\textsuperscript{246} Wang Xizi gazing geese demonstrates that his invention of the cursive script was inspired by the form of the geese’s graceful and arching necks. Wang Xizhi’s fondness of geese is originally recorded in the fifth-century Memorial on Calligraphy by Yu Ho. For Yu Ho’s record, see Wen C. Fong, \textit{Beyond Representation: Chinese Painting and Calligraphy, 8th-14th Century} (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1992), 424-7.
calligrapher in the early Chosŏn period. The 1592 copy (fig. 2-7) is now held in the head
family of the Chinju Chŏng lineage and was supposedly brought into Chosŏn by Chŏng Kyŏngse
鄭經世 (1563-1633) when he visited Ming, China as an envoy in 1609.

There are a number of textual sources that verify that the Preface to the Orchid Pavilion
Gathering was introduced to Korean scholars in the ninth century, at the latest, as a model of
calligraphy and classic literature. In addition, the custom of drinking party at a meandering
stream which derived from this theme was practiced at literati gatherings from the Later Silla
throughout to the Chosŏn dynasties. Of the many possible sources for the Kyŏngjong screen,
the Ming-dynasty ink rubbings served as the most important reference for Chosŏn artists to
envision the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. The correspondences between compositional
arrangements, and iconographic elements, and certain sequential structures found in the Ming
versions and the screen strongly assert their close and firm relationship.

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247 Yi Homin 李好閔 (1553-1634) wrote about the ink rubbing of Li Gonglin’s painting, which was owned by an
acquaintance he refers to as “elder brother Ch’ŏngyŏn.” The work was formerly in the collection of Prince
Anp’yŏng. When Yi Homin visited China as an envoy in 1609, he purchased the Ming version engraving with Zhu
Youdun’s colophon, which was similar to that collected by Ch’ŏngyŏn. The fact that Anp’yŏng possessed Zhu
Youdun’s compilation is also proved by Yun Kunsu’s 尹根壽 (1537-1616) record. See Yi Homin, “Nanjŏng
sugyech’uk ji” 蘭亭修禊軸識, Obongjip 五峰集, vol. 8, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 59 (Seoul: Minjok
munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1996), 436a; Yun Kunsu, “Anp’yŏng yŏngi” 安平硯記, Wŏlchŏngjip 月汀集, vol. 5, in
Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 47 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1989), 257b.


249 The introduction of Wang Xizhi’s Orchid Pavilion Preface to Korea prior to the Chosŏn dynasty is summed up in

250 This is evidenced by the relics of Posuk Pavilion, an artificial, curved water channel for floating a wine cup,
constructed in a detached palace of the Later Silla kingdom. For a survey of P’osŏk Pavilion and the historical
development of parties at a winding stream in East Asia, see Yun Kukpyŏng 完國병, “Kyŏngju P’osŏkch’ŏng e
kwanhan yŏn’gu” 慶州鋪石亭與韓硯記 [Study of P’osŏk Pavilion in Kyŏngju], Han’guk chŏnt’ong chogyŏng
continued to the late Chosŏn dynasty, as seen in the royal gathering at Okryu Stream of Ch’angdŏk palace in 1793
event. The names of 41 participants and 42 poems composed at the occasion are preserved in the scroll entitled
Naewŏn sanghwa kyech’uk gangjae ch’uk 内苑賞花癸丑庚辰軸 [Scroll of enjoying flowers and composing poems
corresponding to king’s in the royal garden] (fig. 2-8) in the National Palace Museum of Korea.
3) Reconstructing History through the Image of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering

While referring to the composition and iconography of precedent Chinese examples, Chosŏn artists made several changes in order to fit a narrative depicted in the long, horizontal format of a handscroll into that of a multiple-panel screen. Space between figures shrinks and some groups of figures overlap because of the decreased horizontal dimension of the screen format. Although the arrangement of participants is reconfigured in the new compositional frame, the sequence and deployment of the figures, that is twenty persons on the right side of the pavilion and the balance of guests on the left, faithfully follows the Ming copy.

Japanese versions of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering of the seventeenth century, which were also inspired by the Ming stone rubbings, make an interesting comparison to the Korean version. Kameda-Madar’s comprehensive research on the development of the theme in the Edo period 江戸 (1615-1868) reveals that the theme was imported in the early seventeenth century and Kano Sansetsu 猿野山雪 (1589-1651) and Kano Einō 猿野永納 (1631-1697) painted the Orchid Pavilion Gathering based on the Ming-dynasty ink rubbings.251 Sansetsu’s version of the Orchid Pavilion (fig. 2-9), owned by the Zuishin-in temple in the outskirts of Kyoto, and his son Kano Einō’s screen (fig. 2-10) in the Shizuoka Prefectural Museum of Art elucidate how Japanese artists (re)interpreted and (re)visualized the original theme by incorporating Chinese visual resources into their own artistic practices and conventions. The theme was depicted on four or two sets of eight-panel screens, and the canvas thus provided a horizontal elongation, allowing for a loose configuration of motifs and more space for landscape elements than the

251 The following account of the Japanese version of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering is deeply indebted to Kameda-Madar’s analysis on the adaptation and modification of the theme in the Edo period, Japan. See Kameda-Madar, “Pictures of Social Networks,” 70-184.
Chosŏn example as well as a sense of monumentality.

The iconography and the basic pictorial scheme shown on these two painting sets correspond to those of the Ming-dynasty ink rubbings; the orchid pavilion, caves near waterfalls, trees and bamboo, scholars seated on both sides of the river, and an arch-shaped stone bridge. However, the strong coloration applied on gold leaf, and eccentric, monumental style are indebted to the artistic tradition of the Kano painters based in the Kyoto area. The landscape elements are given more emphasis, architectural elements reflecting contemporary material culture and the tea ceremony are added, and narrative elements deeply related to pictorial sequencing evolved from Japanese emaki picture scrolls 絵巻物 are enhanced. These two screens are significant examples of the early stages of pictorial representation of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in Japan.

In comparison the seventeenth-century Japanese examples, it becomes evident that the Chosŏn version of 1766 closely resembles the archaic style of the theme, lacking the depiction of hilly terrain and other topographical elements and restraining from the addition of new motifs. These choices relate to the tradition of Chosŏn court art in general, which strongly adhered to archaic styles and conservative modes of representation. The restricted palette of primary colors and the two-dimensional representation of space are characteristics of Chosŏn court art of the eighteenth century. In addition, the taihu rock and banana trees added into the scene are conventional pictorial idioms representing “Chinese-ness” in screens executed by Chosŏn court painters. The traces reminiscent of contemporary customs and society are less obvious in Kyŏngjong’s screen than in the Japanese works.

Although the Kyŏngjong screen is a fairly faithful copy of the Ming ink rubbings, it

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shows some discrepancies with the text and with any other pictorial representation of the theme in China or Japan. First, the chair in the pavilion, which is supposed to be a seat for Wang Xizhi, the protagonist and writer of the *Lanting* narration, is empty (fig. 2-1c), and he appears only once in the scene as the second figures seated on the right side of the riverbank, conversing with Wei Bang. Since Li Gonglin’s painting was established as a canonical work of this theme by incorporating the theme of Wang Xizhi watching geese from a pavilion into the *Lanting* narrative, Wang Xizhi usually appears twice in the Chinese iconography once holding a brush and drafting his preface in the pavilion (fig. 2-11a) and again sitting on the river bank with his guests (fig. 2-11b). Thus, forty-three scholars are depicted in total. Despite its irrelevance to the actual *Lanting* event, locating Wang Xizhi at the beginning of whole narration imbues him with the greatest significance and highlights his authorship of the preface. By deploying Wang Xizhi inside the pavilion, he is distinguished from the other guests and assumes a higher position in both a physical and symbolic sense.

Considering the significance placed on Wang Xizhi in the pictorial representation, it is difficult to understand why this figure was omitted in the Kyŏngjong screen. Could it be a mistake made by court painters misunderstanding the text or by reference to inaccurate versions of the *Lanting* images? Given that Wang Xizhi’s preface was widely circulated in Chosŏn society through a popular anthology of ancient Chinese literature, *True Treasures of Ancient Literature* (*Guwen Zhenbao* 古文真寶) and that Chosŏn scholars frequently cited this text to describe their own poetry gatherings, it is hard to believe that court painters or literati scholars did not know the details or confused the contents of the event. In fact, other paintings  

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253 It has been noted that many of the Chosŏn literati’s quotations of Wang Xizhi’s Preface to the Orchid Pavilion are from *True Treasures of Ancient Literature*. The transmission of this anthology from China to Korea and its wide range of readership in Chosŏn society is discussed in Kang Ch’ansu 강찬수, “*Kungnae Komun jinbo* ŭi yŏn’gu kaehwang kwa munjechŏm: kanhaeng, suyong, chŏnp’a wa kǔ yŏn’gu” 국내 <<고문진보(古文真寶)>>의 연구
of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering produced in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Korea include Wang Xizhi seated in the Orchid Pavilion, overlooking the scene.  

I suggest that the omission of Wang Xizhi’s figure in the Orchid Pavilion in this painting is neither a mistake nor a misunderstanding of the theme but an intentional choice. I hypothesize that this is related to the aforementioned peculiar artistic convention developed in Chosŏn court paintings, especially documentary paintings, wherein the king is not depicted but rather represented in an aniconic form through an empty throne. As already mentioned, in the court screens depicting state ceremonies performed in the presence of the king, the king’s presence was only suggested by screens, tents, and cushions. Under this assumption, one unsolved problem remains: The Lanting scene itself is not a documentary painting depicting an actual event, thus it cannot be discussed within the same context as aniconic representations found in court documentary paintings. However, when considering the scene within the entire artistic program of King Kyŏngjong’s screen, it offers important insights into the reason for the “empty seat” and the symbolic meaning of the Orchid Pavilion in its historical context.

To a patron or recipient of this screen, the Lanting scene goes beyond mere generic symbolism of idealized communities of Chinese scholars and their lofty life in nature. In this case, the theme acts as a medium of visual communication to a small audience belonging to a more or less exclusive social domain that shares the same experience. Returning to the historical occasion depicted on the first panel, we see the recruiting process consisting of two events: the

개황과 문제점: 간행(刊行), 수용(受理), 전파(傳播)와 그 연구(研究) [Overview and issues of current research on Guwen Zhenbao], Chungguk ŏmun nonch’ŏng 39 (2008): 333-359.

254 For example, the painting dated in 1670 held in Sunmoon (Sŏnmun) University Museum (fig. 2-12) and two paintings (figs. 2-13 and 2-14) in the National Museum of Korea depict Wang Xizhi seated in the pavilion. Unlike the Kyŏngjong’s screen, these works are rendered with light color and ink in an album format. The formal elements and coloration of these paintings are reminiscent of works by Wu school painters of the Ming dynasty such as Wen Zhengming (1470-1559) (fig. 2-15), Qiu Ying, and their followers. For an extended discussion of these works, see Yu Mina, “Chungguk simun ūl chuje rō han Chosŏn hugi sŏhwa hapbyŏkch’ŏp yŏn’gu” 中國詩文을 주제로 한 朝鮮後期書畵合璧硏究 [Album of Calligraphy and Painting Originating Chinese Poetry and Prose ] (PhD diss., Dongguk University, 2006), 70-99.
king’s selection of candidates and the ensuing banquet offered to the participants. At the banquet, the officials drink wine together and compose a poem upon the king’s request, an activity clearly reminiscent of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in which literati versed in poetry are invited to a gathering where they exchange poems and drink wine together. The foreign image and narrative of the “sacred past” and the “elegant gathering of literati” embedded in the theme of the Orchid Pavilion were transformed to refer to the current event prepared for honored Chosŏn officials. We witness numerous examples of East Asian posterity’s use of Chinese antiquity as a mythical-historical model of peace and prosperity. In the same vein the agents of this screen had the occasion of their celebration superimposed on the Lanting gathering, knowing that the reference would be easily understood by the guests and the screen’s prospective audience and would impart particular significance to the event in which they were participating. In that sense, the scene of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering is not just an illustration of the famous Chinese calligrapher in his cultural milieu, but also a depiction of the actual banquet offered by the king.

In that sense, this painting can be read as a documentary painting recording the banquet, and consequently, the king who benevolently hosted it for his subjects can be equated with Wang Xizhi, the protagonist of the Lanting story. Therefore, the seat of Wang Xizhi or the king, remains empty following the artistic convention of aniconic representation of the king. This assumption can be attested by another screen of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering in the collection of the National Museum of Korea (fig. 2-16). Although this screen has been attributed to Cho T’aeŏk 趙泰儃 (1675-1728), a scholar-official, the stylistic elements and exquisite rendition indicates that it was completed by professionals associated with the Royal Bureau of Painting in the eighteenth century. This screen is also based on the Ming-dynasty ink rubbings but is less faithful to its model than the Kyŏngjong screen in its composition and depiction of details.
However, the pavilion is portrayed without Wang Xizhi (fig. 2-16a), just as in the Kyŏngjong screen. As mentioned above, in these two Korean screens the chair in the pavilion, which is supposed to be a seat for Wang Xizhi in its Chinese and Japanese counterparts, is empty, and only forty-one among the forty-two scholar-poets in the gathering are pictured.

Again, the Ming-dynasty ink rubbing includes two portraits of Wang Xizhi in the same composition, one inside the Lanting pavilion (fig. 2-11a) and the other shown next to Wei Bang (fig. 2-11b), because two distinct themes centering on Wang Xizhi, the Orchid Pavilion Gathering and Wang Xizhi Gazing at Geese, were fused in the pictorial representation at some early period of its development. As a result, forty-three scholars usually appear in works of art, differing from textual records. Some painters must have been conscious of this discrepancy and tried to solve this problem. For example, Kano Einō did not depict Wang Xizhi in the Orchid Pavilion but left his dais empty (fig. 2-10a); Wang Xizhi appears only once, seated at the riverbank with other guests. He cleverly adds a pageboy holding a goose beside Wang Xizhi (fig. 2-10b) seated on a riverbank, which is the painter’s innovative way of combining the theme of Wang Xizhi gazing at geese and the Lanting narrative without sacrificing the accuracy of the number of participants. Even in Einō’s exceptional example, however, forty-two scholar-poets are visible. This means that the empty chair in the pavilion is not taken by anyone, which differs from the case of the Korean version of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering discussed here.

Contrary to our expectation of a painting as a perfect mirror and a window portraying a world witnessed, Chosŏn court painting does not serve only as a record of a captured moment or event but instead extends the temporality of the event. This effect is usually achieved in Chosŏn court paintings by portraying multiple scenes of an event in a single frame without any divisions. This concept of extended temporality is found in King Kyŏngjong’s screen but in a different way.

Common personal memories that were transformed into cultural memory by adopting motifs recognized by literati are evoked on many levels. It comprises part of the fabric of an extended occasion: the nostalgia for the conventional aura surrounding the lofty gathering of Wang Xizhi and his close friends; the memory of a particular event that was a motivation for the production of this screen; and the collective memory of the painting via transmission of the image through the generations. In short, regarding the Kyŏngjong’s screen in the context of memory and metaphorical, historical, and social relationships uncovers the social dimension of commemorative court painting, which does not aspire to verisimilitude but rather allows “a recognition and re-experiencing” of the historical occasion, from which the viewers could enjoy an intellectual exercise.  

4) Reconsidering the “Empty Seat” as Aniconic Representation of the King in Chosŏn Court Painting

The insertion of Chinese themes into commemorative court paintings is not uncommon in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When the format of commemorative painting was changed from album to screen, Chinese lore and historical narratives were depicted together with real scenes of court events. As examples of this trend predating Kyŏngjong’s screen, there is the painting produced to celebrate King Hyŏnjong’s offering of wine to officials after the special

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256 The manner of evoking memory on many levels in the Kyŏngjong screen is similar to that found in landscape paintings commissioned for commemorative functions by literati in seventeenth-century in China. As Richard Vinograd aptly points out, Chinese literati painting of this kind is “not so much concerned with asserting a veridical or authoritative version of a scene, but rather with permitting (viewers) recognition and re-recreation” of communal memory and the experience of direct participants in the scene through the act of viewing. For further discussion, see Richard Vinograd, “Private Art and Public Knowledge in Later Chinese Painting,” in Images of Memory: On Remembering and Representation, eds. Susanne Küchler and Walter S. Melion (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 176-202.
examination in 1664.\textsuperscript{257} It is no longer extant, but Nam Yongik’s notes describe this screen as including the scene of the banquet, four imperial banquets of ancient Chinese rulers, and a list of participants.\textsuperscript{258} In addition, Wang Wei’s 王維 (699-759) \textit{Wangchuan Villa} 輞川圖 (fig. 2-17), the \textit{Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers} (fig. 1-32), and Zhu Xi’s \textit{Nine Views of Wuyi Valley} 武夷九曲圖 (fig. 2-18) were also used as themes for paintings commissioned by officials to commemorate their participation in important court events such as the king’s outing to a detached palace, the investiture ceremony of the crown prince, and the construction of royal tombs.\textsuperscript{259} Thus, the production of Kyŏngjong’s screen was the result of an artistic tradition prevalent since the mid-seventeenth century. Chinese themes were probably interpreted in a general way to demonstrate the elegance and sophistication of the cultured elite who wished to elevate their current secular events to the distinction of exemplary ancient occasions.

Among others, the two screens commissioned in 1691 (fig. 1-36) and 1735 (fig. 2-19) offer interesting insights into the understanding of the King Kyŏngjong’s screen of 1721. Although all three screens were painted to celebrate the political occasions of the king’s participation in recruiting government officials, the various ways in which the events are memorialized reflect diverse modes of re/presentation of such highly valued moments both

\textsuperscript{257} Pak Chŏnghye, \textit{Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa}, 117-150; Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo,” 316-319.

\textsuperscript{258} Nam Yongik, “Preface to the Screen of the Court Event at Ch’undangdae” 春塘臺圖屛序, \textit{Hogokchip}, vol. 15, in \textit{Han’guk munjip ch’onggan}, vol. 131 (Seoul: Kyŏngin munhwasa, 1993), 331b.

\textsuperscript{259} The \textit{Wangchuan Villa} was used as a theme for the commemorative painting to celebrate King Hyŏnjong’s trip to Onyang for a hot spring cure in 1667, and \textit{Nine Views of Wuyi Valley} was selected for a commemorative painting commissioned by officials involved in the reconstruction of Queen Tangyŏng’s tomb (1487-1557) in 1739. Wangchuan Villa was the famous estate of the Chinese poet Wang Wei (699-759). Paintings of \textit{Wangchuan Villa} are based on Wang Wei’s twenty poems describing the scenic spots of his property near the Wangchu River. \textit{Nine Views of the Wuyi Valley Streams} is related to the Southern Song philosopher, Zhu Xi’s nine poems describing the landscape of Wuyi Mountain with his retreat. Both themes were favored as symbols of idealized landscape by Confucian scholars because of their close links to the legacy of two great scholars. For further study of these two screens, see Pak Chŏnghye, “Hyŏnjong Chŏnghae Onhaeang kyebyŏng kwa 17 segi u sansuhwa kyebyŏng” 頌宗丁未溫幸契屛과 17세기의 산수화契屛 [\textit{Commemorative Screen to Celebrate King Hyŏnjong’s Trip to Onyang for Hot Spring Cure in 1667} and landscape commemorative screen in the 17th century], \textit{Misulsa nondan} 29 (2009): 97-128; Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn sidae kyehoedo,” 319-321.
visually and verbally as well as allegorically and literally. Just like the King Kyŏngjong’s Orchid Pavilion screen, the screen of King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1691 already mentioned in the first chapter combines a depiction of real events with an idealized landscape inspired by the Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers. Its first panel (fig. 1-36a) portrays the scene of the king selecting officials at Hŭngjŏng Hall and contains a list of important participants. The eighth panel (fig. 1-36b) depicts a banquet held by the king for the participants of the Ministries of Personnel and War. Landscapes of mountains and rivers done in an elaborate blue-and-green style appear on the second through sixth panels. In this case, the two actual state events of the selection of the officials and the ensuing wine offering banquet are depicted on the screen. 260

The first panel, entitled “King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials at Hŭngjŏng Hall” depicts the process of selecting officials by the king (fig. 1-36a). This scene includes common iconographical and pictorial elements found in the first panel of the 1721 screen (fig. 2-1a) because both depict the same occasion; the officials are seated on either side of the king’s throne, which is placed in the center of the hall, and King Sukchong is not physically shown but indicated by a red chair and two eunuchs in a prone position. The last panel (fig. 1-36b), entitled “Wine Offering by the King at Hŭngjŏng Hall,” portrays King Sukchong’s wine-offering ceremony the day after the appointment of government officials. There is a wine jar bestowed by the king outside two central columns, with high officials wearing pale pink robes, and lower-ranked officials in red robes depicted in a row. Despite the very simple rendition of the figure and the architecture, these two images, like other documentary paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty, describe the actual events. The artists and patrons of the 1691 screen chose to depict the

260 Screen of King Sukchong’s Selection of Government Officials of 1691 is discussed at length in previous chapter. See chapter 1, 109-114.
two key ceremonies for commemorating this occasion and to add the landscape for
demonstrating their ideal of the life of a scholar enjoying fishing, conversing with guests in a
waterside pavilion, and traveling with a pageboy.

Another example of a screen produced to record the king’s selection of officials is Wine
Banquet after King Yŏngjo’s Selection of Officials in 1735 (fig. 2-19).261 This screen bears the
poems composed by the king and officials attending the wine banquet and two prefaces
describing a details of the selection process and banquet. The screen currently consists of six
panels, but there are indications that two panels might have been lost from the original form. On
the first panel King Yŏngjo’s poem and fourteen subjects’ poems following and corresponding to
the king’s line are inscribed.262 The second panel is divided into two parts: the upper side (fig. 2-

261 In his article on the Wine Banquet, Chin Chunhyŏn explores the political and art historical importance of the
screen at King Yŏngjo’s court. His thorough reading of the screen offers a comprehensive understanding of the
political circumstances in which it was produced and appreciated, the patrons’ motive for commissioning this screen,
and the relationship between the Old Doctrine officials and King Yŏngjo. In particular, Chin asserts that this event
in 1735 was related to King Yŏngjo’s promotion of the Policy of Impartiality, the containment policy against
factionalism and the monopoly of power by long-term officials, which became the basis for establishing a more
powerful role of sovereign and control over the bureaucrats. For further explanation and the full text found on the
screen, see Chin Chunhyŏn, “Yŏngjo sinjang yŏnhwasido,” 37-53.

262 The poems by King Yŏngjo and the fourteen officials:

Royal writing, Respect each other and collaborate with fair mindedness
Being very close, (We) are cautious lest (we) forget the lesson. Minister of War, subject Cho Sanggyŏng
(We) realize quietly that governance is based only on this. Deputy Minister of War, subject Yi Tŏksu.
(We) already witness that ascending to the throne, (our Royal Highness) bestows the Five Blessings. Official of
19a) depicts the banquet in which King Yŏngjo and the fourteen officials drink wine and exchange poems, and below there is a list of nine officials, four from the Ministry of War, one Royal Secretary, one scribe of the Royal Secretariat, and three historians from the Office for Annals Compilation. The preface on the third and fourth panels written by the Deputy Minister of War (Pyŏngjo ch’amp’an 兵曹參判) Yi Tŏksu 李德壽 (1673-1744) reveals the reason for the commission of this screen. In addition, there is another preface written by Yu Manch’u (1678-?), fifth-rank official of the Ministry of War on the fourth through sixth panels, which expounds

senior third rank in the Ministry of Personnel, subject Cho Myŏnggyo.
Being drunk and full with the unlimited benevolence of the king, (we) sing a song, like overflowing dew. Official of the senior third rank in the Ministry of War, subject Han Sadik.
The king’s words have profound meanings even bestowed in the middle of the night. Official of the senior fifth rank in the Ministry of War, subject Yu Manch’u.
The Great Plan with Nine Divisions that Gi Zi bequeathed (to us) is eternal and everlasting. Official Historian of the Office of Annals Compilation, subject Song Yusik.
The happiness of fish and water and heavenly words
The king’s admonition to be diligent is earnest exhortation like medicine and stone needles for acupuncture.
Minister of Personnel, subject Sin Yunyu.
Not being lazy all the time is due to the spirit of collaboration. Deputy Minister of Personnel, subject Song Chinmyŏng.
Again (we) congratulate Our Highness on achieving the merit of a successful conclusion. Chief Royal Secretary, subject Cho Myŏng’ik.
Good governance means that all people labor in various tasks. Royal Secretariat of the senior third rank, subject Kim Ho.
As all people and creatures exist in harmony, a good harvest is expected this year. Official of the senior third rank of the Ministry of War, subject Yi Hŭp.
The unselfishness of a king of virtue is comparable to that of heaven. Official of the senior sixth rank of the Ministry of War, subject Hŏ Hu.
Owing to a banquet that the king benevolently offered (we see) prosperity tonight, Official Historian of the fifth rank of the Office of Annals Compilation, subject Kim Chŏngbong.
The king’s mind has not changed for ten years. Deputy Officials of the senior seventh rank of the Royal Secretariat, subject Yi Hyŏngman.

263 Here I provide the first four lines of Yi Tŏksu’s preface explaining the reason for commissioning this screen and an account of this occasion in detail.

Whenever there is a government event, one must make a screen bearing the title of the event in order to record it for remembrance’s sake. Searching for and writing down the past is important, so how could we not leave a record of it? On the twelfth day of the lunar sixth month of the year of yimao (1735), the king came to Sŏnŏng Hall and participated in the recruitment of government officials. On the following day he ordered his officials to depart from the hall, in compliance with precedent procedure. After the decision of selecting was completed, the officials were summoned to court. The king was waiting under a candle, and the officials from the Ministries of Personnel and War were seated to the east and west at personal tables. Three cups of wine were offered to them. The king composed a verse of a poem and requested his officials to complete the poem corresponding to his line. All participants in the banquet consequently composed a poem of eight syllables…
on the selection process and the banquet following the event.\textsuperscript{264}

The most distinctive feature of this screen, when compared to the previous two commemorating the royal selection of officials, is that it only depicts the scene of the wine party bestowed on the officials upon the completion of their tasks, while omitting the pivotal scene of the official selection process conducted by the king and his subjects. Further research is required to determine whether the scene of the selection was originally not included or whether it was detached from the screen at a later date. However, considering the facts that the names of only nine out of the fourteen officials invited to the banquet are listed on the second panel, and that three poems composed at the time do not appear, it is highly probable that this screen has not been maintained in its original form; that two panels including the list of remaining participants and their poems were removed. If this were the case, the scene of the king’s selection of the government officials may have been included in the lost panels.\textsuperscript{265}

Another possible reason for the lack of the main scene is because the pictorial representation was replaced by a more detailed verbal description. The text on the screen corresponds exactly to the visual representation of the official event, as shown on the 1691 and 1721 screens. The detailed description here recounts in chronological order the entire process of this political event presided by the king. The contents prove more abundant than the pictorial representation, which only captures a select moment of the action. In this case, the patrons probably did not see the necessity for a visual representation to supplement the elaborate text. Instead, they paid more attention to the detailed descriptions achieved through text rather than

\textsuperscript{264} The inscription on the fifth panel describes the placement of furniture and utensils, the arrangement of officials present on the day of the selection and explains the progress of events in chronological order. The text inscribed on the sixth panel delineates the scene of composing and exchanging poems between the king and subjects at the night banquet, following the selection. Overall, the description of the night banquet is similar to that in Yi Tōksu’s writing, but Yu Manch’u elaborates on the process of selecting officials at Sŏnjŏng Hall. For the entire text written by Yu Manch’u, see Chin Chunhyŏn, “Yŏngjo sinjang yŏnhwasido,” 41-44.

\textsuperscript{265} Chin Chunhyŏn, “Yŏngjo sinjang yŏnhwasido,” 50-51.
painting. As a result, in this screen the calligraphy and poems, the verbal expression, became dominant over visual imagery as the main vehicle for commemorating and recording experiences and memories. The fourteen participants appear twice in this screen, as figural representations in the painting and through the poems they composed at the banquet. It is an interesting juxtaposition wherein the textual and visual representations correspond to each other.

In sum, the artists and agents of King Sukchong’s screen of 1691 (fig. 1-36) chose to visualize the two important moments of the event, while those of King Yŏngjo’s screen (fig. 2-19) preferred the verbal account of the occasion. I would place the King Kyŏngjong screen (fig. 2-1) somewhere between the two. It follows the example of King Sukchong’s screen in depicting the scene of the official meeting between the king and his subjects and documenting the names and titles of the participants. However, the artists and/or the agents who commissioned the work cleverly use the innovative method of replacing the scene of the wine party with the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. Although they place emphasis on the visual representation, they do so in a more nuanced and allegorical way by avoiding a direct portrayal of the actual event. The Orchid Pavilion and its surroundings depicted in the King Kyŏngjong’s screen is not merely an illustration of the famous Wang Xizhi story but doubles as the wine banquet actually hosted by the king. The story of the Lanting event would be interpreted in a general way elsewhere, but it lends a specific message to this screen for an intended audience, the officials witnessing the events. The Lanting event’s meaning becomes clearer when read within the entire artistic scheme of the screen. In other words, the wine party where the king and his officials enjoyed wine and composed poems was re/visualized by adapting this Chinese theme, the narrative of which accords with the Chosŏn case. In the case of the King Yongjo’s screen, the banquet is envisioned via the written texts. This sequence of these documentary screens, including those commissioned
by the Kwŏn family members discussed in chapter one, reveals a centuries-long evolution of the ways contemporary events were commemorated and recollected in visual and verbal forms in Chosŏn court art.

5) Reading Politics at King Kyŏngjong’s Court

The tenth panel presents a list of participants in the selection of officials, who were also presumably commissioners or agents as recipients of the screen. The official title, government post, name, courtesy name, year of birth, and year of passing the state exam, as well as the clan seat of nine officials, who also appear as figural representations in the first panel, are inscribed in vertical columns from top to bottom. These elements reveal three most important components that controlled the social network and bureaucratic hierarchy of Chosŏn society: the significance of merit-based civil service examination as entry into a public post, the seniority system as the operative principle of promotion, and patrilineal lineage adhering to region and kinship to secure inherited privilege.

Given that the list only includes officials from the Ministry of War and scribes and historians helping them during the selection in 1721, officials of the Ministry of Personnel, who also played a key role in the event, do not seem to have been involved in the commission of this painting. Scrutiny of the political orientation of the participants sheds light on the political

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The list of officials inscribed on the tenth panel is as follow:

崇政大夫 行兵曹判書 兼判義禁府事 知經筵春秋館事 崔錫恒 汝久 甲午 己未司馬 庚申別試 完山人
嘉善大夫 兵曹參判 兼訓練院都正 尹恕 汝誠 乙己 咸安人己卯廣試
通政大夫 行兵曹參議 知製教 韓重熙 熙甫 辛丑 辛未生進 壬午相魁 西原人
通政大夫 兵曹參判 兼製教 李仁復 來初 乙亥 乙酉司馬 甲午增廣
中直大夫 行兵曹正郎兼春秋館 記注官 朴長淵 袁伯 己未 辛卯式年 密陽人
通德郎 行兵曹佐郎 金慶衍 君曼 辛巳 乙未式年 慶州人
通政大夫 承政院右副承旨 兼經筵參贊 春秋館修撰官 鄭亨益 時偕 甲辰 丁卯司馬 己亥增廣魁 慶州人

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geography and power struggle of two political rivals, the Old Doctrine and Young Doctrine factions, in the early reign of King Kyŏngjong. The history of their confrontation dates back to the rule of King Sukchong, his father and preceding monarch. When King Sukchong attempted to invest his first-born child Yi Yun, a son of his favorite concubine, Lady Chang, as an heir to the throne, the Southerners supported the king’s decision, but the Westerners, which sided with the reigning Queen Inhyŏn, strongly opposed because they were concerned about the close relationship between the Southerners and Lady Chang’s family. Enraged by the opposition to his wishes, King Sukchong expelled the Westerners from court, and deposed and exiled the queen. Taking advantage of this bloody dispute, called the Reversal of the Political Situation in 1689, the Southerners were able to retain their hold on power.267

However, in 1694 King Sukchong executed Lady Chang and reinstated Queen Inhyon, which led to the Westerners’ restoration of power and the downfall of the Southerners. After that, the Westerners enjoyed political supremacy for a long period of time. These political reversals in the reign of King Sukchong derived partially because of king’s strategy to strengthen royal authority by replacing the faction in power with the other one, thereby trying to prevent a monopoly by one political party. Meanwhile, the Westerners themselves had split into the Old Doctrine and the Young Doctrine factions. The former took a firm stand against the Southerners and Lady Chang, while the latter had a moderate attitude towards their rivals. The difference between the two sides arose from the conflicts surrounding the succession to the throne by Yi Yun, who later became King Kyŏngjong. The Old Doctrine bureaucrats were displeased that the son of Lady Chang, whom they had deposed, became king: a king who might be a threat to them...
in the future. Therefore, they supported Prince Yŏning, a half-brother of King Kyŏngjong, as heir to the throne and finally succeeded in installing him as Royal Prince Successor Brother (Wangseje 王世弟) in the eighth month of 1721.268

This event of King Kyŏngjong’s selection of government officials happened just before the appointment of Prince Yŏning as a Royal Successor Brother. The selection and appointment of officials is not only regarded as the king’s responsibility in order to maintain benevolent governance but also as his privilege as a sovereign to wield authority over personnel affairs. Thus, this event has political and symbolic significance for displaying the king’s power and authority. This political event is comparable to court rituals that were designed to demonstrate the king’s legitimacy and authority to his subjects. Through this event, the role and status of the king is emphasized in a tangible manner. Conscious of the political and symbolic significance of this event, King Kyŏngjong carried it out upon his investiture. However, his wishes to strengthen his royal authority through this event were not realized due to opposition from the Old Doctrine faction, whose power overwhelmed that of the king and the political parties supportive of the king.

The six officials of the Ministry of War who comprised the list of candidates offered to the king consisted of two bureaucrats from the Young Doctrine faction, three from the Old Doctrine, and one from the Southerners.269 At first glance, this would seem to indicate

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269 Ch’ŏe Sŏkhang and Pak Changyun 朴長潤 (1679-?) are associated with the Young Doctrine while Yun Kak 尹慄 (1665-1724), Han Chunghŭi 韓重熙 (1661-1723), and Kim Kyŏngyŏn 金慶衍 are affiliated with the Old
impartiality in the distribution of government positions and balance among the power groups. However, four officials of the Ministry of Personnel, which is also in charge of the selection of candidates, belonged to the Old Doctrine. The dominance of the Old Doctrine faction was reflected in the results of the appointment of government posts. The prestigious positions in the central government, so-called “chŏngyojik,” and high-ranked positions in the Ministries of Personnel and War were mostly distributed to officials associated with the Old Doctrine as the result of the selection in 1721. This situation was the natural corollary of the political orientation of the people involved in the selection process, as well as of the political situations being controlled by the Old Doctrine faction. As the personnel changes and promotions were purportedly conducted in favor of the ruling party of the Old Doctrine, a situation that was criticized later by historians affiliated with the Young Doctrine.

In the eighth lunar month of 1721, the Old Doctrine faction established Prince Yŏning as the successor to King Kyŏngjong, a sickly ruler without an heir. In two months’ time they pressured the king to abdicate from the throne and forced him to write a memorial confirming

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270 According to an entry in the Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, year of 1721, the 1st month, the 6th day, four officials from the Office of Personnel participated in the selection process. Song Sanggi 宋相琦 (1657-1723), Sim T’aekhyŏn 沈宅賢 (1674-1736), Sin Sach’ŏl 申思喆 (1671-1759), and Sin Sŏk 申哲, who were the minister, the deputy minister, a senior third-ranked secretary, and a senior sixth-ranked official, respectively, were all members of the Old Doctrine faction.

271 Young officials under the influence of the Old Doctrine faction, such as Yu Ch’ŏkki 俞拓基 (1691-1767), Han Chunghŭi, Kim Mint’aek 金民澤 (1678-1722), and Kim Chaero 金在魯 (1682-1759), were appointed to key positions of the three censorate offices and the Royal Secretariat. The monopoly of chŏngyojik by the Old Doctrine faction is particularly noteworthy because of their significant role in attaining hegemony in the factional strife. Although their positions belonged to the senior sixth rank, they were considered to hold prestigious positions in the central government, which was almost a prerequisite for holding a reputable position with ministerial rank. They were able to exercise their influence to create a sentiment in favor of the factions they belonged to through their right to recommend and consent to the appointment of three censorate officials to the Office of the Censor-General, the Office of the Inspector-General, the Office of Special Counselors, and the Office of Royal Decrees. Moreover, they could recommend their successor. Their exclusive power over the screening procedures and appointment of central posts had a profound impact on the success of a certain family and political faction in the bureaucracy. Thus, the ruling party dominated this position and promising young officials from the party were usually appointed to it.

272 Veritable Records of King Kyŏngjong, year of 1721, the 1st month, the 7th day.
Prince Yŏning’s appointment as a royal regent. This radical claim by the Old Doctrine faction instigated strong opposition by the Young Doctrine faction, which led to a bloody massacre in the twelfth lunar month of 1721. Being accused of usurpation of the throne, many officials of the Old Doctrine faction were removed from office and exiled, and King Kyŏngjong could bring back officials of the Young Doctrine faction to court. King Kyŏngjong’s selection of officials occurred just before this bloody court conflict and reflects the unsettled circumstance when the ruling Old Doctrine faction expanded their political influence over the court to the extent to that they threatened the authority of the king.273

Scholar-officials suffered long from the factional strife and ensuing purges borne of political struggle, including exile and execution of their colleagues and family members. Under these unstable circumstances, which aggravated the political turmoil and tensions between the rivalry factions, officials were probably longing for a reclusive cultivated and carefree life in nature. Their aspirations are expressed through the theme they chose for their commemorative painting, the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. To the Chosŏn elite, the symbolic space envisioning the Orchid Pavilion Gathering is an ideal and peaceful place for hermit literati engaging in cultural and intellectual activities and escaping from political struggle, which was strongly appealing to those who had long lost their chance for a peaceful life in the midst of the “Red Dust.” It may seem ironic, but the theme has formed a long tradition in East Asia, frequently being used by literati living in political turmoil and being suppressed by the oppressive regimes as a sophisticated expedient for self-fashioning and criticism of the current political and social problems.274

274 Peter Sturman’s recent study on the seventeenth-century Chinese painting by remnant subjects of the Ming explicates the concept of reclusion as a persistent and important theme of art in literati tradition. As he states, “reclusion was primarily conceived as a broadly shared discourse that invited commentary within a like-minded community” of cultured men who were disengaged of their own will or being compelled to do, and suffered from political ills and social trauma. See Peter Sturman, “The Art of Reclusion,” in The Artful Recluse: Painting, Poetry,
3. Royal Authority and “Chinese Beauty” in Commemorative Court Painting: King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766

1) King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet in 1766 and Its Political Significance

King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766 (fig. 2-20) in the collection of the Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, was commissioned to celebrate a royal banquet for King Yŏngjo in his forty-second reign year. It consists of eight panels that can be divided into three sections: the first panel features a preface, a list of participants in the royal banquet, and two poems composed by the king and one of his subjects; the second panel depicts the scene of the court banquet at Sungjŏng Hall, Kyŏnghŭi Palace; and the third through eighth panels shows ladies in a court garden wearing Chinese dress.

The preface explains that the banquet is intended to celebrate the virtue of King Yŏngjo, who had turned 73 years old and had ruled the state for 42 years, as well as to wish for his longevity after recovering from illness. In addition, the year of 1766 marked the same sexagenary year when King Yŏngjo, then prince, had offered wine to his father, King Sukchong at the royal banquet of 1706. Despite persistent requests from subjects that a court banquet be held for King Yongjo’s birthday, the king did not grant royal permission because of calamity and

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275 The entire text of the preface has been published in Ko sŏhwachebal haesŏljip 2 고서화 제발 해설집 2 [Inscriptions of old paintings and calligraphic works], (Seoul: Leeum Samsung Museum of Art, 2008), 82-84. In the inscription, the reason for having this banquet in 1766 is explained below.
“… In general, we have a banquet to celebrate auspicious occasions. Now, (the king) will become 80 years old soon, which is the first good reason for hosting a banquet. The king has ruled the state for forty years, which is the second good reason for hosting a banquet. The king recovered from illness, which is the third reason for hosting a banquet. This banquet also follows the previous royal banquet conducted by the preceding ruler, which is the fourth good reason for hosting a banquet. This (banquet) satisfies all conditions for having a banquet…”…夫宴所以飾慶。今者，有望八盡之慶，一斯足矣。又有莅四紀之慶，二斯足矣。又有聖候平復之慶，三斯足矣。又有先王繼述之慶，斯四慶有一焉，亦足以宴…
famine plaguing the kingdom. However, Yŏngjo made an exception and held a banquet on the 27th day of the eighth lunar month, the same date as King Sukchong’s banquet, to commemorate the auspicious occasion taking place coincidently. To prepare for this banquet, King Yŏngjo ordered his subjects to comply with the *Royal Protocol for the Banquets of the Inner and Outer Court in 1706* (*Pyŏnsul nyŏn naeoe'yŏn ŭigwe*,丙戌年內宴儀軌). An unknown subject of the king composed the preface, which contains an eulogy of the king’s virtue and his peaceful reign and expresses contentment regarding the court banquet. Two poems, one composed by King Yŏngjo and one by an unknown banquet participant, reiterate how precisely this event complied with that of King Sukchong’s banquet 60 years earlier, and how King Yŏngjo succeeded his predecessor’s achievement and good deeds. Below the inscription is a list of bureaucrats of the temporary office that supervised the ritual preparation and of royal relatives and high officials who offered wine to King Yŏngjo in the outer court banquet. The listed figures not only played a significant role in the banquet itself but also

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276 *Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo*, vol. 100, year of 1762, the 8th month, the 29th day; year of 1762, the 9th month, the 9th day; vol. 102, year of 1763, the 7th month, the 26th day; year of 1763, the 9th month, the 13th day; vol. 104, year of 1764, the 8th month, the 28th day; year of 1764, the 9th month, the 4th day; vol. 106, year of 1765, the 8th month, the 5th day.

277 The inscription on the first panel states that “…It also happened in the year of bingxu (1706). When King Sukchong held a banquet in 1706, our majesty (King Yŏngjo) had offered wine to King Sukchong. Sixty years after King Sukchong’s banquet of 1706, we have the same year of now. What an auspicious occasion this is…”

278 *Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo*, vol. 107, year of 1766, the 7th month, the 7th day; year of 1766, the 7th month, the 9th day; *Daily Records of the Royal Secretary*, vol. 1258, year of 1766, the 8th month, the 12th day. Following King Sukchong’s event, the outer court celebration for male guests was held on the 27th day of the 8th lunar month in 1706 and the inner court banquet for the queen, court ladies, and wives of high officials was on the following day.

279 Two poems written by King Yŏngjo and one of the participants appear at the end of the inscription. The first poem composed by King Yŏngjo reads: “(The previous event occurred) in Injŏng Hall and (the present event takes place) in Sungjŏng Hall. The preceding banquet was held in the eighth month and the present banquet was also held in the eighth month. Turning my head, (I) gaze at sunset clouds, how delightful it is to listen to music. (I) practice filial piety by loyally succeeding the past king’s deeds and achievements. (I) should be careful not to become idle (仁政崇政 前八後八 回望暮雲 聞樂豈樂 善繼之孝 太康(之)戒 洋溢言表).” The second poem states that “The zither produces resonant sound. Elegant sound of a flute floated harmoniously in the earlier Bingxu year, (we) follow the tradition of the past in this Bingxu year. Our majesty is wise. Pure ritual vessels (are carefully prepared). (King Yŏngjo) carefully offered a bronze vessel (to King Sukchong) in the earlier eighth lunar month, (he) will live long this eighth lunar month. Wise our majesty (朱絃洋洋 前丙戌弦箏喤喤 後丙戌率由舊章 我后明明 楚楚者豆 吾八月瑟瑟者 今八月不眉壽 明明我后).”
belonged to an influential political faction, the Old Doctrine, which occupied important governmental posts at the time. In particular, Queen Chŏngsun’s 貞純王后 (1745-1805) relatives, such as her father Kim Hanku; and Lady Hong’s father and uncle Hong Ponghan 洪鳳漢 (1713-1778) and Hong Chunhan topped the list.

The two rival royal in-law families, the Kyŏngju Kim and P’ungsan Hong lineages, established a strategic alliance to eliminate their common political opponent, Crown Prince Sado 思悼世子 (1735-1762), who was in favor of the Young Doctrine faction. After Crown Prince Sado’s death, the two queens’ relatives coexisted for a while before Kim Kuchu 金龜柱 (1740-1786), the son of Kim Hanku, slandered Hong Ponghan in order to expel him from court in 1772.

King Yŏngjo’s Policy of Impartiality against volatile factionalism was seemingly successful in his later years of rule, when a balance of power was maintained between the two competing sets of the queens’ relatives. The list, including important figures from the rival families, reflects the tense but seemingly balanced power between the two groups in that period.

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280 Two groups of people are listed, who prepared for the royal banquet and offered wine to the king at the banquet. The first group consisting of eleven officials from the togam includes Kim Hanku 金漢耉 (1723-1769), Cho Unkyu 趙雲逵 (1714-1774), Yi Sakwan 李思觀 (1705-1776), Chŏng Pak 鄭璞 (1734-1796), Hong Chunhan 洪駿漢 (1731-?), Yi Myŏngch’ŏl 李命哲, Chŏng Chonyang 鄭存養, Sin Kwangmyŏn 申光勉, Chŏng Linjun 鄭璘埈, and two unrecognizable names. The first three who supervised the preparation of the ritual are high-level bureaucrats ranking higher than senior 3rd rank, while others were working-level officials who belonged to the Bureau of Music, Royal Kitchen Management, Palace Architecture Maintenance Office, and so on. The first three officials also participated in the banquet as guest and director of the ritual but the latter were not invited to the banquet. The political orientation and biography of the low-level officials are not clear. However, the three high officials in the list are important senior politicians of the Old Doctrine. The second list shows the five persons who offered liquor to the king: Hong Ponghan, Yun Tongdo 尹東度 (1707-1768), Kim Hanku, Yi Pyŏng 李棅, Pak Myŏngwŏn 朴明源 (1725-1790). The first three are the State Councilors, Yi is a royal family member and Pak is a son-in-law of King Yŏngjo. We do not have enough information to determine the political preference of royal family members but the first three belonged to the Old Doctrine.

281 Queen Chŏngsun is the second queen consort of King Yŏngjo and Lady Hong is the consort of Crown Prince Sado and daughter-in-law of King Yŏngjo.

