



## Editorial Note

### Reviews of the Five Articles on Characteristics of Goryeo Art

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The most distinctive characteristics of Goryeo art are considered to be the invention of creative techniques and the manifestation of cultural diversity. While the Unified Silla Kingdom established an international artistic style by embracing various foreign cultural elements and formulated the future basis for Korean Buddhist art, it was in the Goryeo dynasty that a distinct Korean Buddhist art was achieved by developing original forms and styles. Buddhism flourished during this period and a number of Buddhist temples were built. Accordingly, a variety of types of Buddhist metalworks began to be produced. This increase in the production of such metalworks was also a result of the demand for the numerous ritual objects required for the complex and diverse rituals and decorations fueled by the expansion of the popularity of Seon Buddhism (禪宗) since the late Unified Silla period. Moreover, among all the art of the Goryeo era, metalwork features the most remarkable dignity and splendor. The outstanding highlights of Goryeo crafts include najeon (螺鈿, mother-of-pearl inlaying) pieces exquisitely adorned with mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell inlay and incense burners (香垵, hyangwan) and kundika (淨瓶) decorated using diverse silver inlay designs. In Xuanhe fengshi Gaoli tujing (宣和奉使高麗圖經, Illustrated record of the Chinese embassy to the

Goryeo court in the Xuanhe era; hereafter Gaoli tujing) written in 1123, Xu Jing (許兢) mentions that the najeon technique in Goryeo was delicate and elaborate enough to be noticed in Song dynasty China: “[Goryeo] people are not that skillful in lacquering a bowl, but their skill at inlaying mother-of-pearl is extremely delicate and praiseworthy.” Goryeo artisans also invented a silver inlay technique involving pounding silver threads into the surfaces of kundika and high-footed incense burners to create contrast. This technique ultimately became the inspiration for the sanggam inlaid design in Goryeo celadon. In addition to silver inlay, the repoussé seen in various Goryeo silver or gilt-silver works is another outstanding method typical of the era. This delicate repoussé technique emphasizes three-dimensional effects, such as in the granulation technique used to create mosaic-like patterns out of tiny granules of gold by hammering from the reverse side of a metal object and by evening the background of relief designs. This was the most distinctive technique in Goryeo metalwork. The height of Goryeo glamor is demonstrated in gilt-silver cups and stands, silver gourd-shaped bottles, silver mirror racks, silver armor, and silver incense boxes. The affluent culture of the Goryeo aristocracy is on full display in belt decorations with their basic shapes cast in metal. Their fine details are decorated

with openwork or delicately adorned in repoussé. Other notable Goryeo metalwork includes Esoteric Buddhist ritual objects. Vajras and vajra bells were widely produced during the Goryeo dynasty, although not in the same diversity found in Japanese examples. Like vajras, most vajra bells in Korea are three-pronged or five-pronged versions. Unlike their Chinese counterparts, which feature the Five Great Kings of Wisdom as the main deities, the six sides of the bodies of Korean vajras show the Four Guardian Kings, Indra, and Brahma carved in high relief. In the vajra and vajra bell set recently excavated at the site of Dobongseowon Confucian Academy, the entire body of the vajra is ornamented with the Five Great Wisdom Kings, Brahma, Indra, and the Four Guardian Kings. In all East Asia, this iconography appears exclusively in Korea and serves as invaluable material for understanding the process of adoption and transformation of Esoteric Buddhist ritual objects on Korean soil. Metalwork developed rapidly up to the mid-Goryeo period and began to be produced in quantity once again from the early fourteenth century. The resumption of the production of metalwork involved a new aesthetic breakthrough made by eclectically embracing artistic influences from Yuan China while suffering from invasions and subjugation. This exotic artistic style developed at the end of the Goryeo dynasty eventually exerted a significant influence on the metalcraft of the early Joseon period.

This editorial note discusses the five articles found in this issue, respectively, on Goryeo metalwork, Goryeo Buddhist sculpture, Goryeo Buddhist rituals, votive objects related to ritual objects enshrined inside Goryeo Buddhist sculptures, and textiles in Goryeo Buddhist paintings.

