

<ABSTRACT>

A New Example of Contemplative Bodhisattva of Paekche

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This contemplative Bodhisattva was purchased by a private Korean collector from a Japanese in Tokyo around 1948, but it has never been introduced.

The statue is not only one of the most beautiful sculptures of Korea, but also offers clues to solve some of the problems of history of ancient Korean sculpture. It exemplifies the last stages of the stylistic changes of the contemplative Bodhisattvas of Paekche. The sculptor of this work attempted a confident plastic recomposition and deformation, which are thought to have links with schematized and abstract style of Buddhist statues of Silla.

Having highly stylized slender bosom, waist and arms and schematized skirt, this statue has characteristics of Sui Chinese Buddhist statues. The Contemplative Bodhisattva with square pedestal(Treasure No.331) may be regarded as a good example of an embodiment of these characteristics with Paekche variation. While faithfully following the type of the Contemplative Bodhisattva(National Treasure No.78) dating from the late 6th century to the style of the statue under discussion, which is dated to the mid -7th century.

In other words, this statue, retaining basic elements of the Contemplative Bodhisattva (National Treasure No.78), derived from schematization and abstraction of the side views of the contemplative Bodhisattva reportedly excavated in Kongju dated to the late 6th century and of the contemplative Bodhisattva(National Treasure No.83)The type and style of contemplative Bodhisattva under discussion began to influence the contemplative Bodhisattva of Silla from the mid -7th century and on. On the Bodhisattva statues of Silla made under the influence of this statue aesthetics of schematic and abstract recomposition is most evident in the lower half, particularly on the side view.

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A Study on Cho Y ōng-s ōk's Works and His View on Painting

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Cho Y ōng-s ōk(1686-1761), whose penname was Kwanaje, was a high ranking literati-official who was also a renowned painter.

Like many of his fellow literati-artists, Cho regarded the painting as a means of suggestion and held it in a close association with poetry and calligraphy. One difference, however, Cho had was that he had a unique view of genre painting based on realism and practical usefulness of paintings.

Cho maintained that it is not sufficient to merely copy model paintings, but a painter must see the subject matter for himself to paint it realistically. Furthermore, he noted cognitive function and practical usefulness of the painting. In establishing his view on the genre painting, he added aesthetic function to these two.

Superficially viewed, Cho may appear to have had double standards for the painting in general. His copies of model paintings and landscapes done in the technique of the Wu School of Chinese painting reflect his view that paintings should be suggestive and should include, the elements of poetry and calligraphy in harmony, while his genre paintings of life of the Chos ōn period people of all walks are regarded as a reflection of his realistic beliefs.

Kim Hong-do(Tanw ōn) and Kim T ōk-shin(K ōngje) have inherited Cho's view on the genre painting, realizing the full blossoming of the Korean genre Painting in the second half of the 18th century. Cho's importance in Korea art history of the late Chos ōn period lies in that he was a harbinger of the Korean genre painting.

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Presentation of a New Material
"Cheong -Jook -hwa -sa" A History of Painting
Written by Nam Tai-eung in the 18th Century

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"Cheong-Jook -hwa -sa" is a well known critical article on painting of the first half of Chosŏn Dynasty. So this article was quoted frequently by art historians. But nowadays we know the article only through the phases quoted books, for example Geun -yeok -seo -hwa -jing, Yeon -ry -sil -gi -sool. We however, have never seen the whole article and we have no information about the author Nam Tai-eung.

Fortunately I found the article at the Tong-moon-gwon, a well known old book store. The article has not been published in books, but remained in the form of manuscript. And I found the material which includes some information about the author. According to this, Nam Tai-eung was a scholar who was born in 1687, and died in 1740.

This article provides us with abundant material of the history of paintings and the painter's life. We cannot help being attracted by it only because of this reason. In that sense its author, Nam Tai-eung was the first and most prominent art historian and art critic in the period of Chosen Dynasty. He could stand at the top of Chosen art criticism by virtue of the following merits.

Firstly, he was absolutely sincere in facts. He abstained from commenting on the famous paintings which he had not seen with his own eyes. He established the principle, according to which art history had to be written on the ground of not literature but paintings.

Secondly, he was absolutely objective in appreciating the paintings with his penetrating eyes. He distinguished himself from his earlier and later art critics and historians by such an objectivity.

Thirdly, he invented various methods of comparing artists and could measure the capacities of artist by their comparative methods. Especially his method of grouping and comparing three painters can be appreciated highly in terms of the standards of modern art criticism. we can grasp the characters of the painter - for example, Kim My ng-guk, Yi Ching, Yoon Doo -seo - concretely and strengthen the appreciative power by adopting this method.

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