The preface and two poems emphasize the significance of the 1766 banquet as succeeding the protocols and customs inherited from the previous monarch by linking this event to the 1706 banquet at King Sukchong’s court. King Yŏngjo declared that the 1766 banquet was also to commemorate his offering of wine to King Sukchong at the 1706 banquet. This can be understood to stem from the Confucian tenets, “Return to Antiquity” (pokko 復古) and “Loyally Succeeding the Past Kings’ Deeds and Achievements” (kyesul chisa 繼志述事), which were employed by the Chosŏn ruling class to justify their policies and to support their rationale.

However, noting King Yŏngjo’s apt use of these elements of Confucian rule in the execution of his policies and in his court, his pronouncement of pursuing antiquity and succeeding the past kings’ accomplishments was more than just rhetoric. To strengthen his legitimacy, which was inherently damaged by his mother’s ignoble birth and challenged by rebellion, King Yŏngjo emphasized his close association with previous rulers, particularly his father, King Sukchong, by emulating his accomplishments and following his policies. This was demonstrated in King Yŏngjo’s organization of numerous court events and ceremonies reminiscent of those of King Sukchong, such as an admission ritual to the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age in 1744, a congratulatory ceremony at Sungjŏng Hall in 1763, and the reprint and

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283 Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 107, year of 1766, the 7th month, the 7th day.
284 For an extended discussion of the Confucian sage-kingship and emphasis on the significance of antiquity at Yŏngjo’s court, see Jahyun Kim Haboush, The Confucian Kingship in Korea, 29-82.
285 For a study of King Yŏngjo’s effort to emulate previous Chosŏn rulers and its political significance, see Kim Chiyŏng, “Yŏngjo tae ūrye wa haengch’a kūrigo kık” 英祖代 儀禮와 行次 而今 기역 [Ritual, outing and memories in the reign of King Yŏngjo], in Chosŏn sidae munhwasa: munmul ū chŏngbi wa wangsil munhwada 조선시대 문화사: 문물의 정비와 왕실의 문화 [Cultural history of the Chosŏn dynasty: establishment of civilization and royal culture], Chŏng Okja et al. (Seoul: Ilichisa, 2007), 261-296. Yun Chong has also explored the historical aspects of King Yŏngjo’s restoration of rituals held in the early period of the dynasty. For details, see Yun Chong 윤정, “18 seji Kyŏngbokgung yuji ū haengsa wa ūrye: Yŏngjodae rŭl chungsim ūro” 18 세기 景福宮 遺址 의 행사와 의례: 영조대의 종실으로 [Rituals and events at the relics of Kyŏngbok Palace in eighteenth century: focusing on King Yŏngjo’s case], Sŏllok yŏn’gu 25 (2005): 191-225.
distribution of Record to Celebrate the Glory of the State (Kwangguk chigyŏngnok 光國志慶錄).\textsuperscript{286}

2) Representation of the Banquet in King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766 and other Commemorative Paintings of the Eighteenth Century

A relatively early example of a screen depicting a royal banquet, King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766 (fig. 2-20) exemplifies the practice of commissioning paintings after court events for commemorative purposes in the late Chosŏn period. The second panel (fig. 2-01a) depicts the banquet taking place at Sungjŏng Hall, in which the royal heir to the throne, the royal family, and high-ranking bureaucrats offered wine to the king, while the royal orchestra and dancers performed on a platform built in the courtyard. Close examination of the second panel reveals significant information on outdoor banquets at the time, which became the pattern for later celebration.

The king’s throne was indicated by a screen of the Sun, Moon, and Five Peaks. Attendants and standing guards hold ritual swords and fans, appears in the upper center of the royal audience chamber (fig. 2-20b). The wine jar and crown prince’s seat are placed to the left and right of the throne, respectively. There are four or five rows of guests (fig. 2-20c), which include royal relatives and palace-ascendable civil and military officials. They are seated on a platform temporarily installed outside the hall under a white tent-like roof. Palace guards armed

\textsuperscript{286} Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 60, year of 1744, the 9th month, the 9th day; vol. 101, year of 1763, the 1st month, the 1st day; vol. 107, year of 1766, the 8th month, 27th day. Kwangguk chigyŏng rok is a collection of congratulatory poems composed in 1588 to celebrate the clarification of the royal genealogy of the Chosŏn dynasty. These collections were printed three times based on the manuscript King Sŏnjo. King Sukchong and Yŏngjo ordered to print it in 1703 and 1744 respectively. For details, see Pak Munyŏl朴文烈 and Kim Tonghwan金東煥, “Kwangguk chigyŏng rok ŭi kyangam e kwanhan yŏn’gu” 光國志慶錄의 校勘에 관한 研究 [A textual study on Record to Celebrate Glory of State], Sŏjihak yŏnʼgu 38 (2007): 69-101.
with bows stand to the rear of the seated officials. On the extended dais at the far right side are
two rows of relatively low-ranking officials who are not permitted to sit on the central platform.
All participants have their own tables, and dishes served separately at each table.

In the middle of the platform (fig. 2-20c), dancers wearing masks of Ch’ŏyong 處容 are
placed in a diamond formation with one dancer in the center. In between the Ch’ŏyong dancers,
boy dancers perform. A court orchestra consisting of a hanging drum, stone chimes, a bell and a
large drum is positioned behind the dancers. A ritual assistant and a conductor clad in court attire,
both high officials of the Bureau of Music, stand to the right of the hanging drum. Six boy
dancers wearing wide-sleeved costumes execute the same movement of an open stance with
outstretched arms. A flood-dragon banner is shown at the right end of the platform, indicating
the royal presence. A royal palanquin, two horses with attendants, and well-to-do gentlemen
appear in the courtyard beyond Sungjŏng Gate (fig. 2-20d).

The process of the banquet, arrangement of ritual objects, and location of participants are
detailed in Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo and Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat. The
deployment of objects and figures shown in the painting is consistent with these archives and
with “Diagram of Rank Chart and Ritual Objects for the Banquet at Injŏng Hall”

仁政殿進宴之圖 (fig. 2-21) included in the Preface Volume of the Supplement to the Five Rites
of State (Kukcho sok oryeŭi sŏrye 國朝續五禮儀序例 ) published in 1744. The painting is not as
accurate as its literary references but clearly displays the happenings in a graphic manner.

287 Ch’ŏyong Mask Dance 處容舞 is the oldest surviving Korean court dance performed since the Later Silla period.
The first record about the dance is found in Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms (Samguk yusa 三國遺事). Paintings
of Ch’ŏyong were attached to the gates to drive off evil spirits. During the Koryŏ dynasty, one person wearing a
black robe performed the Ch’ŏyong Mask Dance, but in the time of King Sejong of the Chosŏn dynasty five dancers
wearing robes of five different colors performed it. It was performed on the night before New Year’s Eve as part of
court rites to chase away evil spirits. In later periods, it was performed separately in the court. See Yi Hŭng-gu,
Korean Court Dance: As Seen in Historical Documents (Seoul: Korea Foundation, 2010), 37-39.
288 Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 107, year of 1766, the 8th month, the 27th day, Daily Records of Royal
Secretariat, vol. 1258, year of 1766, the 8th month, the 12th day.
It is obvious that the progressive narrative mode was adopted in the painting to portray multiple moments of the ritual in a single scene without repetition of characters. For example, the scene depicting the director and deputy director of the *togam* offering food and wine to the crown prince and the scene of the Ch’ŏyong Mask Dance and the Wide-sleeved Dance appear simultaneously although they were performed at different stages of the banquet. In reality, dance and music would stop during the wine offering and the dances were not performed concurrently. The stone chimes and bells on the terrace do not correspond to the actual arrangement of the court orchestra because these instruments were usually installed below the terrace. Thus, the scene is not an accurate rendition of a specific moment, but may be seen as a reconfiguration of images selected to capture the festive atmosphere of the banquet.

This screen reflects the artistic practice and pictorial idioms of court documentary paintings that became the standard in the late Chosŏn dynasty. The convention of producing commemorative paintings was developed from the practice creating paintings to celebrate the social gatherings in the mid-Chosŏn dynasty. Thus, court documentary paintings predating the eighteenth century bear a close resemblance to the gathering paintings of scholar-officials in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries in terms of style, format and function. Until the eighteenth century, such paintings were sponsored mainly by officials at their own expense. Like paintings of literati gatherings, court documentary paintings were mostly commissioned by private patrons, to foster comradeship amongst the participants rather than to commemorate the court event itself, and multiple copies were produced for distribution to the members involved in the event.

However, this convention notably changed during King Yŏngjo’s rule. King Yŏngjo not

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290 For example, documentary paintings in the sixteenth century such as *Royal Banquet Bestowed by the King at Sŏch’’ongdae of 1564* and *Banquet Bestowed by the King for Successful Examination Candidates of the Royal Visitation Examination of 1580* are close in style and format to the gathering paintings of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.
only showed a great interest in documentary painting but also directly engaged in the commission and dissemination of the paintings. As seen in the example of *Album of the Dredging Project of Ch’ŏnggye Stream in 1760* (瀆川稷帖, fig. 2-22) and *Plowing Ceremony* in 1739, a number of commemorative court paintings were produced under King Yŏngjo’s direction and distributed by the king’s order. Some of them were presented to officials who participated in the event and others were presented to the palace. From then onward, it became the custom to offer commemorative paintings to the court for royal viewership. *Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo* and inscription by King Chŏngjo state that multiple copies of the paintings portraying the 1766 banquet were produced in album and screen format, some of which were offered to the court for royal viewers. Once government funds were used in the production of documentary paintings, they assumed a public nature related to political agendas, functioning, as effective tools to celebrate the accomplishments and capabilities of the current monarch, thus fundamentally supporting royal authority. At this juncture, the function of court documentary paintings changed from private memento with an underlying social and political purpose to propagandistic instrument of the king.

The banquet scene in this screen shares some pictorial characteristics evident in previous

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291 *Album of the Dredging Project of Ch’ŏnggye Stream* is an album produced to commemorate the massive dredging work of Ch’ŏnggye Stream in 1760, in which about 215, 380 people participated for 57 days. More than eight copies of the album are extant. Among them, the album in the Asami Collection in the East Asian Library of U.C. Berkeley is believed to have been produced for King Yŏngjo because of its delicate execution and the king’s calligraphy attached to the album. It contains King Yŏngjo’s calligraphy, four paintings of the dredging operations, a list of government officials who participated in the work, and the director’s inscription. For further study of the album, see Pak Chŏnghye, *Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa yŏn’gu*, 280-295. The Plowing Ceremony was carried out at the beginning of spring in order to encourage people to cultivate crops. Despite the significance of farming in an agrarian society, this ceremony was only conducted sixteen times during the 500 years of the Chosŏn dynasty. It was performed four times by King Yŏngjo. For a general explanation of the Plowing Ceremony of the Chosŏn dynasty, refer to Yi Uk 이옥, “Chosŏn sidae Ch’ingyŏngnye ūi pyŏnch’on kwa kŭ ŭim” 朝鮮時代親耕禮의 변천과 그 의미 [The evolotion of the Plowing Ceremony and its meaning], *Chonggyo yŏn’gu* 30: 1 (2004): 289-322. According to Kim Chiyŏng’s research, a painting of a *Plowing Ceremony* of 1739 survived until the 1940s. For the provenance of this painting, see Kim Chiyŏng, “Yŏngjo tae Ch’ingyŏng ūisik ūi kŏhaeng kwa Ch’ingyŏng ūigung irdaipgyeông 30: 2 (2002): 67-72.

292 *Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo*, vol. 122, year of 1774, the 1st month, the 28th day; “Writing on Commemorative Painting for Royal Banquet” 畫進安圖稷屏, *Collective Works of King Chŏngjo*, vol. 1.
court banquet paintings: an aniconic representation of the members of the royal family, including the king and crown prince, multiple perspectives, the visual mode of progressive narration, and the diagrammatic arrangement of figures and ritual objects.²⁹³ *King Sukchong’s Royal Banquet of 1706* (fig. 2-23), which served as a model for the 1766 banquet, shows a similar mode of representation of a court banquet despite minute differences in the color of attire, the placement of the terrace orchestra, dance performances, and the number of figures. In contrast to the 1706 album, *King Sukchong’s Royal Banquet at Sungjong Hall of 1710* (fig. 2-24) was done in the format of a hanging scroll, which allows more space to accommodate more figures. The depiction of architecture and musical instruments is also more accurate in the later work.

The banquet screens painted in King Yŏngjo’s reign follow some conventions of those produced at King Sukchong’s court but show a more naturalistic depiction of architecture and drapery and more interest in representing three-dimensional space. In the cases of *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet at Sungjong Hall of 1744* (fig. 2-25) and Screen of *King Yŏngjo’s Offering Wine to the Elder Officials and Receiving the Congratulatory Banquet at Kyŏnghyŏn Hall of 1765* (fig. 2-26), the banquet scenes are depicted across multiple panels of the screens and thus figures, palace buildings, and the landscape beyond the confines of the ritual site are included. *King Yŏngjo’s Receiving the Congratulatory Banquet at Kyŏnghyŏn Hall of 1765* most closely resembles the 1766 banquet scene. Both paintings show an almost identical placement of music ensembles, court musicians and instruments, dancer’s gestures, ritual objects, and postures of officials in the royal audience hall (fig. 2-26a). Three royal banquet scenes of the 1706 album, the 1710 screen, and the 1744 screen, depict two or four boy dancers with wide sleeves in the center of the platform and two figures who offer the wine cup to the king as they kneel before the

²⁹³ For pictorial conventions to represent court banquets in the Chosŏn dynasty, see Park, “Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa,” 128-138; Jungmann, “Documentary Record Versus Decorative Representation,” 100-107.
king’s throne. However, the 1765 and 1766 screens show five dancers performing the Ch’ŏnyong Mask Dance and six boy dancers wearing wide-sleeve costumes, and two figures bowing behind the crown prince’s mat, probably the director and deputy director of the togam offering food and wine to the heir to the throne.\(^{294}\)

A noteworthy feature of the two screens is the depiction of a staff (figs. 2-20e, 2-26b), which is not found in the ritual protocol or the other banquet paintings. This probably is the staff presented to high officials entering the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age. King Yŏngjo become a member of the Office of Statesmen of Venerable Age in 1744 and was given a cane as a symbol of senior wisdom and longevity. Thus, the staff shown in the two screens reflects the King Yŏngjo’s virtue and pride as a senior statesman reaching a venerable age. In sum, the banquet scene in the 1766 screen follows the convention of representing court ceremony based on ritual protocols, modifies some details in accordance with the development of pictorial techniques, and adds some elements to accentuate the significance of King Yŏngjo.

3) Chinese Beauty Painting in the Late Chosŏn Dynasty and Its Pictorial Sources

In contrast to the depiction of the actual scene, the remaining panels of King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766 display women engaged in various activities in a setting of palace architecture and beautiful gardens in six separate compositions. (figs. 2-20f–k)\(^{295}\) This screen is a rare example of a commemorative court painting including beauties in Chinese costume.

Although paintings of Chinese females had been popular from the beginning of the dynasty,

\(^{294}\) More study is required to explain why the Ch’ŏnyong Mask Dance replaced the Wide-sleeve Dance in later paintings. The Ch’ŏnyong Mask Dance was usually performed at the end of the banquet.

\(^{295}\) The inclusion of idealistic scene in documentary paintings was abandoned in the later half of the 18\(^{\text{th}}\) century. For the development of a documentary painting depicting royal banquet in the late Chosŏn period, refer to Burglind Jungmann, “Documentary Record Versus Decorative Representation,” 95-105.
most were produced for the didactic purposes of propagating female chastity and filial piety. The Chinese beauties in this screen, however, do not seem to illustrate any text nor do they carry sequential narratives. They also do not portray any particular personages but show stereotypes of beautiful women. Rather than identifying each scene, I will investigate the use of ideal female images in commemorative paintings. Where can such scenes be located within the tradition of commemorative court painting in the late Chosŏn dynasty? What is the significance of Chinese beauties in this context? What are the visual sources for the representation of women in this screen?

The panel is replete with a series of standard formal motifs representing the elegant lifestyle of upper-class court ladies: for instance, with a table topped with antiquities, a stack of books, and a screen depicting water. In this idealized setting the aristocratic women are depicted wearing full-sleeved blouses with white collars and cuffs and skirts bound just below the bust with fluttering long sashes and knotted ties (fig. 2-20l). They are accompanied by female servants holding books, a cup, or a lantern. Their bejeweled coiffures with soft chignons covering the ears can be loosely associated with the Ming dynasty style. They have small, slit eyes and eyebrows defined by a single line. The nose is rendered by a single line demarcating the bridge, then curving along the nostril wings. The nose is seen as if from a frontal view, even though the face is often shown in three-quarter view. Lips are accentuated with a red hue (fig. 2-20m). Less defined lines, compared to the fine and thin lines of the facial features, render the curvy creases and folds or their clothes, especially in the skirt above their feet. Shadows are cast along the drapery. Although some shadow effect is applied to rocks and clothing, there is little
shadow shown in the architecture. Only a limited range of colors, such as red, green, and blue was used, reflecting the convention of court painting during King Yŏngjo’s reign.  

The slender women with oval heads and narrow shoulders wearing Han Chinese costumes are resonant of female beauties depicted by the Chinese painter Qiu Ying (fig. 2-28) and his followers, active in the Suzhou area in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. Yet, the women depicted in this painting significantly differ in their overall expression from Qiu Ying’s erotically charged beauties with their enticing faces and sensuous postures, lovelorn air and languid and listless poses. Although some motifs in the screen, such as peonies, banana, paulownia, and blossoming apricot trees create a female space, alluding to sexual pleasure and feminine frailty, the women’s activities are more gender-neutral and practical. Yet, some scenes also adhere to the traditional gender roles of women. Women awaiting a husband or a lover who is away on business or official duties and the woman taking care of or playing boys in the third and fourth panels (figs. 2-1f, 2-1g), respectively, represent the female domain.

However, the self-contained images of women honing their virtue and intimate relationships between women deserve attention. Their accessories, seen through an open pavilion, include a stack of books, a box of writing tools, antique bronze vessels, and a vase containing a

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296 Compared to other court documentary paintings, the 1766 screen shows a fairly unrefined rendition of figures and architecture, a simple composition and a lack of details. Therefore the question arouses whether the 1766 screen was a later copy of original painting executed by less skillful painters. However, a similar archaic style is commonly found in other court paintings produced during King Yŏngjo’s reign, such as Painting of Agriculture and Sericulture of Peiwen Studio (fig. 2-27) in Kŏnguk University Museum. For a study of the work and its stylistic characters, see Chŏng Pyŏngmo, “Chosŏn hubang i kyŏnjikto” 朝鮮時代 後半期의 耕織圖 [A study of paintings of Agriculture and Sericulture in the second-half of the Chosŏn dynasty], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 192 (1991): 32-36.  
297 The stylistic features, repertories, regional styles of Beautiful Women paintings flourished in the Jiangnan area and their social context is well summarized in James Cahill, Pictures for Use and Pleasure, 150-197. See also Ellen Johnston Laing, “Suzhou Pian and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received Oeuvre of Qiu Ying,” Artibus Asiae 59: 3/4 (2000): 265-295.  
298 My account of Qiu Ying’s female paintings of women is based on Ellen Johnston Laing’s analyses of Qiu’s works. Laing’s thorough examination of the style of Qiu Ying and her interpretation of symbolic meanings behind his paintings offer a comprehensive understanding of Qiu Ying’s oeuvre. See Ellen Johnston Laing, “Chinese Palace-Style Poetry,” 284-295; “Erotic Themes and Romantic Heroines,” 68-91; and “Qiu Ying’s Delicate Style,” 39-66.  
red coral branch (figs. 2-20f, 20k) Along with them, women engaged in reading and discussing a book (fig. 2-20i), or playing the lute and watching a crane dance (fig. 2-20j) are reminiscent of an elegant taste of literati activities. A servant carrying a bundle of books heightens the lofty atmosphere. The scene of a woman washing her hands in the fifth panel (fig. 2-20h), which still awaits interpretation is imbued with an elegant atmosphere, enhanced by a bonsai tree in the garden and a servant carrying a tea bowl.

The insertion of Chinese themes into commemorative court paintings is not uncommon in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. For example, the theme of Wang Xizhi’s Orchid Pavilion Gathering, Wang Wei’s Wangchuan Villa, and Zhu Xi’s Nine Views of the Wuyi Valley discussed earlier were used as themes for paintings commissioned by officials to commemorate court events. As suggested by the type of the Chinese subjects adopted in commemorative paintings, the themes are closely related to the male sphere, which reflects the idealized landscape of Confucian scholars and wise monarchs and the lofty culture pursued in the literati milieu. Landscapes and anecdotes related to Chinese Confucian sages satisfied the tastes of the Chosŏn elite and effectively elevated actual contemporary events to the distinction of the exemplary ancient occasions.

The only precedent example of a commemorative painting including Chinese ladies that I have been able to locate so far is Screen of a Gathering of Elders in Honor of Kwŏn Taeun (fig. 1-20) painted in 1689. Like other commemorative paintings, it consists of an inscription on the first panel, a banquet scene in a continuous composition from the second to sixth panels, and a list of participants on the last panel. The ladies attending to the guests are dressed in Chinese attire in a Chinese-style garden setting. The Chinese female images shown in this screen are

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300 For comprehensive analysis of the screen, refer Chin Chunhyŏn, “Kwŏn Taeun Kiroyŏnhoedo,” 1-28; Burglind Jungmann, “Documentary Record Versus Decorative Representation,” 102-104; and chapter 1, 93-102.
somewhat similar to those of the 1766 banquet screen in style. However, the roles of the women in the two screens contrast sharply: the former shows the women as secondary figures serving food and tea to and entertaining the male participants which, most interestingly, are shown in Korean costume, while the latter depicts women as protagonists engaged in cultural activities or domestic chores.

If the preceding commemorative paintings did not directly influence the 1766 screen, then what are the possible visual references for this screen? I suggest two influential sources: an example of an earlier Chosŏn tradition of paintings of Chinese noble women, and woodblock prints and illustrations of Chinese vernacular literature circulated in the late Chosŏn dynasty.

*True Traces of Wise Empresses* (fig. 2-29) and *Wise Empresses from Successive Dynasties* (fig. 2-30) in the collection of the National Museum of Korea have been spuriously attributed to Yi Chehyŏn 李齊賢 (1287-1367) of the Koryŏ dynasty, but they show characteristics corresponding to late-Ming Chinese beauty paintings, which are distantly related to Southern Song courtly styles attributed to Ma Hezhi 馬和之 (ca.1130-ca. 1162) and Liu Songnian 劉松年 (1174-1224) (figs. 2-31, 2-32). The paintings in the National Museum’s collection could be either Chinese works by a very late Ming or early Qing professionals in the Jiangnan region or Korean paintings inspired by this kind of Chinese models which were available in Chosŏn at the time. The association with Qiu Ying’s styles is obvious in the delicacy textile patterns, hair accessories, the detailed rendition of furniture and architecture, and the inclusion of luxurious items, such as bronze vessels, tea pots, and vases containing coral

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302 According to Yi Hongju’s study, paintings of *Chinese Beauties* by Qiu Ying were imported to Chosŏn in seventeen century and the Chosŏn elite appreciated Qiu Ying’s *Qingming Festival* and *Elegant Gathering of the Western Garden* in eighteenth century. See Yi Hongju, “17-18 segi Chosŏn ūi kongp’il ch’aesaek inmulhw,” 34-38.
branches. Slender women with small noses and lips, oval heads and narrow shoulders on their elongated bodies wearing Han Chinese attire are also resonant of the female beauties depicted by Qiu Ying. 

*Beauty Reading a Book* (fig. 2-33), attributed to Yun Tusŏ尹斗緖(1668-1715), indicates that Qiu Ying’s style of Chinese beauty paintings were emulated and appreciated by the Chosŏn elite in the late seventieth century. Unlike previous album leaves depicting exemplary women from history for didactic purposes, this painting does not convey any particular narrative or expository story. A woman wearing Han Chinese-style clothes and sitting on a chair reads a book. A stack of books, a vase containing a peacock feather and a coral create a lofty atmosphere along with banana trees, a *taihu* rock and two cranes in a garden.

The framing of the beautiful women who are shown in front of a screen in a garden setting or in an open architecture alongside elegant objects and luxurious items is a device found in the three paintings and the 1766 screen. However, there are noticeable differences between the three Chinese beauty paintings and the 1766 banquet painting. The finer and fluid lines defining the thinner and elegant looking female figures of the earlier paintings are different from the images of women in the 1766 screen, who are depicted as relatively stocky human figures with rounder and broader faces. In addition, the 1766 banquet screen lacks detail in depicting architecture, furniture, surfaces of vessels, and fabrics. Comparing the three paintings that show direct links to typical Suzhou paintings, the composition of the 1766 screen remains static, with little or no interest in the depiction of shadow effects or three-dimensional space to create more

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303 Yun Tusŏ is a literati-painter active in the late Chosŏn dynasty. Yun developed his own painting style based on the Southern school of painting and his study of Chinese woodblock painting manuals. In addition, Yun Tusŏ and his family members established the foundations of genre painting, depicting rural communities and daily work of commoners. For the significance of Yun Tusŏ’s role in Korean art history and his oeuvre, see Ch’a Miae 車美愛, “Kongjae Yun Tusŏ ilga üi hoehwa yŏng’gu” 恭齋尹斗緖一家의 繪畫 研究 [A study of paintings by Yun Tusŏ’s family members] (PhD diss., Hongik University, 2010).
refined and realistic images.

The simplified and less elaborate composition shown in the 1766 screen is commonly seen in woodblock prints and illustrations of vernacular novels widely circulated in the late part of Yŏngjo’s reign. Economic prosperity, along with increased passion for Chinese literature and culture resulted in an expanded readership, which in turn stimulated the import of diverse forms of Chinese literature. Some images included in Chinese novels, particularly those printed in the late Ming dynasty, exhibit more similarity in pictorial rendition, composition and perspective, and repertoire with the female figures of the 1766 screen. For example, *Album of Paintings Produced to Illustrate Poems* (*Shiyu huapu* 詩餘畫譜) (fig. 2-34), a wood-block printed manual of painting compiled in 1612, shows females based on typical images of beauties by Qiu Ying. Chinese novels such as *The Jade Hairpin* (*Yuzanji 玉簪記*) (fig. 2-35) *History of the Three Kingdoms with Popular Explanations* (*Sanguozhi chuan tongsu yanyi* 三國志通俗演義) (fig. 2-36), *Annals of the States of Spring and Autumns* (*Chunqiu Lieguozhi* 春秋列國志), *Constant Words to Awaken the World* (*Xingshi hengyan* 醒世恒言), and *Stylish Words from the Pleasure Quarters* (*Qinglou yunyu* 青樓韻語) (fig. 2-37) contain females wearing Han-style attire and accessories against the background of a garden or open pavilion.

Regarding the relationship between the images in these woodblock printed books and the 1766 screen, an interesting observation can be made by focusing on the court audience for vernacular Chinese literature. A book of *Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels* (*Chungguk sosŏl hŏemobon* 中國小說繪模本) was most likely compiled by Crown Prince Sado in 1762. It consists of 128 illustrations from Chinese literature, and its preface lists the titles of 93 Chinese

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texts available at that time. According to the preface, the prince collected the illustrations from ancient and modern Chinese literature and then ordered court painters, including Kim Tŏksŏng 金德成 (1729-1797), in order to copy the illustrations to provide exemplary models of conduct for didactic purposes and to offer attractive images for entertainment.

The case of Prince Sado’s compilation provides thought-provoking insights into the question of female readership at King Yŏngjo’s court and the Korean modification of pictorial elements deriving from Chinese themes. Although the book was compiled by a male royal member, its contents and gendered expressions imply widespread female readership. In the preface, Crown Prince Sado disguises himself as a woman by taking the name Yi of the Wansan lineage without providing a first name, the conventional way to present a female’s name. He also employed another gendered signifier, vernacular Korean script (Han’gŭl 한글), above each illustration. As manifested in amkŭl (script for women), a different name for Han’gŭl, vernacular Korean script connotes the domestic, female sphere as opposed to the classical Chinese writing.

305 Chŏng Pyŏngsŏl 鄭炳說 argues that Crown Prince Sado was the compiler of Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels based on three reasons. Firstly, the preface also appears in Sado’s literary collection, Nŭnghógwan mango. Secondly, Changch’un Pavilion and Yŏhui Pavilion where the compiler wrote the preface were attached buildings of T’ongmyŏng Hall, which, according to the Lady Hong’s autobiography Hanjungnok, was Crown Prince Sado’s residence around 1762. Thirdly, the calligraphy of the preface shows the style of Sado’s. See Chŏng Pyŏngsŏl, “Sado seja ka myŏng haesŏ mandŭn hwach’ŏp, Chungguk sosŏl hoemobon” 사도세자가 명예시 만든 화첩, <중국소설화모본 中國小說繪模本> [Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels commissioned by Crown Prince Sado], Munhŏn kwa haesŏk 47 (Summer, 2009): 126-135.

306 For the text and illustrations of Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels, I refer to a photographic edition edited by Pak Chaeyŏn 朴在澗. My account of the list and contents of novels is based almost entirely on his bibliographical notes on the book. Pak Chaeyŏn ed., Chungguk sosŏl hoemobon 中國小說繪模本 [Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels] (Ch’unch’ŏn: Kangwŏn University Press, 1993).

307 For this reason, previous scholars identified Yi from the Wansan clan as a upper class court ladies from Yi Royal Household. For example, Pak Chaeyŏn suggests Concubine Yi (1696-1764), the mother of Crown Prince Sado was the compiler and Kim Sangyŏp 金相燁 concludes that Princess Hwawan (1737-1808) compiled the book. For details, see Pak Chaeyŏn, Chungguk sosŏl hoemobon, 155-160; Kim Sangyŏp, “Kim Tŏksŏng ŭi Chungguk sosŏl hoemobon kwa Chosŏn hugi hoehwa” 金德成의 <中國小說繪模本>과 朝鮮後期繪畫 [Kim Tŏksŏng’s Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels and painting in the late Chosŏn], Misulsahak yŏn’gu 207 (1995): 52-54.
of the public, male domain. The reason for the Crown Prince hiding his identity behind a female name lies in the inappropriateness of the type of Chinese literature listed in the book. Romance and erotic novels, fantasy fiction, and Christian texts occupying a high ratio of the list were criticized and banished from the public realm by literati versed in Classical Chinese literature, on the basis of Confucian tenets and stoicism. However, the restriction on literature genres was not imposed on female audiences as much as on the male elite class. Consequently, Crown Prince Sado used a female alias to avoid criticism from Confucian officials and to conceal so-called vulgar tastes inappropriate to the heir to the throne.

We may thus assume that Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels consists of genres appealing to female readers in the late Chosŏn period, although it was compiled by a man. There is a high ratio of classical historical fiction accompanied by popular explanations, romances, and tales of talented scholars and beautiful women on the list. Popular versions of historical fiction gained a broad female audience because they do not require knowledge of Chinese history, which was generally inaccessible to women. Romances and tales of talent and beauty were also more attractive to female audiences than to male readers. The fact that the listed books were translated into Korean vernacular script also suggests female readership beyond the confines of the court.

Many historical records demonstrate that well-to-do women formed a significant

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309 According to Pak Chaeyŏn’s explanation, it includes 83 titles of Chinese novels, which consists of 11 historical fictions, 10 hero fictions, 7 mysterious stories of ghost and devil sprits, 8 Huaben fictions written in colloquial Chinese, 1 Gongan fiction, 16 erotic novels, 12 romance fictions, and 9 Wenyuan fictions written in Classical Chinese. In addition to fictions, there are 3 didactic books, 2 catholic texts, 1 medical book, and 1 Taoist text.

310 Im Ch’igyun 임치균, “Han’gŭl p’ilsabon Chantang odae yŏnmi yŏn’gu” 한글 필사본 <난당오대연의>연구 [Study of the manuscript of The End of the Tang and the Rise of the Five Dynasty with Popular Explanations written in vernacular Korean script], Changokegak 7 (2002), 33-58.

311 Pak Chaeyŏn, Chungguk sosŏl hoemobon, 195.
audience for Chinese novels in the late Chosŏn period and were involved in their dissemination as readers, transcribers, and translators, as well as collectors and consumers.\(^{312}\)

The images found in *Copies of Illustrations from Chinese Novels* (figs. 2-38a–38d) reveal pictorial elements and visual representations that were widely circulated and appreciated mainly by female audiences in the mid-eighteenth century. Despite many stylistic components indebted to their Chinese counterparts, the images here reveal some changes and modifications such as bold lines with limited brushstrokes, more simplified renditions of architecture and figures, minimal landscape elements executed in a graphical manner, and two-dimensional representation. These pictorial changes result in a broader unpainted space, which in turn keeps the viewer’s attention focused on the human activities. Similarly, such modifications are also found in the 1766 screen. The stylistic affiliations between the copied illustrations of the compiled book and the 1766 screen are much more obvious than with any other possible visual sources discussed above.

4) **Female Audiences of Commemorative Court Paintings**

Some parallels between the popularity of Chinese literature and paintings during King Yŏngjo’s reign as well as the similarities found in illustrations of vernacular novels preferred by female audiences and the 1766 screen suggest female patrons or viewers of the painting. Yet, the fragmentary information on palace women does not allow identification of a female owner or audience of the screen with absolute certainty. Nevertheless, the mode of representation, female sentiments, and artistic expressions common to the illustrations of vernacular novels and the

\(^{312}\) Chŏng Pyŏngsŏl, “Chosŏn hugi Han’gŭl sosŏl ŭi sŏngjang kwa yut’ong” 조선후기 한글소설의 성장과 유통 [The development and circulation of Korean novels in the late Chosŏn period], *Chindan hakpo* 100 (2005): 263-297; Im Ch’igyun, “Han’gŭl p’ilsabon Chandang odae yŏnŭi,” 36-38.
1766 screen seem to have exerted a strong appeal to women, perhaps even more than to men.

This assumption can be backed up by circumstantial evidence and the political situation around 1766. King Yŏngjo often ordered multiple copies of documentary paintings after implementing state rituals to distribute to offices and royal family members. For example, the commemorative painting depicting the Plowing Ceremony in 1739 was presented to the crown prince for instructive purposes. Many copies of banquet paintings were created to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of King Chŏngjo’s mother, Lady Hong of Hyegyŏng Palace (1735-1815) in 1795, and six medium- and large-scale folding screens were sent to the palace for royal viewers. One of them was most probably presented to Lady Hong, the most important figure in the 1795 court ceremony. In the nineteenth century it became the custom to distribute commemorative paintings to members of the royal family who were participants of court banquets. In other words, the king, queen dowager, queen, crown prince, and other royal relatives received paintings recording court events. Thus, there is a high probability that the 1766 banquet painting including Chinese Beauties was produced for a certain member of the royal family important to the banquet, possibly a female.

To identify a hypothetical recipient of the painting requires further inquiry into the political circumstances of the day. As stated earlier, two prominent in-law families, the Kyŏngju Kim and P’ungsan Hong lineages, were involved in the 1776 event as chief administrative officials and guests offering wine to the king. These two power groups established their political base with the support of Queen Chŏngsun, the second queen consort of King Yŏngjo and Lady

313 “Royal Order” year of 1739, the 1st month, the 28th day in Plowing Ceremony (Ch’ingyŏng ŭigwe)
314 Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae gungjung kirokhwa, 275-277; 304-306.
315 Lady Hong bestowed one role of linen on seven court painters for their contribution to painting documentary screens depicting the state event in 1795. It could be regarded as the monetary compensation for the banquet screen presented to her. Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae gungjung kirokhwa, 303.
316 Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn sidae gungjung kirokhwa, 398-407.
Hong, the consort of Crown Prince Sado. The more power the two camps of the queen’s relatives wielded in politics, the more significant the status of the two ladies became. Although Queen Chŏngsun was 10 years younger than Lady Hong, she occupied a higher status in the hierarchy of the inner quarters. Queen Chŏngsun was a major figure, who received an Inner Palace banquet on in the 28th day of the eighth lunar month in 1766, the first full-scale queen’s banquet after her investiture in 1759. Thus, King Yŏngjo thoughtfully considered every detail for his queen, who was 44 years younger, by issuing royal edicts with instruction of ritual decorum in advance. Moreover, King Yŏngjo ordered that her father, Kim Hanku, who had been dismissed for his son’s malfeasance in 1764, be reinstated as director of the togam supervising the ritual preparation.

The inner banquet reconfirmed Queen Chŏngsun’s status as head of the inner court, just as the outer banquet reconfirmed King Yŏngjo’s status. King Yŏngjo’s efforts to strengthen the queen’s authority through ritual continued in the implementation of the Royal Sericulture Ceremony in 1767 led by the queen. Therefore, the 1766 banquet was a significant event not only to King Yŏngjo, but also to Queen Chŏngsun. The central role of the queen in the realm of ritual and politics in the late years of King Yŏngjo’s rule and the subject and style of the 1766 screen, which seems to be targeted at a female audience, support the possibility that she might have been the primary recipient of the 1766 screen. It also raises the question of a body of commemorative court paintings done for women.

317 Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 107, year of 1766, the 7th month, the 13th day
318 Veritable Records of King Yŏngjo, vol. 107, year of 1766, the 7th month, the 9th day
4. Conclusion

The examination of the screen of *King Kyŏngjong’s Selection of Government Officials in 1721* and *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766* provides critical insights into the understanding of the socio-political function of court paintings as means to establish social networks within the bureaucratic system and to perpetuate the communal memory and experience of the participants. It also epitomizes the way in which cultural translation occurred between China, Korea, and Japan.

In the first part, I scrutinized how a canonical work was established through the interplay between texts and images, and how its connotation and perception was altered when the theme moved across time and cultures, focusing on theme of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering. It encompasses the historical development of the theme in China, its spread to Korea, and the comparative study of various forms of visual and textual representation in China, Korea, and Japan.

Drawing on Wang Xizhi’s Preface to the Orchid Pavilion, Li Gonglin’s painting, Ming-dynasty stone engravings, important comments and epilogues on the text, and painting by later artists, I identified the discrepancies between textual and visual representation of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering and the role of artists in the transformation from verbal to pictorial expression. Comparison between the Chinese and Korean versions demonstrates that these was no unilateral ‘Chinese influence’ on Korean culture, but unveils the role of Chosŏn artists and patrons as active agents, constantly engaging in the process of adaption of the Chinese theme and creating an alternative iconography and style of their own. This is reflected in the modified version of the Chosŏn screen, which appears as part of a commemorative painting to remind of a specific court
event. I analyzed this phenomenon in regard to the artistic strategies and the entire artistic program of the screen.

I suggested that the Orchid Pavilion Gathering would be selected as the theme for a commemorative painting because of its appropriability of the actual event. Further, I explained the Koreanization of the subject within the political, intellectual, and artistic circumstance specific to early eighteenth-century Chosŏn. By adopting the conventional and unique practice of Chosŏn court art to represent a main figure as an empty seat, the scene of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering goes beyond mere generic symbols associated with an elegant gathering of literati, transcends boundaries of the past and present, between ancient China and Chosŏn Korea, and connects them seamlessly. In this way, the Orchid Pavilion Gathering includes a series of acts of translations and border-crossing that imaginatively connect various cultural spaces and historical times. The message, whether a metaphorical or veridical one, which the subject conveys is easily decoded and recollected by people who shared the experience and same cultural and educational background. From this point of view, the painting itself serves as the site of a commemoration, not only for the participants of the event but also for later viewers.

In relation to *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766*, I explained the reason for the insertion of Chinese beauties into a commemorative screen in light of its presumed audience. To prove this assumption, I explored the political significance of royal banquets as manifestation of royal authority, discussed its format and styles in the convention of Chosŏn commemorative painting, and suggested the possibility of a body of court paintings debatably intended for female viewership.

In the realm of politics, the 1766 screen shows how the royal banquet was utilized to propagandize the contemporary rulership in a ritualistic manner. The royal banquet, in particular,
visualized the political agenda of “Return to Antiquity” and “Loyally Succeeding the Past Kings’ Deeds and Achievements,” which served as essential ideological principles supporting King Yŏngjo’s legitimacy. On the other hand, it also reflected the clash of political priorities and interests of different political groups. *King Yŏngjo’s Royal Banquet of 1766* reflects the tradition of commissioning commemorative paintings after the implementation of state rituals inherited from the early Chosŏn dynasty. It also follows pictorial conventions in representing court events: the aniconic representation of important royal members, the progressive narrative mode to capture multiple moments of the ceremonies at once, and the adoption of various perspectives to create an expository depiction of an event. At the same time, this painting presents two critical changes that occurred at King Yŏngjo’s court: the king’s commissioning commemorative paintings for distribution to members of the court and the emergence of the screen as popular format for commemorative paintings. More research needs to be conducted to determine whether king’s agency in the producing of commemorative painting facilitated the popularity of the screen format in the later period.

“Chinese Beauties” combined with a documentary painting recording court events is a unique feature of the 1766 screen. Many preceding pictorial images, such as paintings of Chinese women influenced by Qiu Ying’s style, Chosŏn paintings inspired by their Chinese counterparts, and woodblock illustrations from Chinese vernacular novels might have served as models for this screen. Among them, woodblock prints, which were most widely circulated by and easily accessible to the Chosŏn audience, shows the closest stylistic similarities to the screen. Taking into account that women were important audience for such popular literature and that the sentiments and motifs familiar to women are found in the screen, I suggest the likelihood of a female recipient of the 1766 screen. Despite the lack of archival sources regarding this
hypothesis, circumstantial evidence supports the possibility that Queen Chŏngsun was the intended recipient of this screen. Although this is only an assumption, it is compelling enough to attract attention to a hypothetical category of court paintings for female viewership and a definable subject and style directed toward female viewers.
CHAPTER 3. Bridging the Real and the Ideal: Auspicious Images of Chinese Legendary Banquets in Nineteenth-century Chosŏn Court Rituals

1. Introduction

This chapter explores how auspicious images depicting banquets of Chinese mythical and historical figures were adopted and manipulated in Chosŏn court art in order to construct a symbolic venue pertaining to state rituals and to express social practices and political ideology. Focusing on two screen paintings, *The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West* (Xiwangmu 西王母, at the Turquoise Pond (hereafter abbreviated as *The Banquet of Xiwangmu*) and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*, this study investigates the stylistic elements, iconography, pictorial sources, symbolic meanings, and political and ritual functions of these two themes in the nineteenth-century court.

These two themes share elements of composition, style, formality, and of their function during court rites. They are large-scale, eight- or ten-panel folding screens meticulously painted with blue and green minerals and gold pigment. In addition, the two-dimensional representation rendered in calligraphic outlines, an unnatural shading on the architecture, the decorative depiction of clouds and foliage, and a restricted color palette indicate that these two screens share visual forms and styles prevalent in nineteenth-century court art. Both were produced for festive court ceremonies related to the crown prince in the nineteenth century and include communal motifs and figures imbued with good wishes for auspicious occasions.

*The Banquet of Xiwangmu* depicts the mythical scene of a banquet, to which King Mu (r. 1001-946 B.C.) of the Zhou dynasty (c. 1046BC-256BC), heavenly deities,
immortals were invited by the Queen Mother of the West to her palace on Mount Kunlun. According to popular literary tradition, *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* portrays a banquet held in the residence of General Guo Ziyi 郭子儀 (697-781), a great soldier-statesman of the Tang dynasty, China. Guo Ziyi was a loyal subject who successfully subdued the An Shi Rebellion 安史之亂 during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong. He was even better known for the ‘three blessings of abundance’ he enjoyed in his old age: wealth, longevity, and the benefit of many offspring. The highlight of these two screens is the vibrant and festive atmosphere of the banquet scenes, with hosts, guests, entertainers, and maidens milling around.

Building on previous scholarship, which focuses on the stylistic development, iconographical attributes, and the symbolism associated with auspiciousness, I expand the scope of research by examining the propagandistic and ritual functions of the two banquet themes. I emphasize the significance of court ceremonies and policies related to the crown prince, as well as the interrelation between ritual performance and visual art. In contrast to the previously discussed court screens, there is less textual evidence of the exact production date or purpose of these screens. We do know, however, that screens of these two themes were produced for felicitous ceremonies for the crown prince in the nineteenth century, including his investiture ceremony and royal wedding. My analysis adds an alternative interpretation to those traditionally associated with auspicious symbols and fecundity by drawing out the political and ritual functions of these two banquet themes.

320 The story of King Mu of the Zhou and the Queen Mother of the West is first found in the *Bamboo Annals*, which was excavated from a third-century BC tomb. The meeting between the Queen Mother of the West and King Mu at Mount Kunlun appears as well in the early Taoist text *Liezi* 列子, which probably dates to the third century AD, and in the Tang-dynasty text *Primordial Ruler, Metal Mother* (Jinmu yuanjun 金母元君) by the Taoist Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933). According to the record, King Mu sets off on a military expedition to the west, finally reaching Xiwangmu’s paradise on Mount Kunlun, located far to the west of China. The female ruler, the Queen Mother of the West, receives him in court audience and holds a banquet for him. For study of the Queen Mother of the West in Chinese history, see Suzanne E. Cahill, *Transcendence and Divine Passion: The Queen Mother of the West in Medieval China* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993), 46-57.
As a point of departure, I investigate the meaning, iconography, and variations of the themes based on extant paintings and relevant court documents. An analysis of possible pictorial sources and precedents of the nineteenth-century screens will follow, shedding light on when these themes were transmitted to Korea and how they developed over time. Noticing that court paintings under discussion in this chapter include a set of stereotyped images rendered in a homogenous artistic style, I discuss the practice of producing court paintings and the role of court painters, who contributed to creating specific artistic formulas and visual idioms that can be labeled “court painting style.”
2. **Auspiciousness and Propaganda: The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond**

1) **Meaning, Iconography, and Pictorial Sources of *The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond***

*The Banquet of Xiwangmu* (fig. 3-1) depicts the scene of a banquet on Mount Kunlun at Xiwangmu’s palace, which is surrounded by golden walls and contains twelve blocks of jade structures as well as a group of immortals approaching the banquet. Most of the extant paintings of Xiwangmu’s banquet are large-scale, multiple-panel screen paintings done in vivid colors on silk and meticulously executed in the archaic blue-and-green landscape style.\(^{321}\)

Although extant paintings of *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* vary in their depiction of details, composition, and iconography, the main motifs conveying the narrative of the meeting between King Mu of the Zhou dynasty and the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond remain constant. Xiwangmu, the host of the banquet, and her guest King Mu occupy the center of the scene, seated side by side on a terrace in front of a large, painted screen, waited on by jade maidens or male attendants (fig. 3-1a). A number of celestial ladies engaged in diverse activities such as preparing food and drink, playing musical instruments, and dancing with phoenixes are portrayed here and there. The Turquoise Pond with its peach trees and the king’s eight-horse

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\(^{321}\) Important studies of *the Banquet of Xiwangmu* of the Chosŏn dynasty include Pak Ünsun, “Sunmyo cho wangseja t’angang kyebyŏng e taehan tosangjŏk koch’al” 純廟 <王世子 誕降稷綸> 에 대한 圖像的 考察 [An iconographical study of the *Screen to Celebrate the Crown Prince’s Birth*, Kogo musul 174 (1984): 40-75; “Chŏngmyo cho Wangseja ch’aengnye kyebyŏng: sinsŏndo keybyŏng ŭ hangaji ye” 正廟朝 <王世子 稷綸稷的 神仙圖稷綸의 한가지 예 [An Example of the *Screen to Commemorate the Crown Prince Investiture Ceremony*, Misulsa yŏn’gu 4 (1990): 101-112; U Hyŏnsu,“Chosŏn hugi Yojiyŏndo”. Pak Üsun’s and U Hŏnsu’s studies establishes a fundamental basis for further research on this theme because of their excellent accounts of the iconography and style as well as a thorough analysis of Chinese models based on archival materials and extant paintings.
carriage are shown in the foreground of the screen (fig. 3-1b). Auspicious clouds, rocks and trees frame the garden terrace of Xiwangmu’s palace.