Choi Eung Chon's article entitled "Diverse Aspects and Characteristics of the Goryeo Dynasty Crafts in Xuanhe Fengshi Gaoli Tujing" analyzes the records on crafts from this era found in Gaoli tujing, a report written by the Chinese emissary Xu Jing in 1123. This paper largely categorizes crafts into najeon chilgi (mother-of-pearl lacquerware), textiles, woodworking, and metalwork. Notably, metal items, which make up the majority of surviving Goryeo crafts, are examined in detail in terms of their forms and uses. The brief inclusion of the phrase "praiseworthy elaboration" (細密可貴) on najeon in Gaoli tujing suggests that Goryeo mother-of-pearl wares created using tortoiseshell (daemo) painted using the bokchae (reverse-side coloring) technique, which was considered the most sophisticated method of the time, were exported to foreign countries. This paper classifies metalwork according to its shapes and uses, regardless of the order

in Gaoli tujing. Gaoli tujing remarks on the diverse shapes of incense burners, the increased production of vessels modeled after ancient bronzewares (including incense burners in the shape of Boshan Mountain), and braziers. It also hints at the extensive production of gwangmyeongdae candle holders (光明臺) and helps with the investigation of lighting appliances, such as candles, of the Goryeo dynasty. Furthermore, Gaoli tujing mentions a few types of Buddhist metalwork, including ritual ewers (kundika), the large bell hanging at Bojesa Temple (普濟寺), Buddhist flagpoles (幢竿, danggan), and vajras. Ritual ewers are specifically discussed, providing valuable information for dating Goryeo ritual ewers produced at the time. According to Gaoli tujing, a large bell decorated with a pair of flying immortals was created in 1094 and hung at Bojesa Temple, the proto-temple for Yeonboksas Temple (演福寺), before the so-called bell of Yeonboksas Temple was installed. It further describes a copper Buddhist flagpole that stood in the precincts of Heungguksa Temple (興國寺) and was adorned with bonghwang (a pair of mythical birds, Ch. fenghuang) heads bearing a silk banner, something which had not been seen before. This record provides important material for restoring Goryeo Buddhist flagpoles to their original form. It is also noteworthy that such flagpoles were called beon-gan (幡竿) at the time. Moreover, the record of a gilt vajra being carried by a wangsa (王師, royal preceptor) proves that a vajra was regarded as an attribute of a monk from early on. Although the original drawings included in Xu Jing's Gaoli tujing have been lost, and its contents are rather peripheral and fragmentary, it still carries meaningful connotations by offering new perspectives and data on Goryeo crafts from 1123 that are now unrecoverable. However, its analyses of craftworks are somewhat superficial and illogical compared to the fuller analyses found in other literary sources, thus failing to provide substantial evidence on the originals.

The second article "The Development of Suryukjae in Goryeo and the Significance of State-sponsored Suryukjae during the Reign of King Gongmin" by Kang Ho-sun systemically explicates the origins and execution of the Buddhist rite known as Suryukhoe (水陸會, water and land assembly) that began to be held during the Goryeo dynasty and remained significant well into the subsequent Joseon period. According to Kang, Suryukhoe were based on Siagwihoe (施餓鬼會, ceremony for feeding hungry ghosts) and served to pray for the repose of the deceased. They were held to save people from illness and assuage public sentiment even during the Joseon dynasty when Buddhism was constrained.

Kang also describes how the royal court held Suryukhoe as a funeral rite in the early Joseon period and that as a result, this Buddhist ritual was included in Gyeongguk daejeon (經國大典, National code). Kang argues that the Suryukhoe of the early Joseon period derived from the national Suryukhoe that King Gongmin ordered Monk Hyegeun (惠勤), also known as Master Naong (懶翁), to perform during the funerary rite of his consort Princess Noguk-daejang at the end of the dynasty. Kang's article is meaningful in that it expounds how the water and land assemblies, which first gained popularity during the Goryeo dynasty, continued to be held in Joseon despite this dynasty's policy of restricting Buddhism.

Kang claims that the sustained performance of Suryukhoe from the end of the Goryeo period into the early Joseon period originated in the national Suryukhoe held by King Gongmin. This assertion is based on various historical records regarding King Gongmin and Master Naong. However, Kang does not present the immediate grounds for King Gongmin's holding of a national Suryukhoe as an element of the funeral rite. I personally believe the integration of national Suryukhoe into funeral rites could in fact have begun in the period under the rule of the Yuan dynasty, rather than during the reign of King Gongmin as suggested by Kang, given the insufficient historical information from the Goryeo dynasty.