Immortals approaching the banquet place form an important component of this painting. There is a group of Taoist Immortals descending from the sky and crossing a river toward the banquet place. Typically, the Eight Taoist Immortals 八仙 making their way to the terrace over the water (fig. 3-1c) are 1) Zhongli Quan 鍾離權, dressed as a high official with a large potbelly protruding through his partially open robe; 2) Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓, carrying a sword and accompanied by his familiar attendant, the Spirit of a Willow Tree; 3) Li Tieguai 李鐵拐, portrayed as a crippled beggar with a staff and carrying a gourd; 4) Zhang Guolao 張果老, depicted as an old man, sometimes riding a mule backwards; 5) Han Xiangzi 韓湘子, shown as a young man holding a flute; 6) Cao Guojiu 曹國舅, wearing royal robes and holding a tablet of admission to the court; 7) Lan Caihe 藍采和, depicted as a young boy who has lost one shoe and carries a flower basket; 8) He Xiangu 何仙姑, a female deity holding a basket of lingzhi magic mushrooms or the peach of immortality (fig. 3-1c). Some figures walk on a path in the foreground, while others ride a deer, an ox, a crane, and mythical beasts. The figure riding an ox, who has a red parasol held over his head by a young boy, represents the sage Laozi 老子 (fig. 3-1d), known for being the founder of Taoism.

In addition to the Eight Immortals, the painting depicts Magu 麻姑 accompanied by a dog, Zhang Zhihe 張志和 sliding on the water, Zi Ying 子英 or Li Bai 李白 (702-762) riding a carp, and Huang An 黃安 riding a turtle on the river (fig. 3-1e). Other immortals descend from

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322 The immortal riding a carp was previously identified as Ziying or Qing Gao 琴高. However, I assume that the figure might Li Bai 李白 (701-762), the Tang-dynasty poet who was believed to have become a banished immortal.
the sky, including Heng E 嫦娥 with a hare, the God of Longevity 壽老人 riding a crane, Buddha or a Buddhist monk flanked by the Four Heavenly Kings 四天王 (fig. 3-1f), two female deities riding a lion and an elephant who look closely related to the iconography of Manjushri Bodhisattva 文殊菩薩 and Samantabhadra Bodhisattva 普賢菩薩, Xiao Shi 蕭史 playing a flute riding a phoenix, and Wang Ziqiao 王子喬 playing a reed instrument riding a crane. Some immortals stroll along a path or ride a mythical beast: Liu Chen 劉晨 and Ruan Zhao 阮肇 walk with a scepter and a hoe, and Su Xian Gong 蘇仙公 and Laozi ride on a deer and a blue ox, respectively. The scene is replete with further auspicious emblems, such as deer, peacocks, cranes, lingzhi magic mushrooms, peaches of immortality, peonies, paulownias, bamboo trees, and taihu rocks.324

In Korea, the story of the Queen Mother of the West and her banquet at the Turquoise Pond already appears in the literature of the Later Silla period, and the story becomes widespread during the Chosŏn dynasty. The most significant historical record related to paintings of the banquet is King Sukchong’s inscriptions on a painting of immortals and on Xiwangmu’s banquet

The figure is dressed in Chinese official garb and carries a liquor jug, which resembles the iconography of Li Bai elsewhere. Poems written by Hō Nansōhōn 許蘭雪軒 (1563-1589), Yi Hubæk 李後白 (1520-1578) and Chu Úisik 朱義植 (ac. 18th century) describe Li Bai riding on a whale to Xiwangmu’s Jade capital. This indicates that an immortal on a whale was well-known among literati in the mid-Chosŏn period as Li Bai ascending to heaven. For the poems about Li Bai riding on a whale, see Yi Chongun 이종은, Han’guk úi Togyo munhak 한국의 도교 문학 [Taoist literature in Korea] (Seoul: T’aehaksa, 1999), 400-470.


324 For an identification of the figures depicted on the screen, see fig. 3-1g.
at the Turquoise Pond.\textsuperscript{325} This indicates that paintings of \textit{The Banquet of Xiwangmu} belonged to the royal collection in the early eighteenth century and was appreciated by the king. According to the king’s inscriptions, the two paintings depict a scene of the banquet where maidens and immortals enjoy music and dancing. They picture Xiwangmu wearing a crown decorated with nine dragons and the banquet area is surrounded by auspicious clouds. In the late Chosŏn period, this theme was chosen for the court painters’ examination, known as \textit{Nokch ’wijae} for the \textit{Chabi taeryŏng hwawŏn}, or Painters-in-waiting at Kyujanggak.\textsuperscript{326}

Images of Xiwangmu’s banquet date back to at least the Southern Song dynasty in China.\textsuperscript{327} There are several extant paintings attributed to Fang Chunnian (ac.1228-after1) and Liu

\addcontentsline{toc}{section}{Notes}

\textsuperscript{325} “ Yölsŏndo” [Painting of the Arrayed Immortals]
When spring goes on a grand banquet is held
Immortals riding on cranes or phoenixes arrive one after another
The pavilions are filled with strange herbs and beautiful flowers
Jade juice and divine elixir in golden cups overflow from side to side
Amid the unceasing songs and music, a dragon holds water in its mouth
Dancers’ skirts flutter in the wind and the tower below the phoenixes is high
The auspicious and the lovely stars are pleasing
The participants of the banquet help themselves to liquor, drawing their own wine glasses, and they seem to forget to return home under the influence of drink.”

列仙圖
春心聞苑盛筵開 驚鶴鳴鶴次第來 瑤華琪花連玉殿 瑚漿靈液金罍 歌聲迭奏龍吟水 舞袖時飄鳳下臺 日吉辰良多樂事 引觞自醉醉忘廻.

“Che yoji taehoe” [Inscription on a painting of a great banquet at the Turquoise Pond]
As a banquet is held at the Turquoise Pond, immortals gather
Auspicious clouds and smoke surround the railing
Heavenly maidens outside the gate wear crowns decorated with two phoenixes
The Queen Mother of the West in a pavilion wears a crown with nine dragons
Golden cups are full of divine liquor for long life
Magic peaches for agelessness fill the jade trays
Who can say that heavenly beings are too far away
The scene (of heavenly people) standing in a row lingers in my eyes.”

題琱池大會圖
琱池設宴會神宮 瑤華琪花連玉殿 戶外仙娥雙鳳髻 殿中王母九龍冠 長生盈液金罍 不老蟠桃玉盤 天上人間誰謂遠 眼前森列瞭然看.

 Yölsŏndo” 列仙圖 [Painting of the Arrayed Immortals], \textit{Royal Writing of Successive Kings}, vol. 9; “Che yoji Taehoe tu” 題琱池大會圖 [Inscription on \textit{A Great Banquet at the Turquoise Pond}], \textit{Royal Writing of Successive Kings}, vol. 12. My emphasis is added for reference to the iconography.

\textsuperscript{327} U Hyŏngsu, “Chosŏn hugi \textit{Yojiyŏndo},” 21-22.
Songnian, who served in the imperial painting academy of the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279). Festival of the Peaches of Longevity (figs. 3-2, 3-3) and Offerings for Long Life at the Turquoise Pond in the National Palace Museum of Taipei (fig. 3-4) are traditionally attributed to Fang Chunnian (方椿年) (1228-1264) and Liu Songnian respectively but their style is more closely associated with that of professionals of the Ming dynasty.\(^{328}\)

In terms of the Chinese inspiration for the Korean paintings, two Chinese paintings are worthy of note. A Group of Immortals Offering Blessings by Qiu Ying (fig. 3-5) shows similar characteristics as found in two paintings attributed to Yun Tusŏ, The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond (fig. 3-6) and Immortals at the Turquoise Pond (fig. 3-7).\(^{329}\) The paintings depict Xiwangmu sitting on a terrace, surrounded by jade maidens and guests approaching an ornate marble gate. These paintings are important examples showing the early development of the theme of Xiwangmu’s banquet in the Chosŏn dynasty as well as the impact of Qiu Ying’s painting on Korean versions of the seventeenth century. In addition, a record of a painting of Eight Immortals done by the Chinese painter Meng Yongguang (孟永光) (ac. 17th century) who visited Chosŏn, implies the introduction of the Ming tradition to Korea.\(^{330}\)

The painting attributed to Liu Songnian (fig. 3-4) is reminiscent of The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond (fig. 3-8) in the National Museum of Korea in terms of


\(^{329}\) Based on seals on the paintings and their style, these two paintings are regarded as works by Yun Tusŏ, a painter whose oeuvre is extremely diverse and therefore still debated. “Yun Tusŏ in” 尹斗緖印 is impressed as a square intaglio seal on the bottom left corner of The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond, and the two-character embossed seal “Hyoŏn” 孝彥 is found on the lower left in Immortals at the Turquoise Pond. For further study of these paintings and their relationship with Qiu Ying’s painting, see Ch’a Miae, “Kongjae Yun Tusŏ,” 333-338.

\(^{330}\) Meng Yongguang was a professional painter active in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. He visited Chosŏn in the company of the Crown Prince Sohyŏn 昭顯世子 (1612-1645) in 1645. Remaining in Seoul for three years, Meng Yongguang developed a close relationship with the royal family and presented them with various paintings. Regarding Meng Yongguang’s artistic activity in Korea, see An Hwijun, “Naejo Chunggugin hwaga Maeng Yonggwang” 내조(來朝) 중국인 화가 맹영광 [Chinese painter Maeng Yongguang visiting Chosŏn], in *Han‘guk hoehwasa yŏn’gu* 한국 회화사 연구 [A study of history of Korean painting] (Seoul: Sigongsa, 2000), 620-640.
the arrangement of the figures. Like the aforementioned painting by Yun Tusŏ, this work reflects a close adaptation of the Chinese tradition regarding the visualization of the theme.

*The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond* (fig. 3-9) in the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art is included in an album of *Figure Paintings from Famous Tales*, a collection of paintings demonstrating edifying stories of famous figures. This work is dated to the early eighteenth century on the basis of the active periods of court painters whose names are inscribed on each leaf of the album. In contrast to the aforementioned Chosŏn paintings, this leaf has a close affinity with the nineteenth-century screens: the placement of the queen and the king in the center, the two dancing phoenixes, and the king’s palanquin veiled in a cloud are very similar. In sum, this painting, as a forerunner of the nineteenth-century screens, reveals a gradual alternation of the Chinese-derived iconography to Chosŏn circumstances and the various developments of the said themes in the eighteenth century.

Apart from the Ming-dynasty paintings discussed above, multiple-panel screens produced in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, roughly corresponding to the first half of the reign of Emperor Kangxi 康熙帝 (1661-1722), resemble the Chosŏn version most in their panoramic view of the banquet scene combined with immortals crossing the water and descending from heaven. For instance, an eight-panel screen dated to 1683 (fig. 3-10) and a Coromandel lacquer screen dated to 1708 (fig. 3-11) portray an extensive scene in which

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331 The painting in the National Museum of Korea purportedly dates to the eighteenth century. Its original format is unknown. Further investigation is required to identify the approximate date and provenance of the painting as well as the origin of the artist.

332 Seven court painters engaged in the production of this album are Yang Kisŏng 梁箕星 (?-1755), Chang Kyeman 張繼萬 (1694-?), Chang Tŭngman 張得萬 (1684-1764), Chin Chaegi 秦再起 (ac. 18th century), Chin Chaehae 秦再奚 (1691-1769), and Han Huryang 韓後良 (late 17th-early 18th centuries). The album comprises four volumes, and each volume consists of sixteen paintings. The painter’s name is inscribed in the lower right of each leaf. The fact that King Chŏngjo’s seals reading “Hangiae” 弘齋 and “Chunggwang chi chang” 重光之章 are impressed on the album indicates that it was commissioned for royal viewership and viewed by the king in the late eighteenth century. For illustrations of other album leaves, see *Chosŏn hwawŏn taejŏn*, 92-93 and 365.
immortals, including the Eight Immortals, descend on clouds or slide on the water to attend the banquet, and Xiwangmu is accompanied by an entourage of musicians and attendants higher up in the sky or in a terraced courtyard. Another Coromandel screen (fig. 3-12) has an almost identical configuration of motifs and iconography to the two dated works. These three works are related to a style typical of Suzhou professional artists of the High Qing. The 1683 screen (fig. 3-10) was painted by Yan Shengsun 嚴繩孫 (1623-1702) of Wuxi, near Suzhou in Jiangsu province, and it appears to be a forerunner of works by other Suzhou professionals of the eighteenth century. The lacquer industry, including Coromandel screen workshops, thrived fairly well in the cities of Fujian and Jiangsu provinces, such as Suzhou and Yangzhou, satisfying the demands of wealthy merchants and civil officials. Designs for screens full of decorative patterns and colors resemble fine Suzhou-style paintings of that period.

If compared to earlier Chinese paintings, the Korean screens are unique with their emphasis on the banquet scene and its fusion with the group of immortals crossing the sea, and with their folding-screen format. This tendency that Korean versions are rendered on folding-

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333 One side of this screen is decorated with a scene of immortals visiting Xiwangmu’s palace, including Laozi, Wang Zhi, the Eight Immortals, the God of Longevity, Dongfang Shuo, the Ox herd and the Weaving Maid, the Hehe twins, Magu and Liu Hai inside of the panels of landscape and mythical creatures. The reverse is carved with a scene of the birthday celebration of Guo Ziyi, a Tang dynasty general. Although it is undated, this work seems to be an eighteenth-century Coromandel screen, based on stylistic elements such as floral border patterns and techniques.

334 The inscription at the bottom of the 1683 screen informs us that the painting was done by Yan Shengsun of Wuxi, near Suzhou in Jiangsu province, in the third month of the guihai year of the Kangxi era. For the information on this screen, see Christie’s website, accessed April 4, 2014, http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/LargelImage.aspx?image=/lotfinderimages/d42493/d4.

335 In general, a Coromandel screen refers to a Chinese multi-panel, folding lacquer screen that is incised, painted, and inlaid with decorative mother of pearl, ivory, gem stones, or other materials. The term “Coromandel” derives from the name of the southeastern Indian coastal area where Chinese lacquerware and furnishings were loaded onto ships being exported to the West. The East India Company originally introduced them to Europe in the mid-seventeenth century. They were principally manufactured in Fujian province, south of Shanghai, and workshops in Beijing and Suzhou won fame in the industry for their high quality. At first they were produced to satisfy the demands of well-off merchants and civil officials in the domestic market. They were frequently commissioned as birthday or retirement gifts and depicted court scenes, auspicious symbols of longevity, immortals, and landscapes. In the late seventeenth century, Coromandel screens were exported to Europe for decoration in palaces and aristocrats’ mansions. W. G. De Kesel and G. Dhont, Coromandel Lacquer Screens (Gent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 2002), 23, nos. 14 and 15.
screens can be explained by favor for this format in late Chosŏn court art and their function.\textsuperscript{336} The Chosŏn period witnessed a high demand for painted folding screens, which served not only as draft-breakers but also as decoration and important paraphernalia for rituals and ceremonies.\textsuperscript{337} Painted screens were commissioned by the court to decorate and commemorate special events and rituals.\textsuperscript{338} For these reasons, no format was used more widely than the folding screen in court art.

As mentioned above, the stylistic origin of this particular screen cannot be explained only by comparing it to Chinese paintings. I suggest five possible visual sources of this theme.\textsuperscript{339} The first is other contemporary court paintings, such as Sun, Moon and Five Peaks (fig. 3-13), Ten Longevity Symbols (fig. 3-14), One Hundred Boys (fig. 3-15) and The Banquet of Guo Ziyi (figs. 3-46–54). These share similar compositions, coloring and motifs. Common motifs found in these screens include magic mushrooms, heavenly peaches and deer, all of which originate in Taoist ideas of immortality. The second is woodblock prints, including Encyclopedia of the Pictorial Compendium of the Three Powers (fig. 3-16, 3-1h) and Strange Traces of the Taoist and Buddhist Deities Recorded by Master Hong (fig. 3-17, 3-1i). These Chinese woodblock prints featuring famous Taoist immortals and Buddhist monks were circulated among Chosŏn literati painters in the early eighteenth century. They contributed to introducing the iconography of Taoist immortals to the peninsula.

\textsuperscript{338} Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn side kungjung kirokhwa, 267-279.
\textsuperscript{339} U Hyŏnsu also provides four sources for the pictorial representation of Xiwangmu’s banquet in Chosŏn court art: contemporary court paintings, illustrations of Ming-Qing novels, earlier Chosŏn paintings of immortals, and Japanese Shōheiga 障壁画 (wall and sliding door paintings). See U Hyŏnsu, “Chosŏn hugi Yojivŏndo,” 52-63. Regarding the possible inspiration, I generally agree with U Hyŏnsu’s suggestions and my account here is mostly based on her study.
The third visual source consists of illustrations found in Chinese novels imported to Chosŏn and Korean novels of the late Chosŏn period. The compositional element of the banquet scene (fig. 3-1j) is closely related to the illustrations of a Journey to the West (Xi you ji 西遊記) (fig. 3-18), a famous novel of the Ming dynasty imported to Korea during the Chosŏn period. Similar images of deities and heavenly maidens on floating clouds in the screen (fig. 3-1k) are also found in Honor of Parental Love (Pumŏ Ŭnchunggyŏng 父母恩重經) (fig. 3-19), the Buddhist scripture with illustration, which is believed to have been created by Kim Hongdo in 1796 under the auspices of the royal court. The fourth source is paintings depicting a group of immortals on the sea, which were very popular in the eighteenth century. Kim Hongdo’s Immortals Crossing the Sea (fig. 3-20) and Immortals (fig. 3-21) done by an anonymous painter in the National Museum of Korea are representative examples reflecting this genre, which includes motifs similar to those found in the screens of Xiwangmu’s banquet.  

Finally, New Year’s paintings are another important pictorial source for paintings of Xiwangmu’s banquet. New Year’s paintings had been presented to officials by the king or exchanged among high officials in response to annual rituals and customs since the beginning of the dynasty. Chŏng Hongmyŏng 鄭弘溟 (1592-1650) left an inscription about New Year’s painting depicting immortals. The text mentions four immortals: a figure holding a peach and riding on a crane; an immortal carrying flowers while mounting a deer; a female immortal with a bottle; and an old

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immortal bearing a jar. In addition, a document written by Cho Unjong 趙雲從 (1783-1820), a royal relative by marriage and high official of the late eighteenth century, writes about a group of immortals holding magic peaches and riding on cranes were painted as New Year’s painting. These paintings, made with rich colors and detailed drawing, were presented to kings and ministers. New Year’s paintings flourished and began to spread to wealthy commoners in the late Chosŏn period along with increasing economic prosperity and the development of popular culture. Many of them were commissioned by the royal court and favored by royalty and high-ranking officials. Considering that the depiction of immortals in New Year’s paintings reveals similar characteristics to those in the screens of Xiwangmu’s banquet, especially in terms of techniques and motifs, and that both genres were produced by court painters, New Year’s painting may have had a significant impact on the development of paintings of Xiwangmu’s banquet in the late Chosŏn period.

2) Style, Artists, and the Production of Screens of The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond

It is difficult to determine the exact date or the artists of paintings sponsored by the court because of the lack of signatures and other documentation, the relatively weak position of court painters as artistic agents, and the collaborative work practices at court painters, in addition to a standardized style, the repetition of similar motifs, and the production of multiple versions and

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343 Cho Unjong, Myŏnam yugo 勉庵遺稿, vol. 2 in Han’guk misulsa charyo chipsŏng韓國美術史資料集成 [Compilation of primary sources for Korean art history], vol.4, ed. 契弘燮 sŏp (Seoul: Ichisa, 1995), 840.
copies of an original painting.\textsuperscript{344} In many cases, the artist’s presence and agency were overwhelmed or controlled by other social agents such as bureaucratic institutions and more powerful human agents of privileged elite groups. Consequently, artists functioned as a vehicle of agency for others. The artists worked as officials of the Royal Bureau of Painting, a subordinate organ of the Ministry of Rites, and their painting production was institutionalized within a complex bureaucratic system under state supervision. Under these circumstances, court painters did not figure in the modern notion of artists possessing artistic liberty and autonomy. Therefore, an alternative framework is needed to explore court painters’ agency. Questions are how an artist’s agency was realized and how it influenced the production and consumption of court art, and how these aspects impacted the materiality of the product.

Court paintings discussed here typically suppress any sign of an individual brushstroke, are devoid of any evidence that the images were made and handled by individuals. The artists’ touch was effaced by a codified visual aesthetic, a restricted set of stereotyped images, and limited color schemes. The court painters’ subjectivity and identity were concealed because they were not allowed to leave their names or seals to indicate their authorship of their product, and many court paintings were the result of collaborative work similar to manufactured products. These facts suggest the relatively weak position of artists in the dynamics of the production of court paintings.

However, the absence of an individual touch and texture is not necessarily without meaning; the concealment of the artist’s hand can indicate the patterns of articulation and consumption of materiality in the given time and space, which can shape the practice of production, or bundle of related practices. It is clear that court painters collectively contributed to creating specific artistic formulas and visual idioms that can be labeled “court painting style,”

which is characterized by graphical clarity, marked flatness, and a bright color scheme restricted to primary colors. However, these characteristics cannot be solely attributed to the agency of the artists. Rather, this homogeneity of style is the result of a coherent set of negotiations between different social agents and the cultural body. It can be considered a material proof codified in visual forms that complies with an internal royal vision celebrating the Chosŏn king’s rulership and stabilizing the social hierarchy.345

Once the visual idioms comprising composition, color palette, and mode of representation were established as a collective sign of a cultural body and social agents, they became ubiquitous across subjects and media and constituted interchangeable formulas that the court painters used to convey meaning. This phenomenon is most obvious with Chosŏn court paintings depicting Chinese themes. Certain forms and styles were repeatedly manipulated to represent/present Chinese subjects. Although an agency from the ruling class was at work in selecting themes, the materiality of the artwork depended on artists’ techniques and practices internalized through apprenticeship education and the collaborative working system of institutions. The material qualities of the work created a set of homogenized visual forms that referenced the immaterial concept of Chinese culture and history, and then attained autonomy as independent signifiers of ‘Chinese-ness’.

For example, nineteenth-century court screens depicting Chinese themes, including The Banquet of Guo Ziyi (figs. 3-46~54), One Hundred Boys (fig. 3-15), Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court (figs. 4-1~9), and Han Palace (fig. 4-36~45), include similar sets of motifs rendered in

345 Adapting Gell’s concept of “agency,” Jessica Rawson analyzes the weak role of artists in the Chinese context, particularly in the case of ritual portraiture. According to Rawson’s argument, while modern Western artists’ agency was clearly recognized by viewers, Chinese court painters who worked in the workshops regulated by the institutionalized system did not enjoy artistic autonomy. In the minds of viewers, the artist played no role as author of the art. Instead, the emperor, the subject of the portrait, exerted agency directly on the recipients of the painting. For a detailed account, see Jessica Rawson, “The Agency of,” 95-113.
a peculiar manner; the colorful clouds, the beautifully carved marble balustrade, oddly shaped *taihu* rocks, auspicious creatures closely related to longevity, tables covered with cloth skirts, luxurious items and antiquities, and figures wearing Han Chinese costumes and hairdos.

Subsequently this objectified ‘Chinese-ness’ erased or weakened the presence of the artist as agent by replacing individual touches with a homogenous style that can be labeled Chosŏn court painting style.346

Screens of *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* are no exception. Certain forms and styles were repeatedly manipulated to represent the subject as if a group of court painters shared a sketch drawing and model painting to produce and reproduce works of art. Further research should be done to identify techniques used to transfer motifs. Probably this was done through stencil or pouncing (a technique using a sheet with small holes along the contour lines of a motif laid on the painting surface and pounced with black or colored powder through the holes in order to leave a dotted outline), or sketchbooks. The drawing of *The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West* (fig. 3-22) done in monochrome on a large scale being almost identical to a completed screen of the same theme indicates the possibility that Chosŏn court painters used sketches to replicate the motifs. In fact, two screens, held by and the Kyŏnggi Provincial Museum (fig. 3-23) and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (fig. 3-1) are almost identical to the sketch, from overall pictorial composition and iconography to minor details such as textiles, patterns on furniture, stencils, number of figures, and the attire and headgear of figures.347

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346 Interestingly, the Chinese-ness conveyed through these motifs are not reflective of contemporary Qing China, but of ancient Chinese empires, vaguely related to the Han, Tang, and Song dynasties, whose ritual and legal systems served as a foundation for those of the Chosŏn dynasty. In terms of visual representation, the motifs and style show remarkable resemblance to those of Ming copies of old masterpieces that were prevalent in the Jiangnan region during the mid- and late Ming periods.

347 There are few differences between the two screens, which might, I think, have resulted from the procedure of coloration or been caused by the recipient’s social and economic status. The painting in the Kyŏnggi Provincial Museum is richer in motifs and better in terms of execution. Compared to the LACMA screen, the screen in the Kyŏnggi Provincial Museum is exquisitely rendered, with more elaborate brush strokes and more detailed depictions.
The close resemblance among these three versions strongly suggests that model paintings or sketches (*ch’obon* 草本) were circulated among court painters and were used to make out drafts. The two screens were created with the same sketch, possibly the monochrome ink drawing at the Kyŏnggi University Museum, and then reproduced with variations and adjustments in coloring and decorative patterns. By using this kind of sketch, a set of motifs as movable units were transferred, rearranged, and modified marked by various degrees of elaboration. A master painter following the model painting would complete an outline, and then the coloring and execution of details might be assigned to other painters. In sum, the relatively weak agency of court painters in the late Chosŏn dynasty, their tendency to adhere to model sketches for production and reproduction of paintings, and collaborative work practices within the institutional system brought about a homogeneous style and repeated motifs in court paintings, and in turn, technical standards and the practice of production further curtailed the

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We can assume that workshops took charge of producing these kinds of court paintings. The differences between them can probably be explained by the economic status of the patrons: Seventeen female orchestra members are more expensive than eleven, and the richness of setting and other decorative details closely reflect the prices paid for the respective works. Richard M. Barnhart explains the differences in quality and the variations shown in the *Toy Peddler* paintings of the Ming dynasty in terms of economics. According to him, *Toy Peddler* paintings with similar composition were made in a workshop based on the same stencil. However, the prices paid for a work dictated the quality of the execution and the level of detail. For his argument, see Richard M. Barnhart et al., *Painters of the Great Ming: The Imperial Court and the Zhe School* (Dallas, Tex: Dallas Museum of Art, 1993), 111-113. Likewise, Lothar Ledderose suggests that the Ten Kings of Hell made during the thirteenth century in the town of Ningbo were produced based on modular structure technique. The Ningbo workshops composed paintings using transferable, interchangeable motifs according to price. For further study, see Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 163-185. Kim Tŭksin was a professional painter renowned for the genre painting, which was influenced by Kim Hongdo and Sin Yunbok 申潤福 (1758-?). He came from an illustrious family of artists in the late Chosŏn period and became a member of the Royal Bureau of Painting at the age of twenty. Kim Tŭksin served as a painters-in-waiting at Kyujanggak Royal Library and painted the royal portrait of King Chŏngjo.
freedom of a painter’s brush.

It is obvious that the screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu is also a result of the collaborative labor of court painters who were trained by the internal apprenticeship program at the Royal Bureau of Painting. However, many extant paintings are attributed to one court painter, Kim Tŭksin 金得臣 (1754-1822).\(^{349}\) For example, the eight-panel folding screen at the LACMA (fig. 3-1) has an inscription reading “Painted by Kŭngjae on a spring day of the bingshen year (時丙申春日繪兢齋),” with two seals on the eighth panel (fig. 3-11).\(^{350}\) As long as we do not doubt the authenticity of an inscription on the painting, this screen was painted in 1776 by Kim Tŭksin, who was a court painter specializing in figure and genre painting in the late eighteenth century. The same signature is found on a painting of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (fig. 3-60a). The manner of depicting figures in the two paintings appears similar at first glance. Observed in detail, however, differences are striking, especially in the depiction of landscape and architecture. Moreover, the discrepancy in the writing style of the inscriptions should be noticed. There is another painting, believed to be a panel of an otherwise lost screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu by Kim Tŭksin.\(^{351}\) It bears a seal reading ‘Kŭngjae’兢齋, Kim’s sobriquet, in the upper left corner of the painting. Although it is not as close to the LACMA screen as other paintings attributed to Kim Tŭksin, the costumes and compositional

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\(^{349}\) Kim Tŭksin was a professional painter renowned for the genre painting, which was influenced by Kim Hongdo and Sin Yunbok 申潤福 (1758-?). He came from an illustrious family of artists in the late Chosŏn period and became a member of the Royal Bureau of Painting at the age of twenty. Kim Tŭksin served as a painters-in-waiting at Kyujanggak Royal Library and painted the royal portrait of King Chŏngjo.

\(^{350}\) Kŭngjae is a penname of Kim Tŭksin. The Bingshen year in the inscription could be 1776, based on his active period. The upper seal reads “Sŏkpunŭm”惜分陰, which means “value each instance” and the lower one is unidentified.

\(^{351}\) This painting was first shown under the joint sponsorship of Kongch’ang gallery and Chin gallery in 1990. In the exhibition catalogue, it was titled The Banquet of Guo Ziyi. However, its composition and iconographical features show that this painting depicts The Banquet of Xiwangmu. For the explanation and illustration, see Pusan simin sojang Chosŏn sidae hoehwa myŏnp’umjŏn 釜山市民所蔵朝鮮時代畫畵名品展 [Masterpieces owned by private collectors in Pusan], (Seoul: Kongch’ang hwarang; Chin hwarang, 1990), pl.63.
elements of this painting reveal similarities between the two paintings.

Thorough comparison of the LACMA screen with other paintings bearing Kim Tūksin’s inscriptions and seals suggests that his depictions of figures show greater similarities than those of landscapes and architecture. Even though the stylistic differences imply that these paintings did not come from one artist’s hand, there apparently was an established painting style related to Kim Tūksin’s figures.\textsuperscript{352} According to court records, in 1794 Kim Tūksin took part in the \textit{Nokch’wijae} examination of the \textit{Chabi taeryŏng hwawŏn} and scored high in the examination by painting the theme of the Queen Mother of the West descending to the Turquoise Pond.\textsuperscript{355} The group of paintings just discussed above presenting similar stylistic features and the historical documents thus provide evidence in support of the important role of Kim Tūksin played in establishing a model for screens of \textit{The Banquet of Xiwangmu} of the late Chosŏn period.

3) \textbf{Reading the Political Contexts Reflected in \textit{The Banquet of Xiwangmu}: An Example of Commemorative Painting to Celebrate the Crown Prince’s Investiture Ceremony}

Previous scholarship points out that like other paintings of immortals, \textit{The Banquet of Xiwangmu} grew to be an important court painting genre due to the royal family members’ private concerns for longevity.\textsuperscript{354} However, close examination of three versions of \textit{The Banquet of Xiwangmu}, two to commemorate a crown prince’s investiture in 1800 (figs. 3-24, 3-25) and one in commemoration of a crown prince’s birth in 1812 (fig. 3-26) raises questions about the function of this painting in the realm of politics: why was this theme selected for certain

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item There is an \textit{Immortals} screen attributed to Kim Tūksin in a private collection. The ten-fold screen includes various immortals, including the Eight Immortals. Although no documentary evidence of this attribution is present, the painting shows an iconography and stylistic features similar to other attributions to Kim Tūksin. For more detailed information and illustration, see Evelyn B. McCune, \textit{The Inner Art: Korean Screens}, 76-77.
  \item Kang Kwansik, \textit{Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn}, vol. 1, 153-155; vol. 2, 34
  \item Pak Ùsun, “Sunmyo cho wangseja t’angang kyebyŏng,” 40-75; “Chŏngmyo cho wangseja ch’aengnye kyebyŏng,” 101-112.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
ceremonies related to the crown prince and how was the legendary story appropriated for specific political circumstances and ritual?

So far, only three examples of *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* are known to bear colophons that give evidence of the date, patrons, and purpose for their production. Two paintings now in the collections of the National Museum of Korea (fig. 3-24) and the Seoul Museum of History (fig. 3-25) were produced to commemorate the celebration of the investiture of Crown Prince Yi Kong 李ProcessEvent, to become King Sunjo 純祖 (r. 1800-1834), in 1800. The other painting was done to commemorate the birth of Crown Prince Yi Yŏng 李旲 (1809-1830) upon his investiture ceremony in 1812 (fig. 3-26). The two paintings done in 1800 were commissioned by officials of the Office of the Herald (Sŏnjŏn'gwanch'ŏng 宣傳官廳) and the latter painting was produced by the order of officials of the Delivery Room Office (Sansilch'ŏng 産室廳), which was temporarily established to prepare for Queen Sunwŏn’s delivery in 1809. These three paintings depicting Xiwangmu’s banquet were produced to express the delight of royal subjects and to enhance the status of the newly-installed crown prince upon his investiture ceremony.

Of the two screens depicting *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* commissioned for the crown prince’s investiture in 1800, the one in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 3-24) remains intact. It consists of eight panels and includes a preface written by the Third State Councilor, Yi Sisu 李時秀 (1745-1821) on the first panel; the image of Xiwangmu’s banquet at her palace in Mount Kunlun from the second to the fourth panels; immortals approaching the banquet from the fifth

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355 After Crown Prince Yi Kong’s investiture ceremony was held in the second month of 1800, his father, King Chŏngjo passed away on the 28th day of the sixth month and thus he accessed to the throne on the forth day of the seventh month of the same year.

356 Yi Yŏng was a father of King Hŏnjong 憲宗 (r. 1834-1849) and later given posthumous titles of Crown Prince Hyomyŏng 孝明世子 in 1830, King Yikchong 翼宗 in 1834, and Emperor Munjo 文祖 in 1899.

357 Although the title and list of patrons inscribed on the backside indicates that this painting was commissioned to commemorate the crown prince’s birth in 1809, this painting was actually completed in 1812 when the eldest son of the king was officially proclaimed heir to the throne. Pak Ŭnsun, “Sunmyo co wangseja t’angang kyebyŏng,” 40-75.
to the seventh panels; and a list of the nineteen officials of the Office of the Herald who commissioned this painting on the eighth panel. The other painting (fig. 3-25), at the Seoul Museum of History, has only five panels. Two panels of immortals and the list of patrons, which are found in the completely preserved painting in the National Museum of Korea, are missing in this screen. However, the undamaged preface indicates that this screen was also commissioned by the same patrons to commemorate the crown prince’s investiture ceremony in 1800.

These two paintings show an almost identical composition and iconography, with small variations in the number of motifs, colors, and depiction of details. Both of them were executed in the archaic blue-green landscape style with decorative and conservative depictions of motifs, a style that is characteristics of court painting of the late Chosŏn dynasty. Shadows cast by furniture, utensils, musical instruments, and cloth, subtle gradations of color, and a double outline rendered in ink and dark color are common stylistic elements seen in court documentary paintings of the late eighteenth century. Yet, there are slight differences between the two paintings: overall, the screen at the National Museum of Korea displays more detail, and shading techniques are more frequently applied than in the screen at the Seoul Museum of History. More attendants and musicians appear in the former screen. Facial expressions in the former screen are depicted more vividly, showing slightly individual features. The most noticeable distinction between the two lies in coloring. Although an analysis of pigments of the Seoul Museum of History painting indicates that gold pigment was applied to the royal insignia and mixed with other mineral pigments for other parts of the painting, more sumptuous and glossy colors were applied to the screen at the National Museum of Korea. These differences can probably be

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358 For example, see Screen of King Chŏngjo’s Visit to his Father’s Tomb in Hwasŏng (Hwasŏng nŭnghang dobyŏng) of 1795.
359 Chosŏn sidae kirokhwa ch’aesaeck allyo 조선시대 기록화 채색 안료 [Pigments applied to documentary paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Seoul Museum of History, 2009), 138-139.
explained by the economic condition of the patrons and the social status of the recipient of the painting: the painting created for the king was executed more extravagantly than that presented to the crown prince or to high officials. The richness of the setting and other decorative details closely reflects the prices paid for respective works. Since both of the paintings were commissioned by the same patrons, officials of the Office of the Herald, the status of the recipient of each painting must have been the factor that influenced the differences in quality and variations.\(^{360}\)

High officials of the *togam* would commission commemorative paintings to celebrate their own standing and social connections. Similarly, these two paintings can be understood as commemorative screens commissioned by government officials. However, there is a noticeable difference from the norm in the government affiliations of those who sponsored the paintings. It was not the officials of the *togam* undertaking the task of preparing for the investiture ceremony, but members of the Office of the Herald, who did not play a pivotal role in the investiture ceremony. The Office of the Herald served as a royal guard carrying the king’s messages to armies and announcing proclamations and messages in times of war or military drills. The Office of the Herald was located within the palace so officials could respond promptly to the king’s requests, and it was one of the very significant government offices that supported the king directly. However, they only played an auxiliary role in the crown prince’s investiture ceremony, escorting the crown prince and honored guests.

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\(^{360}\) For example, multiple screens of *King Chŏngjo’s Visit to His Father’s Tomb in Hwasŏng* were created by royal commission in 1795 and then distributed to the king and high officials preparing for this event. The king, ministers, and civil officials higher than the junior third rank received large-scale screens, and working-level administers received medium-scale screens. A large-scale screen offered to the king cost 100 *nyang*, and those for ministers and high civil officials cost 80 *nyang*. The expense of medium-scale screens presented to a relatively lower level of officials was only 30 *nyang*. This indicates that screen paintings produced simultaneously for celebrating court events varied in size and materials according to the social status of the recipients. For a meticulous study of the cost of screens produced for court rituals, see Pak Chŏnghye, *Chosŏn side kungjung kirokhwa*, 274-275.
It was quite unusual for officials not directly engaged in the ceremony to commission a commemorative painting, which was rarely found in previous centuries. A distinctive characteristic of nineteenth-century commemorative screens is the increased role of the Royal Secretaries, officials of the Office of the Herald and the Delivery Room Office, and bureaucrats of the Five Military Commands Headquarters (Owi toch’ongbu 五衛都摠府) in the commissioning of this kind of painting. Although these government organs undertook secondary tasks in the event and their official rank in the Chosŏn bureaucratic hierarchy was not high, these officials closely served the king and held de facto power by forming a supportive base for the monarch. In most cases, the king and his closest officials belonging to the aforementioned government bodies shared the same political interests, and thus they had strong ties with each other.

As explained in Yi Sisu’s preface to the Screen to Commemorate the Crown Prince Yi Kong’s Investiture Ceremony in 1800, it became customary for devoted retainers directly attending the king to commission a screen to record auspicious state events in remembrance of the prosperity of that time. Therefore, in the nineteenth century it is not necessarily the case that officials in charge of preparing for and participating in an event commissioned commemorative paintings in order to foster camaraderie and cherish their common experience. Rather, officials closely attending the king produced commemorative paintings to eulogize the

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361 For example, the Screen of the Congratulatory Ceremony for King Hŏnjong’s Capping Ceremony in 1819 was commissioned by Royal Secretaries; the Screen to Commemorate King Hŏnjong’s Wedding Ceremony in 1844 was commissioned by officials of the Office of the Herald, the Screen of the Congratulatory Ceremony of Queen Dowager Cho’s Fortieth Birthday in 1847 and the Screen of the Congratulatory Ceremony of the Crown Prince’s Recovery from Smallpox in 1879 were commissioned by officials of the Five Military Commands Headquarters; and the Screen of Congratulatory Ceremony for the Birth of the Crown Prince in 1874 was produced under the auspices of the officials of the Delivery Room Office. For illustrations of the screens, see Pak Chŏnghye, Chosŏn side kungjung kirokhwa, figs. 94, 101, 96, 97, 103, and 104.

362 Yi Sisu’s inscription is written on the first panel of the screen. It starts with the following sentence, which explains the reason for commissioning the painting: “In our country, devoted retainers who directly attended the king order a screen and leave a list of names on the last panel in order to remind posterity of the present auspicious events.”
king’s virtue and to highlight the grandeur of the state event itself. As a result, the impetus for creating commemorative paintings shifted away from the private sector, the personal memento to celebrate friendship among officials working in the same office or engaging in the same state projects, to the public domain for official propaganda to glorify a court event and the king’s benevolent rule.

There is no written evidence explaining to whom these two screens were distributed. However, considering that the cost of a large-size screen is 80 to 100 nyang, and the annual salary of a government official of the junior seventh rank is 58 nyang in the late eighteenth century, most low-rank military officials of the Office of the Herald, who were appointed to a part-time ch’eajik 遞兒職 position, could not have handled the high expense. Thus, it is possible that large, multiple-panel screens were only given to a few high officials who are listed on the screen, or presented to the king or the crown prince, the protagonist of this event. I assume that these screens were more likely to be offered to the monarch for two reasons: first, because of the quality of materials used, including gold pigments and expensive mineral pigments and because of the exquisite craftsmanship which points towards first-class court painters. Second, there is evidence for cases in which large screens commissioned by officials of the Office of the

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363 According to “Treasure Record,” in Royal Protocol for King Chŏngjo’s Visit to His Father’s Tomb in Hwasŏng in 1796 (Wŏnhaeng ülmyo chŏngni ügwe, 復幸乙卯整理儀軌), a large-scale screen given to the court costs 100 nyang while those for high officials costs 80 nyang. For the wage of lower government officials in the eighteenth century, see chapter 1, 77-83. The ch’eajik was a convenient office title through which several public officials could receive their official stipends in turn for one vacant position. Through this system, the government could cut down on expenses for official stipends. Every official post could be distributed as the ch’eajik, if only the post had its own stipend finances. Most military positions are the ch’eajik position. In addition to military officialdom, however, even a miscellaneous technical post with its own financial allowance could be used as ch’eajik.

364 For scientific analysis of pigments applied to the Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Kong’s Investiture Ceremony in 1800 owned by the Seoul Museum of History, see Chosŏn sidae kirokhwa ch’aesaek allyo, 138-9.
Herald and the Five Military Commands Headquarters were offered to the king in the early nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{365}

If this assumption is correct, we can explain the reason for the selection of Xiwangmu’s banquet as a subject of the screen. The theme, on first glance, seems to be irrelevant to the crown prince’s investiture ceremony, especially it contrasted with the \textit{Screen to Commemorate Crown Prince Yi Sun’s Investiture Ceremony in 1784} (fig. 3-27), which was painted to celebrate the crown prince’s investiture ceremony during the reign of King Chŏngjo.\textsuperscript{366} This latter screen shows a faithful rendition of the two most significant procedures of the investiture ceremony: the moment that the king issues a royal edict proclaiming his eldest son heir to the throne in the royal audience hall, and the event of Crown Prince Yi Sun 李晸 (1782-1786) receiving the royal edict in his residence hall.\textsuperscript{367} The different iconographies, ‘ideal’ in one case and ‘real’ in the others, and the ways of representation found in these two screens lead us to question why Xiwangmu’s banquet was chosen for the crown prince’s investiture in 1800 instead of a scene displaying the actual ritual processions, as seen in the 1784 screen.

I suggest that this is partially due to the different groups of patrons who commissioned the 1784 and 1800 screens. Officials of the Office of the Herald played an auxiliary role in the investiture ceremony by guarding the king and crown prince, yet the event itself did not seem to

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{365} In her recent study on a screen of a congratulatory ceremony in 1783, Yu Chaepin 유재빈 suggests that the \textit{Screen of the Congratulatory Ceremony for King Hŏnjong’s Capping Ceremony in 1819} and the \textit{Screen of the Congratulatory Ceremony of Queen Dowager Cho’s Fortieth Birthday in 1847} were commissioned by officials of the Office of the Herald and the Five Military Commands Headquarters, respectively, and then offered to the king. This assumption is supported by the use of the character ‘sin’ (臣, subject) before each official’s name in the preface, which is customarily used for officials when offering poems, writings, paintings, or gifts to the king. See Yu Chaepin, “Kungnip chung’ang pangmulgwan sojang Chinhado 으 chŏngch’ijŏk sŏnkyŏk kwa üimi” 국립중앙박물관소장 <進賀圖>의 정치적 성격과 의미 [The Political connotation of the \textit{Screen of Congratulatory Ceremony} in the collection of the National Museum of Korea], \textit{Tong’ak misulsahak} 13 (2012): 181-200.
  \item \textsuperscript{366} Pak Chŏnhye, \textit{Chosŏn sidae kungjung kirokhwa}, 435-445; “Court Paintings on the Crown Princes,” 136-139.
  \item \textsuperscript{367} Yi Sun was an elder brother of King Sunjo, who died at the premature age of five. He was given a posthumous title, Crown Prince Munhyo 文孝世子 on the 22nd day of the fifth month of 1786.
\end{itemize}
offer particular personal meaning or memory to them. In contrast, the painting of 1784 was produced under the auspices of officials of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince, who played a major role in the ceremony. They attended the investiture ceremony as honorary guests, agents of the crown prince, and performers verifying the correct procedures for the ritual. For example, in the investiture ceremony in 1784, Yi Munwŏn 李文源 (1704-1794) and Kwŏn Úm 權燾 (1729-1801), lecturers of the office, received the royal edict of investiture and seal of the crown prince bestowed by the king on behalf of the crown prince. Yi Kyŏmpin 李謙彬 (1742-?), the crown prince’s tutor, checked the ritual protocol and the process of the ceremony as it was conducted.

The officials of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince, who were well versed in the Confucian cannon and all aspects of rituals, undertook an important assignment not only by guiding a young prince unfamiliar with court etiquette and ritual protocols prior to the event but also by participating in the ceremony as conductors of the ritual. Thus, when they decided to commemorate this event with a painting, they did not hesitate to choose actual scenes of the investiture ceremony as the theme of the work they commissioned. It was conventional to produce a documentary painting as a pictorial record for posterity, and it was also the best way to highlight the officials’ own tasks. In addition to the visual representation of their activities during the ceremony, the officials of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince left their names on the last panel of the screen. Thus, with the combination of image and text, this screen served not only as depiction of the real court event but also as a complete record of the role of the officials.

In addition, the 1784 screen reflects the increased political self-esteem of officials of the

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368 This government organ was a full-scale education institute established at court for tutoring the young crown prince. The most accomplished scholars, high officials of the state council, and royal relatives were recruited as teachers and guardians for the young prince.
Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince, which had been bolstered by a series of policies intended to augment royal authority during King Chŏngjo’s reign. The king made concerted efforts to reinforce the function and prestige of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince in order to provide full support for the future reign. For example, just one month before the investiture ceremony of 1784, King Chŏngjo learned that working-level officials such as lecturers podok 輔德 and kyŏm podok 兼輔德 in the institute belonged to a lower rank of palace-ascendable officials; he then elevated their ranks from the junior third rank to the senior third rank, the same rank as officials of the three censorate offices, the most important government organs. The Record of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince (Sigangwŏnji 侍講院志), an official record of the tasks of the office and of ritual protocols pertaining to the crown prince, was completed by the order of King Chŏngjo in 1784. Considering these political circumstances and the functions of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince, one can conclude that the most important moments of the investiture ceremony were selected as the theme for the 1784 commemorative painting in order to underscore the improved status and increased confidence of the patrons.

The officials of the Office of the Herald, on the other hand, would not benefit from a painting depicting the actual scenes of the ceremony in the way bureaucrats of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince did. Yet the question still lingers: why was the banquet of Queen

369 According to Pak Chŏnghye, all post-eighteenth century documentary court paintings relevant to the crown prince were produced during the reigns of Kings Chŏngjo, Sunjo and Kojong. Each of these respective ruling periods was a time of strengthening the authority of the king. In particular, she argues that court paintings depicting Crown Prince Yi Yŏng’s birth, entrance into the Royal Confucian Academy (Sŏnggyungwan 成均館), and capping ceremony produced in the first half of the nineteenth century were the result of the extraordinary efforts of King Chŏngjo to strengthen the kingship and establish a strong monarchy. See Pak Chŏnghye, “Court Paintings on the Crown Princes of the Joseon Dynasty,” 129-160.

370 Veritable Record of King Chŏngjo, vol.18, year of 1784, the seventh month, the 2nd day.

371 For a study of the political significance of the publication of the Record of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince, see U Kyŏngsŏp 董景燮, “Chŏngjo tae Sigangwŏnji p'yŏnch’an kwa kŭ ŭi” 정조태侍講院志ペ 검판과 그의의 [Publication of the Record of the Tutorial Office for the Crown Prince and its significance during the reign of King Chŏngjo], Taedong kojŏn yŏn’gu 26 (2010): 87-120.
At the beginning of his preface, Yi Sisu highlights the background reasons for commissioning the screen:

In our country, devoted retainers who directly attend to the king have the event painted on a screen and leave a list of names on the last panel in order to remind prosperity of the present auspicious events. His Majesty ascended to the throne 24 years ago and decided to hold the investiture ceremony at Chippokhôn (of Ch’anggyŏng Palace) on the second day of the second lunar month (in 1800). After the crown prince’s capping ceremony, the investiture was implemented. (The King) ordered the Ministry of Rites to select an auspicious day for the wedding of the crown prince, aiming to have the three felicitous rituals for the crown prince held concurrently. This follows King Hyŏnjong’s when the three ceremonies took place simultaneously. 372

Yi Sun was invested in 1784 and died in 1786. King Chŏngjo mourned the premature loss of his son for a long period and postponed the investiture ceremony of the second prince, Yi Kong, despite his subjects’ persistent request for proclamation of an official heir to the royal throne. The investiture ceremony was delayed until Yi Kong became ten years old, which was quite late, considering that Yi Sun was designated royal heir at the age of two. Having fallen behind schedule, the king and his bureaucrats agreed to have the three ceremonies of the crown prince, capping, investiture, and wedding, in the same year. Since it was such a rare case, many subjects repeatedly offered memorials to the king asserting that the ceremonies must be conducted magnificently.

However, Chŏngjo commanded that all procedures be simplified and costs reduced,
expressing his sorrow for the deceased kings and respecting the virtue of frugality pursued by royal ancestors. He ordered an end to congratulatory presents from local governments and receptions for honorary guests. Furthermore, the king issued a royal edict to appoint Yi Kong as heir to the throne in his private quarters, not before a royal audience, and ordered a downscaling of congratulatory ceremonies and banquets that conventionally followed the investiture ceremony. Although Chŏngjo tried to justify his decisions by announcing that he followed in the footsteps of previous Chŏson rulers, they were exceptional and contrary to royal convention. Thus, the king’s actions aroused strong opposition from his courtiers who claimed that auspicious state events should be made sumptuous in order to showcase dynastic prosperity and royal authority to the broader public, who throng the palace to view the state ceremony. Despite the critique of his courtiers, the king did not yield but rather reduced the number of ceremonial and armed guards. Eventually, the investiture ceremony of 1800 was reduced to the lowest cost, in accordance with the king’s will.

The downscaled investiture ceremony of Prince Yi Kong contrasts strikingly with Yi Sun’s investiture ceremony sixteen years earlier. For Yi Sun’s investiture ceremony, King Chŏngjo promoted ranks of officials of the Office of Royal Lecture for the Crown Prince upon the ceremony and declared the royal heir in the main royal audience hall. Observing previous practices, he also received congratulatory gifts from the governors of the provinces. Celebratory ceremonies set up for the king, royal consorts, and the young crown prince, as well as a reception for honorary guests and tutors of the crown prince were held by the order of the king after the investiture. After implementing the ceremony, King Chŏngjo marked the significance of the

373 Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo, vol. 53, year of 1800, the 1st month, the 10th day; the 24th day.
374 Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo, vol. 53, year of 1800, the 1st month, the 24th day.
375 Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo, vol. 53, year of 1800, the 2nd month, the 2nd day.
376 Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo, vol. 18, year of 1784, the 7th month, the 11th day.
event through political actions such as conducting a special state examination, granting pardons for many prisoners, and exempting commoners from grain credit payments and corvee labor.

Many historical records state that the investiture ceremony of 1800 was unprecedentedly reduced by the order of King Chŏngjo. Despite King Chŏngjo’s decision, many subjects wanted to hold lavish court ceremonies noticeable to commoners outside the palace and memorable to posterity. Thus, officials who commissioned the painting in commemoration of the investiture ceremony of 1800 may have chosen *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* as a theme because it displays a splendid banquet and emphasizes a festive atmosphere. This was one way to represent a moderate court event as more extravagantly than it actually was and to idealize the court ceremonies through the imagery of a sacred banquet of immortals.

In addition, the relationship between the group of immortals depicted in the *Banquet of Xiwangmu* and the congratulatory ceremony (fig. 3-28) following the investiture ceremony deserves closer attention. When the crown prince was fully invested, it was customary to hold a congratulatory ceremony, in which civil and military officials paid homage to the king. The congratulatory ceremony represents Chosŏn’s strictly hierarchical political structure, with the king presiding over ministers and other court functionaries. The imagery of immortals approaching Xiwangmu’s palace is reminiscent of courtiers attending a congratulatory ceremony at court. Possibly, the depiction of the group of immortals in these Chosŏn screens of *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* stemmed from the patrons’ intentions to magnify the significance of the court event by associating it with a mythical banquet scene. This underlying meaning also explains the unique combination of the two originally separate iconographies, the banquet and the arrival of the immortals.
4) The Use of The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond in a Royal Wedding Ceremony

Screens of The Banquet of Xiwangmu were displayed at royal wedding ceremonies in the nineteenth century. The earliest record documenting the usage of this screen in the nuptial rituals appears in Yi Yisun’s 李鳩淳 (1754-1832) “Renovation of Taejo Hall” 大造殿修理時記, written in 1802. Taejo Hall was a royal residential quarter and the venue of the tongnoe 同牢宴, in which the ceremony of formal wedding vows is conducted by drinking wine together using the nuptial cup. Queen Dowager Chŏngsun, who was the eldest member of the royal household and acted as royal regent, ordered the repair of Taejo Hall in preparation for the wedding ceremony of King Sunjo and Queen Sunwŏn. Yi Yisun’s record describes the details of the investiture of screens and interior decoration of the palace. Previous scholarship appreciates the importance of this record as a primary source that reconstructs the arrangement of court paintings on a permanent basis in the royal bedchamber and the decorative schemes of the Chosŏn palace interior. However, given that Taejo Hall was also used for the tongrae banquet following the wedding ceremony in 1802, Yi’s text also describes the ritual setting designed for the special occasion.

377 Veritable Records of King Sunjo, vol. 4, year of 1802, the 8th month, the 30th day.
378 Veritable Records of King Sunjo, vol. 4, year of 1802, the 8th month, the 10th day.
379 U Hyŏnsu, “A Study on the Pair of Phoenix and Peacock Paintings in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art,” in Kunggwŏl ŭi changsik kūrim 궁궐의 장식그림 [Decorative Paintings of Chosŏn Palaces : Special Exhibition of the National Palace Museum of Korea] (Seoul: National Palace Museum of Korea, 2009), 127-128. The excerpt from Yi Yisun’s “Renovation of Taejo Hall” introduced in her article draws scholarly attention to various ways of displaying paintings and installing furniture in the setting of the palace.
380 Veritable Record of King Sunjo, vol. 4, year of 1802, the 10th month, the 16th day. The ceremony of king’s induction of the queen-to-be was held in the detached palace in Ōŭi-dong and the tongnoe banquet took place at Taejo Hall of Ch’angdŏk Palace.
The hall (Taejo Hall), east of Injŏng Hall and north of Hŭijŏng Hall, is located in the innermost part. In the center is the six-kan (six spaces between columns) main hall, to the left is the six-kan eastern chamber, and to the right is six-kan western chamber. The eastern chamber consists of six rooms and the west has eight rooms. Each room has a wooden floor in front. The total number of kan is 36. In each of the four directions are windows, doors, and screens, but no mud-plastered wall. Cracks between wooden boards on the floor are covered with paper. Old paper is laid down first, and then new, flower-patterned paper covers it.

At the center of the north wall of the main hall a pair of golden screens is installed, fixed in place by rivets. In front of these, a ten-panel screen of The Banquet of the Queen Mother of the West at the Turquoise Pond is installed. The king’s seat is placed before it, on a dragon-patterned mat. Having asked (about the mat), I heard that the craftsmen in Andong offered it to the court. On the mat stands a chair and in front of the chair is a footstool. On either side brushes and ink stones rest on tables, with an incense burner and a brazier. To the lower east side of the seat is a lamp made of a painted bamboo stick with a jade stand. Above it hang the keys to all windows and doors.

To the west of the hall, a moon sword and flags stand on a painted pedestal. On the southeast side stands a screen resembling an instrumental rack of bronze chime bells. Both sides are wrapped with paper and painted with landscapes. Emulating the old, it is called a screen wall made of trees (樹塞門). At the southeast corner are a red mat, wild geese made of copper, golden toads, and a fish. Golden lotus flowers are placed in the mouth of the fish. A pair of large mirrors hangs on the two columns to the south, and a pair of medium mirrors hangs on the two columns in the northern and southern wood-floored hall, respectively. There are two columns both at the south end of the hall and southern wood-floored halls, on which a pair of long swords with yellow deer skin strings hang. The entrances are located three-kan south of the hall, and all have the blinds lifted up. Straw mats are placed on the wooden floor in the south and north. Mattings with decorations are on the straw mats. The mats are fringed with beads.

The eastern chamber is the king’s bedchamber measuring three kan, where a screen of Peonies stands in front of the east wall; a painting of Nine Phoenix Chicks is attached on the north wall; calligraphy reading Ch’angsŭng wŏlgwang 蒼蠅月光 (fly and moonlight) written in clerical script is attached to the two central beams; and calligraphy reading Chŏngsim susin 正心修身 (rectify the mind and cultivate the body) is written in ba fen 八分 (seal-clerical script). In the middle room, a screen of Plum Blossoms stands in front of the west wall, and a screen of Bamboo Leaves stands in front of the north wall. A painting of Plum and Bamboo is attached to the east door. There are yellow flower-patterned mats and arrangements of silk flower lanterns. On the mat sits another pair of mats decorated with lotus flowers. This is the bedchamber of the main hall. Screens or chests are arranged in all side-rooms on the right and left and in the back of the main chamber. A pair of mirrors with tortoise and shell patterns is hung over in the southern wooden floor hall. There is also a brass brazier as large as a cauldron and covered with a lid.
In the two kan of the western chamber, translucent windows are installed to the south. The rest of the rooms are one kan, and they connect to each other through doors. Two rooms on the north side have large storage spaces. Ceiling windows and sliding doors in the bedchamber are covered with white paper with ogival-shaped patterns and lined with blue foil paper. Grasses-poured paper is glued on windows and doors lacquered with wax and oil. The floors are covered with oil-painted paper, on which silk figural mats are spread. Each room of the eastern chamber has double-layered seats of yellow mats over mats with patterns. Small-hinged doors are installed within the outer windows and doors to become double doors. This is probably because here is the king’s bedchamber. (In the eastern chamber) there are more than ten screen paintings, including a gold screen of Seven Cranes. The rest are Taoist immortals and flying dragons, rare birds and animals, and beautiful flowers and plants. It is immeasurable.381

Yi Yisun’s writing delineates the splendid interior of Taejo Hall, replete with dozens of screens, paintings, calligraphic works, mats, and furnishings. The fact germane to this discussion is that The Banquet of Xiwangmu screen was installed with a pair of golden screens at the center of the north wall of the main hall, where the tongnoe banquet mostly likely occurred.382

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381 Yi Yisun, “Renovation of Taejo Hall” 太祖殿修理時記事, *Hugyejip* 後溪集, vol. 5, in *Han'guk munjip ch’onggan*, vol. 269 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwón hoe, 2001), 117b. The phrases related to paintings are underlined for emphasis.

382 For the royal wedding of King Yongjo and Queen Chongsun in 1759, screens were installed to the north of T’ongmyǒng Hall in Ch’anggyǒng Palace, where the king and queen held the tongnoe banquet. As royal protocol does not mention the subject of the screens installed for the ceremony, we do not know exactly which screens were displayed. See Pak Sotong 박소동, trans., *Kugyŏk karye togam ūgwe* 국역가례도감의례 [Protocols of the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies translated in Korean] (Seoul: National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, 1999), 291-293.
The information on paintings prepared for the royal wedding is also documented in "Protocol of the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies." In the case of nineteenth-century royal weddings, screens of The Banquet of Xiwangmu and Birds and Animals were installed in the temporary residence, a bridal pavilion called pyōlgung 別宮, for the wedding rituals of King Hŏnjong and Queen Hyojŏng 孝定王后 (1831-1903) in 1844. At the wedding of King Hŏnjong and the Royal Concubine Kyŏng-bin, or Lady Kim 慶嬪 金氏 (1832-1907), in 1847, three large screens of Ten Symbols of Longevity, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi, and Birds and Animals, and a small screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu were sent to the queen’s detached palace.

383 Karye togam ŭigwe starts with a list of officials who were appointed to various positions at the superintendency (坐官), followed by a schedule of all the events (行日記), from the first round of selection of the bride-to-be (初揀擇) to the first greeting ceremony of the bride to her in-laws (朝見禮) after the couple’s formal wedding vow at the tongnoe banquet. The rest of the book comprises all the communication and correspondence among the offices engaged in the preparation of the wedding. Then follow the lists of all the ceremonial items, such as the scroll of the king’s letter of appointment, the jade book, the golden seal, and the outfit for the new queen, as well as non-ceremonial items including painted screens, attributes for the honor guards, palanquins, and food to be served. At the end, there is a painting of the royal procession in which the king and his entourage brought the queen into the palace. For further research on wedding-related royal protocols, see Yi Sŏngmi et al., Chungsŏgak sojang karye togam; “Euigwe and the Documentation,” 113-133.

384 (Hŏnjong Hyojŏng wanghu) Karye togam ŭigwe (憲宗孝定王后) 嘉禮都監儀軌

385 There are several documents recording versions of the 1847 wedding, and discrepancies in paintings used for the ritual are found. For example, Daily Records of the Royal Wedding in 1847 notes that four screens, including large screens of Ten Symbols of Longevity, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi, and Birds and Animals, and a small screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu, decorated the detached palace. See Dyŏngmi karye si ilgŭi [Daily records of the royal wedding in 1847], “[Items] procured by the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies” 嘉禮都監儀軌의서 별궁 (別宮) 연배 (進拜). “Four Colored Screens (a large screen of Ten Symbols of Longevity for tongnoe banquet, a large screen of the Banquet of Guo Ziyi, a large screen of Birds and Animals, and a small screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu)” 각색(各色) 복풍(屏風) 사좌(坐座) 심장생(十長生) 대일(大葒) 일 동례연, 행락도 (行樂圖) 대병 (大瓶) 일, 영모도 (領毛圖) 대병 (大瓶) 일, 요지연 (銀侍宴) 쇼병 (小瓶) 일. However, Transcribed Records of the Office of the Royal Wedding Concubine Kyŏng-bin explains that there were a large screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi and two large screens of flowers, plants, birds, and animals, and a medium screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu. See Kyŏng-bin karye si karyech’ŏng tongnoe 慶嬪嘉禮時嘉禮總彙錄 [Transcribed Records of the Board of Royal Wedding for the Royal Concubine Kyŏng-bin], “Transcribed Records of the Repair Department in the 10th month of the year of 1847, 道光二十七年十月日嘉禮修理所彙錄, Ministry of Taxation’s
At these two events, the screens were commonly installed at the detached palace in Ŭi-dong (present day Sajik-dong), near Ch’angdŏk palace. The queen-to-be, who was selected from a third and final group of candidates, moved to the detached palace and remained there while learning about court decorum and participating in several rehearsals for important wedding ceremonies. The royal wedding of the King and Queen consisted of six stages, or small rituals 六禮, beginning with sending the marriage proposal letter (napch’ae 納采), sending gifts to the bride’s family (napching 納徵), announcing the wedding date (kogi 告期), investiture of the queen (ch’aekpi 剃妃), the king’s personal induction of his queen (ch’inyŏng 親迎), and making the formal wedding vows (tongnoe 同牢).

These six ceremonies were performed at three different sites: at the main palace in the king’s residence, at the queen’s detached palace, and at the queen’s natal home. The first three rituals occurred concurrently at the main palace and at the queen’s maiden home. The ceremonies on the king’s side involved sending a royal delegation to deliver the king’s document verifying the marriage and announcing the wedding date, as well as sending a betrothal present to the bride’s family. The ceremonies in the queen’s home, presided over by the father of the bride, were to welcome and receive the royal delegates. The queen’s investiture ceremony consisted of two parts, one was held at the main palace and the other was at the queen’s residence in the detached palace. The king handed over the investiture documents, a golden seal, and a jade investiture book to a delegation at the palace, and then officials bestowed them upon the queen on behalf of the king at the queen’s detached palace.

Execution and Each Part’s Support 戶曹 舉行 各司附. “Offering four colored silk screens (Offering three large screens, including a screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi and two screens of flowers, plants, birds, and animals, and a medium- sized screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu” 納屏風四坐內 (大三坐內 一坐行樂圖二坐花草翎毛中一坐瑶池圖).
Among the six steps in the nuptial rituals, the bridegroom’s personal induction of his bride (ch’inyŏng) and the consummation ritual (tongnoe) where the wedding partners directly engage in the ceremony together are significant in terms of the arrangement of paintings and ceremonial performance. These two important events happened at the queen’s palace and the main hall of the king’s palace, respectively. Most of the decorative paintings prepared for the royal wedding were used to adorn the places where these two rituals were conducted: the queen’s detached palace used as a bridal pavilion outside the court and the audience hall and the king’s private chambers inside the palace. Historical accounts of these paintings reveal a range of subjects, including auspicious birds and flowers, animals, immortals, and legendary and historical figures, which represent the concepts of longevity, prosperity, fecundity, and conjugality. The Banquet of Xiwangmu was a favored theme for the royal wedding, and therefore it was displayed at the queen’s temporary residence or in the king’s bedchamber.  

Screens depicting The Banquet of Xiwangmu were used not only for the nuptial ceremony of the king and queen, but also for princesses’ weddings in the nineteenth century. For instance, Transcribed Records of Princess Suksŏn’s Wedding (Suksŏn ongju karye tŭngnok 淑善翁主嘉禮謄錄) in 1804 and Transcribed Records of Princess Myŏngon’s Wedding (Myŏngon kongju karye tŭngnok 明溫公主嘉禮謄錄) in 1823 include a list of articles arranged for the princesses’ weddings. According to the list, three screens, including two large, multiple-

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386 In addition to The Banquet of Xiwangmu, the Ten Symbols of Longevity and Birds and Flowers, Peonies, Lotus Flowers, and Bird and Flowers, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi, and One Hundred Boys 百童子圖 were displayed at the royal wedding ceremony. For the list of paintings installed for royal wedding ceremonies, see Yi Sŏng-mi, Karye togam ǔigwe wa misulsa, 300-303; Pak Ŭnkyŏng 박은경, “Chosŏn hugi wangsil karye yong pyŏngp’ung yŏn’gu” 朝鮮後期 王室 嘉禮用 屏風 研究 [A study of screens for royal weddings ceremonies in the late Chosŏn dynasty] (master’s thesis, Seoul National University, 2012), 90-99.

387 Pak Ŭnkyŏng, “Chosŏn hugi wangsil karye yong pyŏngp’ung yŏn’gu,” 40-50. The supply of ritual paraphernalia and utensils required for the princess’s wedding were administered by a government office called the Board of Royal Weddings (Karyech’ŏng 嘉禮廳), an ad hoc office in charge of wedding ceremonies of princes and princesses.
panel colored screens done on silk and one on ramie, were prepared under the direction of the Office of Supplementary Procurement (pyŏlgongjak 別工作) and deployed in the ritual space in 1804. The Banquet of Xiwangmu and Flowers, Plants, Birds, and Animals were selected as themes of the two colorful screens. 388 At Princess Myŏngon’s (1810-1832) wedding in 1823, two silk screens, The Banquet of Xiwangmu and Flowers, Birds, and Animals, and a screen with no color were used. 389

The popularity of The Banquet of Xiwangmu as a decoration at wedding ceremonies was not confined to the court. Yu Tŭkkong’s 柳得恭 (1748-1807) Miscellaneous Records of the Capital (Kyŏngdo chapchi 京都雜誌) explains that paintings of Xiwangmu’s banquet were used for wedding ceremonies of literati officials and wealthy commoners, along with other screens such as One Hundred Boys and The Banquet of Guo Ziyi. 390 The Song of Hanyang (Hanyangga 漢陽歌), written by Hansan Kŏsa 漢山居士 in 1844, describes the scene of painting shops around Kwangt’ŏng Bridge at Ch’ŏnggye Stream, in which screens of The Banquet of Xiwangmu were displayed for sale. 391 This means that there was a great demand for paintings of

388 Suksŏn ongju karye tŭngnok 淑善翁主嘉禮牒錄 [Transcribed Records of Princess Suksŏn’s wedding] (1802), “List of items owned by each part” 各司所掌物目秩, (Items in) the Office of Supplementary Procurement 別工作. “A screen (for rehearsal) and three screens (two silk screens and a white ramie screen; a silk painting of The Banquet of Xiwangmu and a painting of Flowers, Plants, Birds, and Animals. All inspected by the office)” 一坐(習儀所用)屛風三坐(二坐納木一坐白蓆本納木一畫池宴一畫花草翎毛皆於本廳檢飭).

389 Myŏngon kongju karye tŭngnok 明溫公主嘉禮牒錄 [Transcribed Records of Princess Myŏngon’s wedding] (1823), “List of items owned by each part” 各司所掌物目秩, (Items in) the Office of Supplementary Procurement 別工作. “A screen (for rehearsal) and three screens (two silk screens of The Banquet of Xiwangmu and Flowers, Birds, and Animals. All prepared by the office).” 一坐(習儀所用)屛風三坐(二坐納木一畫池宴一畫花草翎毛一本皆於本廳檢飭).

390 Yu Tŭkkong (1749-1807), Kyŏngdo chapchi 京都雜誌 [Miscellaneous records of the capital], vol.1 in Hong Sŏkmo 洪錫謨 (1781-1857), Tongguk sesigi 東國歲時記 [A record of seasonal customs in Korea], trans. Ch’oe T’aerim (Seoul: Hongshin munhwasa, 1989), 206-207. For English translation, see Sung Lim Kim, “From Middle to Center Stage,” 82-83.

Xiwangmu’s banquet for rites of marriage, and professional painters outside the court worked on commissions of private patrons and for the art market.

The favor for *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* screens is partly due to its generic symbolism associated with longevity and auspiciousness, which was appealing to anybody inside and outside the court. In addition, while court rites exclusively for members of the royal household were prone to strictly comply with Confucian regulations, royal wedding ceremonies were more likely to become venues, in which court culture encountered and interacted with social customs held by the broader society. The interplay between court culture and the influx of wider spheres of taste, materials, and personnel occurred during a royal wedding.

As mentioned above, a striking peculiarity of the Chosŏn screen of *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* lies in its combination of two themes, the scene of the banquet and immortals visiting the queen’s palace, which are often separately depicted in Chinese paintings. These unique characteristics stand out when we compare the Chosŏn screens to Japanese paintings. There exist a number of Japanese screens of Xiwangmu’s banquet. The deity Xiwangmu is depicted with a male protagonist such as a Chinese emperor – Emperor Mu of the Zhou dynasty, Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty, the legendary Han-dynasty official Dongfang Shuo 東方朔, or Dong Wang Gong (東王公, King Lord of the East). For example, screens painted by artists of the Kano School, such as Kano Motonobu 狩野元信 (1476-1559), Mitsunobu 狩野光伸 (?-1608), and Eiryo 狩野永良 (1741-1441) (figs. 3-29~3-31) demonstrate the long-lasting popularity, from the Muromachi 室町(1392-1573) to the Edo period, of the scene of Xiwangmu’s meeting with Dongfang Shuo. Paintings by Kano Eitoku 狩野永徳 (1543-1590) and Sansetsu (figs. 3-32, 3-33) depict the queen attended by a maiden holding a tray with the peach of immortality meeting King Mu, while Kano Tan’yū’s 狩野探幽 (1602-1674) painting (fig. 3-34) portrays the deity
offering a tray of celestial peaches to Emperor Wu 武帝 (r. 141BC-87BC). Xiwangmu is depicted with the King Lord of the East, who is known as her spouse in one pair of six-panel screens by Kaihō Yūshō 海北友松 (1533-1615) (fig. 3-35).

Like the Chosŏn screens, these Japanese examples include a couple of the female deities and male human beings as main figures but the emphasis is laid on Xiwangmu bestowing the fruit of longevity. There are neither pictorial motifs lending a festive note nor a lively parade of immortals as shown in the Korean counterparts. The celebratory atmosphere created by a group of musicians, dancers, and maidens preparing food and drink, and the invigorating atmosphere of the immortal guests that dominate the Chosŏn screens is replaced by the tranquil, sublime moment of Xiwangmu’s interaction with human beings in the Japanese paintings.

The comparative study of the theme related to Xiwangmu reaffirms the distinctiveness of the Chosŏn screens. In the earlier part of this chapter, I have connected the long procession of immortals approaching Xiwangmu’s palace to government officials attending a congratulatory ceremony at court. Here, I propose another hypothesis to account for the emphasis of the banquet scene in nineteenth-century Chosŏn screens, in relation to its use at royal wedding ceremonies.

The Banquet of Xiwangmu paintings were employed for wedding ceremonies due to their association with the wish for longevity and their composition, which consists of male and female protagonists in a festive atmosphere that resembles a real wedding ceremony. Unlike other festal rituals, music and dance were not performed during a wedding ceremony, following regulations from the Five Rites compiled in the reign of King Sejong. The Office of Ritual Music

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392 In Confucianism, music is considered a device for self-cultivation, a vehicle of self-expression, an embodiment of social harmony, political authority, and a medium of communication between man, nature and supernatural powers. Confucian musical traditions have influenced ceremonial court music known as aak 雅樂 since the Koryŏ dynasty. Complying with Confucian percepts, musical instruments were installed but not played during purification rituals before state sacrificial rites or the ritual for the departure of a funeral procession. The king prohibited playing music at court rituals when people suffered from drought and famine so he could show his sympathy for his people.
(Aaksŏ 雅樂署) arranged musical instruments on the south courtyard facing the royal throne, but musicians did not perform at all during wedding ceremonies at court. Likewise, an orchestra and a musical band were deployed but not rendered during the nuptial rites at the bridal pavilion. In sum, courtyard musical ensembles were “presented but did not play” (chin i pujak 陳而不作) throughout all stages of the wedding rituals. This marks a striking contrast from royal wedding ceremonies of the Koryŏ period, in which music was performed throughout the event. This shift resulted from the adaptation of regulations manifested in the Books of Rites (Liji 禮記) and Elementary Learning (Xiao Xue 小學) by Zhu Xi, the foremost Neo-Confucian thinker of the Southern Song dynasty, who exerted the most important influence on the Confucian transformation of Chosŏn society. According to Confucian accounts, the household who took a daughter-in-law after the wedding ceremony should refrain from listening to music for the first three days. This was because it was assumed one could not but sentimentalize over undertaking the tremendous responsibility of taking care of one’s parents and carrying on a family line.

In circumstances where music is not allowed, paintings depicting banquet scenes with musicians and dancers would have served as a visual replacement evoking music and self-reflection as a monarch. However, various types of orchestras and music bands performed music in auspicious and congratulatory rites. For the refrainment from musical performance during calamities and royal weddings, see Kim Chongsu, 金鍾洙, “Chaebyon kwa kukhon e sŏ ūi yong’ak: Chosŏn Sukchong cho rŭl chungsim ūro” 災變과國婚에서의用樂: 朝鮮숙종조를중심으로 [Performance of court music during calamity and state wedding ceremonies: focusing on cases in the reign of King Sukchong], Han’guk hakpo 16: 2 (1990): 85-117. Yi Chaesuk, Chosŏn cho kungjung urye wa ūmak), 107-112; Kim Chongsu, “Chaebyon kwa kukhon e sŏ ūi yong’ak,” 108-117. Kim Chongsu, “Chaebyon kwa kukhon e sŏ ūi yong’ak,” 110-112.


performance and creating an imaginary space for the royal wedding. In fact, musical instruments depicted on the screen – a wooden clapper, a bowed zither, a flute, a reed mouth organ, a seashell horn, a set of small, tuned gongs, a pair of brass cymbals – are almost identical to those used in court rituals and royal processions in the Chosŏn dynasty. Although elements closely reminiscent of Chinese culture were employed to mythify the theme, these screens also reflect contemporary Chosŏn material culture and echo the royal rites in which the screens are physically presented.

5) Resonance of Xiwangmu in Court Performance and in Painting

The scenes shown in The Banquet of Xiwangmu screens reflect actual performances in which the plot is based on the Queen Mother of the West’s encounter with a Chinese emperor. In performances of the Peach Offering Dance (Hŏnsŏndo 献仙桃) (fig. 3-36), for instance, a group of celestial maidens led by the Queen Mother of the West descends from Heaven carrying a peach of immortality to present to the king. The highlight of this performance is the moment when the lead dancer, acting as Queen Mother of the West, holds up the tray with the heavenly peach and sings “Wŏnso gahoe sa” (Song of the feast of the fifteenth day of the first lunar month 元宵嘉會詞) to eulogize the king’s virtue and wish for his longevity:

Enjoying a wonderful feast and the spring scenery on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month,
Reminiscent of a glorious event that took place at Shangyang Palace.
Emperor Yao faces north toward heaven with happiness on his brow;

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397 Based on a classical, poetic song of the Song dynasty, musicians of the Koryŏ dynasty (918-1392) composed a tune to accompany this dance. In the Koryŏ dynasty it was performed at celebratory ceremonies and eventually was handed down to the Chosŏn dynasty. For a survey of the development of Korean court dance, see Yi Hŭng-gu, Korean Court Dance.
398 Shangyang Palace was constructed in Luoyang during Gaozong’s 高宗 reign (r. 649-683) in the Tang dynasty.
Emperor Shun in long robes sits deep in the palace with arms folded…

These lyrics carry political overtones: they celebrate contemporaneous court events over which the king presided by comparing them to legendary feasts held by ancient sage-rulers such as Emperors Yao and Shun and Emperor Gaozong of the Tang dynasty, whose reigns traditionally signify idealized, peaceful sovereignty in Confucian thought. Thus, they fundamentally aim to promote the Chosŏn king. The intention of this performance is clearly manifested in the following song, “Haedong kŭm’il sa” (Song about today East of the Sea):

Peace reigns over this Eastern country (Chosŏn) today  
In delight the king and his court look upon a pleasant congratulatory feast  
under a dragon cloud  
The fans are spread open and the throne of the king shines  
Auspicious energy is resonant in this place where the painted blind is lifted up  
Foreign envoys gather outside the gate of the royal audience hall  
Tributes, including jade and silk, pile up on the stone steps of the hall…

Here, the status of the Chosŏn king is elevated to that of a Chinese emperor who receives tributes from neighboring states. By receiving tributes from delegates, the Chinese emperor proclaims his superior status as a Son of Heaven and confirms the hierarchical diplomatic relationship of China with its vassal countries, which paide tribute to China. Even though

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400 For an extended discussion of a Confucian sage-king and his role in the political realm of the Chosŏn dynasty, see JaHyun Kim Haboush, *The Confucian Kingship*, 29-82.

Chosŏn never received tributes from other countries, the lyrics honor the glory and power of the reigning Chosŏn monarch through their reference to the Chinese emperor.

*The Dance of Five Immortals with Sheep* (*Oyangsŏn* 五羊仙) (fig. 3-37) is another performance related to Xiwangmu. Here Xiwangmu, accompanied by dancers and musicians, descends from Heaven in order to celebrate the king’s successful reign. The lyrics convey the Confucian ideal of a perfect government under a virtuous ruler, similar to the lyrics of *Hŏnsŏndo*. The dance performance and music described in the lyrics are very similar to the scenes portrayed in *The Banquet of Xiwangmu*: the splendid appearance of the dancers, phoenixes dancing, and music played by celestial maidens.

In both performances, a dancer acting as Xiwangmu presents a peach of immortality or performs dance and music in front of the king, glorifying a peaceful reign under his leadership. Just as The Turquoise Pond is regarded as the sacred place of the meeting between King Mu and Xiwangmu, so the Chosŏn palace represents a holy realm because the goddess visits the king through the performance. The meeting of the king and goddess not only sanctifies the palace but also promotes the Chosŏn monarch’s status to that of the ancient legendary sage-rulers, and he becomes equal to the Son of Heaven. The king hosting the court rituals is thus endowed with the remarkable political power and authority of the legendary Chinese rulers and the performance elevates the court banquet to a sacred event. *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* was thus used to idealize secular court events and augment the authority of the king.

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402 Suzanne E. Cahill analyzes how the story of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty meeting Xiwangmu glorifies and sanctifies the emperor’s palace. For her argument, see Cahill, *Transcendence and Divine Passion*, 174-176. U Hyŏnsu also discusses the political propaganda behind this theme in relation to its ritual context. U Hyŏnsu, “Chosŏn hugi Yŏjyŏn,” 69-71.
3. From Historical Figure to Manifestation of Abundant Blessings: The Banquet of Guo Ziyi

1) Guo Ziyi as a Subject of Visual Culture in China and Korea

The Banquet of Guo Ziyi depicts a sumptuous banquet held in the palace of Guo Ziyi, a renowned figure of the Tang dynasty. Guo Ziyi was a capable general and loyal subject who successfully subdued the An Shi Rebellion that devastated the Tang Empire at the end of the reign of Emperor Xuanzong. In acknowledgement of his efforts, Guo Ziyi was awarded an honorary title designating him the Prince of Fenyang 汾陽王 in 762. When a combined army of the Uighurs and Tibetans invaded China in 765, he appealed to the Uighur chief to break their alliance with the Tibetan army and convinced him to change sides. With Uighur’s help, Guo Ziyi quelled the rebellion and defended the Tang against the nomadic tribes on the northwest frontier.

After he served in various government posts in charge of military protection as well as administration under four successive emperors, Guo Ziyi lived in comfortable retirement until his death at the age of 85. Emperor Dezong 德宗 (r. 779-805) bestowed upon him the title of “the honorable father” 尚父 in a display of respect and issued an edict to mourn him and to praise his deeds when the general died in 781.\(^{403}\) In his rank he reached “as high up as anyone could while still being a subject,” and it was said that “his contribution to the survival of the

Tang Empire is so enormous that it covers the earth.”404 Because of his great achievements and his virtue, integrity, and humility, he was admired by the whole nation and enjoyed prestige and a stellar reputation throughout his life.

Guo Ziyi was also well known for having many sons and grandsons who became successful in careers as a high officials at the imperial court. He had eight sons and seven sons-in-law. His son Guo Ai married Princess Shengping, the daughter of Emperor Daizong 代宗 (r. 762-779) and her granddaughter Lady Guo married Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 805-820). It was said that Guo Ziyi had far too many grandsons to remember all the names; when they came to greet him, he simply nodded in recognition. He peacefully died at the age of 85 and his was honorably buried on the grounds of Jianling Mausoleum, the tomb of Emperor Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756-762). Guo Ziyi enjoyed a blessed life unblemished by a single instance of misfortune. Later generations praised him not only because of his success as a military leader and government official but also for the three abundant blessings granted to him: wealth, longevity, and the benefit of many offspring.

Due to his monumental successes in public and private life, Guo Ziyi’s portrait was painted, and his happy life became a popular motif in Chinese art. Several historical records of the Song dynasty indicates that the portrait of Guo Ziyi was enshrined in Lingyan Pavilion 凌煙閣 along with portraits of other loyalist officials recognized by their meritorious service and contribution to the establishment of the country.405 There are few examples of Guo Ziyi’s portraits predating the Ming dynasty, but we can conjecture the content of earlier paintings

404 Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086), Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 [Comprehensive mirror to aid in government] vol. 227, in Xu Zhi zhi tong jian chang bian 續資治通鑑長編, ed. Li Tao (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 2004), 7303.
based on woodblock prints published in the Ming and Qing periods. Among them, *Portraits and Inscriptions of the People of Antiquity through the Dynasties* (*Lidai guren xiang zan* 歷代古人像贊) (fig. 3-38) shows the archetypal form of a half-length portrait of Guo Ziyi wearing an official robe and cap. The illustration (fig. 3-39) carried in *Painted Portraits by Wanxiao tang* (*Wanxiao tang huazhuan* 晚笑堂畫傳) by Shangguan Zhou 上官周 (1665-1750) of 1743 displays a version of Guo’s portrait that circulated widely in the Qing period. In this full length-portrait, he holds an official’s tablet in his hands and wears a robe, decorated with a dragon-and-cloud motif, and the *shanyi guan* 善翼冠, a casual cap for royalty.

In addition to portraiture, Guo’s accomplishments as a military leader were depicted during the Tang and Song eras by famous painters such as Wang Wei and Li Gonglin. Wang Wei’s *Banquet for Guo Ziyi Hosted by Yu Chao’en* is long lost and only recorded in *Tongzhi* (Comprehensive Treatises 通志) written by Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104-1162), the Song dynasty historian. The painting illustrates the story that a powerful eunuch official of the Tang dynasty, Yu Chao’en 魚朝恩 (722-770), threw a banquet to celebrate Guo Ziyi’s victory in the campaign against rebel general Zhou Zhiguang in 767. The eunuch was worried about the growing power of Guo Ziyi, who had gained recognition for his successive subdual of rebel forces. Jealously, Yu Chao’en submitted memorials to the emperor criticizing Guo Ziyi. Yet he was deeply impressed by Guo’s integrity and modesty and held a banquet to celebrate Guo’s conquest over Zhou Zhiguang.

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Li Gonglin’s *Guo Ziyi Receiving Homage from the Uighurs* (fig. 3-40) depicts another well-known episode in Tang military history, in which Guo Ziyi defended the empire from the attacks of Tibetan and Uighur troops in 765 despite his army’s numerical inferiority. When the advancing army requested to meet Guo Ziyi, he went out unarmed and accompanied by only a few cavalrymen to the camp of the Uighurs. The Uighur chiefs were so impressed by Guo’s loyalty to the Tang court and his bravery that they also took off their armor and kowtowed to the Chinese commander in respect. After the meeting, the Uighurs broke their alliance with the Tibetans and changed sides, and fighting until they conquered them.408 These two works, in which Guo Ziyi appears as a historical figure to save the country, represent the didactic function of the paintings of Guo Ziyi. They were commissioned in order to praise the patriotic ardor of a national hero and to evoke the fidelity of loyal subjects to future generations.

In addition to images of Guo Ziyi depicted as a military commander, themes from his life began to be adopted as pictorial subjects to symbolize abundant blessings of wealth, longevity, and numerous progeny during the Yuan dynasty. The earliest known example is *Guo Fenyang’s Family Celebration* by the Yuan court painter Wang Zhenpeng.409 The deification of Guo Ziyi as a symbol of fortune and happiness is exemplified in “A Bed-full of Tablets” (*Man chuang hu* 滿床笏), a theater play depicting Guo’s birthday celebration that was on vogue in the late Ming and early Qing eras.410 The piece culminates in Guo’s sixty-sixth birthday banquet, in which his sons and sons-in-law come to the banquet to offer their congratulations, each carrying an official tablet. Guo’s bed was overloaded with tablets carried by his offspring, from which the title of

409 John Calvin Ferguson, *Li dai zhu lu shu mu*, 41.
410 The relationship between this drama and paintings of Guo Ziyi’s birthday celebration in the late Ming and Qing dynasties is summed up in Chŏng Yongmi, “Chosŏn hugi Kwak Punyang haengnakto,” 13-14; Kim Hongnam, “Chungguk Kwak Ch’ā’i ch’ǔksudo,” 173-176.
this work derives. These images of ‘a bed-full of tablets’ and Guo’s sons and sons-in-law wearing official robes illustrating his blessings became favorite themes of New Year paintings in the late Ming dynasty (fig. 3-41)

Guo’s birthday banquet was portrayed in paintings and other media, including a large hanging scroll (fig. 3-42) and lacquer screen (fig. 3-43) in the Ming and Qing periods. In a lavish palace setting replete with pavilions, halls, and bridges, Guo Ziyi received audiences bearing tribute in a terraced hall while watching ladies dance and musicians play in a courtyard. By the seventeenth century, this particular reception was perceived as a metaphor of auspicious birthday celebrations in general, and artworks of this scene were frequently presented to distinguished individuals on the occasion of their birthday, retirement, or promotions to praise their benevolence and virtue. In light of the symbolic meaning, iconography, and pictorial composition, the development of this theme during the late Ming and early Qing periods offers significant insight into the screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi produced at the nineteenth-century Chosŏn court.

As in China, Guo Ziyi was known to Koreans as a talented general as well as a person living a blissful life. In many textual sources written in the Koryŏ and early Chosŏn dynasties, Guo Ziyi’s achievements are mentioned to eulogize contemporary Korean loyalists’ fidelity and their faithful commitment to the king. These writings explain that Guo Ziyi’s long and fruitful life is the result of his good deeds, contribution to society, and possession of a high moral

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character. Thus, they asserted that those who reached a venerable age devoting themselves to maintaining prosperity and peace in the country should be rewarded with respect.

In the fifteenth century Guo Ziyi is mentioned as an iconic loyal subject, and his portrait was commissioned for edifying purposes, as indicated in Sin Sukchu’s 申叔舟 (1417-1475) inscription on a screen depicting twelve Chinese illustrious generals and military strategists of many generations.\(^{414}\) The production and circulation of Guo Ziyi’s portraits for didactic function in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is attested by a few surviving paintings, such as the half-length portrait of Guo Ziyi with Sin Sukju’s inscription in the Yūgensai collection in Kyoto (fig. 3-44), the later copy of this portrait in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 3-45), the woodblock print of Guo Ziyi’s portrait combined with Yi Haeng’s 李荇 (1478-1534) preface and Hwang Hŏn’s 黃憲 (1502-1574) writing in the Hōsa Library in Nagoya.\(^{415}\) In the same vein, historical perspectives and recognition of Guo Ziyi’s heroic military accomplishments are frequently found in the *Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty*. His military prowess and diplomatic skills are emphasized during the reign of King Sŏnjo, when the state called upon capable commanders like Guo Ziyi to repel the Japanese attack in the Imjin War of 1592.

From the late seventeenth century onward, Guo’s fame as a capable general began to fade; instead, his image was transformed to a symbol of auspiciousness and became popular among

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\(^{415}\) The “Portrait of Guo Ziyi” included in *Painting Scroll of Sages* 聖賢列傳圖卷 serves as evidence to prove the Ming version of Guo’s portrait was transmitted to Korea as early as the mid-fifteenth century. This portrait accompanies Sin Sukchu’s inscription. *Portrait of Guo Ziyi*, which was in the former Tongwŏn collection, is believed to be a later copy of the Yūgensai version. In addition, a woodblock print of Guo’s portrait probably commissioned by King Chungjong in 1525 is found in Hōsa Library of Nagoya, Japan. It was combined with other portraits in the form of an album, which also has Yi Haeng’s (1478-1534) preface and Hang Hŏn’s (1502-1574) record. For details, see Kim Hongnam, “Han’guk Kwak Punyang haengnakto yŏn’gu” 한국 <郭汾陽行樂圖> 연구 [A study on the Painting of Guo Fenyang’s Enjoyment-of-life in Korea], *Misulsa nondan* 34 (2012): 69-71.
people longing for happiness, prosperity, and fecundity. This shift in the symbolic meaning is found in King Sukchong’s two inscriptions on *Painting of Guo Fenyang’s Enjoyment of life*.

Inscription on *Painting of Guo Fenyang’s Enjoyment of life* Granted to the Crown Prince

From ancient times, Guo Ziyi has been considered the most fortunate person among those who lived blessed lives. All of his sons, sons-in-law, and grandsons stand before him. It is not by chance that paintings such as this work were created. Keeping the painting by your side, may you enjoy great happiness and endless longevity.  

Inscription on *Painting of Guo Fenyang’s Enjoyment of life*

Accumulate good deeds and fortune will follow  
Zithers, flutes, and high buildings are deployed in a row  
Sons and sons-in-law are seated in a banquet hall  
No one in the Han and Tang periods can compete with Fenyang  
The Emperor does not doubt him, and people are not jealous of him.  

We can thus assume that a painting of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*, also known as *Guo Fenyang’s Enjoyment of life*, was during the royal collection in King Sukchong’s reign, and that the king presented it to his heir wishing him longevity and happiness. The subject of Guo Ziyi’s peaceful and prosperous life was also selected for the commemorative screen commissioned by Cho Munmyŏng 趙文命 (1680-1732) to celebrate the suppression of Yi Injwa’s 李麟佐 (?-1728) Uprising in 1728. Although Guo Ziyi, according to the text, is depicted with other Chinese merit subjects, special attention is given to his comfortable and peaceful life, rather than to his distinguished service in war.  