The third article entitled "Thirteenth-century Wooden Sculptures of Amitabha Buddha from the Goryeo Dynasty and the Ink Inscriptions on their Relics," is authored by Choe Songeun, who has performed extensive research on Buddhist sculptures from Goryeo dynasty. In this paper, Choe investigates the characteristics and production backgrounds of wooden Amitabha Buddha sculptures from the Goryeo dynasty by focusing on the Amitabha sculptures at Gaesimsa, Gaeunsa, Bongnimsa, and Suguksa Temples, within which votive objects and records have been recently discovered. Choe also provides an overview of the Goryeo Buddhist culture and on the creation backgrounds of these four sculptures by comprehensively examining their sculptural styles and the dharanis, ink inscriptions, and scriptures found inside them.

Choe sheds light on the relation between the Goryeo royal court and the temporarily established office known as Seungjaesaek through an analysis of the ink inscription on the wooden plug used to seal a hole on the Wooden Seated Amitabha Buddha at Gaesimsa Temple. For the version at Gaeunsa Temple, she attempts to draw diverse historical inferences based on its prayer texts by identifying the commissioners and donors. Moreover, Choe discusses the

relationship between the Wooden Seated Amitabha Buddha at Bongnimsa Temple and the historical figure Choe U, who played a leading role during the military regime that ruled Goryeo by analyzing documents extracted from the sculpture. The author additionally suggests the relevance of the Wooden Seated Amitabha Buddha at Suguksa Temple to local families in Dongju (present-day Cheolwon) and its enshrinement background by scrutinizing the dharanis placed inside it. Furthermore, Choe argues that the proliferation of Amitabha Buddha sculptures was primarily a response to the devastation inflicted during the Mongol Invasions of Korea and that the expansion of demand for Buddhist sculptures led to both the increased use of wood due to its availability as a material and to the production of uniform styles.

This article is academically stimulating since the author researches a broad range of subjects spanning from the particulars of Buddhist sculpture to their materials and offers new suggestions based on historical inferences. Although her effort to present a range of possibilities is praiseworthy, there seems insufficient evidence for absolutely proving these prospects. Some readers may think that her paper does not provide enough evidence for the argument that the seated sculptures of Amitabha Buddha at Gaesimsa and Suguksa Temples could have been produced in the same workshop due to their stylistic similarity. If such a case, I would suggest referring to her Korean paper on the same theme, which provides convincing proof and detailed elucidation of the sculptural styles involved.<sup>1</sup>

In her article "Consecrating the Buddha: The Formation of the Bokjang Ritual during the Goryeo Period," Lee Seunghye examines the sacred objects interred in the interior spaces of Buddhist sculptures during the Goryeo dynasty to illuminate the background and meaning of the contemplation of Buddha images. The author points out that interpreting these votive objects from Goryeo Buddhist images according to Josang gyeong (造像經, Sutras on the production of buddhist images), published during the Joseon dynasty, raises several issues. Lee instead reconsiders votive objects and related documents from the mid-Goryeo period and the cultural exchanges between Goryeo and the Liao dynasty, which maintained a close relationship with Goryeo during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In particular, she reassesses the impacts of Miao-jixiang pingdeng mimi zuishang guanmen dajiaowang jing (妙吉祥平等祕密最上觀門大教王經, Sutra on the king of the great teaching of visualization methods which are auspicious, universal, secret, and superlative), which was embraced by