The change in perception of Guo Ziyi is expressed in *Veritable Royal Writing of Successive Kings*, vol. 10.  

*Royal Writing of Successive Kings*, vol. 11.  

*Cho Munmyŏng 趙文命 (1680-1732), “Che nokhun togam kyebyŏng hu” 題錄勳都監稱屏後 [Inscription on commemorative screen (commissioned by) the Superintendency for Recording Accomplishment of the Merit
Records of King Chŏngjo. King Chŏngjo praised the Chief State Councilor Hong Naksŏng 洪樂性 (1718-1798), who turned 80 years old and served as a governmental official for more than twenty years, comparing his virtue and fortune with that of Guo Ziyi.\footnote{Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo, vol. 37, year of 1793, the 6th month, the 22nd day; vol. 39, year of 1797, the 4th month, the 24th day.} This trend, prevalent at King Chŏngjo’s court, was continued thereafter and the extant nineteenth-century screens of Guo Ziyi’s banquet under discussion here share similar symbolic meanings.

2) Iconography, Styles, and Artists of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi in Nineteenth-century Chosŏn

Approximate forty Chosŏn screens of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi are preserved in private and museum. Most of them are eight- or ten-panel screens rendered on silk in a bright colors. As recent research reveals, the surviving works of this theme were produced in the nineteenth century by court painters or professional painters following the style of court painting.\footnote{For important previous research, see Chŏng Yŏngmi, “Chosŏn hugi Kwak Punyang haengnakto”; Kim Hongnam, “Han’guk Kwak Punyang haengnakto,” 67-104; Pak Chŏnghye, “Kungjung changsikhwa ūi segye” 궁중 장식화의 세계 [Decorative court painting], in Chosŏn kunggwŏl ūi kūrim, 93-108.} Unlike their Chinese counterparts, Korean versions of Guo Ziyi’s banquet are consistent in terms of iconography, style, and format. Fewer variations in the Chosŏn paintings suggest that the extant works were done within a relatively short period of time, spanning from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, and that the archetype was firmly established enough to inform pivotal aspects of the representation of the theme. In fact, there are only minor discrepancies among the various versions of this subject, such as different numbers of auxiliary figures, decoration and patterns on textile and utensils, and coloration.

Subjects], Hagamjip 鶴巖集, vol. 5, in Han’guk munjip ch’önggan, vol. 192 (Seoul: Minjok munhwah’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1997), 559b.
The popularity of Guo Ziyi as a symbol of wealth and happiness was not confined to royal members and prestigious officials. As exemplified in several examples rendered in folk painting (fig. 3-46), this theme must have been fairly popular among common people. While some extant paintings reveal an exquisite workmanship with delicate brushstrokes and expensive pigments, others present a less defined rendition, probably executed by painters outside the court. The theme is also executed in fine embroidery using multiple-colored threads on silk satin (fig. 3-47). The iconography, figures, animals, birds, and other objects in the embroidery work are almost identical with those found in the painting, but are simpler in execution and composition. Yet, the expensive material points to a noble or wealthy household. To sharpen the focus of my analysis, selected examples (figs. 3-48–3-54), which are thought to be done by court painters and were formerly housed in the royal collection, are examined below.

*The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* depicts a lively, festive banquet in magnificent palatial architecture surrounded by a vast garden in the midst of a spring day. The bustling activities of figural groups including numerous descendants, consorts, maidens, female orchestra members, and dancers are shown on continuous picture planes called waejang, (倭裝, Japanese-style mounting). Taihu rocks, willow trees, blossoming magnolia and peach trees, peonies, bamboo, pine trees, and other auspicious flora and fauna are scattered throughout the garden. Brilliant

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421 Compared to court products, folk paintings often show a loose composition, less defined rendition, and stylized depiction of figures and architecture.

422 For further analysis I chose seven artworks which are considered representative examples of court products: a painting attributed to Kim Tǔksin at the National Museum of Korea (access number Tŏk 1508) (fig. 3-48); two eight-panel folding screens at the National Museum of Korea (access numbers Tŏk 1660 and Tŏk 3153) (fig. 3-49, 3-50); an eight-panel folding screen at the Korean Christian Museum at Soongsil University (fig. 3-51); an eight-panel folding screen at the Seoul Museum of History (fig. 3-52); a ten-panel folding screen at the National Folk Museum of Korea (fig. 3-53); and a ten-panel folding screen at the Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art (fig. 3-54). According to the development of style and visual techniques in Chosŏn court art, the dates of these paintings range approximately from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth centuries. The first painting consists of two and a half panels, which are obviously fragments of an complete eight-panel screen. It is believed to be one of the earliest works among the extant paintings. This work reveals stylistic affiliations to Kim Tǔksin’s figure painting and bears the artist’s seal and inscription. However, the seal and inscription were probably added later, evidenced by their dubious location on the painting. The ten-panel screen at the Leeum is regarded as the latest work among other examples based on its colors, perspective, and decorative effect.
blue, green, and red colors accentuated with gold pigment are used for the depiction of the architecture and the figures.

Celebrations are shown in three scenes, from right to left: Guo Ziyi’s wife and consorts in the inner quarters, Guo Ziyi and his offspring holding a reception in a garden, and male guests in a rear garden. The screen begins with a scene of the private areas of the compound and the female quarters, featuring a two-storied pavilion and other halls connected by covered corridors. Behind the main building of the inner quarters, a pavilion and other buildings are seen. Throngs of court ladies (fig. 3-50a) are engaged in diverse domestic activities and children play vividly in the front garden. Some ladies enjoy their leisure time, chatting casually, playing with a colorful ball or a parrot on a perch, or are gazing at a cat. Others do the housework, prepare food and tea, carry a tray of drinks, breast-feed a baby, or attend to some boys. A woman embroidering a dragon on red silk and a lady dressing her hair in front of a bronze mirror, are shown in rear buildings (fig. 3-50b). In a garden, a boy observes two peacocks and a lady tends to a young boy. A boy on a wheeled hobbyhorse is accompanied by boys holding an umbrella, beating a drum and a gong, and waving banners bearing the Chinese character for ling (令), mimicking the procession of a military leader (fig. 3-50c).

To the left, Guo Ziyi’s wife (fig. 3-50d) is seated on a large armchair covered with flower-patterned textiles, holding a goblet in her hand. She is depicted in the full bloom of old age, with white hair and in a stately posture. Maidens, one of whom waves a large fan, stand directly behind her and a lady watches boys parading to the right of the pavilion, while two

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423 The motif of boys playing in a garden was an established subject in paintings of the Song dynasty and it became one of the most favored themes as icons of good fortune in the late Chosŏn dynasty. The resemblance found in the depiction of children at play in The Banquet of Guo Ziyi and One Hundred Boys is discussed in Chŏng Yŏngmi, “Chŏng Yŏngmi, “Chosŏn hugi Kwak Punyang haengnakto”, 65-76. For the historical development and iconography of One Hundred Children in China, see Terese Tse Bartholomew, “One Hundred Children: From Boys at Play to Icons of Good Fortune,” in Children in Chinese Art, ed. Ann Elizabeth Barrott Wicks (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2002), 57-83.
others on the outer terrace on the left hold a jar or feather fan. Behind the building, female attendants prepare the banquet, brew tea, ladle liquor, and carry a tray. Court ladies wear loose full-sleeved blouses with white cuffs and collars and skirts bound below the bust with long, flowing sashes and knotted ties, and beaded hair adornments. Guo’s wife wears a similar dress, but the details are more delicate, with conspicuous decorations such as a gold belt, a shoulder cape, and a phoenix headdress. There are tables replete with bronze vessels, crackled glazed porcelains, incense burners, decorated arrow vases, and other antiquities (fig. 3-50e).

At the center of the screen, Guo Zuyi (fig. 3-50f) is seated on a couch in a temporary, portable tent set up in the rear garden. He is surrounded by female attendants, family members, and visiting dignitaries, with performers and dancers providing entertainment. The reception venue is encircled by trellises of plants, beyond which a thatched pavilion and a pavilion standing in the middle of pond are located. Guo Ziyi is often pictured as a gentleman with a long, white beard, dressed in the formal ritual attire of civil officials, in a cap with golden ridges (liangguan 梁冠) and a gold-patterned red robe. Two or three small boys snuggle up him. Female attendants stand behind him, holding a sword, a large fan, a pile of books, and a gift wrapped in cloth. To the left, books in lavish jackets are piled on top of a table. Guo’s sons and sons-in-law, who are dressed in court robes with official caps, are scattered below and to the right of Guo Ziyi. In front and behind the central scene groups of young people representing Guo’s grandchildren stand in a submissive posture with hands clasped in front of their chests. Two male attendants offer a ridged cap, an official’s tablet, and tripod vessel (jue 禧) on a tray (fig. 3-50g). These objects traditionally symbolize a high and distinguished official and allude to Guo’s noble status.

In the foreground, beautiful women entertain Guo Ziyi and his guests with graceful
dances and music. One or two dancers perform on an ornate rug. A female orchestra plays a wooden clapper, a bowed zither, a flute, a reed mouth organ, a seashell horn, a set of small tuned gongs, a pair of brass cymbals, a seated drum, and other traditional Chinese musical instruments (fig. 3-50h). Several musicians look toward the pavilion where Guo’s wife is seated. Far below, a servant carries lingzhi, the magic fungus, which is probably presented to Guo Ziyi to wish him a long, contented life. This area of the painting is also replete with various auspicious symbols associated with longevity, fortune, and prosperity, including cranes, peonies, peach blossoms, pine trees, and bamboo. Along with luxurious antiquities, books, and incense burners scattered throughout the paintings, large standing screens adorned with landscape and bird-and-flower paintings evoke a lofty atmosphere reflective of the artful taste of the cultured owner of the property and the enviable harmony of a successful household.

To the far left is the space exclusive to men (fig. 3-50i), in which scholars converse and play chess in a pavilion set on stone columns in the garden pond. A boy servant crossing the footbridge carries a tray with a wine jar and bottle to the guests. Two pairs of Mandarin ducks, symbolizing conjugal fidelity, swim in the pond, and a brace of deer cavort behind the pavilion. Beyond the walled garden, a blue-green landscape with a waterfall appears amid auspicious clouds. To the right are the thatched roof pavilion, a large stone garden table and two stools (fig. 3-50j). In the foreground other guests tended by young servants arrive (fig. 3-50k); one of the attendants holds a folded umbrella and the one carries a container on his back. A dog runs for the door through which the scholar-officials are about to pass, and an aged man chases the dog (fig. 3-50l). All motifs appearing on the screens represent the three blessings bestowed upon Guo in

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424 The musical instruments depicted here are similar to those in the Chinese painting *One Hundred Children*. Of them, an instrument called the *yunluo* (雲鑼 cloud gong), which consists of four small brass gongs of different pitches arranged inside a bamboo frame, are newly added to the boys-at-play motif of the Qing dynasty. Terese Tse Bartholomew, “One Hundred Children,” 74-5.
his contented old age: the grand setting of the residence and the many luxurious items exemplify his comfortable life, the white hair and aged depiction of Guo and his wife symbolize their longevity, and Guo’s many sons and grandsons indicate the blessing of their abundant offspring. In addition, the Korean version of the theme contains many pairs of male and female birds and animals to symbolize wishes for conjugal felicity and happy marriage.  

The screens investigated here exemplify the nineteenth-century court painting style, a style that is also reflected in The Banquet of Xiwangmu. Complying with the traditional rendition of architecture, a parallel perspective and moving focal points are employed. Figures and objects shown in frontal or bird-eye views are rendered with even lines and painted with the restricted color scheme of green, blue, and red. Unlike Chinese examples of this theme, Chosŏn paintings do not employ an illusionistic three-dimensional representation and they seldom use lighting, shading, or shadows. Limited shading effects are partially found on architectural structures, such as roof tiles and columns. Therefore, the perception of distance and depth is diminished. The figures in the foreground normally appear larger than those who stand farther away, giving some sense of distance. However, more important figures, including Guo Ziyi and his wife, are painted in a larger scale than those around them. Great attention is paid to painting the background landscape and the buildings with their splendid decoration. Auspicious plants and animals, the fabric of tents, textiles and clothing, and the patterns of bronze vessels, vases, and porcelains receive the same detailed treatment.  

The stylistic features and the possible pictorial inspirations for The Banquet of Guo Ziyi

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425 Many of the surviving screens conform to this iconography, but there are some variations in the architectural details of the main hall of the inner quarters and the water pavilion, the color and patterns of costumes, the themes of standing screens, and the number of musicians, dancers, maidens, boys, and male offspring. In the case of architecture, the building where Guo’s wife is placed is depicted as a pavilion with a hip-and-gable roof, or ridgeless roof. The types of pond pavilions vary from square hip roof to hip-and-gable roof, and cross-gable roof. Some screens contain an incense burner or abundant food on a table in front of Guo Ziyi’s seat, while others include a figure kowtowing to Guo Ziyi.
have been thoroughly examined in previous studies, which hypothesize that the theme developed through the interaction between internal and external components.\(^{426}\) Chŏng Yŏngmi points out the resemblance between *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* and scenes of actual banquets in *The Birthday Celebration of Elderly Mothers of High Officials in the Reign of King Sŏnjo* (fig. 3-55) and *Sixtieth Wedding Anniversary Celebration* (fig. 3-56). The festive, bustling scene replete with musicians, dancers, and maidens preparing food and drinks in a temporary tent set up in a courtyard are commonly found in Chosŏn celebration paintings. As for the external factors, Chinese paintings done by Qiu Ying, Tang Yin 唐寅 (1470-1524), and their followers active in Suzhou during the Ming and Qing dynasties are important.\(^{427}\) In particular, elaborate colored prints and fake paintings known as *Suzhou pian* and woodblock-printed illustrated books that flourished since the late Ming dynasty were widely circulated throughout China and even traded at Liulichang 琉璃廠 market in Beijing. A number of travelogues written by Chosŏn envoys explain that Liulichang was a locus for the sale of Chinese books, old paintings, and antiquities, where intellectual and artistic exchange between Chinese and Korean scholars occurred.\(^{428}\) It is highly possible that Ming and Qing pictorial sources such as woodblock prints, books, and copies of old paintings traded in the Beijing market were introduced to the Chosŏn people by Korean envoys and that they played a significant role in the development of court art during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; included among these sources would be *The Banquet of*
As mentioned above, many illustrations accompanying vernacular fiction novels during the Ming dynasty followed Qiu Ying’s style and contributed to disseminating it beyond Southern China. Reminiscent of elements from Pre-Tang to the Song dynasty, Qiu Ying’s style had a profound impact especially on the painting of beautiful women, not only in China but also in Chosŏn, Korea. Qiu Ying’s style was primarily transmitted to Korea through woodblock print illustrations and late copies of his paintings. Previous studies have discussed stylistic similarities between the Chosŏn screen of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* and illustrations in printed copies of novels dating to Emperor Jiajing’s 嘉靖 (r. 1521-1567) and Wanli’s 萬曆 (r.1572-1620) reigns in the Ming dynasty, such as *Story of the Lute* (*Pipa ji* 琵琶記) by Gao Ming 高明 (c. 1305-1370) and *The Water Margin* (*Shui hu zhuan* 水滸傳).

In addition, the court ladies who perform music and dance, and engage in various domestic activities in a palace courtyard setting, as shown in the screen, resemble female images in *Spring Dawn in the Han Palace*, which was produced in the Ming and Qing dynasties. For example, copies of *Spring Dawn in the Han Palace* painted by Qing court painters (figs. 4-50–4-52) show consorts and maidens who enjoy a leisurely, luxurious life amid palace architecture and gardens, just as seen in the Korean version of Guo Ziyi’s banquet. Further, Kim Hongnam introduces Coromandel lacquer screens depicting Guo Ziyi’s birthday celebration produced in the reigns of Qing Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong to compare with the Korean versions of this

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429 Chosŏn envoy Kim Chŏnjung mentions a painting of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* hung on a wall, which he saw at the mansion of a rich man in Beijing in 1791. See Kim Chŏnjung 金正中, *Yŏnhaengnok* 燕行錄 [Travelogue to Beijing], year of 1791, the 1st month, the 4th day.

430 The formidable influence of Qiu Ying’s style on Chosŏn painting of beautiful women is examined in Yi Hongju, “17-18 segi Chosŏn kongp’il ch’aesaek inmulhwa,” 34-39.

Among many remaining Chinese lacquer screens, two screens dated 1671 and 1687 (figs. 3-57, 3-58.) demand attention in that they betray an overall composition, iconography, and motifs closely associated with the Chosŏn screens.

These screens depict the birthday celebration of Guo Ziyi in the main reception hall of a terraced pavilion, where guests arrive at the gate, cross a bridge on horseback, or wait to approach the central pavilion to offer their presents. To the left of the central pavilion are secluded pavilions in an inner courtyard where Guo Ziyi’s wife and consorts stroll along and court ladies take care of young children. Dancers performing on a terrace of the main hall, officials playing chess, the lavish setting of pavilions with roofed corridors, gardens with precious plants and taihu rocks, and carefree children at play in the courtyard are also in both types of screens. The correspondence between Chinese Coromandel screens and Chosŏn paintings of Guo Ziyi’s banquet suggests the possibility of the introduction of Chinese works to Korea, which necessitates further inquiries.

Another significant factor to consider in regard to the visualization of this theme in Chosŏn court art is the role of the court painters. Due to the Chosŏn practice that prohibited court painters’ signatures or seals on their product, there is very little information on the artists of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi screens. Based on seals and inscriptions on the existing screens and fragmentary records in court archives, we can find a handful of painters who produced paintings on this theme. The most notable painter is Kim Hongdo, the leading court artist of the eighteenth century and a favorite of King Chŏngjo. A handscroll of Guo Ziyi’s Eight Sons and Seven Sons-
in-laws (fig. 3-59) at the National Museum of Korea is attributed to him based on an inscription and seals (fig. 3-59a), which inform of the depicted subject matter, painter, date, and provenance. The inscription explains that this painting depicts Guo Ziyi’s eight sons and sons-in-law and his long, peaceful life and was produced as a draft by Kim Hongdo in 1790.434 Below the inscription is a square relief seal reading “Hongdo.” The seal of the Office of Merit Subject (Ch’ung’ikbu 忠翊府) (fig. 3-59b) and seal of Prince Imwŏn 林原君 (fl.1682-1700), or Yi P’yo 李杓, reading 忠敬公東林世孫之章 (fig. 3-59c) were imprinted in the upper center of the painting and on the left lower corner, which suggest the provenance of this painting.435 Although further examination is needed to assert the authorship of this painting, scholars agree that this scroll conveys Kim Hongdo’s style in its depiction of figural and architectural motifs and is a relatively early work of this theme, predating the nineteenth-century screens.436

This work differs from the screens in that it shows a more naturalistic rendition by adjusting the scale of objects in relation to distance and through the moderate proportions

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434 The inscription reads “郭子儀八子七壻皆顯于朝 每諸孫問安 不能盡記 頜之而已 壽考康寧富貴終 靑紫萬朝冠蓋成里 封汾陽王古今一人。譜師 金弘道出草 戊戌?九月。” An English translation of this inscription follows: “Guo Ziyi’s eight sons and seven sons-in-law all occupied high positions at the imperial court. Whenever all of his grandsons came to greet him, he could not remember their names so he simply nodded his head. Longevity, a healthy and peaceful life, and prosperity are fulfilled. There are throngs of high officials wearing blue and purple robes. He is the only one through all ages who was ennobled as prince of Fenyang. Painter Kim Hongdo created this draft in the ninth month of the gengxun year (1790).”

435 On the right lower corner is a seal reading “千竿竹萬卷書” (Thousand stalks of bamboos and one thousand books), which probably comes from Xie Jin’s 謝緯 (1369-1415) calligraphy. Xie Jin was a famous Hanlin academician and imperial propagandist in charge of the historical revision of Ming Taizu’s reign records during Emperor Yongle’s 永樂 rule (r. 1402-1424). He was also known as a painter and calligrapher in the early Ming era. Traveling Early in Clouds and Sun in the Shanghai Museum and Du Fu’s Thatched Cottage in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum are his representation landscape paintings, which are closely related to the style of the Four Masters of the Yuan dynasty. For information of his biographical information and role as a historian at the Hanlin Academy, see Hok-Lam Chan, “Xie Jin (1369-1415) as Imperial Propagandist: His Role in the Revisions of the Ming Taizu Shilu,” T’oung Pao, 91:1/3(2005): 58-124.

Some of his works are now in the collection of Shanghai Museum.

between human figures and architecture. These features concord well with eighteenth-century artistic trends pursued by Kim Hongdo and his contemporaries, in contrast to the nineteenth-century court painting style imbued with decorative and schematic qualities. Kim Hongnam claims that this painting reveals a transitional stage from the original Chinese iconography to the Koreanization of the Guo Ziyi theme. Its undistorted depiction of figures and architecture, round-ridged roof, and balcony-type of structures (fig. 3-59d) are indebted to Chinese examples of the theme, while the deployment of Guo Ziyi beneath a tent in a courtyard (fig. 3-59e) and Guo’s wife in a pavillion in the foreground (fig. 3-59f) betokens the fully Koreanized version of the nineteenth century. As indicated in the inscription, this painting was probably created as a model sketch. Light color applied to figures and landscape, roughly finished lines, and simplified motifs also give evidence that the handscroll was made as a draft. Moreover, the iconography and pictorial composition are continued in later versions of this theme, as exemplified in screens discussed in this chapter. The close resemblance found in various copies of screens of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi strongly suggest that court painters utilized this kind of sketch as a model.

Along with Kim Hongdo, Kim Tŭksin is assumed to have contributed to the establishment of the iconography in Korean versions of the Guo Ziyi theme. Screens of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi at the National Museum of Korea (fig. 3-48), the Soongsil University Museum (fig. 3-51), and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (fig. 3-60), which are considered typical examples of the surviving paintings of this theme, bear Kim Tŭksin’s signature and seals. However, considering the improper location and quality of those signatures and seals seem to have been added later to increase the market value of those paintings. Further, a discrepancy in style of calligraphy and painting between these works and Kim Tŭksin’s authentic works raises doubts that these three paintings were done by the painter. Yet, the facial expressions of figures

and the landscape elements in these works show the influence of Kim Tūksin’s figure painting. In addition, Kim Tūksin served in the First Division of the Superintendency for the Royal Wedding Ceremony (이왕의례) of King Sunjo and Queen Sunwŏn in 1802, which was in charge of producing screens installed in the bridal pavilion. At that time, an eight-panel screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi was created, and Kim Tūksin, as a senior master painter, must have participated in the project along with other court painters. Therefore, we can assume that Kim Tūksin, who was well-versed in figure painting, also excelled in the theme and played a significant role in the development of the theme of Guo Ziyi’s banquet.

In sum, Kim Hongdo played an essential role in the adaptation of the Chinese iconography of the subject in the late eighteenth century, and Kim Tūksin or his contemporary court painters contributed to the Koreanization of the theme by modifying Chinese elements corresponding to the demands of Chosŏn patrons and their indigenous aesthetic practice. One of the important innovations that Kim Tūksin and his fellow court painters made in the

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438 Yi Sookyŏng 이수경, “Explanation of works” (catalogue entries), in Kungnip chung’ang pangmulgwan Han’guk sŏhwa yamul torok 국립중앙博物館 韓國書畫遺物圖錄 [Korean paintings and calligraphy of the National Museum of Korea], vol. 12 (National Museum of Korea, 2003), 138-140.
440 Two screens (figs. 3-61, 3-62) bear an artist’s seal reading Injae 仁齋, on the left upper side of the paintings. Except for Kang Hŭian 姜希顔 (1417-1464), a literatus-painter in the fifteenth century, I have been unable to find any artist who used this name. An attribution to Kang Hŭian is out of the question. Even though the colors applied to each screen are different, the motifs and composition look almost identical. The artworks were introduced at the Kang Collection in New York and Christie’s auction in 2011. For a description of the screens, see “Guo Ziyi’s Banquet,” Kang Collection website, accessed April 5, 2014, http://www.kangcollection.com/detail/226; “Guo Ziyi’s Banquet,” Christie’s website, accessed April 5, 2014, http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/paintings/anonymous-guoziyis-banquet-5416439-details.aspx.
441 ‘Koreanizaton’ of the Chinese iconography became prevalent in the nineteenth century. For example, Burglind Jungmann explores the adaptation and dissemination of the Chinese theme of the Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden in the late Chosŏn period by focusing on the role of court painter Kim Hongdo and the significance of Qiu Ying’s painting as a model of Chosŏn versions of Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden. For further study, see Burglind Jungmann, “Kumi pangmulgwan sojang ŭi Sŏwŏn ajipto 2 chŏm e taehan sogo” 구미 박물관 소장의 <서원아집도 (西園雅集圖)> 2 절에 대한 소고 [Studies on Two ‘Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden’ paintings in Western Collections], in Misulsa ă chŏngnip kwa hwaksan: Hangsan An Hwijun Kyosu chŏngnyŏn t’oeim kinyŏm nonmunjip 미술사의 정립과 확산: 항산 안휘준 교수 정년퇴임 기념 논문집 [Establishment and dissemination of art history: a festschrift in honor of Professor Ahn Hwi-joon], Hong Sŏnp’yo et al. (Seoul: Sahoe p’yŏngnon, 2006), 334-352; “Two Screens of the ‘Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden’ in Western Collections,” Orientations 34:4 (2008): 58-67.
nineteenth century was the employment of a coherent set of visual idioms to represent Chineseness, which can now be identified as “court painting style.”

3) The Use of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* in a Royal Wedding Ceremony

I assume that the distinctive features uniquely found in Korean versions of Guo Ziyi’s banquet pertain to their function at wedding ceremonies. To verify this conjecture, I will carefully examine the distinguishing features of the Chosŏn screens by comparing them to their Chinese counterparts.

The most remarkable difference between the Chinese and Korean versions is that Chosŏn artists emphasized the domestic scene of the inner quarters. In any given eight-panel folding screen, the four panels on the right are occupied with the scenes showing an overview of the pleasant life of women of the well-to-do class, while only two panels in the center are dedicated to the portrayal of the banquet, in which the Guo Ziyi with his male progeny watches the female entertainers’ perform. As the most important figure in the inner quarter, Guo’s wife is emphasized by her large scale and dominant position, as well as pictorial elements. Not only is she depicted larger than any female attendants or consorts in the villa but also positioned in the foreground near the viewer. In the same way her husband Guo Ziyi is distinguished from other figures, she is distinguished by heavy ornaments, elaborate attire, and maidens with a large fan symbolizing her prestigious status, and a screen framing her. In addition, in some screens a female orchestra is playing music while looking in her direction. Drawing on these pictorial strategies and components, she is immediately recognizable as a person of importance. In Chinese versions, Guo Ziyi’s wife is more or less neglected or downscaled; she is eliminated or
small, seated in a rear building. In the same vein, Chosŏn screens portray in detail women engaged in leisurely activities and domestic work. This presents a striking contrast to the Chinese paintings, where this part is simplified or diminished because these motifs are dispensable to convey the narrative.

Other noticeable attributes of the Chosŏn screens are the insertion of auspicious symbols, especially related to conjugality. Examples include bamboo, peonies, pine trees, cranes, peacocks, mandarin ducks, and deer. Animals and birds appear in conjugal pairs, referring to fertility, fidelity, and the happy marriage of a newlywed couple. These auspicious symbols can be found everywhere in Chosŏn court art as the standard artistic motifs for all kinds of interior and exterior decoration, architecture, furniture, containers, and textiles. Among many symbols that reflect the private concerns of the royal family, motifs representing conjugal relationships imbued with pairs of living creatures are much more emphasized in the Chosŏn screens than in the Chinese examples, in which birds and animals do not necessarily appear in pairs.

The Chosŏn transformation of Guo Ziyi’s life is also reflected in the composition of pictorial elements and the employment of techniques. While Guo Ziyi is posed in a stately manner in the main hall of the terraced palace and receives guests paying their tribute in the Chinese lacquer screens, he is seated beneath a portable tent temporarily set up in the rear garden and playing with young boys in the Chosŏn paintings. Chinese artists attempt to present Guo Ziyi in a formal setting of magnificent architecture by using a recognized style called jiehua (ruled-line painting), which presents faultless calculation, correct proportions, structural clarity, and spatial organization of palatial buildings. By contrast, Chosŏn screens create an intimate and homey setting by focusing on the leisurely activities of human figures rather than on the precise depiction of the architecture. As a result, the proportion between figural and architectural motifs
is distorted, and the spatial relationship among the buildings is ambiguous. On the other hand, a close-up view of various activities is offered and the narrative is effectively delivered in a different way.\footnote{Kim Hongnam, “Han’guk Kwak Punyang haengnakto,” 79-84.}

Chinese paintings of Guo Ziyi’s birthday celebrations were commissioned as birthday or retirement gifts to distinguished individuals who reached a venerable age and thus the paintings tend to bear symbols of longevity and prosperity. By contrast, Chosŏn screens of \textit{The Banquet of Guo Ziyi} were frequently used and favored as decorations for wedding ceremonies, from royal members down to commoners, in the nineteenth century. According to \textit{Protocols of the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies}, the screen of Guo Ziyi had always been installed at the bridal pavilion of the detached palace since it first appeared in the royal wedding of King Sunjo and Queen Sunwŏn in 1802. The wedding-related screens usually had eight panels, but ten panels were made for the royal weddings in 1882 and 1906.\footnote{Yi Sŏngmi, \textit{Karye togam ŭigwe wa mísulsa}, 302-3.} Screens of \textit{The Banquet of Guo Ziyi} were also used for princess’s weddings, as exemplified in Princess Suksŏn’s 淑善翁主 (1793-1836) wedding in 1804 and Princess Pogon’s 福溫公主 (1818-1832) in 1830.\footnote{\textit{Transcribed Records of Princess Suksŏn’s Wedding}, “Office of Supplementary Procurement 別工作. “An eight-panel screen of (Guo Fenyang’s) \textit{Enjoyment-of-life} with Japanese-style mount 八帖倭粧屏風一坐; \textit{Transcribed Records of Prince Pogon’s Wedding}, “Official documents delivered from a higher-level office to a lower-level office 甘結, year of 1830, the 3rd month, the 29th day, “Office’s document, bring in screens of an eight-panel screen of (Guo Fenyang’s) \textit{Enjoyment-of-life} with Japanese-style mount, a ten-panel screen of \textit{Birds and Animals} with Japanese-style mounting, and an eight-panel colorless ramie screen, record them and then report the document” 庚寅三月二十九日 廳甘結今此嘉禮時所用行樂圖八貼倭粧屏風一坐翎毛圖十貼各粧屏風一坐無彩八貼苧布屏風一坐所入後錄捧. Besides the ritual protocols of royal wedding ceremonies, \textit{The Daily Journal of Kyujanggak} 内閣日曆 records that the theme of Guo Ziyi was selected as an examination for the painters-in-waiting in 1834 and 1873. See Kang Kwansik, \textit{Chosŏn hugi Kungjung hwawŏn}, vol. 1, 218-20; 243. The subject for the 1873 examination was Guo Ziyi’s One Hundred Boys, which fuses the two themes, \textit{The Banquet of Guo Ziyi} and \textit{One Hundred Boys}. Princess Pogon got married at age twelve, which reflects early marriage customs in the Chosŏn dynasty.}

One of the most interesting facts about the use of these screens at the royal wedding is that they were mainly displayed at the bridal pavilion, a female space, in which the queen-to-be
or crown princess stayed until the wedding day. In other words, the primary intended viewer of
the screen of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* was a woman. Considering the likelihood of a female
recipient or audience of this screen, it is not surprising that there is more emphasis on Guo Ziyi’s
wife and women’s domestic activities, since these would be scenes appealing to female
sentiments.

There is also an interesting parallel between the scene of Guo Ziyi’s banquet and an
actual wedding ceremony. The arrangement of Guo Ziyi and his wife resembles the
configuration of the king and the queen-to-be in the ceremony of the king’s personal induction of
his queen. This actual ceremony takes place at the bridal pavilion, where the king is seated in a
portable tent temporarily built in the courtyard, while the queen-to-be waits inside a pavilion.
Thus, the screen of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* and the actual wedding ceremony are so intimately
connected, and create such a reciprocal relation, that both can evoke each other.

Additionally, Guo and his wife depicted in the full bloom of old age, with white hair and
wrinkled faces are reminiscent of an old couple having their sixtieth wedding anniversary
celebration. Elderly couples growing old together were fêted by their offspring. In fact, the scene
of a sixtieth wedding anniversary celebration included in *Highlights of the Illustrious Lifetime of
Hong Kyehūi* 洪啓禧 (1703-1771) (fig. 3-63) bears motifs comparable to those in *The Banquet
of Guo Ziyi*. An old gentleman playing with his young grandchild and a male guest offering a cup
to the man are also found in *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* (fig. 3-63a). A feast celebrating the old
couple’s reenactment of their wedding ceremony was painted on the last panel of the screen of
*Highlight of an Illustrious Lifetime*, which culminates in the honorable and happy life of
*yangban* officials. The depiction of an aged couple growing old together in the screen of Guo
Ziyi’s banquet thus expresses a wish for the newlyweds’ life-long devotion to each other.
At the approximate time when the pictorial representation of Guo Ziyi was produced in the early nineteenth century, the Story of Guo Ziyi (Kwak Punyang chŏn 郭分陽進) was published in Han’gŭl, vernacular Korean translation. It gained popularity and was later republished in a woodblock printed edition for commercial purposes.\(^{445}\) Guo Ziyi’s story was well known to royal members in the reigns of Kings Chŏngjo and Sunjo. For example, the novel Guo Fenyang, the Loyal General (Kwak Punyang tyungjangnok 郭分陽庸將錄) was transcribed by officials of the Crown Prince Tutorial Office in 1820 and Lady Sŏng 宜嬪成氏 (1753-1786), King Chŏngjo’s concubine, and Princesses Ch’ŏngyŏn 淸衍公主 (1754-1821) and Ch’ŏngsŏn 淸壎公主 (1765-1802), two sisters of the king, transcribed a novel entitled the Story of Two Families of Guo and Zhang 郭張兩門錄 in Han’gŭl in 1773.\(^{446}\) In this way, novels regarding Guo Ziyi’s life were published and disseminated in the late eighteenth century and became popular reading for court ladies in the nineteenth century. This indicates a broad audience for the stories about Guo Ziyi.

The two themes focused on this chapter, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi and The Banquet of Xiwangmu have much in common in their composition and pictorial elements, such as abundant symbols of longevity and prosperity and male and female protagonists in a festive atmosphere created by bustling scenes of dancers, musicians, and attendants entertaining and serving the

\(^{445}\) Chŏng Yŏngmi, “Chosŏn hugi Kwak Punyang haengnakto,” 36-44.

\(^{446}\) Pak Chŏnhye, “Kungjung changsikhwa ūi segye,” 96; Kim Hongnam, “Han’guk Kwak Punyang haengnakto,” 75. For a survey study of the Story of Two Families of Guo and Zhang, see Chi Yŏnsuk, “Mong ok ssangbong yŏnnok, Kwak Zhang yangmunok yŏnjak yŏng’u”동옥쌍鳳緣錄, 郭張兩門錄연작연구 [A study of the sequence novels, Story of a Dream of Jade and a Tie of Two Phoenixes and Story of Two Families, Guo and Zhang] (master’s thesis, Korea University, 1997).
The perception of court paintings began to change with the spread of court products among the populace at large during the last century of the Chosŏn dynasty. Many artifacts exclusively created for royal members at court and produced under the strict controls of the government system, such as royal collections of painting and calligraphy, white porcelain used for state rituals, royal clothing and jewelry, were circulated in art markets in the capital city.  

The sensual use of vivid colors, the conspicuous composition, and the large-scale screen formats of court paintings continued to be popular as backdrops at special events, such as wedding ceremonies or first and sixtieth birthday banquets. Like paintings of The Banquet of Xiwangmu, screens of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi were arranged for wedding ceremonies of literati officials and wealthy commoners and were traded as commodities at painting shops near Kwangt’ong Bridge. The popularity of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi as a decoration for wedding ceremonies continued into the early twentieth century. The color etching of a Korean Bride by British artist Elizabeth Keith, who visited Korea in the early 1920s (fig. 3 -64) shows that a screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi was still used for display in a bride’s room. A family photograph taken in 1804 for Princess Suksŏn’s wedding ceremony, it was originally planned to produce a screen of The Banquet of Xiwangmu, but then a screen of The Banquet of Guo Ziyi was actually made. See Pak Ŭnkyŏng, “Chosŏn hugi wangsil karye,” 47.

For a study of the circulation of court products at the art market in Seoul, see Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn malgi kungjuang yangsik changsikhwa ŭi yut’ong kwa hwaksan” 조선 말기 궁중양식 장식화의 유통과 확산 [Circulation and dissemination of courtly style decorative paintings in the late Chosŏn period], in Chosŏn kunggwŏl ŭi kūrim, 334-405.

For instance, privileged yangban borrowed peony screens for their wedding ceremonies from the Office of Fabric and Clothes (Cheyonggam 濟用監), which also managed the screens used for royal rites. See Yu Tūkkong, Kyŏngdo chapji, 206-207; Hansan kŏsa, “Hanyangga,” 48-51.

This color etching was created in 1938, when Keith returned to England. Her color prints and water color paintings depicting Korean people and landscapes in 1920s were published as illustrations of her book Old Korea: The Land of Morning Calm (London, New York, Hutchinson, 1946). A special exhibition of Keith’s paintings and prints was organized by the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea in 2006. For illustrations of works...
1906 illustrates another case in which a screen of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* was used as decoration for the sixtieth birthday celebration of a well-to-do family (fig. 3-65).

The eye-catching screens were also employed as backdrops for portrait photography. In one instance the screen of *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* served as a frame for the portrait of Cho Pyŏngsik 趙秉式 (1832-1907) (fig. 3-66), who was appointed to many important positions in the government during the reign of King Kojong. The Guo Ziyi screen was also installed as background in photos of female entertainers (fig. 3-67). In the former the male elite figure is associated with Guo Ziyi, a capable military official who enjoyed longevity and secular happiness, while in the latter the female entertainers link themselves to maidens attending to the male protagonist, dancing and playing musical instruments in their performance costumes.

displayed at the exhibition, see *P’urûn nune pich’in yet Han’guk: Elizabeth Keith chon* [Korea through Western Eyes: Elizabeth Keith in the 1920s] (Kwach’ŏn: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea, 2006).

452 Yun Chinyŏng identifies this picture as that taken to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of Lady Pak, whose husband was Chu Insŏp, a former military official and owner of a paper goods shop near Ōui-dong Palace. Yun argues that *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* screen in the photograph was a commodity for sale at Chu’s shop and was probably a court product sold on the market in the early twentieth century. See Yun Chinyŏng, “Chosŏn malgi kungjung yangsik,” 389-401.
4. Conclusion

This chapter investigated the significance of court paintings in nineteenth-century Chosŏn society, focusing on two celebrated themes of screens, *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*. The importance of these two subjects can be summarized in four points. First, they provide case studies in understanding the procedure of cultural translation and transmission that occurred in East Asia. Second, we can offer alternative readings of visual art by taking its political and ritual settings into consideration. Third, we can reevaluate “court painting style” in conjunction with the artistic practice of court painters and methods of production at court. Forth, they give a fascinating glimpse into the interaction between the court and the public in terms of tastes, customs, and materials.

*The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* are closely related to various types of preexisting Chinese examples, such as literary works including novels and plays, as well as visual material of paintings, woodblock print book illustrations, and decorative furniture. Despite similar iconographical elements, there are noticeably distinct features that result from the cultural translation that occurs when adapting foreign elements to the artistic and social conventions of Chosŏn society. To tease out the indigenous development of the themes, I expounded on Chinese pictorial and textual sources, the possibility of their transmission to Korea, and then compared their iconography and style in detail to those of the Chosŏn screens. The stylistic and iconographical analysis of Chosŏn screens illuminates the process of transmission of the Chinese subject to the neighboring country, where it evolved its own manner of representation and engendered distinct characteristics reflective of cultural sensitivities and socio-political circumstances.
I attempted to prove that the eclecticism reflected in the representations of the two Chinese themes is the result of intentional choice by agents or artists corresponding to their political and ritual demands. Going beyond the obsolete assumption of a unilateral Chinese influence on Korean culture, I analyzed the unique features by taking account of the circumstances of Chosŏn agents and viewers and emphasized their functionality in ritual and political context. First, while paying attention to the fact that *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* was selected as a commemorative screen to celebrate the crown prince’s investiture ceremony, I discussed the role of art as propaganda to highlight the royal authority by locating the screens in their political circumstances pertaining to the patrons’ roles and to the succession to the throne. Like many paintings commissioned by officials to commemorate felicitous court events, these paintings were produced to express the delight of the subjects for an event, in which they played a certain, albeit minor, role and to eulogize the benevolent rulership of the reigning monarch. In addition, I linked court performances with the visual representations as a means of supporting my hypotheses. The legend of Xiwangmu and memories of Chinese ancient sage-kings were blended in court performance and paintings. The stories were manipulated and repeated in ritualistic ways in order to sanctify political events and honor the monarch.

My second assumption for Koreanization was that *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* were modified to fit the ritual purpose and needs of the audience. I speculated how and why these screens became popular for royal wedding ceremonies in the nineteenth century, based on archival research of *Protocols of the Superintendency for Royal Wedding Ceremonies*. These two themes were frequently installed for royal wedding ceremonies because their symbols reflect the aspiration for prosperity, longevity, and numerous offspring. Also, their motifs resemble the real wedding ceremony with its male and female protagonists and
festive surroundings. While the image of a royal wedding is superimposed by the mythical story of immortals and legendary Chinese rulers in *The Banquet of Xiwangmu*, the components of contemporaneous wedding ceremonies are incorporated in *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*. Further, I suggest that the increased importance of female spaces and the domestic activities of women in *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* stems from the fact that these screens were often installed at the bridal pavilion, and thus the primary viewers were women. This presents a striking contrast to Chinese works of Guo Ziyi’s life, which were usually presented to older gentlemen with prestige and wealth as birthday and retirement gifts.

In addition, I suggest that the selection of these two themes for wedding ceremonies is related to a peculiar custom of Chosŏn court ritual music, so-called *chin i pujak*, “presented but did not play.” Although the wedding ceremony is one of the most felicitous events, music was not permitted to be played. Thus, *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*, which include scenes of musicians and dancers, would be highly favored as visual replacements of music and performance and they created an imaginary space for the royal wedding. In that sense, the Chinese themes are not merely a pictorial presentation of a textual record or ‘misunderstood’ copies of Chinese iconographies, but they lead viewers into experience of the actual events and performances in a dynamically interactive manner that is resonant with the historic and mythical past. Thus, the significance of banquet scenes originating in China does not entirely lie in the auspicious symbolism inherent to the motif itself. Rather it is more likely found in the material world interwoven with ritual performance and social practice that the screens visualize in a manner, which was easily recognized by the audiences and participants involved.

I explained the stylistic resemblances and ubiquitous motifs shared by nineteenth-century court screens in light of collaborative work practices and the use of model sketches or drawings.
In Chosŏn court art, the artist’s individual touch was replaced by a codified visual aesthetic represented by a restricted set of stereotyped images and a particular generic manner called “court painting style.” This standardized formula created by court painters’ collective contributions was internalized through apprenticeship education, the collaborative working system of institutions, and the circulation of model paintings. The physical qualities of the work, consisting of a set of homogenized visual forms, as mentioned above, are particularly enhanced in the depiction of Chinese themes, including *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*. In sum, the immaterial concepts of China and Chinese-ness were envisioned with or translated into peculiar visual idioms and modes invented by various social agents and the cultural body of Chosŏn society.

*The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi* were favored by both the upper class and commoners. Although Chosŏn court art and culture were distinctive, they were neither isolated nor without points of resonance with the broader society. The considerable congruence of wedding ceremonies at court and in the rest of society, and the common usage of this kind of screen, evidenced the mutual interactions between the court and the populace and their particular aesthetic preferences in art.
CHAPTER 4. The Chinese Empire and Imperial Palace Represented in Late Chosŏn Court Art

1. Introduction

This chapter examines how the Chinese empire was represented in late Chosŏn court art by focusing on screens collectively known as Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court (figs. 4-1~4.9) and The Han Palace (figs. 4-36~45) that were produced in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The former conveys the theme of the Chinese emperor receiving tribute bearers from vassal states and foreign countries at his imperial court, while the latter allegedly depicts palace architecture of the Han dynasty in landscape setting. These two themes, which visualize the space of the Chinese imperial palace, were adopted for Chosŏn court screens used for diverse celebrations at court and for the decoration of Chosŏn palaces.

_Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court_ envisions an idealized society by referencing historical events reminiscent of Chinese sage rulers. _The Han Palace_ also conveys utopian images through the manipulation of Chinese motifs, but utilizes undefined, vague spaces loosely related to ancient Chinese imperial palaces in a symbolic way, not based on historical facts. Despite considerable differences in approach to representing “Chinese-ness,” these screens represent an idealized society reflecting the visions of the Chosŏn elite.

A thorough analysis of these screens elucidates how Chinese history, politics, and civilization were reinvented by the Chosŏn ruling class according to their ideological and epistemological stances. A comprehensive iconographical and visual analysis of the paintings, in conjunction with a close look at how interregional cultural exchanges are reflected in the production of Chosŏn paintings depicting Chinese themes, and the introduction of Western
pictorial techniques and materials to Chosŏn society are addressed. The study of these screens illuminates the significance of the Chinese themes in intellectual discourse and politics and emphasizes the process of establishing new visual idioms and practices based on foreign inspiration.

As a point of departure, the subject and iconography of the paintings will be investigated by examining multiple versions of the screens that have survived to date. In order to verify the authenticity of the works and to locate them in their socio-political context, I trace their provenance and propose estimated dates for the paintings based on court documents, anthologies of Chosŏn scholar-officials, and museum archives. To supplement archival research, a formal analysis of each painting in comparison with contemporaneous works of court art will be made. Then I discuss how the theme of tribute bearers and Chinese palaces were established as a crucial part of the repertoire of Chosŏn visual culture. Selected Chinese examples and records of the early Chosŏn dynasty will be discussed to address the historical developments of the theme.

Finally, I reconsider the title of the screens and question whether the current names are valid. Discrepancies in the titles together with ambivalent features of the iconography have resulted in a lack of consensus among scholars as well as diverse readings by viewers. I deal with these phenomena from the perspective of the “biography of an object.” As aptly noted by Craig Clunas, objects remain in the physical world long after their production and exert influence on human action, particularly in the human perception of the objects. The meanings are neither unambiguously fixed at the moment of production nor do they remain intact during a work’s afterlife. They are constantly revised by later viewers according to their socio-historical context. The study of the afterlife of an object enriches the narratives surrounding a work of

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453 The concept of the “biography of an object” comes from the discipline of anthropology in its materialist approach. Rather than focus on an object at the point of its creation, it pays more attention to the process of
art by extending focus from the object itself at the point of its creation to audiences of a later time.

“reception” by asking how an object was viewed and identified by its beholders throughout its lifetime. Craig Clunas paves a path toward a new social history of Chinese art by emphasizing the importance of the “social life of things.” According to his argument, things function as if they were active agents in their own right by generating new and complex social identities corresponding to ensuing socio-historical contexts. His relativist and post-historical approach reflects a recent shift across the humanities in which meaning is seen as constantly changing, as opposed to adhering to an object from the moment of its making. For details, see Craig Clunas, Superfluous Things, 1-7; “The Admonitions Scroll,” 295-298.
2. Envisioning the Empire in Late Chosŏn Court Art: *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court*

1) Visual Narratives in *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court*

Screens collectively known as *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* (figs. 4-1~4-9) depicts foreign dignitaries carrying tribute to the imperial palace, in which an emperor on a throne is attended by his courtiers. There exist, so far as is known, ten screens depicting this scene. These screens are large-scale, eight- or ten-penal folding screens meticulously painted with pigments in a restricted color palette. The multiple-panel screens commonly display the grandeur of a procession of tribute bearers and a panoramic view of splendid palace architecture in a continuous composition.\(^{454}\)

In contrast to the usual direction for reading Korean screens, the narratives of these screens begin on the far left panel where a group of envoys wait behind a palace wall. Unlike the linear perspective in Western painting, which employs a fixed, single point of view, parallel perspectives without a vanishing point are deliberately adopted in these paintings. Six diagonal lines formed by a stone bridge, palace wall, balustrades of a balcony, and the ridge of the main hall’s roof divide the canvas and create flat layers in the scene. Spatial recession is barely

\(^{454}\) For previous research of this subject in the context of Chosŏn court art, see Pak Chŏnghye, “Chosŏnhugi Wanghoe do pyŏnp’ung chejak ǔ úimi” 조선후기 <王會圖> 屏風의 제작과 의미 [Production and cultural significance of paintings of tribute missions to the Son of Heaven in the late Chosŏn period], *Misulsahak yŏn’gu* 277 (2013): 105-132; Sŏ Yunjŏng, “Wanghuitu: Chaoxian houqi gongting huihuah zhong de diguo xingxiang” 《王会图》: 朝鲜后期宫廷画中的帝国形像 [*Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court: Envisioning the empire in the late Chosŏn court, Korea*], *Zhongguo Hankuoxue lunwenji* 22 (2014): 206-222. Pak Chŏnghye introduces this record in her discussion of the production of the screen of tribute bearers at the late Chosŏn court. This study is one of the most significant researches on the theme of tribute bearers, as it explores a wide range of court archives and visual materials relating to the theme.
perceived in the depiction of architectural structures. However, there is an attempt to reduce the size of more distant figures to express relative distance. As a result, the emperor, the most important figure, who is traditionally shown in the largest scale in the reverse perspective system prevalent in pre-modern East Asian art, appears small in size. Despite the small scale, however, the emperor remains the focal point of the painting by being positioned at the final destination of the viewer’s eye as it follows the procession of the tribute bearers.

Notwithstanding variations in the depiction of details, screens of tribute bearers begin with a scene of envoys and their attendants outside a palace gate awaiting their turn to proceed to the court (fig. 4-2a), and end with the emperor flanked by courtiers and guards within magnificent palace halls (fig. 4-2c). In the middle panels, a group of envoys bearing tribute, officials administering the process, and guards holding ritual paraphernalia stand in the courtyards and terraces (fig. 4-2b). There are four centers of interest: dignitaries and their servants showing distinctive ethnic features through their costumes and foreign-looking faces; the emperor, courtiers, and guards wearing official robes and ceremonial attire; the tributes presented to the emperor, including exotic animals, mythical beasts, and indigenous products; and sumptuous palace architecture, such as a gate with a double-eave, hipped roofs topped with sculptured mythological creatures along the ridge lines, a column decorated with dragons and clouds, a stone balustrade carved into flowery patterns, marble terraces with bronze guardian lions, sculptured slabs of staircases, halls painted in cinnabar and intense blue-green.

Two-dimensional representation rendered in even outlines, unnatural shading of color on columns and roof-tiles, decorative depictions of clouds and foliage, and a restricted color palette

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455 Tributes include exotic animals such as elephants, rare breeds of birds in cages and on ornate perches, hunting dogs, falcons, phoenixes, pheasants, camels, lions, mountain sheep, rhinoceroses, and stags. Indigenous products paid as tribute include coral trees, textiles, lingzhi mushrooms, bronze vessels, incense burners, peaches, and white rabbits, which imbue an exotic atmosphere and auspiciousness to the painting.
indicate that these are court products of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For example, palace architecture depicted in the screens is reminiscent of that seen in nineteenth-century documentary court paintings, such as *Wedding Ceremony of King Hŏnjong* (fig. 4-10) and *Royal Banquet of 1848* (fig. 4-11). Pine trees accentuated with green dots, greenish paulownia, and foliage looking like petals frequently appear in other court paintings dated to the nineteenth century, such as the just discussed *The Banquet of Xiwangmu, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi, and Ten Symbols of Longevity*. Among them, *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* of 1800 (figs. 3-24, 3-25) and *Ten Symbols of Longevity* of 1879 (fig. 4-12), as rare examples of dated court artworks, offer insights into the approximate dates of the screens of tribute bearers. The elaborately decorated balustrade, palanquin, ceremonial objects, and furniture in *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* of 1800 are closely linked to decorative representations in the screens of tribute bearers. The 1879 screen of *Ten Symbols of Longevity* has affinities with the envoy screen in terms of the depiction of clouds in yellow and reddish hues, turtles, stags and fungus.

The provenance of the extant paintings is relatively well known, except in the cases of those recently introduced at auctions. An eight-panel screen described in the Smithsonian Institute archives as “Group Bringing Gifts to King at Royal Ceremony” (fig. 4-4) was acquired by John Baptist Bernadou in 1884 when he was dispatched to Korea as Smithsonian Attaché to the American Legation. In his letter sent to Spencer F. Baird (1823-1887), Director of the U.S. National Museum, Bernadou states that he obtained an excellent screen painted on silk that he believes to be the scene of a Chinese emperor of a former dynasty receiving tribute from various

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nations. Another eight-panel screen, housed in the National Gallery of Australia (fig. 4-2), was acquired by Charles and Jessie McLaren, who worked as Australian Christian missionaries in Korea from 1911 until 1941. According to Rachel Human, a daughter of McLaren who donated this screen to the gallery, her mother became interested in Korean culture and bought many publications from traveling salesmen who came to their home in Seoul, being aware of her collecting activities.

The records regarding those acquisitions indicate that the screens of tribute bearers, which formerly must have been in the royal collection appear to have circulated on the art market in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many precious artifacts from the royal collection were dispersed among the populace after the decline of the dynasty and were taken abroad. This is confirmed by the fact that two screens of tribute bearers came into the collection of the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-1) and the National Library of Korea (fig. 4-3) in the early twentieth century through purchases from private collectors during the Japanese colonial period. In addition, four screens were recently introduced in Western auction catalogues (figs. 4-6-4-9), indicating that some court paintings were brought to the West in modern times.

The surviving nine screens of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court discussed in this

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457 The selected letters by Bernadou sent to Spencer F. Baird are introduced in the appendices of aforementioned book by Houchin. The description of the screen of tribute bearers was included in the letter written on September 2nd, 1884, as a part of a progress report. He had thus already acquired the painting before that time. The part of the letter that explains the screen is as follows: “I have a most excellent screen, painted on silk. It is undoubtedly the work of a Corean, but the picture represents a Chinese scene, the presentation of tribute by various nations to the Chinese Emperor of a former dynasty. I have not been able as yet to fix the period, but hope to do so by showing it to several well-read Coreans of my acquaintance.”


459 According to the catalogue card in the National Museum of Korea, the museum paid 40 Japanese yen to obtain the screen of tribute bearers on March 5th, 1913. On the other hand, the screen in the National Library of Korea was purchased from Kim Chōnghun on January 25th, 1933 for 11 Korean won.

460 These four screens were displayed at auction at Sotheby’s in New York on December 2nd, 1992, at Christie’s in New York on April 22nd, 1992, March 23rd, 2000; March 20th, 2013, respectively. The ten-panel screen displayed in the Christie’s auction in 2000 was purchased by the British Museum. The screen at Christie’s in 2013 had formerly been sold at Bonhams, a privately owned British auction house, in 2011.
chapter share common stylistic features but reveal variations in the details of motifs, color, and the number of figures, which indicates that they were produced in slightly different periods and by diverse artists. Although the exact dates of the paintings remain unknown, we can estimate the dates of each screen and the chronological order of production.

Extant screens can be classified into at least three categories based on stylistic and iconographic affinities.\(^{461}\) The first category includes the screens in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-1), the National Gallery of Australia (fig. 4-2), and the National Library of Korea (fig. 4-3). Screens 4-1 and 4-2 are almost identical in their overall composition and configuration of motifs. Their less decorative representation of landscape elements and the relatively austere color schemes suggest that they are earlier works that functioned as prototypes of ensuing variations. The only differences between screens 4-1 and 4-2 are that the former shows piles of books and brushes on the emperor’s table (figs. 4-1a, 4-2d), a half-open gate, and two paulownia trees behind the palace wall instead of pines (figs. 4-1b, 4-2e); screen 4-2 includes three envoys wearing official black robes with winter hats over official black hats (fig. 4-2f). These figures are a noteworthy feature of screen 4-2 because they do not appear in any other screens and their

\(^{461}\) The categories do not necessarily reflect chronological order of paintings but show affinity among paintings in terms of an iconography, composition, and style. It is difficult to decide the sequence between these screens because all extant paintings are undated and their artists are unknown. Yet, based on stylistic development of late Chosŏn court painting, the general chronological order of the screens discussed here are:

Late 18th Century ---- 19th century----------------------------------20th century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screen 4-1; 4-2 (Group 1)</th>
<th>Screen 4-3 (Group 1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screen 4-4 (Group 2)</td>
<td>Screen 4-5 (Group 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen 4-6 (Group 3)</td>
<td>Screen 4-7 (Group 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen 4-8; 4-9</td>
<td>Screen 4-9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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clothing exactly corresponds to the costume of Chosŏn envoys described in historical records.\textsuperscript{462} Screen 4-3 faithfully follows the earlier tradition, but adds its own unique features, including the depiction of lavish textiles (fig. 4-3a), the addition of officials alongside ritual object-holding guards on the first terrace (fig. 4-3b), and an increased number of guards clad in armor standing on the second terrace (fig. 4-3c). The stylized depiction of leaves in the screen (fig. 4-3d) indicates it was done later than screens 4-1 and 4-2 (figs. 4-1c, 4-2g), which were rendered in a relatively naturalistic manner. Screen 4-3 has more decorative details and displays a more diverse color scheme with dark and vivid greens and blues that were rarely used in earlier court paintings.

The screens in the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History (fig. 4-4) and at the Ewha Womans University Museum (fig. 4-5) form the second category. Screen 4-4 was presumably produced slightly later than screens 4-1 and 4-2 but earlier than screen 4-3. This screen shows a different iconography that distinguishes it from screens in category one, such as the Sinicized clothes of envoys, the elongated bodies of the figures (fig. 4-4a), and the deployment of the central figures and furniture in the audience hall (fig. 4-4b). Tribute bearers’ costumes which are depicted in the style of northern, non-Chinese nomadic clothes in other screens are transformed into traditional Han Chinese-style robes and hats in screen 4-4. A huge imperial table is replaced with a throne ensemble comprised of a dais approachable by stairs. Two figures kowtowing to the emperor in the audience hall appearing on other screens are not depicted here, and three imperial relatives or lords wearing black coronets with a flat-top board

are standing outside the hall in screen 4-4, unlike the same scene in other screens.

In terms of visual effects, this screen shows a great deal of interest in patterned surfaces, as illustrated in the depiction of animals with spotted skins (fig. 4-4c), a common characteristic of late nineteenth-century Korean painting. The modifications reflected in screen 4-4 suggests two possible scenarios: 1) the screen was inspired by other types of preexisting screens that are different from screens 4-1 and 4-2, or 2) the artist and patron of this painting purposely transformed certain visual elements. In terms of overall compositions, the screen in the British Museum (fig. 4-7) resembles screen 4-4 most, but it includes envoys wearing costumes in the nomadic tradition of Manchurian or Mongolian ethnic groups (fig. 4-7a), elements also found in screens 4-1 and 4-2 (figs. 4-1d, 4-2h). The appearance of trees with flower-like leaves and the interest in the representation of various surface patterns indicate that screen 4-5 was produced later than screen 4-4 (fig. 4-4d, 4-5a).

The remaining four ten-panel folding screens can be designated as the third category. The additional two panels allow for a more spacious courtyard replete with an increased number of motifs. These are the screens that were at auction at Christie’s in 2013 (fig. 4-6) and Sotheby’s in 1992 (fig. 4-9); and are now housed in the British Museum (fig. 4-7) and in the Ewha Womans University Museum (fig. 4-8). The screen introduced at Christie’s in 2013 represents a milestone in estimating the dates of the paintings.\(^{463}\) The cartouche on the upper-left side of the back of the screen bears the inscription: “Painting of Royal Gathering with Tribute Bearers, large, Chŏngch’uk. Ch’un (王)會圖 大 丁丑 春” (fig. 4-6a). The large Chinese characters of “Wanghoedo” (王)會圖 are written above the two lines of small characters of “Tae” 大 and “Chŏngch’uk”丁丑. Below and to the right, the character “Ch’un 春” was separately inscribed.

\(^{463}\) This screen came up for auction at Bonham’s in 2011. It came from a private collector in Northern California. http://www.bonhams.com/auctions/19433/lot/8445/
Given the condition of the inscription and style of calligraphy, it might have been written around the same time of the creation of the painting.\(^{464}\)

Considering the style of painting, the year of Chŏngch’uk in the Chinese sexagenary cycle can be narrowed down to 1817 or 1877.\(^{465}\) In this context, the court archive, “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the King” (Kŭndyŏn pyŏngp’ungko gan palgwi 큰던병풍고간볼기), which documents the list of screens housed in the king’s residence deserves attention. According to the record, a large screen of Royal Gathering with Tribute Bearers was offered to King Sunjo by officials of the Crown Prince Tutorial Office in the year of Chŏngch’uk, 1817, when the Ceremony of the Crown Prince’s Entrance to the Royal Confucian Academy (Iphangnye 入學禮) was held.\(^{466}\) Although further research is required to ascertain whether the screen described in the record is screen 4-6. It is highly likely that this painting is the screen of 1817 that appears in the court archive because the title, the large scale, and the sexagenary cycle year inscribed on the back of the painting match those of the screen of 1817. Moreover, the last character of the inscription, “Ch’un” 春, does not necessarily indicate the season of spring but can also be an abbreviated name of Ch’unbang 春坊, also known as the Crown Prince Tutorial Office. If the assumptions that the character “Ch’un” refers to the Crown

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\(^{464}\) Besides this inscription, there is another scribbled suspect inscription, “Sadong Pak p’anyun” 寺洞 朴判尹, which reads “Chief magistrate of the capital city, (Mr.) Pak of Sadong.” Although the person is unknown, the inscription suggests that he might have been an owner of the screen at a later time. Sadong is located near Wŏngaksa temple, encompassing present-day Kwanhun-dong, Insadong, and Kyŏnjidong.


\(^{466}\) The document is housed in Changsŏgak Archives of the Academy of Korean Studies. It is included in the photographic edition of classical materials published by the Changsŏgak Archives. See Komunsŏ chipsŏng 古文書集成 [Comprehensive anthology of classical archives], (Sŏngnam: Academy of Korean Studies, 1994), 254. In her recent article, “Chosŏnhugi Wanghoedo” Pak Chŏnghye introduces this record in her discussion of the production of the screen of tribute bearers at the late Chosŏn court. This study is the most significant, as it explores a wide range of court archives and visual materials relating to the theme.
Prince Tutorial Office is valid, then screen 4-6 is indeed a painting of *Royal Gathering with Tribute Bearers* on a large-scale screen presented by the Crown Prince Tutorial Office, exactly coinciding with the record.

A formal analysis comparing screen 4-6 to other dated court paintings also raises the possibility that 4-6 is more closely related to early, rather than late, 19th-century styles. For example, there is a considerable likeness between this screen and *Painting Album of the Commencement of Learning for Crown Prince Yi Yong of 1817* 王世子入學圖帖 (fig. 4-13) and the *Capping Ceremony of Crown Prince Yi Yong of 1819* 翼宗冠禮陳賀契屏 (fig. 4-14). Although screen 4-6 shows a more conspicuous representation with vivid colors in its depiction of figures and architecture similarities with these two court documentary paintings can be found in the rendering of trees and clouds. It implies that these three paintings were produced in the early nineteenth century. This becomes even more obvious when we compare the screen with *Ten Symbols of Longevity of 1879* (fig. 4-12). The later painting includes pine trees with reddish trunks, patterned motifs, and decorative green dots surrounded by small white dots (fig. 4-12a), which are typical characteristics of late nineteenth-century Chosŏn painting. The fact that these features are not found in screen 4-6 (fig. 4-6b) suggests a significant time lag between screen 4-6 and the 1879 screen.

Given that the motifs in screen 4-6 repeatedly appear in the other three ten-panel paintings in a similar way, this screen presumably served as a model for later screens of tribute.

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bearers. Screens 4-7, 4-8, and 4-9 share important motifs and compositional elements with screen 4-6 but exhibit different color patterns and more decorative details, again reflecting later nineteenth-century styles. Such a close affinity indicates that these three paintings were almost simultaneously produced around the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. Slight differences in the placement of envoys and the architectural structure of the gates are observed among them. Considering the colors applied to pine trees and taihu rocks, screen 4-7 (fig. 4-7b) might have been produced a little earlier than screen 4-8 (fig. 4-8a).

In sum, the screens of *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* were most likely produced in the late eighteenth through nineteenth centuries and they developed in three distinctive types that are mutually interrelated. Screens 4-1, 4-2 and 4-4 are relatively early works that provide visual idioms for later works. Screens 4-3 and 4-5 are derived from screens 4-1, 4-2, and 4-4 respectively, but they add their own unique features by inserting textile patterns and additional figures and objects, and applying different colors. Screen 4-6 is a ten-panel screen predating screens 4-7, 4-8, and 4-9, which show the last stage of development of the envoy screen. These three screens exhibit thematic inspiration from previous examples, but newer stylistic characteristics dominate in the late nineteenth century.

2) **Paintings of Tribute Bearers in China**

The theme of tribute bearers derived from Sino-centric tributary relations in which foreign countries who wanted to establish trade and contact with China had to demonstrate their subservience to the Chinese emperor by paying tribute and performing an act of ritual obeisance. Under the Sino-centric system of foreign relations, the concept of the “middle kingdom versus
barbarian states” achieved practical and symbolic importance in China and its neighboring countries throughout history.469

Due to its political significance and symbolic meaning, the story of tribute bearers was repeatedly reinstated throughout Chinese history and fascinated many rulers who sought to propagate the legitimacy and prosperity of their reigns.470 One of the earliest accounts of the theme is “Emperor Yu’s Gathering at Mount Tu” (Yu hui Tushan 禹會塗山) of the Xia dynasty (c. 2070 BC- c. 1600 BC).471 Mount Tu is also known as a venue for the gathering of King Mu 穆王 (r. 976-922 BC) of Zhou and his feudal lords.472 In addition, the Leftover Documents of the Zhou (逸周書) contains two famous stories regarding a gathering of tribute bearers that took place during the Zhou dynasty (1046-256 BC): “The Duke of Zhou’s receiving audience in the Luminous Hall (Mingtang 明堂) of the capital Zhongzhou” and “The Royal Meeting (Wanghui 王會) in Chengzhou” (present-day Luoyang).473

470 John Duncan says that tributary relations between Chinese states and Korean/Japanese/other states date back to the Interregnum (Three Kingdoms era in Korea) when competing states in north and south China tried to outdo each other. Although some scholars trace the origins of tributary relations to the Zhou periods, he thinks there is an important qualitative difference between the Zhou and later times. John Duncan, email message to the author, June 3, 2014.
473 The story of the Duke of Zhou 周公 receiving audience in the Luminous Hall is recorded in the chapter of “Mingtang,” and “The Royal Meeting in Chengzhou” is included in the chapter “Wanghui” of Yi Zhou shu, see Zhu Youzeng 朱右曾, Yi Zhou shu 逸周書 (Taipei: Hanjing wenhua, 1980), vol. 5, 1965-2-1966-1, and vol. 7, 1971-2-1975-2. The royal meeting took place after Duke Zhou who acted as a regent of King Wu’s young heir King Cheng, suppressed rebellions and established a new, secondary capital in the east, called Chengzhou. The royal meeting occurred during the reign of King Cheng but later records including the Old Book of Tang links the event to King Wu, the father of King Cheng. Leftover Documents of the Zhou provides important historical accounts entailing ceremonial protocols for receiving tribute and the hierarchy of vassal lords and foreign embassies. The vivid

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A celebrated anecdote explaining the commission of a painting of tribute bearers by the Deputy Minister Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581-645) during the reign of Emperor Taizong of Tang was recounted in historical texts such as the Old Book of Tang, the Institutional History of Tang (Tang hui yao 唐會要), and the Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government. According to these records, Yan Shigu asked the Emperor to have the various foreign envoys to the court painted when the delegation from the Eastern Xie barbarians visited the Tang court to present tribute to the Emperor in 629. Their exotic appearance and clothes drew the attention of Yan and the Emperor, reminding them of the anecdote of Emperor Wu of the Zhou dynasty who received foreign envoys at his court. Emperor Wu’s story was handed down through the generations as a symbol of a peaceful and prosperous reign under a sage ruler and the superiority of Chinese civilization. Here lies the intention of Yan’s commission: he eulogized the accomplishment of Emperor Wu as equivalent to that of Emperor Taizong by superimposing the legacy of the ancient rulers upon the current monarch. The Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era mentions that Yan Lide 閻立德 (ca. 596-656) painted the work upon Yan Sigu’s commission. Many Chinese treatises on art state that Yan Liben 閻立本 (ca. 600-673) and his older brother Yan Lide, active in the early Tang period, were talented in this genre and left a number of paintings depicting foreign envoys.

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476 While Lidai minghua ji 歷代名畫記 [Records of famous paintings through history] lists Foreign Countries (Waiguo tu 外國圖) painted by Yan Lide, Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era specifies that Yan Lide painted Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers (Wanghui tu 王會圖) on Yan Sigu’s commission. The latter also includes two paintings of tribute bearers (Zhigong tu 職貢圖) by Yan Liben. The Yan brothers’ authorship of paintings of foreign envoys was cited in later documents. Wu Sheng (?-ca. 1712) described Yan Lide’s Envoys
Following Emperor Taizong’s commission, a painting of tribute bearers was created during the reign of Emperor Wuzong of Tang 武宗 (r. 840-846) by the suggestion of Chancellor Li Deyu 李德裕 (787-849) when Kyrgyz envoys reached the imperial palace in 843. Foreign delegations bringing tribute to the court became a popular theme in the Tang dynasty because it accentuated the successful diplomatic relations, territorial expansion, and cultural diversity of the cosmopolitan Tang empire. Envoys and barbarians entering the solemn, splendid Daming Palace were frequently mentioned in city gazettes of Chang’an, the Tang capital, and in contemporaneous poetry and literature.

The aforementioned texts formed essential narratives for furthering the development of the theme during the Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties and were widely circulated and cited among Chinese historians. The popularity of the theme stems from the embedded symbolism: the conviction of the superiority of Chinese culture and a peaceful and prosperous reign. Later Chinese rulers linked the story of tribute bearers to the accomplishments of legendary and historical monarchs such as Emperor Yu, the Duke of Zhou, King Wu of Zhou, and Taizong of Tang, who had been eulogized as cultivated inventors of state rituals and protectors of Chinese

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478 Records of Chang’an (Chang’an zhi 長安志), vol. 6 (618) vol. 6, in Siku quanshu shibu 四庫全書史部, vol. 11, 2a; Great Tang Records on the Western Regions (Da Tang Xiyuji 大唐西域記), vol. 5, in Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō 大正新脩大蔵経, vol. 51, no. 2087 (Tōkyō: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō Kankōkai), 895a15(03); Wang Wei, “An Early Audience at the Palace of Great Light Corresponding to Secretary Jia Zhi’s Poem” 和賈舍人早朝大明宮之作, Collection of Poetry by Wang Wei (Wang youcheng shi ji 王右丞集箋注), vol. 10, in Siku quanshu jibu 四庫全書集部, vol. 2, 7a-8b.
civilization against barbarian invasions.479

Along with the painting of tribute bearers in the reign of Emperor Taizong of Tang, Tribute Bearers 職貢圖 by Xiao Yi 蕭繹 (508-555), posthumously known as Emperor Yuan of Liang 梁元帝, was an influential work.480 There are three extant copies of Xiao Yi’s painting, one in the Museum of Chinese History (fig. 4-15) and two in the National Palace Museum, Taipei.481 This type of works exemplifies early depictions of the theme, in which numerous envoys featuring foreign physiognomy and exotic costume walk in a single file, bringing rare gifts to the Chinese emperor.

Further, there exist paintings with different formats and composition: a mural entitled

479 It is not a coincidence that the tribute bearers of the Zhou and Tang dynasties were favored; the Zhou was known as a period in which Chinese ritual systems were established, and Tang was one of the greatest empires, marked with territorial expansion and a cosmopolitan cultural efflorescence. The virtues of rulers as custodians of Chinese culture and powerful sovereigns expanding their influence to neighboring countries are aptly demonstrated in these stories of tribute bearers.

480 This painting was painted by Xiao Yi during his service as Jingzhou prefectural governor to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the enthronement of his father, Emperor Wu 武帝 (464-549) of Liang. Xiao Yi’s painting appears in later art treatises and literature including Ouyang Xun’s, Yiwen leiju 藝文類聚 [Collection of literature arranged by categories], Zhang Yanyuan’s Records of Famous Paintings through History, Li Gonglin shou tie 李公麟手帖 [Li Gonglin’s notebook], Mao You’s (1127-1194) Suichutang shu mu 綱初堂書目 [Library catalogue of the Suichu Hall], Yao Lou’s (1137-1213) Gongkui ji 攻瑰集 [Collected works of Gongkui], Wang Yinglin’s Yu hai 玉海 [A sea of jades], We Cheng’s (1249-1331) Wu Wenzheng ji 烏文正集 [Collected works of Wu Wenzheng], Song Lian’s Wenxian ji 文獻集 [Collected Works of Song Lian]. For a more completed list of the literature, see Yun Yonggu 尹龍九, “Yang Chikkongdo ū yujōn kwa mobon” 梁職貢圖의 流傳과 基本 [Transmission and copies of Tribute Bearers of the Liang dynasty], Mokkan kwa munja 9 (2012), appendix 1, 145-154.

481 Modern scholarship convincingly suggests that the painting in the Museum of Chinese History, which dates to 1077, is the earliest extant copy of the original Xiao Yi work. See Enoki Kazuo 彦一雄, “Ryou Shokukouzu ni tsute” 職貢圖について [About Tribute Bearers of the Liang dynasty], Tōhō gaku 26 (1963): 105-129; “Katsu kuni ni kansuru Ryou Shokukouzo no Kiji ni suite” 滑国に関する職貢圖の記事について [About the description of Huagu in Tribute Bearers of the Liang dynasty], Tōhō gaku 27 (1964): 132-161; Jin Weinuo 金維諾, “Zhi gong tu de shi dai yu zuo zhe” 職貢圖的時代與作者 [The date and artist of Tribute Bearers], Wenwu 7 (1960): 14-17. The other two paintings, Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers 王會圖 by Yan Liben and Foreign Guests Coming to the Court 聖客人朝圖 by the Southern Tang painter Gu Deqian (fl. mid-10th c.) in the National Palace Museum, are considered later copies of the original scroll by Xiao Yi. Tribute Bearers in the Museum of Chinese History only includes 12 envoys and 13 texts explaining the customs and tributes of each country. The painting attributed to Yan Liben in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, depicts 26 envoys from 24 countries, and is executed in color and ink. This painting is listed as “Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court by Yan Len” in Shiqu baoji 石渠寶笈 [Precious book box of the stone drain], vol. 5. Foreign Guests Coming to the Court in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, shows 31 dignitaries painted in ink only. It is listed as “Gu Deqian’s painting in the manner of Foreign Guests Coming to the Court by Emperor Yuan of Liang” in Shiqu baoji xu bian, vol. 17.
Courtiers and Foreign Envoys (fig. 4-16) in the Tomb of Li Xian 李賢 (653-684) Crown Prince Zhanghuai 章懷太子 of 706; a work attributed to Yan Liben, Tribute Bearers (fig. 4-17), which has a title written by Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1100-1126) of the Song dynasty; Tribute Bearers from a Myriad of Countries 萬國職貢圖, attributed to Li Gonglin (1049-1106) (fig. 4-18); and Envoys from a Myriad of Countries Attending a Celebratory Ceremony 萬國朝宗圖 (fig. 4-19), painted by Su Hanchen 蘇漢臣 (1131-1170) and inscribed by Zhao Mengfu. These paintings portray a procession of envoys conversing with each other on the way to the imperial court, set against a landscape or blank background.

The tradition of painting scenes of envoys continued in the Song and Ming dynasties. In addition to the paintings by Li Gonglin and Su Hanchen mentioned above, paintings done by court painters of the Song dynasty were recorded in the History of the Song Dynasty (Song shi 宋史). 482 Traces of this artistic tradition in the Ming dynasty are found in Qiu Ying’s paintings, which depict a procession of emissaries against a landscape background. Tribute Bearers (fig. 4-20) in the Palace Museum, Beijing, bears an inscription by Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559), and Receiving Envoys from Barbarian Countries 蕃國交見圖 (fig. 4-21) in the National Library of Korea suggests that the visual representation of tribute bearers established in previous dynasties developed during the Ming dynasty.

This type of painting continued into the Qing period, as seen in Tribute Bearers (fig. 4-22) in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries 皇淸職貢

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482 Yi wen zhi 藝文志 [Records of art and literature], ch. 157, Song shi, vol. 204.
Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries, a work produced at Qianlong’s court, which was almost contemporaneous with the Chosŏn screens of tribute bearers, is worthy of note as a reference work of foreign peoples and their customs for late Chosŏn representation of this theme. The work consists of four scrolls that depict the dress and customs of foreigners and ethnic groups living in frontier regions of the empire, following the old model of Xiao Yi’s 

Tribute Bearers.

Foreign delegations bringing tribute had been a courtly painting subject at least since the Tang dynasty in China, and still continued to be produced during the reign of Emperor Qianlong of Qing. Despite similar ideas and concepts in depicting foreign delegates paying tribute to sovereign, the Chosŏn paintings discussed here show considerable differences from Chinese paintings. The difference is obvious in the configuration, the composition and the mode of representation. Particularly, in Chinese versions little attention is paid to depictions of the grandeur of palatial architecture, which is a distinct characteristic of the following Chosŏn screens.

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483 This painting, purchased by curator Okakura Kakuzo 岡倉覚三 (1862-1913) in 1907 for the museum, is known as an eighteenth-century Qing work. Its composition is similar to that of Qiu Ying’s Tribute Bearers but is done in monochrome ink.

484 This project began in 1750 and was completed in 1761, with multiple copies in various formats being reproduced later on. Eminent court artists such as Ding Guanpeng 丁觀鵬 (ac. 1726-1770), Jin Tingbiao 金廷標, Yao Wenhan 姚文翰, and Cheng Liang 程梁 (ac. 1736-1795) participated in this decade-long project. Explanations describing the nationalities in terms of origins, customs, history, indigenous products, traditional costume, and relationships with China were included in Manchu and Chinese scripts. For further study of the painting, see Wei Dong, “Qing Imperial ‘Genre Painting’: Art as Pictorial Record,” Orientations 26:7 (July/August 1995): 18-24. For the Qing court, the work served practical and symbolic functions. As pictorial records rich with information of foreign and minority peoples, the scrolls provided helpful references for controlling the diplomatic relationship with neighboring countries. At the same time, they celebrated the historical achievement of the Qing unifying all within its territory and propagating that minorities and foreign nationalities within and beyond the nation’s domain enjoyed the benefit of prosperity and civilization under the umbrella of the empire. The identities of each ethnic group are classified and managed in a hierarchical order and within the ideological framework of the Qing Empire, in which the Manchus played the central role.
3) The Theme of Tribute Bearers in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-century Chosŏn Society

Anecdotes of legendary Chinese emperors receiving foreign envoys were widely disseminated and frequently quoted by members of the Chosŏn elite as reference to the diplomatic relationship between China and Korea. *Leftover Documents of the Zhou* became an important source for Chosŏn painters depicting the theme of envoys since it provided detailed information on the participants of the event, including the emperor, members of the imperial household, ministers in royal meetings, and tribute bearers from various countries. “Emperor Yu’s Meeting at Mount Tu” and Yan Shigu’s commission of *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* were well known to Chosŏn literati through the Chinese historical texts available at the time.

As in China, the theme was in Chosŏn Korea perceived as an expression of virtuous Confucian rule and as a symbol of the harmonious universe complying with the civilized Sino-centric order, in which the emperor’s prodigious virtues and the superiority of Chinese culture enlightened neighboring barbarian tribes. In return, the barbarian countries sent emissaries and presented tribute as a token of their obeisance to the emperor’s moral and ideological superiority. In their writings, Ki Taesŭng 奇大升 (1527-1572) and Hwang Sin 黃慎 (1562-1617), scholar-officials of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, glorify the benevolent sovereignty and the brilliant civilization of ancient China radiating toward its neighboring countries by referring to the achievements of Chinese sage rulers like Emperor Shun of Yu,

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485 By the early fifteenth century, the Chosŏn court regularized its foreign relations by implementing a diplomatic hierarchy consisting of Ming China at the top and then Chosŏn, the Japanese, and the Jurchen, in that order. See Kenneth R. Robinson, “From Raiders to Traders: border Security and Border Control in Early Chosŏn, 1392-1450,” *Korean Studies* 16 (1992): 94-115.
Emperor Yu of Xia, and Emperor Taizong of Tang. In particular, An Sigu’s commission to paint tribute bearers was intensively cited in these texts, probably because Zizhi tongjian, which explains the paintings produced at Emperor Taizong’s court, enjoyed a wide readership throughout Chosŏn history. The image of tribute bearers was frequently used to describe the magnificence of the celebratory rituals Korean envoys witnessed during their visits to China. A number of poems written by Korean envoys cite the famous gathering of tribute bearers at the ancient Chinese imperial court noted in historical texts in order to commemorate their memories and experiences in China. In the same vein, tribute bearers were often mentioned in farewell letters for Korean envoys dispatched to China.

Of records regarding tribute bearers in the mid-Chosŏn dynasty, “Ode on Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court” 王會圖頌 written by Cho Chigyŏm 趙持謙 (1639-1685) is important because it contains the most detailed description of the scene of tribute bearers as if Cho had actually seen a painting. This suggests that visual materials as well as literature were appreciated by Chosŏn literati. Hwang Ho 黃㩿 (1604-1656) wrote about a painting of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court copied by Wen Zhengming, and Hong Kyŏngmo 洪敬謨 (1774-1851) wrote about barbarian tribute bearers painted by Li Gonglin and inscribed by Li Kan 李衍

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486 Ki Taesùng, “Composing a Poem Imitating Yan Sigu’s Poem Asking the Emperor for a Painting of Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers” 擬唐中書侍郎師古 請作王會圖表, Kobongjip 高峯集, vol. 2, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 40 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1989), 55b; Hwang Sin, “Yan Sigu Offering a Painting of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court” 唐顏師古進王會圖, Ch’up’ojip 秋浦集, vol. 2, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 65 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1991), 639d.


489 Cho Chigyŏm (1639-1685), “Wanghoedo song” 王會圖頌, Ujaejip 迂齋集, vol. 5, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 147 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1995), 479d.
of the Yuan dynasty. These indicate that Chinese paintings of tribute bearers, most likely later copies of Song paintings, were brought to Chosŏn.

There existed a common understanding of the theme of tribute bearers in Japan as well as China and Korea in medieval and early modern times. The perception and interpretation of the theme in early Chosŏn literature is very similar to that reflected in inscriptions and poems written by Zen monks of the Muromachi period in Japan. The image of envoys paying tribute to the emperor stands for a reign of peace and prosperity that is especially associated with Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty. Sesshū Tōyō’s 雪舟等楊 (1420-1506) Figures of Various Nations (fig. 4-24.) in the Kyoto National Museum indicates that copies of Xiao Yi’s painting of tribute bearers had been known in Japan since the Muromachi period and was imitated by Japanese painters. The most well known Japanese painting of this theme, which is entitled *Gift Bearers at the Chinese Court*, is now in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (fig. 4-25, 4-26.). The pair of six-panel folding screens painted on gold-leafed paper exhibits lavish and decorative characters typical of Momoyama-period art. Emperor Taizong and his subjects, clad

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490 Hwang Ho, “Inscription on Kim Sik’s painting” 題金碭畫後, *Mallangjip* 漫浪集, vol. 8; Hong Kyŏngmo, “Inscription on Painting of All Barbarian Tribute Bearers” 諸夷職貢圖, *Unsŏk oesa* 転石外史. Interestingly, a painting of tribute bearers attributed to Li Gonglin that has Li Kan’s inscription on it is now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei. This work is considered a 17th-century copy in the style of Li Gonglin’s style. In light of this, the painting in Hong’s records is probably not an original copy of Li Gonglin but a later copy, possibly of late Ming or early Qing. These records do not delineate the details of paintings. Hwang Ho mentions that Wen Zhengming painted *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* at the age of 80, while Hong Kyŏngmo praises Li Gonglin’s painting for its delicate rendition of the exotic features of diverse ethnic groups. Neither record includes remarks on architecture or palace structures.

491 Paintings of *Tribute Bearers* became popular in Japan and began to appear in the Momoyama period. Three examples of these are known today: a pair of six-panel screens in Kannonji, Shiga prefecture, a pair of six-panel screens entitled *Gift Bearers at the Chinese Court*, and the two-panel screen *Boating Escorted by Mounted Tartars* in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. For a study of the symbolic meaning of tribute bearers in Japan, see Kitano Yoshie 北野良枝, “Wanghuitu no henyō” 「王會圖」の変容 [Changes in paintings of *Royal Gathering with Tribute Bearers*], *Kokka* 1356 (2008): 3-16.

492 These two screens were purchased by William Sturgis Bigelow (1850-1926) and Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) respectively, and bequeathed to the MFA in 1911. Based on their identical measurements and stylistic features, these two screens were purported to have been produced as a pair by Kanō Eitoku in the Momoyama period. For the provenance of these works, see “Gift Bearers at the Chinese Court,” website of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accessed September 19, 2013, http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/gift-bearers-at-the-chinese-court-25975; http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/gift-bearers-at-the-chinese-court-24901.
in Han-style Chinese official robes, are positioned inside a building, and a group of envoys and attendants proceed to the hall to present their gifts. Compared to Korean and Chinese examples, this screen offers a close-up view of each figure as well as the interior of the emperor’s audience hall. Envoys aboard a ship appear in the far left panel of the screen, above tribute bearers on horseback, a unique feature of the Japanese version. Although a landscape and architecture are depicted as backdrops, they function merely as a stage for figures. Emphasis on architecture, as seen in the Chosón screens, is rarely found in Japanese paintings.

4) Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Chosón

The historical significance of literary sources regarding the paintings of tribute bearers in the late Chosón dynasty is twofold: first, it indicates that the paintings were produced by court painters and exclusively used for the King and the Crown Prince; second, the theme was frequently addressed in writings by literati-scholars who visited China as envoys. The official record on commissioning a painting of tribute bearers at court appears in King Chŏngjo’s reign. “The Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers” (王會圖) was selected as a theme for a painting examination of court painters in 1796.

In 1815, during King Sunjo’s rule, a similar theme was chosen for the court painters’ examination: the scene of the emperor receiving tribute and clad in ceremonial attire. The theme was probably selected by King Sunjo himself, considering his special interest in the topic.

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493 For example, Hong Yangho 洪良浩 (1724-1802), Pak Chega 朴齊家 (1750-1805), Yi Mansu 李晚秀 (1752-1820), and Pak Yŏngwŏn, who visited China as members of envoys, wrote about paintings of tribute bearers.
495 Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn, 196-197. At that time, the following line from a poem by Wang Wei, a famous Tang dynasty poet, was quoted as the reason behind the choice of the subject: “An early audience at the Palace of Great Light corresponding to Secretary Jia Zhi’s poem.” The same topic was selected for the examination for court painters in 1849.
For example, when Sunjo met with scholar-officials of the Office of the Censor-General and the Royal Library at Hŭngjŏng Hall in 1811, he ordered them to compose a poem responding to an excerpt from Wang Wei’s poem, “Envoys from a myriad of countries in ceremonial attire paying respect to the imperial crown” 万国衣冠拜冕旒. This is the same line used for the painting examination in 1815. Chŏng Yagyong 丁若鏞 (1762-1836) wrote two poems by command of the king that correspond to Wang Wei’s verse. Chŏng’s poem suggests that the theme of tribute bearers was used as a Confucian symbol of an idealized society in order to manifest the Sino-Barbarian hierarchy and the superiority of Chinese culture and moral ideology, thus maintaining the perception of the theme prevalent in the previous period.

The court archives “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the King” and “Records on the Storage for Screens Dedicated to the Crown Prince” (Tonggung pyŏngp’ung ko kŏn kwi 東宮屏風庫件記) give evidence that the screens of Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers were produced during the reign of King Sunjo and presented to the King and Crown Prince Yi Yong by the officials of the Crown Prince Tutorial Office and the Royal Library in 1817 upon his entrance into the Royal Confucian Academy. Also, at the royal lecture in 1819 King Sunjo commanded his subjects to compose poems on the screen Royal Meeting with Tribute Bearers. Accordingly, Yi Yagu 李若愚 (1782-1860) and Sŏ Hŭisun 徐憙淳 (1793-1857) wrote poems and offered them to the king. Their poems are no longer extant, but a poem written by Pak

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496 Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, year of 1811, the 6th month, the 12th day. Here the emperor is directly mentioned, whereas he is alluded to in other texts. This may be related to changes in iconography, which emphasize the presence of the emperor and (thus) the palace in early nineteenth-century paintings of tribute bearers. 497 Chŏng Yagyong, “Poem Corresponding to Royal Order at Kyujanggak” 内閣應敎, Tasan si munjip 茶山詩文集, vol. 1, Yâyudang chŏnsŏ 與猶堂全書, vol. 1, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 281 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 2002), 21a. 498 Pak Ŭnkyŏng, “Chosŏnhugi wangsiil karye,” 81-83; Pak Chŏnghye, “Chosŏnhugi Wanghoedo,” 114-115. 499 Daily Records of the Royal Secretariat, year of 1819, the 3rd month, the 13th day. It is uncertain that the painting shown to the subjects in 1819 was the screen that had been presented to King Sunjo by the officials of the Crown Prince Tutorial Office two years before.
Yŏngwŏn 朴永元 (1795-1854), who also participated in the lecture, can be found in his anthology, Osŏjip.\textsuperscript{500} These records indicate the theme of tribute bearers was favored and appreciated by the King and his close subjects. As mentioned above, paintings of tribute bearers were used exclusively at court and dedicated to the king and the Crown Prince. This fact is confirmed by the fact that the Palace Guard Unit (Muwiso 武衛所) commissioned a medium-size screen on this theme and offered it to King Kojong, and the Royal Secretariat presented a large-scale tribute screen to the Crown Prince in 1879 in order to celebrate the Crown Prince’s recovery from smallpox.\textsuperscript{501}

Documents relating to these envoy screens demonstrate that the concept of the “middle kingdom versus barbarian states” based on a Sino-centric world order maintained symbolic importance and influenced the epistemological, ontological, and socio-cultural perspectives of the Chosŏn elites in the late period. This perception is also consistently found in travelogues written by scholar-officials sent to Beijing.\textsuperscript{502} Yet, their records reveal two attitudes toward Qing culture that contrast but are yet compatible: anti-Manchu prejudices versus the acceptance of the Sinicized Qing as the legitimate successors of the Han Chinese civilization. Although Chosŏn kings paid diplomatic respect to the Qing emperor following the Manchu invasion of 1636, Chosŏn did not readily accept the fact that Manchus, the “barbarians,” defeated the Ming dynasty,

\textsuperscript{500} Pak Yŏngwŏn, “Lines offered by the king, envoys clad in ceremonial attire coming from a myriad of countries bow to the emperor wearing a coronet” 御題 異國衣冠拜冕旒, Osŏjip 桐墅集, vol. 5, in Han'guk munjip ch'onggan, vol. 302 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch'ujin wiwŏn hoe, 2003), 309d. As noted by the title of Pak’s poem, it is not a poem about the painting that King Sunjo showed his subjects in 1819 but one corresponding to the aforementioned famous poem by Wang Wei.

\textsuperscript{501} See “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the King” and “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the Crown Prince” included in Komunsŏ chipsŏng, 254 and 257.

the most “civilized world.” The legacy of Ming survived in Chosŏn in the realm of ritual and ideology: the last Ming emperor was enshrined and worshiped by the state, the Ming-dynasty reign year was still used in private writing, and official uniforms reflecting Ming style were worn in court rituals. 

Chosŏn elites developed the concept of “Chosŏn Chunghwa” (Chosŏn as the last bastion of Confucian civilization) and identified themselves as devout successors of the Ming legacy.

This self-consciousness and prejudice against the Manchus often prevented Korean envoys from fully appreciating Qing culture. Nevertheless, Chosŏn Koreans could not fail to observe the order and prosperity built by the Manchus. Changes in Chosŏn perception of the Qing can be found in the mid-eighteenth century, for example in Hong Taeyong’s (1731-1783) remarks, “If one says that a gentleman should not step on the soil of barbarians and should not talk with those wearing barbarian clothes, that person is parochial and narrow-minded.” A more positive evaluation of the Qing and increased interest in its culture are partially reflected in the writings of Korean envoys regarding paintings of tribute bearers. The sumptuous palace architecture of the Forbidden City, prosperous urban living with flourishing markets full of

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504 For the establishment of the concept of “Chosŏn Chunghwa” in the late Chosŏn period, see Jahyun Kim Haboush, “Constructing the Center,” 47-90. It should be noted that Chosŏn literati of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had been very critical of the Wang Yangming school of the Ming dynasty, despite late Chosŏn’s protestations of loyalty to the Ming.

505 This attitude towards the Qing resulted from contempt towards ‘barbarian’ rule on the one hand and admiration for the grandeur of their empire and splendid architecture on the other. This ambiguity might be reflected in the representation in the Chosŏn screen of tribute bearers.


507 Yi Yonghyu 李用休 (1708-1782), “Farewell to Mr. Hong Going to Beijing as an Envoy” 送洪大夫使燕序, *Tanmanjip* 當番集 in *Han’guk munjip ch’onggan*, vol. 223 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1999), 26b; Hong Yangho 洪良浩 (1724-1802), “Farewell to Secretary Cho Going to Beijing” 送趙尚書爾真尚鎮赴燕序, *Yigyejip* 耳溪集, vol. 11, in *Han’guk munjip ch’onggan*, vol. 241 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 2000), 199b.
luxurious commodities, and the efflorescent civilization of the contemporaneous Qing appear as a new iconography in Chosŏn screens and were superimposed on the ancient historical anecdote of tribute bearers. In contrast to the Chinese screens discussed in the previous paragraphs, the Chosŏn screens of *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* show the increased interest in architecture. The most conspicuous characteristic of these screens is their emphasis on the representation of splendid palace architecture, which can be designated as a new iconographic invention. Interest does not rest normally in the exotic appearance of the foreign envoys but in the sumptuous depiction of architecture as a symbol of royal dignity and of the prosperity of the empire.

It may be impossible to discern whether changes in the Chosŏn perceptions of Qing culture as articulated in mid-eighteenth century literature was visually reflected in the screens of tribute bearers. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible that the Qing culture introduced through Korean envoys’ firsthand experiences, along with the circulation of knowledge through their travelogues and official records, inspired the painters of the Chosŏn screens. The knowledge obtained through the ethnographic reports about diverse foreign countries written by envoys in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contributed to the general understanding of foreign culture.\(^{508}\)

Along with these textual sources, I suggest that contemporary Qing Chinese culture imported through diplomatic exchanges and the rise of the Northern Learning School in the late Chosŏn period provided visual inspiration for the tribute bearer paintings. In particular, *Envoys from a Myriad of Countries Paying Tributes to the Emperor* 萬國來朝圖 (fig. 4-27), commissioned by Emperor Qianlong, is an important work of art that might have affected

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\(^{508}\) Kim Yongjuk 김영죽, "Chosŏnhugi Chukchisa rŭl t’onghae pon 18,19 segi chungin ch’ŭng chisigin ūi t’aja insik” 조선후기 竹枝詞를 통해본 18, 19 세기 중인층 지식인의 他者 인식 [The chungin intellectual’s recognition of the other in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: focusing on Cho Susam’s bamboo-branch poems], *Hanmun hakpo* 24 (2011): 455-494.
Korean versions of tribute bearer paintings. This large scale silk scroll shows envoys from vassal states and foreign centuries in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony (Taihe dian 太和殿) in the Forbidden City (fig. 4-27a). In this painting, Qianlong fashions himself as an ideal Confucian monarch, using the rhetoric of tribute bearers to signify an age of peace and prosperity. Qianlong is famous for using visual representation for fashioning himself as sovereign over diverse ethnic groups: he represented himself as the Great Khan or bodhisattva for the Mongols and Thbetans, and the Confucian monarch for the Han Chinese.

This painting includes abundant ethnographical information, exotic figures and precious tributary gifts, which served as important references for Korean painters. The deployment of ritual objects and the seating of envoys and officials in the Qing paintings generally accorded with the directions found in Comprehensive Rites of the Great Qing (Da Qing tongli 大清通禮).

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509 Chŏng Ênchu, Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kirokwa, 399-435. The relationship between the Chosŏn screen of tribute bearers and the Qing court paintings has been also pointed out in Pak Chŏnghye’s article. For details, see Pak Chŏnghye, “Chosŏnhugi Wanghodo,” 111-113.

510 There are five paintings of Envoys from a Myriad of Countries Attending an Imperial Ceremony produced from 1761 to 1779 in the Palace Museum, Beijing. Two paintings were commissioned to celebrate the Empress Dowager’s birthdays in 1761 and 1771, while three paintings were produced to commemorate the celebratory ceremony on New Year’s Day. Among them, the painting of 1760 upon the Empress Dowager’s birthday bears Qianlong’s inscription. This inscription indicates Qianlong’s intentions in commissioning the painting. He aptly cites King Yu’s gathering at Mount Wu and the painting of tribute bearers during the reign of Taizong of Tang to link himself to those ancient heroic Han monarchs. The painting was commissioned to celebrate one of the most important imperial ceremonies – the Empress Dowager’s birthday in 1761, held in the Hall of Supreme Harmony in Beijing.


512 My account of this painting is based on Liu Lu 劉潞, “Huangdi guo nian yu wan guo lai chao: du wan guo lai chao tu” 皇帝過年與萬國來朝：讀《萬國來朝圖》 [The emperor seeing the old year out and envoys from a myriad of counties attending an imperial ceremony: reading Envoys from a Myriad of Countries Attending Imperial Ceremony], Zhijincheng 1 (2004): 57-63 and Chŏng Ênchu, Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kirokwa, 416-435.

513 In the painting, actual palace architecture is depicted in some detail, and the large
audience hall is raised on a multi-tiered terrace enclosed by marble balustrades. A double-eave hipped roof is decorated with yellow tiles and with sculptured mythological creatures along the ridge. The Hall of Central Harmony (Zhonghe dian 中和殿) and the Hall of Preserving Harmony (Baohe dian 保和殿), two main components of the outer court, are hinted at by their rooftops. The Golden Water Bridge (Jin shui giao 金水橋) lies between the Meridian Gate (Wumen 午門) and the Gate of Supreme Harmony. The articulation of splendid palatial architecture and conspicuous display of luxuries is also an important feature defining art at Qianlong’s court. Here we find an obvious break with past settings. It is important to note that the imposing architecture plays a significant role in the overall composition.

The emphasis on architectural setting shown in this work is quite similar to that of the Chosŏn envoy screens. Moreover, the composition and deployment of objects and figures in this painting are reminiscent of Korean screens of tribute bearers in many ways. The magnificent view of the great audience hall depicted in the format of a hanging scroll was horizontally expanded to fit the wider screen format of Chosŏn court painting. We can thus find here a re-interpretation or ‘translation’ of the theme into a different format in accordance with the Chosŏn court’s favor for the screen format.

The assumption that this hanging scroll and its copies are possible sources for the Chosŏn screens is supported by the fact that such compositions were known to Korean envoys and brought to the Chosŏn court. For example, Hong Yangho, a Chosŏn envoy who went to China in 1782 and 1794, wrote about Envoys from a Myriad of Countries Attending an Imperial Ceremony after he saw the painting on his second journey to Beijing. In addition, another

vassal lords are arranged according to their ranks. A row of officers of the Eight Banners troops as well as military and civil officials stand in the courtyard. A group of foreign dignitaries identified by their banners are gathered on each side of the access road to the main gate.
important reference for ethnic groups, *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries* was also introduced to Korea, as indicated by the fact that Han Ch’iyun 韓致鏞 (1765-1841) used it as a reference when writing his *History of Korea* (*Haedong yŏksa* 海東繹史) in the early nineteenth century; King Hŏnjong kept a copy of the painting in his royal collection. Moreover, Yi Yuwŏn 李裕元 (1814-1888) received the eight-volume set of books of *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries* as a gift in 1875 when he visited Beijing. Thus, the Qing court culture that flourished during the reign of Qianlong was transmitted to Chosŏn without delay.

Although many scholars have already emphasized the cultural exchanges, the sophisticated networks between Chosŏn and Qing courts deserve more attention. The study of Chosŏn screens depicting tribute bearers broadens scholarly perspectives on the intercultural relationship between China and Korea in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Previously, I discussed textual sources related to tribute bearers in order to analyze the perception and symbolic meaning of the theme. It is partially correct that such written records shaped the concept of Sino-Barbarian theory and influenced the Chosŏn paintings of tribute

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514 *Qing Imperial Illustrations of Tributaries* was listed in the Sŭnghwaru sŏmok 承華樓書目 [Royal Catalogue of Collection in Sŭnghwa Pavilion] compiled in the early nineteenth century. See Pak Chŏnhye, “Chosŏnhugi Wanghoedo,” 112.

515 Chŏng Unchu, *Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kiroy kho*, 413-416.

516 The immediate introduction of Qing court painting to the Chosŏn court is also documented in the case of two sets of engravings of the *Conquest of Central Asia* 平定準部回部得勝圖 and the *Conquest of the Great Jinchuan and the Small Jinchuan* 平定兩金川得勝圖. The scrolls commissioned to glorify the military achievements during the Qianlong period and were bestowed on Chosŏn envoys at the imperial banquet on New Year’s Day in 1790. When the envoys returned to their homeland, they offered the scrolls to King Chŏngjo. See *Veritable Records of King Chŏngjo*, year of 1790, the second month, the 20th day. The seventh scene of the *Conquest of the Great Jinchuan and the Small Jinchuan* (fig. 4-28), which is believed to be transmitted to Korea in 1790, is currently in the collection of the Korean Christian Museum at Soongsil University. For details, see Pak Hyoŏn 朴孝鎬, “1789-90 nyŏn Kim Hongdo ŭi kirokhwah? Haengsado? Silgyŏnhuah? – Han’guk kidokkyo pangmulgwan sojang《 yŏnaengdo》ūi hoehwa sa chŏk ko’ch’al-” 1789-90 년 金弘道의 记錄畫? 行事? 畫景? - 한국기독교박물관 소장《燕行圖》의 繪畫史的 考察- [Kim Hongdo’s documentary painting? Painting of an event? Or painting of real-scenery landscape from 1789 to 1790? : Art historical study of *Painting of the Korea Envoys to Beijing during the Chosŏn Dynasty* in the collection of the Korean Christian Museum at Soongsil University], in *Yŏnaengdo 燕行圖* [Painting of the Korea envoys to Beijing during the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Korean Christian Museum at Soongsil University, 2009), 69-70.
bearers in some ways. However, discrepancies between details in the text and their visual representation indicate that the paintings are neither illustrations of specific texts and anecdotes nor realistic depictions of historical events. They rather rhetorically display illusionary images, which are manipulated for the benefit of the viewers, yet they also depict the reality of contemporaneous events that the painter or patron encountered.

There were a total of 474 Korean embassies to Beijing during the 238 years from the beginning of the Qing to the final year of the Tongzhi Emperor 同治 (1861-1874). The whole corps of an embassy usually numbered from 200 to 300 persons, which sometimes included court painters. Personal experiences recorded by envoys were widely circulated among the Chosŏn ruling class, enhancing the understanding of Qing culture and society. Chosŏn artists working on the screen of tribute bearers may have used the envoys’ travelogues and hearsay information in their depiction of the imperial palace architecture and the deployment of ritual objects and participants. However, their work is not a faithful rendition of an actual ritual held in the Beijing palace: The images represented in the screen stray rather far from reality. According to Record of the Bureau of Interpretation (Tongmungwan chi 通文館志), envoys submitted tribute and local products to the imperial treasury two weeks after having observed the ceremonies in the presence of the emperor. Thus embassies carrying tribute to the emperor were not expected to be seen in the actual procedure of the ritual. Yet, painters had to find some formal structure deriving from the real events to savor a sense of Chinese-ness, and the images of the contemporary Qing dynasty would be valid and available sources to them. As in the paintings discussed in the previous chapters, real and ideal scenes are creatively combined and, just as in

documentary paintings, events happening at different times are shown simultaneously.

5) The Cultural Biography of the Screens of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court

Although scholars agree that screens of envoys are considered Chosŏn court productions in general, there is, in fact, an ongoing debate as to the identity of the emperor depicted in the paintings and what narrative the screens illustrate. When a screen of tribute bearers purchased by John Bernadou in 1884 arrived at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the curator Walter Hough suggested that the screen delineates the Ming Emperor receiving presents from state tributaries to China, just as Bernadou had described. Evelyn McCune, however, asserts that the screen depicts embassies visiting the Forbidden City in Beijing during the Yuan period, based on the costumes and the architecture. Australian art historian Charlotte Galloway introduced a screen of tribute bearers brought from Korea to Australia by Jessie McLaren in the early twentieth century, currently in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, as a painting representing the major annual tribute mission to Beijing on the Lunar New Year.

More recent scholarship offers interesting interpretations that reflect a notable shift in the understanding of the theme. According to the opinion of Sascha Priewe, the curator of the British Museum, the screen in their collection was painted during the brief period of the Taehan Empire 大韓帝國 (1897-1910) at the turn of the century, when the Chosŏn dynasty ceased its long-standing tributary relationship with China and declared itself an independent, modern state. Agreeing with Korean art historian Chŏng Ŭnchu, Priewe further asserts that this painting was intended to proclaim Korea’s new, strong position in the international arena after Qing China lost

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its hegemony over its East Asian neighbor in the early twentieth century. From this he concludes that the main figure seated on the throne is Korean Emperor Kojong.\textsuperscript{521}

However, the majority of scholars favor the classical interpretation that the screen represents envoys paying tribute to the Chinese Emperor. Korean art historian Pak Chŏnghye attempts to show that the subject of the screen is King Wu’s royal gathering at Chengzhou, as delineated in the \textit{Leftover Documents of the Zhou}, by comparing textual evidence and extant screens.\textsuperscript{522} Korean costume historian Chŏng Unchi argues that the theme entails Chosŏn envoys visiting the Qing court to celebrate the Lunar New Year based on her observation that three envoys in the screen of the National Gallery wear black official robes and winter hats (fig. 4-2f), which accords with the Chosŏn court attire style for attending to the royal meeting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{523}

As shown above, there are various interpretations regarding the iconography of the screen; some believe it is based on diplomatic events that actually occurred during the Ming or Qing dynasties, while others consider that the painting visualizes an ancient historical anecdote related to literature or an imaginary scene reflecting the political desire of the patrons. Questions that naturally arise are what the reasons for such diverse readings: which reading is a viable assumption, and what is the valid title of these screens. In order to delve into these questions, I explore two thought-provoking aspects about the screens and their narratives. First, I examine the characteristics of the ambiguous, unidentifiable space envisioned in the screen by analyzing

\textsuperscript{521} Sascha Priewe, “Han Kwang-ho and the British Museum,” \textit{Orientations} 41:8 (2010): 59-64; Chŏng Unchu, \textit{Chosŏn sidae sahaeng kirokkwa}, 396-399. This signals a remarkable paradigm shift, departing from the traditional Sino-centric world order and advancing to the idea of a ‘modern’ state and society, in which the whole ‘Chinese world order and ‘traditional’ values became obsolete.

\textsuperscript{522} Pak Chŏnghye asserts that the painting \textit{Royal Gathering with Tribute Bearers} is an illustration of King Wu’s Royal Meeting in Chengzhou described in the \textit{Leftover Documents of the Zhou}. However, the deployment of figures, ritual objects and guards in paintings of tribute bearers are different from those delineated in the text. For Pak’s argument, see Pak Chŏnghye, “Chosŏnhugi \textit{Wanghoedo},” 119-121.

\textsuperscript{523} Chŏng Unchi, “Ōsutoraria Kokuritsu Bijutsukan,” 1-14.
the motifs, and second, I investigate the ways in which these artworks have been removed from their original contexts and relocated in new contexts throughout history.

In my mind, the lack of consensus among scholars relating to the iconography of the screens is caused by the uncertainty and ambiguity represented therein. The image of the empire is a transcendental space in which past and present, real and unreal, exotic and domestic, Chinese-ness and Korean-ness coexist. The throne hall on a multi-tiered marble platform enclosed by stone balustrades, the Pillar Supporting the Heaven (Qing tian zhu 擎天柱) carved with dragons at the courtyard, a set of bronze lion-dogs on each side of the staircases, bronze vessels placed on the terrace in the paintings are reminiscent of the Hall of Supreme Harmony (fig. 4-29), the largest audience hall of the Qing palace. However, the low-slung architecture of the palace, the audience hall on a two-tiered terrace, the medallions of two phoenixes on the central slabs of the staircase (fig. 4-2i, 4-29), and the two-storied gate with one entrance in the paintings (fig. 4-2j) have much more in common with Kyŏngbok Palace 景福宮 of the Chosŏn dynasty (figs. 4-31, 4-32) than with any of the Chinese imperial palaces.

Other Chinese motifs, such as the costumes of high-ranking officials and ritual objects depicted in the screens, are reminiscent of earlier Han Chinese traditions as well as those of the Chosŏn dynasty, which were in turn inspired by their Chinese counterparts. The costumes of officials (fig. 4-2k), a wide-sleeved robe with round collar and a black, rounded hat with two wings at the back projecting sideways, as well as the ritual paraphernalia carried by guards (fig.4-2l), are related to traditions of the Chosŏn dynasty (fig. 4-33) influenced by Ming China, which in turn refers to Han, Tang, and Song conventions. Koreanization of the motifs is apparent in the depiction of the guards standing on the terrace, with their short-brimmed black military hats and red robes. The guards holding ritual objects have a close affinity to those shown in court
documentary paintings depicting contemporary Chosŏn court ceremonies (fig. 4-34). The Koreanized motifs and vestiges of Han Chinese relics were so similar to those of the Chosŏn dynasty that to contemporary Korean viewers the painting appeared very much like a scene from the Chosŏn court. Likewise, the Chosŏn court images superimposed on those of ancient Chinese dynasties in the painting create an ambiguous, unidentified space that challenges scholars’ attempts to unravel the iconography of the theme.

The above observations suggest that the theme was selected by the patrons who commissioned the painting, and their agency is expressed in its iconographic details. In addition, court painters may have contributed to the creation of the iconography exerting their own expertise to some extent. In this sense, the screens can be regarded as a site of complex dialogues and negotiations between patrons and artists, and as a result the experience and knowledge of both sides are brought into play. First-hand experience and sophisticated knowledge of China obtained by an elite group served as a significant source for the visualization of this theme. At the same time, court painters’ understanding of China that was fused with their experience and their formulas of representing contemporary Chosŏn culture influenced these paintings. This interplay would be one of reasons for the ambivalent and multifaceted ambience of the screens of tribute bearers.

In the early twentieth century, the symbolism of the screens seems to have been unclear to general audiences too, not just to contemporary scholars. That the eight-fold screen depicting envoys bringing tribute to the court in the National Library of Korea is entitled Chinese Envoys Paying Tribute to the Chosŏn King provides evidence of this ambiguity. The title, written on paper, was purportedly attached to the back of the first panel around 1962 when the screen was remounted. The collection catalogue shows that this was also
the title when the Japanese Government General of Korea purchased the screen from Kim Hunbae 金薰培 in 1938.\textsuperscript{524} In the title, the term “China” 支那 (Shina in Japanese) was used, a designation seldom employed in Chosŏn society but frequently used in Japan from the late Edo period until the Second World War.\textsuperscript{525} This indicates that the screen was renamed sometime during the colonial period and that the original title made at the moment of creation was forgotten. As aptly remarked by Gregory Levine, the appropriation and re-signification of objects involves agents acting on the object to confer new names and meanings that accord with the social and political demands of that time.\textsuperscript{526} If the work were renamed during the colonial period, this act would have reflected the political circumstances of that period, particularly related to the interests of the Japanese Empire. By degrading the political position and the symbolic significance of China to merely one of many foreign countries having diplomatic relationship with Korea, the catalogue entry reflects the Japanese colonial desire to overthrow the hierarchical, conservative relationship between China and Korea and to occupy the most dominant position in Korea.

Besides such political intentions, the screen contains confusing elements that may cause the audience to perceive it as a scene of Chinese envoys paying homage to the Chosŏn king. This reinterpretation is related to the way in which stereotypes of “barbarians” were represented in Chosŏn visual culture. In contrast to the Emperor and officials who are represented as Han Chinese, many envoys wear costumes reflecting nomadic traditions: short-sleeved overcoats

\textsuperscript{524} Collection catalogue offered by An Hyegyŏng 안혜경, librarian of the National Library of Korea.

\textsuperscript{525} The name “China” 支那 originated from the ancient words ‘Cina,’ ‘Sinai,’ or, ‘Thinai’ used in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin. The words are believed to refer to the name of ‘Qin’ (pronounced as “chin”), the first unified empire of China known to the West. “China” 支那 is frequently used in Buddhist Sutras translated from Sanskrit into Chinese but is rarely found in premodern Korean texts. The term was used by Japanese as part of their effort to de-center China in modern era.

faced with fur and knee-length coats worn underneath with relatively tight-fitting sleeves, fur-trimmed hats with upturned brims, peacock plumes decorating the hats, and braided queues (figs. 4-1d, 4-2h, 4-7a). The accouterments of these envoys remind Chosŏn audiences of the horsemen’s coats often associated with the Manchus. It is quite impossible to determine whether the figures wearing nomadic costumes depict the Manchu, Mongol, or other nomadic tribes from the steppe. Nevertheless, these figures reflect stereotypes of “barbarians” prevalent in Chosŏn visual culture. This typical representation of northern nomadic envoys also appears in paintings of Manchu horsemen and hunters (fig. 4-35) in the late Chosŏn period. In the realm of visual culture, the ethnographical differences among northern barbarian tribes are neglected and recorded in a symbolic rather than a realistic manner. This perspective was pervasive enough to influence the Korean understanding of the screen in early modern times. Modern audiences viewed foreigners clad in nomadic costumes to be Qing envoys, and thus the work was considered to be a depiction of the Chosŏn court where Qing envoys brought tribute.

The provenance of the screens in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia and the National Museum of Natural History (figs.4-2, 4-4) adds another layer of narratives to the paintings. These screens were collected by two Westerners who visited Korea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jessie McLaren and John Bernadou, and were later relocated into modern museum systems. By considering John Bernadou’s official assignment in Korea and the nature of his Korean collection, we can get an idea of how a screen of tribute

528 Yi Sangguk 이상국, “Chosŏn hugi ŭi hryŏnŏ” 조선후기의 호림도 [Barbarian’s Hunting in the Late Chosŏn Dynasty], Han’guk minhwa 1 (2012): 134-172.
529 Further inquiry might reveal precisely why McLaren purchased the screen of tribute bearers during her stay in Korea, but considering the wide range of her Korean collection, from history and literature to philosophy and religion, the acquisition of the screen likely resulted from her interest in Korean culture in general. Her purchase of this large-scale screen is extraordinary, given that most of her collection brought from Korea consists of rare books and prints, which were easily movable to her home country.
bearers was acquired and appreciated by a Westerner in the late nineteenth century. As mentioned earlier, Bernadou was dispatched to Korea as an attaché of the Smithsonian Institution, acquired the screen of tribute bearers in 1884, and then brought it back to the United States. Bernadou recognized that the screen of tribute bearers was a depiction of a Chinese, not a Korea scene and became interested in the various nationalities and ethnographical information found in the painting. The vivid representation of various ethnic groups and their exotic costumes was an informative source of ethnography in the foreigners’ eyes. The screen, along with the rest of Bernadou’s collection, was catalogued and classified as an essential component of descriptive ethnography of other cultures and was thus perceived in a completely different context from the time of its commission. It was also perceived differently from the screens that remained in Korea.

Viewers at different times saw objects from different perspectives and added their responses and interpretations to those of earlier audiences, whether congruent with earlier understandings or not. Erasing original meanings due to the absence of inscriptions and corroborating texts is a common occurrence in the field of art history. As Levin asserts, scholarly endeavors to rediscover original identifying information of an object may cast an essentialist shadow by returning the object to a pristine past, losing most of the history of said object by focusing on the moment of its creation. In this sense, speculating about layered meanings and changes of identity experienced by art objects over time can be an attractive alternative. Although the discovery of a title inscribed on the tribute screen offers an exciting opportunity to unravel the confusing identity of the work, partial historical recovery based on a text cannot

530 Having received training in the systematizing sciences, including ethnology and the taxonomic studies of biology, in which natural history museums of the time excelled, Bernadou collected materials that would be useful for building a science of ethnology for the museum. Under this agenda, he collected books, maps, games, musical instruments, and expiatory effigies, prints, drawings and paintings in Korea. Bernadou’s understanding of this work is revealed by a short note on the screen by Walter Hough, which says, “this screen is worthy of close study for the number of nationalities depicted.” See “Catalogue Card of the Department of Anthology in the Smithsonian Institute,” accessed March 11, 2013, http://collections.si.edu/search/results.htm?q=Bernadou+collection&view=&date.slider=&dsort=title
suffice to prove the validity of a singular and fixed identity of the object. Thus, asking how an object was viewed in a later historical context is as important as asking when, and where, and by whom the object was produced.
3. Myth-making of Chinese Palaces at the Chosŏn Court: Paintings of the Han Palace

1) Problems Regarding the Theme and Iconography of Screens of the Han Palace

Screens of Han Palace (figs. 4-36–45) commonly depict architecture reminiscent of Chinese palaces against a landscape backdrop. As previous scholarship has persuasively pointed out, these screens are considered court products from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: The mountains done in the blue-and-green landscape style, the restricted color scheme consisting of red, green, and blue, the shading applied to roof tiles and columns, and the representation of trees and houses show close affinities to the court style of that period. These screens have been defined as court paintings used for decoration of the Chosŏn palace complexes for their auspicious symbolism of the peaceful, prosperous society of ancient Chinese dynasties. In addition, the fact that five extant paintings (figs. 4-36–38, 42,43) currently held in the National Palace Museum of Korea were transferred from storage at Ch’angdŏk Palace strongly suggests that they were created for court use. Along with those five screens, several paintings, including one in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-39) and one in the Kyŏnggi University Museum (fig. 4-40), will be discussed in depth in this chapter.

It is difficult to grasp the concrete subject of these paintings, just as in the case of the screens depicting envoys paying tribute. Notwithstanding notable similarities between the screens of envoys and the screens of the Han Palace, matters are more complicated in the latter case. If the subject of these works is related to the historical Han palace as indicated by their purported title, what are the iconographical or characteristic features associated with Han palaces and why are they designated “Han” palaces as opposed to any other Chinese royal palaces? If the

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subject is not related to an actual palace, what do these screens represent and is there any
evidence to help identify the theme? To answer these questions, I investigate Chosŏn Koreans’
perception of Han palaces and their symbolic meanings by examining primary sources on Han
palaces such as historical records, literature, and inscriptions on the paintings of the theme.

In Chosŏn art and literature, “Han” 漢 has multi-layered meanings. It was used as a
generic term to indicate China, sometimes referring to the Ming dynasty. The term was
transformed from the particular name for the Han dynasty to a comprehensive term referring to
China and all things Chinese, similar to the use of the dynastic name Tang in Japan. In addition,
the Chinese character for Han “漢” was identical to the first character of the capital of Korea,
Hanyang (漢陽). For this reason, the capital of Chosŏn was also called Hando (漢都), literally
meaning the capital of Han. In the same vein, Chosŏn palaces in Hanyang could be also
referred as Han palaces (漢宮). In the entry for Chosŏn in Poems of Foreign Countries (Wai
guo zhu zhi ci 外國竹枝詞) written by You Tong (1618-1704) of the Qing dynasty, the customs
of contemporaneous Korea are explained as “the rituals of the Han Palace still to be seen in

532 Kim Sanghŏn 金尚憲 (1570-1652), “Poem Matching the Rhymes of the Deputy Minister Kim Paekhu” 次金參
判伯厚韻, Ch’ôngŭmjip 清뎌集, vol. 13, in Han’guk munjip ch’ŏnggan, vol. 77 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin
wiwŏn hoe, 1991), 188b. Late Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty records show differentiation between Han
(Chinese) and Man 滿 (Manchu).
533 Hanyang (present-day Seoul) functioned as the capital during the Chosŏn dynasty. After King Taejo (r. 1392-
1398) established the Chosŏn dynasty in 1392, he transferred the Korean capital from Kaesong to Hanyang to
symbolically break association with the old capital, identified with the former aristocracy, and to proclaim a new era
of central government. Hanyang is located in the center of the Han River basin, surrounded by mountains.
534 This particular “Han” refers to the Han River and not to the Han dynasty of China, although some dual meanings
may have been in play as I suggest below.
131 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 1993), 423a; Kim Sanghŏn, “When His Majesty was on His Way
to the Royal Ancestral Shrine for Worship, Heavy Snow Fell Just in Time. Composed Matching the Rhymes of
What I Wrote at Mid-night” 上將有事太廟 適大雪深丈復次子時韻, Ch’ôngŭmjip, vol. 6, 90a.
Hansŏng (the capital of Korea)." The dual meaning of the word “Han” would appeal to Chosŏn Koreans, who as already mentioned, believed they were the last protectors of Chinese civilization and the most sincere followers of Confucian ideals. The romantic connotation related to immortals and nostalgic images of past civilizations, which the term “Han Palace” conveyed to Chosŏn audiences presumably, became more poignant, when combined with their self-esteem.

Several texts of the Chosŏn period explain Han palaces, but high importance was placed on the achievements and anecdotes of preeminent emperors of the Han dynasty and myths related to the Queen Mother of the West and other immortals. Han Palaces were also favored as a subject of Palace Lyrics (kungsan, 宮司) in Chosŏn literature from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. In “Han Palace Lyrics” (漢宮) Han palaces are described as stunning architecture boasting grandiose castles and high-storied pavilions and towers, in which the emperor enjoyed spring days while hosting banquets and received audiences. The story of Emperor Wu of the Han frequently appeared in literature describing Han palaces. In these records, Han palaces were depicted as sacred places where Emperor Wu met the Queen Mother of the West and auspicious venues where immortals would visit. The plate for collecting dewdrops (Chenglupan 承露槃), built by Emperor Wu to extract the elixir of everlasting life from dew, is usually described as a symbol standing for a Han palace. Whereas literary texts place more emphasizes on the

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538 Emperor Wu led an intensive military campaign across the wastes of Central Asia to the fringes of the Western world and dispatched teams of magicians to search for the land of immortals by suggestion of Taoist necromancers. There are copious Han Palace Lyrics accounting for Emperor Wu’s accomplishments and his enchantment with Taoism, such as Chŏng Tugyŏng 鄭斗卿 (1579-1673), “Twelve lines of Han Palace Lyrics” 漢宮詞十二首, Tongmyŏngjip 東溟集, vol. 2, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan, vol. 100 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe,
narratives of mythical or historical figures in the context of Han palaces, palatial architecture and landscape are the focal points in Chosŏn screens of the Han Palaces.

_Han Palace_ paintings seem to have been extant at least since the seventeenth century, as exemplified in a poem by Sin Wan’s 申烷 (1646-1707). A _Han Palace_ painting he saw was part of a set known as Ten Palaces, historically famous Chinese imperial palaces and it exuded a poetic, romantic image of Han palaces, where swallows fly about on the mild days of spring.539

Along with Sin Wan’s poem, a poem by Cho Tusun 趙斗淳 (1796-1870) and a text by Yu Manchu’s 俞晚柱 (ac. late 18th century) indicate that paintings of the _Han Palace_ were appreciated by Chosŏn literati in the late eighteenth century.540 Excepting a few poems that recite the loneliness of an autumn night, most works depict a spring day at Han Palace, where willow trees and flowers blossom, swallows return, and court ladies prepare a banquet. Besides Han palaces, other ancient Chinese palace complexes had served as themes of paintings in Korea for a long time.541

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541 Among them, Epang Palace of the Qin dynasty (221 BC-206 BC) was so popular that it was produced during the Koryŏ dynasty and continued to be painted in the eighteenth century. Literary evidence proves that a painting of
The popularity of painting Chinese palaces is attested by the fact that they were selected as exam subjects for painters-in-waiting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The imperial garden and pavilion of King Wen of the Zhou dynasty, Changle Palace of the Han dynasty, and Jiucheng and Daming Palaces of the Tang dynasty were chosen for the painting examinations during the reign of Kings Chŏngjo, Sunjo, and Hŏnjong.542 It is noteworthy that paintings of multi-storied halls and pavilions 樓閣 were a new category introduced for court painters’ examinations in the late eighteenth century, and that this genre was one of the most favored and frequently selected examination themes in the nineteenth century, during the reigns of Kings Sunjo and Hŏnjong.543

The popularity of and interests in architectural painting of the nineteenth century was already foreshadowed by Northern Learning scholars’ writings on jiehua in the eighteenth century.544 Jiehua generally refers to the accurate depiction of architecture with the aid of a line-

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543 Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kunjung hwawŏn, 119-124; 541-3.
544 Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1737-1805), the eleventh day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar, T’aehak Yungwanrok 太學留舘錄 [Record on Staying at the National Academy in Rehe], “Yŏhra ilgi” 熱河日記 [Daily records in Rehe], Yŏnamjip 燕巖集, vol. 20, in Han’guk munjip ch’onggan 韓國文集叢刊, vol. 252 (Seoul: Minjok munhwahoe ch’ujin wiw n hoe, 1988), 211a; Yi Tŏngmu 李德懋 (1741-1793), “Angyŏp’i” 安揚記 [Encyclopedic records] ch. 3, Chŏngjanggwan chŏnsŏ vol. 56; Pak Chega, “Poem,” Chŏngyugakjip, vol. 4, 535c.
brush and a ruler and emerged and gradually developed as a painting category in the Sui (581-618) and Tang dynasties. It was established as a recognized style under the term of *jiehua* during the Five Dynasties and the Northern Song period.\(^5\) Compared to the long history of *jiehua* painting in China, this term was not well established in the Chosŏn dynasty and was scarcely found in Chosŏn literature until the late eighteenth century. The increased interest in architectural painting in nineteenth-century Chosŏn society is epitomized in *Painting of the Eastern Palaces* (fig. 4-46). In her recent study, Pak Chŏnghye explains the popularity of *Han Palace* in relation to the burgeoning interest and a boom in architectural paintings of Chosŏn palaces in the nineteenth century.\(^5\)

Scholars agree that the architecture shown in *Han Palace* is not necessarily a realistic depiction of historical Han imperial palaces, but rather an imaginary representation of splendid, exotic buildings imitating Chinese pavilions.\(^5\) No iconographical feature of the Chosŏn paintings of the *Han Palace* identifies the place as any of the Han palaces. In other words, the surviving paintings were never intended as an accurate representation of Han palaces existing at

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\(^{5}\) *jiehua* was originally a technical term applied to architectural representation but not equivalent to architectural painting until the Song dynasty. The wall paintings in the tomb of Price Yide and in the Mogao caves at Dunhuang are the earliest examples of architectural painting showing the use of the ruled-line techniques of the Tang dynasty. When the term first appeared in *Tuhua jianwen ji* [Experiences in Painting] (ca.1080) by Guo Ruoxu (ac.1070-1075), architectural paintings had already been recognized as an independent genre and referred to as “wooden constructions” or “towers and pavilions.” In the *Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era* compiled in the Northern Song, paintings of architecture are categorized under the title of “gongshi” (palaces and chambers) along with other man-made objects such as boats, bridges, and chariots, whose representations require specific drawing techniques based on accurate measurements and structural understanding. Until the Song dynasty there was a clear distinction between subject matter and techniques, but the technical term of “jiehua” was so popular that the term eventually became a general designation for the genre of architectural painting from the Yuan dynasty onward. For the historical development of *jiehua* and its terminology in China, see Maeda Robert J, “Chieh-Hua: Ruled-Line Painting in China,” *Ars Orientalis* 10 (1975): 123-141 and Anita Chung, *Drawing Boundaries: Architectural Images in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 9-44.

\(^{5}\) Pak Chŏnghye, “Kunggwŏl changsikhwa ūi segye,” 122-123. For her analysis of the connection between paintings of Chosŏn palaces and Han palaces, see “19 segi kunggŏwl kyehwa and Tonggwŏldŏ ūi kŏnch’uk p’yohyŏn” 19 세기 궁궐 계화와 <동궐도>의 건축 표현 [Ruled-line painting of palace architecture in the nineteenth century and architectural representation in Eastern Palaces], in *Tonggwŏl* 東闕 [Eastern Palaces] (Pusan: Dong-a University Museum, 2012), 254-271.

\(^{5}\) Pak Chŏnghye, “Kunggwŏl changsikhwa ūi segye,” 122-123.
a particular time, or even any kind of historical Chinese palaces. Instead, there are some elements borrowed from contemporary Chosŏn court paintings depicting Chinese themes, such as the garden setting, the figures’ clothing, and architectural components and found is the earlier discussed screens of The Banquet of Xiwangmu, The Banquet of Guo Ziyi, and One Hundred Boys.

In screens of the Han Palace, Chosŏn court painters employed motifs which already existed as visual idioms to represent “Chines-ness.” The “Chinese-ness” represented in Han Palace screens is also similar to that seen in screens of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court in many ways. The vague and undefined space envisioned through the use of Chinese motifs brought to the Chosŏn mind a nostalgia of the golden age of ancient China and expressed a longing for a peaceful and prosperous society. Yet the ambiguous atmosphere represented in the paintings also brought confusion to the viewers. Just as the screens of envoys, Han Palace paintings bear various titles. For example, the screens in the National Palace Museum of Korea (fig. 4-36–38) are provisionally named Han Palace (漢宮圖), whereas the painting in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-39) is called Towers and Pavilions (樓閣之圖) and the one in the Kyŏnggi University Museum (fig. 4-40) is entitled Palace in Sumptuous Colors (極彩宮闕圖).

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548 Among the historical Han palaces, Changle Palace, Weiyang Palace and Jianzhang Palace were cited as representative palaces located in Chang’an, the capital of the Western Han dynasty (206 BC – 9 AD). These are repeatedly invoked as symbols commemorating the Han’s past glory or lamenting its tragic destruction in numerous historical records and literature. For development of the city of Chang’an and palaces during the Han dynasty, see Wu Hung, Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1995), 143-188.

549 The concept of “Chosŏn Chungwa” might be applicable to the perception of the screens of the Han Palace, too. The Han palaces might have implied that Chosŏn was the last bearer of Confucian civilization after the barbarian Manchu conquest of the Ming.
2) Chinese Examples of Palace Architectural Painting

Unfortunately, surviving paintings of Chinese palaces produced at the Chosŏn court prior to the nineteenth century are too scarce to reveal the development of the theme. Without visual evidence for the style of the earlier paintings, it is difficult to imagine how these paintings might have preconditioned Han Palace paintings of the nineteenth century. Thus, we can only speculate about earlier Chosŏn paintings by referring to Chinese examples of palace paintings bearing, however, in mind that the theme was appropriated to the contemporaneous situation of the Chosŏn agents.

In China, the painting of palaces, also known as jiehua, has a long tradition. Yin Jizhao 尹繼昭 (ac. 874-888) of the late Tang period was listed as a specialist of the genre and Zhang Xuan 張萱 (713-755) of Tang, Zhao Boju of Southern Song, and Li Rongjin 李容瑾 (ac. mid 14th century) of Yuan were known as painters of the Han Palace theme in China. The Han Palace (fig. 4-47) formerly attributed to Zhao Boju according to a colophon by Dong Qichang 董其昌 (1555-1636), is regarded as an idealized portrayal of a palace observed in the artist’s own time rather than representation of a Han palace. This work includes rich information and pays close attention to detail despite its small scale: there is a two-story main hall of the palace compound whose interior is full of colorful furniture, bronze vessels, and a vase with coral branches; a high tower accessible through the stairway; a dusky, moonlit garden with plum trees, willow trees, banana palms, and artificial rockery; a procession of palace ladies with their

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550 Yin Jizhao’s works, including Epang Palace, Wu Palace, and Han Palace, were introduced in “Place and Chamber,” Imperial Painting Catalogue of the Xuanhe Era, vol. 8. Han Palace painted by Tang painter Zhang Xuan is noted in Fang Xuan’s (1736-1799) Shanjingju hualun 山靜居畫論, vol. 2 in Zhibuzu zhai congshu 知不足齋叢書, vol. 131, 22-1. Han Palace attributed to Zhao Boju and Li Rongjin are now in the National Palace Museum, Taipei.

attendants holding tall fans or playing musical instruments; and ox-and horse-drawn carriages in the courtyard. Like other Southern Song court productions, this exquisitely-rendered painting invokes a poetic, romantic image of the past, adding some contemporaneous touches to cater to the taste of the audience at that time.

By contrast, Li Rongjin’s hanging scroll of *Han Palace* (fig. 4-48) is a monumental composition showing the palace compound against a landscape backdrop and is executed only in monochrome ink. The composition, the moist brushwork and the forms of mountains and trees include the artist’s association with the tradition of Northern Song landscape painting founded by Li Cheng 李成 (919-967) and Guo Xi 郭熙 (ca. 1020- ca.1090). The continuously connected, multiple-story pavilions and halls and their grandiose scale symbolize the glorious past of the Han dynasty. The illusion of reality achieved by precisely rendered lines reveals the tradition of Chinese architectural painting.

In the Ming and Qing dynasties numerous copies of *Spring Dawn in the Han Palace* were painted over the centuries. Qiu Ying’s handscroll (fig. 4-49) shows a classical representation of the theme, portraying scenes of court ladies engaging in various leisurely activities in a palace courtyard setting: strolling, picking flowers, playing chess, brewing tea, dancing, conversing, playing with children, and enjoying music. Qing versions of *Spring Dawn in the Han Palace* (fig. 4-50~52) were rendered in the style of Qiu Ying, yet the Qing copies focus more on the architecture that on figural scenes because they allow a view of whole buildings and of the layout of the palace compound. Compared to Qiu Ying’s version, these Qing paintings are more concerned with the palace architecture and garden settings than the narratives.

The newly added iconographical elements do not seem to be related to the traditional theme of *Spring Dawn in the Han Palace*. Anita Chung links this phenomenon to artistic trends
of Qing court art, which visualized the mythical past by incorporating elements of the contemporary world. Qing imperial painters adapted the ancient theme to suit the taste of their imperial patron for more naturalistic and decorative representations by inserting elaborate architectural designs similar to the actual imperial architecture of the Qing. These changes in the depiction of the theme and the emphasis on the representation of architecture resonant of the contemporaneous world are comparable to the changes made in nineteenth-century Chosŏn screens of the Han Palace.

In sum, visual and literary evidence indicates that Chinese paintings of the Han palace display grandiose palace complexes executed in great detail in the jiehua style. Despite various changes throughout time, conceptions and conventions continued in Chinese architectural

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552 There are three Qing dynasty versions of this theme in the National Place Museum, Taipei. These works are the result of the collaboration of prominent painters at Qianlong’s court including, Jin Kun 金昆 (ac.1717-ca.1749), Lu Zhan 魯湛, Cheng Zhidao 程志道, Wu Gui 吳桂, Sun Yu 孫祐, Zhou Kun 周鲲 (ac. 1737-ca.1748), Zhang Weibang 張為邦, Ding Guanpeng, and Yao Wenhan. For a detailed analysis of these works, see Anita Chung, Drawing Boundaries, 101-111. The scrolls were done in 1738, 1741, and 1748, respectively. For illustrations of each work, see Gugong shuhua tulu 故宮書畫圖錄 [Illustrated Catalog of Painting and Calligraphy in the National Palace Museum], vol. 21 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2010), 422-425; 428-431; 434-444.

553 Along with the Han palaces, various other imperial palaces were depicted in China. Jiucheng Palace, one of the most splendid residences of the Tang dynasty, was a favored theme of this genre. Li Sixun 李思訓 (651-718) of the Tang, Guo Zhongshu 郭忠恕 (?-977) of the Song, and Yuan Jiang 袁江 (ac. ca. 1690-ca.1746), Yuan Yao 袁耀 and Jiang Maode 蔣懋德 (1752-1828) of the Qing dynasty are known as artists who painted these themes. Lianchang Palace, a detached palace of the Tang dynasty, became famous from Yuan Zhen’s 元稹 (779-831) poem “Lyrics for the Lianchang Palace (Lianchang gongci 連昌宮辭)” and was thereafter a celebrated subject of painting. Lianchang Palace by Li Zhaodao 李昭道 of the Tang, Qiu Ying, and Zhang Gao 張鎬 of the Qing are in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei. Emperor Taizong Arriving at the Jiucheng Palace in the Freer Gallery of Art is attributed to the Tang dynasty court artist Li Sixun on the label of the painting. However, the stylistic elements suggest that this painting was done in the Ming dynasty by followers of Li Sixon’s style. For the record of Guo Zhongshu’s Jiucheng Palace 題郭忠恕九成宮圖, Jiang ting ji 江亭集 in Gu Sili ed., Anthology of Yuan Poems 元詩選, vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 547. The Jiucheng Palace by Yuan Jiang is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yuan Yao’s painting is housed in the Palace Museum, Beijing. Yuan Jiang, and Yuan Yao were professional painters based in Yangzhou in the eighteenth century. Because of the close correspondence between these two artists, they are thought to be brothers, with Yuan Yao younger than Yuan Jiang. They excelled in the intricate depiction of palatial complexes set within sumptuous blue-and-green landscapes. Reviving the monumental landscape style of the Tang and Song dynasties, the Yuan brothers produced large-scale scrolls and multi-panel screens to decorate the ostentatious mansions of the Yangzhou mercantile elite. For details of their artistic activities, see Anita Chung, Drawing Boundaries, 133-150; Richard M. Barnhart, Peach Blossom Spring: Gardens and Flowers in Chinese Paintings (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 104-113. Jiang Maode’s painting is in the National Palace Museum, Taipei.
representation; faultless calculation and proportion, structural clarity, and spatial organization were embodied in Chinese architectural representation done in the jiehua techniques. Rather than presenting any historical scene, these paintings bear a pseudo-historical nature created, or recreated, from the artist’s imagination. However, those recreations provide a convincing appearance and structural validity by referring to contemporaneous architecture, and evoke the atmosphere of a real event through sheer accumulation of details and their emphasis on accurate proportion and verisimilitude.

3) **Paintings of the Han Palaces: Between Tradition and Modernity**

Another complex problem regarding the theme is caused by the fact that there are discrepancies in iconography and motifs among the paintings of the *Han Palace*. This suggests that there was certain continuity with variations of the theme as it bore reinterpretation over time. The decision which visual elements should be kept and which altered was most probably made by people at a particular place and time. Thus, my analysis of *Han Palace* aims to elucidate how the choices of representation were made and what socio-historical background caused these selections.

The paintings known as the *Han Palace*, on which I focus show a repertoire of architecture loosely related to Chinese palaces. However, the paintings can be divided into three distinctive types according to the layout of the architecture and the landscape setting, the color schemes, the adaptation of linear perspective, and the shading techniques.\(^{554}\) The first type

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\(^{554}\) Paintings of the first group, which can be roughly dated to the early nineteenth century, seem to predate the screens belonging to the second and third groups based on their close affinity with the style of eighteenth-century landscape painting. Those in the third group are considered the latter version of this theme considering the employment of Western painting technique and pigment. They are most likely the products of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.
includes three screens in the National Palace Museum of Korea (figs. 4-36~38), one with eight panels and the other two with six panels. They were originally stored in Ch’angdŏk Palace but were transferred to the National Palace Museum of Korea in the late twentieth century. These paintings neither display the same range of architectural elements as the aforementioned Chinese examples nor can they be associated with the genre of jiehua. They feature a waterside village surrounded by continuous, gently rolling mountain ranges. The artists dedicated a large portion of the canvas to landscape depiction, and their architecture and figures are tiny in scale. The panoramic view of each screen portrays an idealized, romantic landscape in which the “Han palace” is embedded.

The blue-and-green landscape style is applied to the mountains, which are delineated with clean graphic lines and small green dots spread out along the outlines. With the exception of one or two thatched-roof pavilions, most buildings have gable-and-hip roofs decorated with a golden ridge and cinnabar and blue-green hues (fig. 4-36a). The representation of architecture complies with Chosŏn convention: individual buildings are represented by diagonals roughly parallel lines, and multiple moving focal points are applied in the same scene. The buildings are open to view, and inside literati leisurely converse or play chess (fig. 4-36b), and women play a board game. Screens with landscape and flower paintings, wooden benches, books and ceramics on tables inside buildings, and oddly shaped taihu rock and banana trees outside in the garden (fig. 4-36c) lend a Chinese atmosphere to the scene, complementing the Chinese hairstyles and clothing of the figures. Fishermen sit on a riverbank with their rods or catch fish in a net while sitting on a boat (fig. 4-36d). A scholar riding a mule or horse accompanied by an attendant crosses a stone bridge (fig. 4-36e). Rice paddies and buildings hinted at their rooftops are visible in the far distance.
The use of a moving focal point and parallel perspective, a color palette mainly consisting of blue and green, the decorative depiction of the landscape, and shades cast on roof tiles and columns indicate that these three works were produced in the court painting style prevalent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, a waterside village embraced by rolling hills and a warm spring scene with exuberant willow and banana trees, and colorful peach blossoms in profusion are reminiscent of the seventeenth-century landscapes, such as the *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers* (fig. 1-32) and *Landscape* (fig. 1-33). The artists of the two paintings adopted the generic objects and scenes that were conventionally used to represent the timeless pastoral tableaux of the Jiangnan region of China during springtime. Considering that the Han palaces were actually situated in the northern central region of China, the adaptation of motifs relating to spring in Jiangnan while depicting Han palaces is interesting.

The typical representation of peaceful spring days in the Jiangnan area may be found in the painting known as the *Air of Spring in Jiangnan* (江南春意圖). Spring in Jiangnan was not only a beloved theme of literati artists, including Sim Sajŏng 沈師正 (1707-1769) and Yi Insang 李麟祥 (1710-1760) in the eighteenth century, but was also favored by royal patrons. For example, the theme was selected as a painting topic for the painters-in-waiting three times during King Sunjo’s reign. In addition, large-scale screens depicting this subject were placed at the

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555 The former screen was commissioned to commemorate Crown Prince Yi Yun’s investiture in 1690 and the latter was produced to celebrate King Sukchong’s selection of government officials in 1691. These two works display similar motifs, such as scholars looking out from a water pavilion, fishing boats, bright green willows and colorful peach blooms along a meandering riverbank, and an official in a robe riding a horse, as well as a composition of buildings and mountains comparable to paintings of *Han Palace*. The noticeable differences between these screens and *Han Palaces* are that the painters of *Han Palaces* replaced the modest representation of thatched-roof pavilions with the splendid image of tile-roof buildings decorated in bright colors, which might correspond to courtly taste in the 19th century.

556 Sim Sajŏng’s and Yi Insang’s paintings of Air of Spring in Jiangnan are housed in the National Museum of Korea. Both paintings are done in monochrome ink, following the typical style of the Southern School of painting. Sim Sajŏng’s painting bears Kang Sehwang’s 姜世晃 (1713-1791) inscription.

557 Seventeenth day of the sixth month of 1814; the 5th day of the 1st month of 1819; the 13th day of the 10th month of 1819. See Kang Kwansik, *Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn*, vol.1, 311 and 355.
king’s and the crown prince’s residence and most likely been commissioned by scholar officials. Given that this image of rural life in Jiangnan was used by officials to eulogize a great age under capable and virtuous rulers in China, the gift presented by the royal subjects might express their wishes that the young crown prince become a benevolent and wise monarch to perpetuate happiness and prosperity as shown in the painting. Unfortunately, these screens described in court documents were not handed down to the present, but a handscroll painted by court painter Kim Sukyu 金壽奎 in 1814 (fig. 4-53) gives an idea of how this theme was visualized in the cultural milieu of the early nineteenth century. Interestingly, Kim Sukyu’s painting resembles the three screens of Han Palace in terms of motifs, such as the pyramidal-roofed pavilion and arch-shaped bridge. Although Kim’s painting was done in an abbreviated manner bearing the flavor of the Southern School of Painting, the conventional visual idioms associated with peaceful living in the springtime of Jiangnan similarly appear in Han Palace in the more sumptuous, luxurious blue-and-green style.

The close stylistic features found in the three screens indicate that they were produced around the same time by professional court painters who shared a range of vocabularies and methods for depicting landscape and architecture. The less decorative depiction of landscape in the eight-panel screen (fig. 4-36) indicates that it is probably a slightly earlier version than the two six-panel screens (figs. 4-37, 4-38). The method and materials used in mounting are almost identical. Another noteworthy feature regarding the three screens is that the first half of the eight-panel screen appears in one six-panel screen (fig. 4-37) while the second half is shown in the

558 Court archives indicate that Spring Air in Jiangnan was commissioned by officials of Kyujanggak Royal Library and dedicated to the crown prince in 1817, when the ceremony of the crown prince’s entrance to the Royal Confucian Academy was conducted. See “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the King” and “Records on the Storage of Screens Dedicated to the Crown Prince” cited in Komun’s chipsông, 254.

other six-panel screen (fig. 4-38). In other words, screen 4-37 is based on the left four panels of screen 4-36, which depicts fishing boats, water pavilions, the front thatched-roof building attached to a blue tile-roof main building, and an official riding a horse followed by a boy carrying a parasol. Between a river with fishing boats and the main building, the artist of screen 4-37 adds a scene of a house with a terrace and well-tended garden, where two scholars engage in conversation and a boy sweeps with a broom (fig. 4-37a). The right four panels of screen 4-36 were copied in screen 4-38: an architectural complex consisting of pavilions above a garden pond and the inner quarters of court ladies, a rice paddy, a gentleman in a wheelchair pushed by an attendant. The far right two panels of screen 4-38 contain newly added motifs, such as three scholars reading, conversing, and looking at ducks from a two-story thatched pavilion with red columns and luxurious rooftop decoration, and a fishing net cast into the water (fig. 4-38a). A careful examination of the two six-panel screens reveals how similarly these two paintings are rendered, even in the details.\footnote{In addition to the identical quality of the representation, the measurements are almost same: The painting on screen 4-2 is 70.8 x 45.5 cm and that of screen 4-3 is 71.2 x 49.9 cm.} These observations point towards the possibility that both paintings followed screen 4-36 and were created as a pair by the same group of artists.

In comparison to the three paintings discussed above, the second group of paintings emphasizes the architecture in their composition. These consist of an eight-panel screen in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-39), a four-panel screen in the Kyŏnggi University Museum (fig. 4-40), and two in private collections (figs. 4-41, 4-42). The richly decorated palace complex consists of double-eaved buildings (fig. 4-39a), pyramidal-roofed pavilions topped with gilded ornaments such as a stupa, disc, or globe (fig. 4-39b), and covered corridors connecting buildings. With their reduced landscape and total absence of human figures the paintings evoke a melancholic, solitary atmosphere. Bare mountains with a few plants along the ridges have
replaced mountains luxuriously rendered in the blue-and-green landscape style. The foliage of the broccoli-shaped trees is painted with dots, and ink outlines are used sparingly in the depiction of trunks and branches of trees (fig. 3-39c). Instead of using ink outlines, trees and columns are modeled with light and shadow, an unusual technique in Chosŏn court paintings. The nostalgia and romance have vanished and the emphasis is on the architecture, not the figures. The model of ideal Chinese antiquity gives way to the grandeur of the architecture, which is represented with newly imported Western techniques and materials via China and Japan. Similar patterns that emphasize the architecture in visual representation are found in the development of the screens of envoys.

Along with the unusual modeling technique, what is new here is the application of light blue color to the sky, an element most likely deriving from European painting techniques received through China. According to the East Asian tradition, the sky was considered an empty space and thus remained unpainted. Together with the introduction of European illusionistic devices, such as perspective, depth, shadows, and light from a single source, the concept of the empty sky changed. This new trend can be detected in the literature and paintings of the late eighteenth-century. For example, the travelogue written by Hong Taeyong, a Chosŏn envoy dispatched to China, described the wall painting inside the North Catholic Church in Beijing as follows.

Fabulous colors are applied to pavilions and figures in the painting. The pavilion is hollow inside, and the concave and convex shapes go well together.

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561 Exceptions include certain examples of religions paintings and landscapes with a background of winter or night sky, in which ink washes are lightly applied.
Human figures move and float high in the air as if they were alive. Moreover, being knowledgeable of perspective (the artist) aptly depicts the appearance and shade of stream and valley, the light and dimness of smoke and cloud, and the vacant space of the far sky with the original colors.\(^{563}\)

The ‘original’ color described in this quotation refers to sky-blue. As indicated by this record, Western paintings with a blue sky may have been introduced to the Korean peninsula via China by Chosŏn envoys.\(^{564}\) In fact, an inspiration can already be detected in works by Chŏng Sŏn 鄭款 (1676-1759) and Kang Hŭiŏn in the early and mid eighteenth century.\(^{565}\)

The radical shift in the rendition of the theme might have been caused by an influx of a new type of Chinese visual material, the Suzhou print, in the late eighteenth century. Suzhou prints, as highly commoditized visual objects, were widely circulated throughout China as well as exported to foreign countries, including Japan, Vietnam, France, Britain, Germany, and Holland. Unfortunately, it is difficult to discern which Suzhou prints were introduced into Korea and how many were imported to Chosŏn because of the paucity of textual evidence. However, similar stylistic elements found in Chosŏn paintings and circumstantial evidence suggest that Suzhou prints were transmitted to and appreciated in Chosŏn since the eighteenth century. For\(^{566}\)

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\(^{563}\) Hong Taeyong, “Conversation with Liu Songlin and Bao Youguan” 建寶問答, Tamhŏn oejip 湛軒外集, vol. 7, in Han’guk munjip ch’ongg an 韓國文集叢刊, vol. 248 (Seoul: Minjok munhwa ch’ujin wiwŏn hoe, 2000), 247a. “…樓閣人物。皆設真彩。樓閣中虚。凹凸相參。人物浮動如生。尤工於遠勢。若川谷顯晦。至於遠天空界。皆施正色…”

\(^{564}\) The influx of Western paintings by Chosŏn envoys is mentioned by Yi Ik 李瀷 (1681-1763) in his Sŏngho sasŏl 星湖僿說 [Sŏngho’s Encyclopedic Discourse], vol. 4: “Most of the envoys traveling to Beijing recently bought Western paintings and have them hanging on their walls.” Envoys to China not only bought Western paintings but Jesuit missionaries in Beijing also presented paintings to the envoys. Lee Kiji (1690-1722), who visited Beijing in 1720 received seven Western paintings, and Lee Úihŏn was gifted fifteen paintings in 1720. For details, see Shin Ik-Cheol, “The Experiences of Visiting Catholic Churches,” 24.

\(^{565}\) For example, Chŏng Sŏn’s (1676-1759) Sunrise at Munam of 1711 and 1742 and Kang Hŭiŏn’s Mount Inwang are early examples of Korean landscapes showing the coloration of blue sky. This non-traditional attribute reflected in these works is discussed in Yi Sŏngmi, Chosŏn sidae kŭrim sok ŭi sŏyang hwabŏp 조선시대 그림 속의 서양화법 [Western Techniques in paintings of the Chosŏn dynasty] (Seoul: Taewŏnsa, 2000), 153-156 and Burglind Jungmann, “Korean Contacts with Europeans in Beijing, and European Inspiration in Early Modern Korean Art,” in Looking East: Ruben’s Encounter with Asia, Stephanie Schrader et al. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2013), 82.
instance, Chosŏn envoys witnessed or purchased antiquities, paintings and calligraphic works known as Suzhou pian (蘇州片) prints or paintings imitating older works produced in Suzhou from the late Ming to the mid-Qing) at markets in Beijing and Suzhou merchants also visited the Chosŏn envoy’s lodgings. In addition, Chinese merchant ships departing from Suzhou to Nagasaki sometimes drifted on to or stopped by the southern coast of Korea and Cheju islands, and a Suzhou-native Catholic priest and missionary, Zhou Wenmo 周文謨 (1752-1801) propagated his faith to royalty and members of the elite in the capital in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These instances suggest that Suzhou’s visual objects were introduced to Chosŏn society. In fact, paintings and calligraphy imported from the Suzhou area were favored and collected by many Chosŏn collectors in the late eighteenth century.

Large, single-sheet prints depicting architecture and scenic spots—which were produced during the prime of the Suzhou print-making business, corresponding approximately to the reign of Yongzheng 雍正 (r. 1722-1735) and the beginning of Qianlong’s rule, are the most convincing sources for the second group of screens of the Han Palace. In particular, prints of

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566 Yi Ŭihyon 李宜顯 (1669-1745), Kyŏngja Yŏnhaeng chapchi 庚子燕行雜識 vol. 1, year of 1720, the 4th month, the 9th day; Sŏ Kyŏngsun 徐慶淳 (1804-?), “Ilha ingmuk” 日下賸墨 [Exchange with Eminent literati], Monggyŏngdang ilsa 夢經堂日史, year of 1855, the 11 month, the 28th day; Pak Chiwŏn 帕奇文, “Kwannae chŏngsa” 間程史 [Record of affairs on the way to Shanhai Pass], Yŏrha ilki, the 7th month, the 25th day; “Kodongrokk” 古董錄 [Records of Antiques] from “Sŏnggyŏng chapchi” 盛京雜識 [Miscellaneous notes on Shenyang], Yŏnamjip.

567 Zhou Wenmo was born in Kunshan County of Suzhou Prefecture in 1752 and entered the diocesan seminary in Beijing. After being ordained a priest, he was dispatched to Korea in 1794 and devoted himself to pastoral activities in the capital until his death by the Persecution of 1801. He baptized Lady Song, Prince Ŭnŏn’s wife and Lady Sin, the prince’s daughter-in-law. For his religious activities in Korea see Veritable Records of King Sunjo, vol. 2, year of 1801, the 3rd month, the 16th day; the 4th month, the 20th day; Chŏng Yakyong, “Chŏnhŏn myojimyŏng” 貞軒墓誌銘 [Epitaph of Chŏnhŏn], Simunjip 詩文集 vol. 15, Yŏyudang chŏnsŏ, vol. 1, 325a.

568 Pak Chiwŏn, “Kongjakgwan mungo” 孔雀館文稿 [Anthology of Pak Chiwŏn], Yŏnamjip, vol. 3.

ancient legendary palaces with conspicuous architectural compounds employing a modified European perspective and shadowing techniques seem to be related to new elements seen in the second and third groups of the Han Palace. Examples of large-scale, single-sheet prints produced in the prime period (figs. 4-54~56) offer clues to the possible Chinese import to Chosŏn, which inspired the paintings of Chinese palaces of the nineteenth-century. In the large monochrome prints with bright color applied by hand, splendid architecture is rendered in the Western modeling technique, against landscape settings. Incorporating a traditional bird’s-eye view into the linear perspective, employing heavy shading on buildings and trees, and adding a pyramidal-roofed pavilion with metal ornaments are common features of these Chinese examples and Chosŏn versions of the Han Palace in the nineteenth century. As is well-known, Chosŏn painters learned about Chinese painting through woodblock prints rather than genuine Chinese paintings because the former were more readily available.

The coloration of blue sky was also found in late nineteenth-century Japanese woodblock prints known as Ukiyo-e (浮世絵), of the theme Royal Palace of Chosŏn (fig. 4-57). This full-color woodblock print allegedly depicting the royal palaces of Chosŏn shows significant parallels with the screens of the Han Palace in the blue coloration of the sky and the configuration of motifs. This work was printed by the Japanese publisher Fukada Kumajirō (1874-1898) in 1894, who was famous for Ukiyo-e depicting the diplomatic events between Japan and Korea and the Sino-Japanese War. The ways in which the artist represents the actual place in this triptych is surprisingly similar to that of Chosŏn painters who painted Han Palace. His approach

570 Ukiyo-e prints were introduced to Chosŏn society in the eighteenth century, as evidenced by Kim Kwangguk’s (1727-1797) Sŏngnong hwawŏn 石農畫苑 [Paintings collected by Kim Kwangguk ], an album still extant. For further study of the contents of Kim Kwangguk’s collection, see Pak Hyoün, “Kim Kwangguk úi Sŏngnong hwawŏn kwa 18 segi huban Chosŏn hwadan” 김광국의 《석농화원》과 18세기 후반 조선 화단 [Kim Kwangguk’s Painting Collection, Sŏngnong hwawŏn and the art world in late eighteenth-century Chosŏn], in Yuhŭi sammae: Sŏni úi yelsul kwa sŏnbī ch’wimi 遊戱三味: 欣賞의 예술과 선택취미 [Pleasure and Three Devotions: Literati’s arts and pastime], eds. Yed bu Hongjun and Yi T’aeho (Seoul: Hakkojae, 2003), 136-139.
is not to render an objective depiction of the site, but rather to construct a place catering to a contemporaneous audience.\textsuperscript{571} Like the objects and scenes found in paintings of the *Han Palace*, those in the print are generalized by featureless motifs conforming to types. Interestingly, the elements used to visualize the Chinese palaces by Chosŏn painters, square pavilions with metal decoration, long galleries surrounding an architectural complex, a garden pond with balustrade, barren mountains with little vegetation, were employed to create a Chosŏn palace by a Japanese artist active in the contemporary period. Given the considerable impact of Suzhou prints on the development of Japanese multi-color woodblock prints, it is not surprising that there are some similarities among Chinese Suzhou prints, Japanese Ukiyo-e, and Chosŏn screens of the *Han Palace*.\textsuperscript{572} The closeness to the Chosŏn *Han Palace* is even more obvious in *Royal Palace of Chosŏn* (fig. 4-58), a copper engraving in the collection of Tokyo Keizai University Library, which is believed to be a later version of the aforementioned woodblock print.

The eight-panel screen in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4-39) is the most refined version representing the second type. The composition of this work is emulated by the other screens, with only slight modifications of detail and color. In addition, the stylistic features, including the depiction of broccoli-shaped trees, the rendition of short lines inspired by hemp-fiber strokes, combined with small dots on the mountains, and the application of black color to cast shadows on trunks and columns, are commonly found in the other works of the second group. The painting of the Kyŏnggi University Museum (fig. 4-40) is close to screen 4-39 in terms of style and composition. However, this work was done in a less refined manner, as shown

\textsuperscript{571} The figures’ clothes, architectural structures, and locations of buildings are different from the reality of nineteenth-century Chosŏn.

in its simplified motifs and casual execution of shading. The ten-panel screen in a private
collection in Korea (fig. 4-41) resembles screen 4-40 most. Yet, a noticeable difference is found
in the coloring; the former is painted in a more moderate manner while the latter is rendered in
bright, vivid colors to provide a decorative effect. Another painting fragment in a private
collection in Germany (fig. 4-42) was probably the far left panel of a multi-panel screen. This
painting shows a more traditional color scheme, and the rendition of the architecture looks close
to court paintings of the late eighteenth century. An official wearing a robe and a crane in the
courtyard are reminiscent of the first group of paintings, thus reflecting an older style of court
painting.

Despite variations in detail and coloration, these four paintings share compositional and
stylistic elements that distinguish them clearly from those in the first group. Because of these
obvious differences, one may be skeptical about claims that the paintings in the first and second
categories can be collectively called “Han Palaces.” Regarding this divergence, another eight-
panel screen in the National Palace Museum (fig. 4-43) provides insights on the evolution of this
theme. This painting is located somewhere between the two groups, revealing mixed features
associated with either group. Architecture along a riverbank, mountains in the style of blue-and-
green landscape, and decorative, auspicious clouds entail the traces of the first group of paintings.
The blue sky, the structure of the architecture, and the exclusion of human figures are related to
the second type. This work is an important link in understanding the development of court
screens depicting architectural themes as well as in proving evidence for the relationship
between the two groups.

The third group of paintings, comprising a six-panel screen in the National Palace
Museum (fig. 4-44) and one in a private collection (fig. 4-45), represents the last development of
the Han Palace theme, featuring a radical break with traditional styles of painting. In spite of looking very different on first glance due to the difference in format and in landscape setting, these works have many similar to the previous two groups in terms of motifs: the pyramidal-roofed pavilion in the middle, buildings atop a high platform and enclosed by red lattice railings, and brick architecture. These paintings show a more advanced acceptance of European techniques than those in the second group. While artists of earlier screens somehow avoided to use chiaroscuro effects and linear perspective, those who produced these two paintings actively experimented with Western techniques of illusionism. The architecture arranged in long diagonal lines offers a receding space on the canvas, and shadows cast on one side of the stone platforms allude to a source of light. However, the artist’s adaptation of Western techniques is eclectic; shading is reduced and formatted, and the architecture is shown in a frontal orientation inconsistent with the overall viewpoint. These modifications are intended to make the unfamiliar Western elements more palatable to Chosŏn viewers. This is attested by the perspective applied to the two paintings, which does not have the locus of a vanishing point. Despite this pseudo-perspective, these works show the most advanced form of representation of architecture at that time.\footnote{While the shading is convincing for the architecture, the shading of rocks is more or less decorative.}

The six-panel screen in the National Palace Museum (fig. 4-44) includes architectural motifs and a landscape background similar to the paintings discussed before. Decorative depiction of trees and piles of rocks, and the use of green and red color reveal its connection to the tradition. The surrounding landscape is rendered in a more or less decorative manner, while the architecture is based on European naturalism with its sense of volume and shading effects (fig. 4-44a). Trunks of trees without outlines (fig. 4-44b) and shadows cast on buildings are unusual in East Asian tradition.
The painting in the private collection (fig. 4-45) is currently mounted in a modern frame. The exceptionally large-sized square canvas is an unusual format for traditional Chosŏn painting.\(^{574}\) The lightly rendered color on paper indicates that this painting may have been created as a sketch for a color screen. The dramatically contrasting dark and light created by a single and unseen source of light reveals a more developed understanding of the Western chiaroscuro technique. However, the artist did not pay as much attention to linear perspective as the painters of the earlier discussed screen did. Nevertheless, the full modeling of the architectural structure contributes to a more convincing representation of three-dimensional objects and of space.

While paintings in the first group are closely associated with the style of court painting prevalent in late eighteenth century, paintings in the second and third groups have more in common with works of the second half of the nineteenth century. Examples of the latter employ a pseudo-perspective in which architectural structures are arranged on parallel lines that converge at a single vanishing point, but figures and objects are painted in frontal or birds-eye views corresponding to multiple moving focal points. Such techniques are frequently employed in the court screens documenting royal banquets during the reign of King Kojong. This modified version of the Western perspective first appears in the screen *Royal Banquet of 1848* (fig. 4-11) and grows in popularity thereafter. Another clue to estimating the dates of the works in the second and third groups is the inclusion of building structures made of brick (fig. 4-43c), which resemble Chip’ok Pavilion (fig. 4-59) in Kyŏngbok Palace.\(^{575}\) Chip’ok Pavilion was originally attached to Hamnyŏng Hall in Ch’angdŏk Palace and was transferred to Kyŏngbok palace in

\(^{574}\) This painting was first introduced at an auction managed by My Art Auction in March of 2013. The measurements of this work are 132.0 x 133.5 cm. The unusual square canvas suggests that it may be cut from a larger rectangular.

\(^{575}\) Architecture made of bricks appears in screens 4-34, 4-38, 4-39, which are believed to be later works of this theme.
1888 by the order of King Kojong. At that time, the building was renovated according to the Chinese style with the aid of a Qing architect active at Kojong’s court. Its Chinese inspiration is reflected in its moon-shaped window, its platform and latticed windows and doors. This unusual brick architecture with distinctive Chinese elements rarely appeared in previous Chosŏn paintings. The insertion of these new iconographical elements seems to have been inspired by painters’ direct experiences and knowledge of actual, contemporary palaces in the late nineteenth century. Thus, the paintings belonging to the last two groups were probably produced in the late nineteenth century, approximately a century later than the screens of the first group.

4) An Example of the Use of the Han Palace at the Early Nineteenth-century Royal Banquet

Literary evidence proves that Chinese architectural paintings, including *Going up the River on the Qingming Festival*, a Ming copy of Zhang Zeduan’s 張擇端 (1085-1145) original painting, had been known in Chosŏn since the eighteenth century. In addition, the first edition of the *Manual of the Mustard Seed Garden* (芥子園畫傳 Jieziyuan huazhuan, 1679) (fig.4-60), a

576 The Qing architect was known as Huang Yueting 黃月亭, who worked with Russian architect Afanasy Ivanovich Seredin-Sabatin (1860-1921) active in Korea while constructing Kwannun Pavilion in 1888, the first Western-style building in Kyŏngbok Palace by the commission of Emperor Kojong. Huang Yueting’s activities in Korea are relatively unknown but he served as a teacher until 1911 in the office of household furniture, affiliated with the Department of the Royal Household (Kungnaebu 宮內府).

577 Cho Yŏngsŏk 趙榮祿 (1686-1761) saw Qiu Ying’s painting of the Qingming Festival and left an inscription in 1704. Pak Chiwŏn (1737-1805) saw eight different versions of *Going up the River on the Qingming Festival* including one by Qiu Ying. Among the eight paintings, Pak left detailed records on three paintings he saw; one that had been collected by Kim Kwangsu 金光遂 (1696-?) and was acquired by Sŏ Sangsu 徐常修 (1735-1793) later; one was in the collection of a person whose style name was Ilsujae; and one was owned by Yi Hagon 李夏坤 (1677-1724). For the original texts, see Cho Yŏngsŏk, “清明上河圖跋” *Inscription on Going up the River on the Qingming Festival, Kwanajaego 觀我齋稿*, vol. 3; Pak Chiwŏn, “清明上河圖跋” *Inscription on Going up the River on the Qingming Festival*, “觀齋所藏清明上河圖跋” *Inscription on Going up the River on the Qingming Festival owned by Sŏ Sangsu*, “日修齋所藏清明上河圖跋” *Inscription on Going up the River on the Qingming Festival owned by Ilsujae*, “湛軒所藏清明上河圖跋” *Inscription on Going up the River on the Qingming Festival owned by Yi Hagon, Yŏnamjip*, vol. 7, 114b-114c.
Chinese painting manual that included instructions for painting architectural images, was imported to Korea at the latest in 1719, and it is thus possible that Chinese images of imperial palaces were transmitted to Chosŏn artists through woodblock painting manuals. However, the transmission of Chinese models to Chosŏn does not necessarily mean that Chosŏn architectural representations were affected by Chinese paintings. In fact, the images of an imperial palace with complex architectural details as demonstrated in Chinese paintings and woodblock prints differ from those of Chosŏn paintings discussed in this chapter.

Although we know through archival research that Weiyang Palace, Lianchang Palace, Changle Palace, and Jiucheng Palace were also produced and appreciated in eighteenth-century Chosŏn, there are few surviving paintings of such topics. Thus it is difficult to discern the similarities and differences between Chosŏn and Chinese paintings of palace architecture. Supposing that the extant Chosŏn paintings of the Han Palace produced in the nineteenth century were somehow reflective of their precedents, the earlier Chosŏn paintings of Chinese palaces would not have much in common with the Chinese paintings discussed above.

The aforementioned various examples of literary texts and pictorial representations in earlier paintings and painting manuals may have provided elements of Chinese palace architecture and become sources of knowledge that affected later representations of “Han” Palaces at the Chosŏn court. However, there are clear differences between these references and nineteenth-century paintings of Han palaces. This is partially because the description of a text cannot be easily translated into a visual medium like painting, and partly because the artists’

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579 For example, Yu Manchu saw paintings of Weiyang Palace, Lianchang Palace and Spring Dawn in the Han Palace in 1782 and 1783. Refer to footnote 540. The subjects of Changle Palace of the Han and Jiucheng Palace of the Tang dynasty were selected for painter’s exam in 1824 and Daming Palace of the Tang was selected in 1838. See Kang Kwansik, Chosŏn hugi kungjung hwawŏn, 404 and 409.
subjectivity and conventions hindered the conveyance of accurate representation. The allusive and allegorical quality in literature explaining Han palaces offers unspecified areas to be filled in later by the imagination and interpretation. In the same vein, Chinese visual representation, which offered imaginary scenes on the basis of historical and mythical narratives, did not provide an explicit iconography for Chosŏn painters.

In this context, Anita Chung’s analysis of Qing pictorial representations of Han palaces is inspiring. She claims that Han palace paintings produced in the Qing dynasty show the way Qing people visualized the mythical past through materials around them: Han palaces were fabrications by Qing people based on their selection from various ranges of vocabularies and methods. This is equally true for pictorial representation of Han palaces by Chosŏn court painters. Chosŏn court painters neither paid attention to the nostalgia of ruined splendor as expressed in the literature nor did they intend to generate architectural representation as seen in contemporaneous Chinese paintings. Instead, they formed their images of Chinese palaces through a perceptual screen derived from inherited culture and transformed by personal experience. The images of Chinese palaces represented in the paintings were “retrospective reconstructions from present-minded vantage points.”

From this relativist point of view, we can glimpse at the function and meaning of painting of the Han Palace in the nineteenth-century Chosŏn court context. Two ritual protocols records give evidence that a screen of the Han Palace was used for a court ceremony in 1809 held to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the consummation of the marriage of Lady Hyegyŏng, the

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580 Anita Chung, Drawing Boundaries, 104-116.
581 Wu Hung’s analysis paves the way to alternative approaches to understanding the theme. He points out the possibility of diverse, complex images and the concept of the Western Han capital, Chang’an by quoting American cultural historian Carl Emil Schorske’s words, “No man thinks of the city in hermetic isolation. He forms his image of it through a perceptual screen derived from inherited culture and transformed by personal experience.” Wu Hung, Monumentality, 144-145.
widow of Crown Prince Sado and grandmother of then ruling monarch King Sunjo. The screen, which is no longer extant but is represented in an illustration as part of the ceremonial record (fig. 4-61), was installed behind the seat of Lady Hyegyŏng. A series of pyramidal-roofed pavilions and two-story buildings of multiple gables and hip roofs placed on high platforms, bridges connecting architecture, and willow trees along a riverbank shown in the screen are closely associated with surviving paintings of the Han Palace. Not only the contents of the painting but also the style of the mounting are strikingly similar to the screens of the first and second groups in the National Palace Museum of Korea and National Museum of Korea.

Given that screens of the Ten Symbols of Longevity and bird-and-flower paintings were usually placed behind the Queen’s seat at court ceremonies because of their connotation with longevity and conjugal harmony, it is unusual that a screen of palace architecture would be installed. It might be related to the symbolic meaning of Han palaces in the early nineteenth-century court context. The word “Han palace” appears six times in the Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty: once in the reign of King Sukchong and five times in the reign of King Sunjo. Except for one case in which “Han palace” was mentioned in the Royal Order of

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582 Two copies of ritual protocol recording this event are now in the British Library and in Changsŏgak Royal Library at the Academy of Korean Studies in Sŏngnam, Korea. The former is entitled Kisa chin p’yori chin ch’an ŭigwe 己巳進表裏進餧儀軌 [Ceremony offering clothes and food to Lady Hyegyŏng in the Year of Kisa (1809)], which was produced for royal perusal. It contains 18 two-page illustrations of buildings, court regalia, musical instruments, furniture etc. used in the ceremony. Pigments used in the paintings are vermillion, carbon, lazurite, lead white, malachite, orpiment, and red ochre. The latter is called Chinchansŏ ŭigwe 進饌所儀軌 [Records of Royal Banquet to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Lady Hyegyŏng’s consummation of marriage] (access number is 2-2822). This copy, which does not include illustrations, was distributed to the Four History Archives and the authorities concerned.

583 The screen depicted in the ritual protocols consists of ten panels. However, the extant paintings of Han Palaces comprise six- or eight-panels. This screen is eclectic, showing both the romantic, idealized landscape of the first type and the architectural depiction of the second type. Of the paintings discussed above, screens 4-38 and 4-39 have a close affinity with this screen.

584 Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty, year of 1676, the 4th month, the 9th day; year of 1802, the 10th month, the 13th day; year of 1809, the 1st month, the 22nd day; year of 1809, the 2nd month, the 27th day; year of 1811, the 3rd leap month, the 27th day; year of 1815, the 1st month, 1st day. Han palace in the Veritable Records of King Sukchong in 1676 symbolizes the pleasure life of retired Queen Dowager Insŏn (1618-1674), the grandmother of King Sukchong.
Investiture of Queen Sunwŏn in 1802, the term was associated with Lady Hyegyŏng in King Sunjo’s rule. In particular, this word was repeatedly included in the eulogy dedicated to Lady Hyegyŏng at the royal banquet in 1809. In the eulogy to celebrate and wish for her longevity, the Han palace symbolizes the pleasure and comforts of the late life of the retired queen dowager and the sacred place, which the Queen Mother of the West visits to offer immortal peaches to her. Considering that this symbolic meaning of a Han palace was prevalent at King Sunjo’s court, it is not surprising that a pictorial representation of the theme was displayed at the event dedicated to Lady Hyegyŏng. It is likely that the artists, agents, and anticipated participants in the ceremony would understand the symbolic meaning of the Han palace in association with Lady Hyegyŏng and thus might have chosen the theme to represent longevity and auspiciousness, among the many other meanings attached to Han palaces in order to construct meaning pertinent to the special occasion.

In this case, the Han palace served as a ritual apparatus to lend a sacred and auspicious atmosphere to the court event. Immortality and longevity could be materialized through visual representation of a Han palace. In short, the Han Palace was reinvented and fabricated according to viewers’ demands: its meaning was shared by audience and participants of the event at that time and intensified through ritual performance. It is only one of many meanings embedded in the notion of Han palaces that conformed to the perception of a small audience, nineteenth-century royal members who were under specific historical and cultural circumstances.

585 The eulogies dedicated to Lady Hyegyŏng are documented in Veritable Records of the Chosŏn Dynasty, twenty-second day of the first month of 1809 and twenty-seventh day of the second month of 1809. The allegorical implication of a Han palace relating to longevity and pleasure in the later life was continued in the royal edict delivered on New Year’s Day of 1815 to celebrate Lady Hyegyŏng’s eightieth birthday.
4. Conclusion

*Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* is a complex collage of numerous images derived from textual and visual sources past and present, Chinese and Korean, domestic and foreign, and eyewitness and hearsay. As a result, it creates a dazzling spectacle and fascinating ambiguity that is open to multiple interpretations. Despite some unsolved enigmas and disagreement among scholars, I assert that the screen is the envisioned image of idealized empire and peaceful and prosperous society under a sage kingship, which both reflects and creates the vision of an empire the Chosŏn elite had in mind.

There are multi-layered meanings of the theme of tribute bearers that shift according to socio-political circumstances. It is clear that the screen directly represents the concept of the “middle kingdom versus barbarian states.” This theme is fundamentally rooted in Confucian ideology and the Sino-centric worldview that constitute the cultural and political identity of the state as well as the epistemology of Chosŏn intellectuals. These concepts, which define the hierarchy of the countries and diplomatic relationships in pre-modern East Asia, were not always necessarily China-centered. After the demise of the Ming, the Sino-Barbarian theory was transformed into the concept of “Chosŏn Chunghwa,” which asserted that Chosŏn Korea was central vis-à-vis the “barbarian” neighboring states.

While political ideology operated on a philosophical level in understanding the theme of the paintings, Qing material culture imported to Chosŏn through intensive diplomatic and artistic exchange during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries provided the formal structure for envisioning the image of an empire. It is also important to note that elements and iconographical features that seem confusing or ambiguous to viewers were purposely chosen and incorporated
by Chosŏn intellectuals, royal members, and court painters in an act of cultural translation. The popularity of this theme in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can be explained by the appeal of its ideological connotations to the Chosŏn ruling class and the increased curiosity and favor for the exotic and knowledge and information about the outside world prevalent in late Chosŏn Korea.\textsuperscript{586}

The *Han Palace* paintings belonging to the first group are rendered in a more conventional manner in terms of style and subject matters. They are closely associated with the court painting style of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but their motifs and composition are indebted to historic themes favored since the beginning of the dynasty, such as the *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers* and *Spring in Jiangnan*. By contrast, the paintings in the second and third groups are done in a style of the late nineteenth century that integrated certain Western techniques such as linear perspective and chiaroscuro. The images representing a peaceful life in an idyllic village, the primary motif of the first group, disappears in these later paintings. Instead, the splendid palace architecture is emphasized in a ‘Westernized’ spatial organization.

In light of such obvious differences of styles and iconographies, how can these paintings be perceived as rendition of the *Han Palace*? It is likely that Chosŏn Koreans conceived differing images of Han palaces, or any Chinese palace, as a homogeneous whole, resulting in stereotyped images that conformed to the Chosŏn perception of an exotic and splendid Chinese imperial space. It was not the intention of the artists or agents to reconstruct the image of a particular historical Chinese palace through the theme of “Han Palace,” or directly imitate any set of Chinese iconography but adhere to fantasies that painters and audiences of the Chosŏn

\textsuperscript{586} For a study of a new culture of curiosity and its social and artistic affect on late Chosŏn society, see Chang Chinsŏng, “Chosŏn hugi hoehwa wa munhwajŏk hogisim” 조선 후기 회화와 문화적 호기심 [Late Chosŏn painting and the Culture of Curiosity], *Misulsa nondan* 32 (2011): 163-189.
dynasty held in their imagination. Since these images were constructed according to the reigning culture and made pertinent to the contemporary world, they changed throughout times. In the first stage, “Chinese-ness” was represented as a peaceful rural life in nature and was achieved through figures wearing Chinese-style clothes. But the theme was reshaped in a later period with the introduction of new techniques and new viewer perspectives. At that point, “Chinese-ness” was represented by magnificent Chinese architecture visualized in quasi-Western techniques imported through China. This shift reflects changes in Chosŏn Korean’s perception of China in relation to Qing rule and later on to the emergence of Westernization and modernity. It, in fact, follows the development from a peaceful, romanticized kingdom to a modern state represented by a grand imperial palace.

Glorifying the prosperous and splendid past of China as a political and cultural model of Chosŏn society and reflecting contemporary material culture both from China and Korea, as well as interest in new visual techniques and idioms, *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* and *Han Palace* embody the self-referential rhetorical way of Chosŏn elites by incorporating Chinese exemplars and curiosity toward a new world beyond the confines of China.
CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the circulation of knowledge, the transmission of cultural and social values and practices, and the manifestation of ideological ideas and political agendas reflected in the visual culture of the late Chosŏn court. Pursuing an alternative history of Chosŏn intellectuals and society as represented and reconstructed through court art, I employed a new framework to analyze screens commissioned by royalty and high officials to satisfy ritual, political, and social demands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rather than focusing only on iconographical and formal analyses, as had been customary in previous art historical scholarship, I attempted to challenge the notion of “influence” in the relationship between Chinese and Korean art and of “one, true meaning” innately fixed to pictorial themes and motifs widely disseminated in East Asia.

To achieve my goals, I pondered on the plurality of agencies at work in the production and consumption of art, and the conflicts and negotiations among various agencies, by employing the theoretical concept of “agency” developed in the discipline of anthropology. Another important concept I used in this study is “cultural translation,” which provided a conceptual remapping to understanding the adaptation of Chinese themes in Chosŏn court art in light of the artistic agency of Korean participants involved in the cultural transformation or nativization of foreign elements. Further, I included ideas of scholarship regarding the propagandistic role of art, the significance of the materiality of works of art, and the interrelation between visual objects and ceremonial dance and music in ritual settings.

Although the notion of Koreanization, or nativization, of Chinese elements in Korean art is of great concern to modern scholarship, the notion of and boundaries between China and Chosŏn Korea, as well as different levels of consciousness of China as ‘other’ in constituting the
political and cultural identity of Koreans in pre- and early modern periods is difficult to grasp. However, there exist subtle and delicate differences between Koreanized versions of Chinese images and original Chinese representations, which are readily recognized not only by modern scholars but also were undoubtedly acknowledged by the Chosŏn audience. When studying Korean literature written in classical Chinese, scholars acknowledge semantic units of meaning, a rule of syntax, and a structural order of sentences shared with Chinese literature. However, there are distinct features that differentiate the Korean literature from its Chinese counterparts, whether a discrepancy in linguistic elements, or meanings. In the same vein, we can find many common characteristics in terms of iconographies, formats, styles, and symbolic meanings of a given subject matter in Chinese and Korean art, while there is obviously an untranslated realm.

I designated this untranslated area of “Chosŏnized” or nativized elements and delved into the reasons for this cultural untranslatability and eclectic adaptation of Chinese themes in Chosŏn court art with interdisciplinary investigations of the cultural and social functions of commemorative art as well as the temporal and spatial contexts of Chosŏn court screens. In addition, I examined an idiosyncratic style of late Chosŏn court paintings depicting Chinese themes in relation to the artistic practices of court painters, which had been often noted as “court painting style” elsewhere, but not discussed as a phenomenon that occurred across a certain range of genres in a given period. The royal court defined in this dissertation is not a self-contained entity, but an arena of competitions and negotiations in which both individual and corporate agents engaged. Thus, court art commissioned by individuals is considered a dazzling fabric interwoven with personal concerns, social standings, political interests and identity, and artistic tastes.
Another conundrum I faced was how to define “Korea-ness,” specifically “Chosŏn-ness,” with meaningful and objective parameters for the study of Chosŏn court art. In lieu of investing in the aesthetic values and originality attributed to Chosŏn art that Korean nationalist art historians formulated to counteract Japanese colonial scholarship, I focused on cases studies as a way of examining the role court art played in mediating networks of social agents, creating symbolically charged ritual spaces, and circulating knowledge and ideas. Each chapter consists of two subjects that show the adaptation, and reinvention of certain Chinese themes in court screens ranging from the eighteenth to the late nineteenth centuries: the *Orchid Pavilion Gathering* and *Chinese Palace Ladies; The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi;* and *Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court* and the *Han Palace.* I selected these subjects not only for their rich iconographical and formal elements which had circulated widely in East Asia, but also for their political and ritual significance for the Chosŏn audience. Each case study is also integral a variety of questions concerning iconic representation, female viewership, reference of contemporaneous material culture, rhetorical and reference to historical events, and the expression of social and cultural values and desires.

Chapter One introduced institutional systems of royal painting bureaus, explored how various agents participated in the creation and consumption of court art, and examined the socio-political dimensions and conventions of art commissioning in the Chosŏn dynasty. This chapter provided an overview and prelude to the investigation of late Chosŏn court art presented in the following chapters. Incorporating previous scholarship on the historical development of artistic institutions and royal patronage of court art, I investigated how various agents interacted with each other and how the social network among artists, patrons, and recipients influenced the art commission, and how works of art played a role in mediating the conflicts or demands of agents.
The second part of this chapter proved the significance of commemorative screens in social and artistic contexts by examining three screens produced under the auspices of leaders of a political faction in the late seventeenth century.

I scrutinized two types of eighteenth-century commemorative screens rendered in court painting style in Chapter Two. The examination of these two subjects consisted of both formal analysis and a discursive approach. Teasing out iconographical and stylistic elements found in Chinese themes of the Orchid Pavilion Gathering and of court ladies, I explored the process of cultural translation and changes in connotation and perception when the themes are transferred from one culture to another over time. My discursive analysis was concerned with the peculiarity of Chosŏn commemorative court screens and the agency of the intended viewers. I examined how the “aniconic representation” adopted to depict a famous Chinese subject engendered, contested, and constructed space for communal memory and for the identity of patrons and viewers, and how female agency was exercised in a patriarchal society, expressing social, cultural, and intellectual identities and subjectivities. The emphasis in my approach is on the historical specificity referring to particular, actual events rather than acknowledging the symbolic meaning of a subject matter in general terms. I searched for specific meanings and contexts, and asked how symbols were deployed at particular times, in particular spaces. This analysis points us towards the way representational practices operate in concrete historical circumstances.

In Chapter Three I proposed that two themes deriving from Chinese mythological and semi-historical texts, *The Banquet of Xiwangmu* and *The Banquet of Guo Ziyi*, were modified to reflect current Chosŏn society and formulated to suit ritual settings. In addition to reviewing primary and secondary sources to introduce the symbolic meaning and historical evolution in China and Korea, I investigated how screens depicting these two themes were employed in
rituals, particularly in festive state ceremonies, to fulfill political, social, and commercial functions in and beyond the court. The political and ritual roles these themes played at the Chosŏn court are scrutinized by taking court performances and customs of court ritual music into account. The emphasis on the festive atmosphere of the banquet scene in Korean versions of The Banquet of Xiwangmu and The Banquet of Guo Ziyi is a result of the intentional choice made by artists and patrons who were conscious of possible viewers of the art: the intentions lie in their desire to glorify and celebrate the occasion and the political authority of the monarch by superimposing the legendary past onto contemporaneous circumstances, or to enhance the congratulatory ambiance in a dynamically interactive manner.

Screens of Envoys Paying Tribute to the Court and the Han Palace discussed in Chapter Four reveal the way in which Chosŏn Koreans imagined and represented Han China as an idealized, prosperous society by using local idioms invented by Chosŏn artists that were based on knowledge imported to the peninsula through artistic exchanges. Although these two themes commonly visualize the space of the Chinese imperial palace, the mode of representation and perception differs from the case studies analyzed in previous chapters. Compared other examples of Chosŏn screens depicting Chinese subject matters, their meaning, function, iconography, and direct relationship with Chinese examples of similar themes are ambiguous. This is partially because the intention to convey a certain ‘historical’ moment and place with iconographical accuracy was not a primary concern of the Chosŏn agents. This attitude toward envisioning Chinese-ness led to the creation of an ambiguous, unidentifiable space that offered a dazzling patchwork of images deriving from textual and visual sources past and present, Chinese and Korean, domestic and foreign, eyewitness and hearsay. This ambiguity opened the possibility of
multiple interpretations, such as the construction of a dynamic narrative and multiple reinterpretation in the afterlife of those works of art.

I would like to conclude this dissertation by revisiting the quotation in the introduction, “culture as routes.” This study sent me on a fascinating odyssey exploring the various routes in which culture travels, moves, and develops through time and space, and constantly demanding attempts to diversify the vocabulary describing the cross-national relationship between Korean and Chinese art by emphasizing the role of Chosŏn Koreans as active agents. Instead of positing or identifying the original meaning of a visual object, I hope that this thesis has been able to illuminate multifaceted aspects of these works of art as living embodiments of the ideological, political, social, and ritual circumstances in which an object was produced and consumed. It thus would stimulate scholarly inquiry into Chosŏn court art from transcultural and interdisciplinary perspectives.
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* Figures have been removed due the copyright restrictions.

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