Goryeo in the eleventh century and also quoted in Josang gyeong on the development of the rituals for enshrining sacred objects within Buddhist sculptures at the time. The sutra, translated by the monk Maitribhadra (慈賢, Ch. Cixian, K. Jahyeon) and cited as Myogilsang daegyowang gyeong (妙吉祥大教王經) in Josang gyeong, has been considered to record the ritual for and order of filling the five treasure bottles (五寶瓶, obobyong), the core of the objects placed inside Buddhist sculptures during the Goryeo dynasty. However, Lee argues that in fact, it originally detailed the abhiseka (灌頂, initiation) rite of practitioners, not the five treasure bottles. Moreover, the author emphasizes that Miaojixiang pingdeng mimi zuishang guanmen dajiaowang jing was an Indian Esoteric Buddhist scripture presenting the names of the Five Buddhas as written in the Vajrasekhara Sutra (金剛頂經, Diamond peak sutra). According to Lee, the initiation rite of the five treasure bottles in Myogilsang daegyowang gyeong, which consecrated a sculpture to turn it into a Buddha or Bodhisattva after making and chanting mantras, allowed a Buddha's body as a microcosm to correspond to the Buddha as a macrocosm through the installation of the five treasure bottles. She suggests that the ritual of enshrining sacred objects into a Buddhist sculpture was essential to this transformation.

008 Lee's article is noteworthy in that it discusses the development and philosophy of votive objects from Goryeo Buddhist sculptures with a focus on the acceptance and transformation of the objects' ritual functions, challenging the existing approach based on Josang gyeong. However, some votive objects from the Goryeo and Joseon periods cannot be understood solely on the basis of Miaojixiang pingdeng mimi zuishang guanmen dajiaowang jing. Rather, the implicit thinking these objects represent is based on Josang gyeong. I agree with Lee regarding her argument that Miaojixiang pingdeng mimi zuishang guanmen dajiaowang jing played an important role in establishing the rites for enshrining sacred objects inside Buddhist sculptures during the Goryeo dynasty. Nevertheless, diverse approaches will be required before we can reach a full conclusion.

In "Clothing and Textiles Depicted in Goryeo Paintings of Water-moon Avalokitesvara," Sim Yeonok emphasizes the value and significance to the history of Goryeo clothing and textiles of the textile designs depicted in paintings of Water-moon Avalokitesvara, the quintessence of Korean Buddhist art. In this paper, Sim proposes periodic characteristics for textile designs by comparing those seen in paintings of Water-moon Avalokitesvara with actual textiles of the same age, Chinese examples from the Song, Liao, and Yuan dynasties, and Japanese

examples. She also addresses the textile weaving techniques and pattern-making methods used at the time. Based on this historical research, Sim endeavors to reproduce the actual fabric of the skirt and veil worn by Avalokitesvara in the painting. Moreover, she categorizes the designs illustrated in the inner robe, skirt, loincloth, sash, and veil of the deity into water waves, a nest in a tree filled with eggs, hexagonal lotus flowers, snowflake-and-circles, floral medallions, and pomegranate-and-beads. She further elaborates the locations, compositions, and forms of these designs. The author not only describes the formal features of each design through comparisons with contemporaneous Chinese, Japanese, and Korean textiles, but also reassesses the designations of patterns by referring to pertinent literature, including Wongan nogeoldae (原刊老乞大) the original textbook of colloquial northern Chinese, Yingzao fashi (營造法式, Treatise on architectural methods), and Goryeosa (高麗史, History of Goryeo). Furthermore, Sim proposes identifications for the types of textiles portrayed in the paintings and their pertinent weaving techniques. According to Sim, Avalokitesvara's skirt is a depiction of geum (錦), a silk fabric with a design of hexagonal lotus flowers, while the veil consists of ra (羅), silk gauze rendered only with deviant crease lines, and sa (紗) silk gauze with a pattern of snowflakes and circles. Based on these assumptions, she has reproduced the actual fabrics of the skirt and veil herself by hand-weaving. To reproduce the sa silk gauze veil with a design of snowflakes and circles, she wove sa silk gauze and gilded it with cloud patterns.

This article asserts that various designs in the painting of Water-moon Avalokitesvara are not simple pictorial depictions, but realistically reflect actual characteristics of Goryeo textiles and the compositions of Goryeo textile patterns. The reproduction of the deity's skirt and veil by restoring the tools and techniques needed for weaving patterned fabric, ra silk gauze, and sa silk gauze is meaningful to the study of Korean traditional textiles since no looms from the Goryeo dynasty have survived. However, the article does not touch on the peculiar context of Water-moon Avalokitesvara as religious art.

Goryeo art is widely considered highly ornate and aristocratic, as revealed in the ceramics, Buddhist painting, imposing architecture, mother-of-pearl lacquerware, and metalworks of the era. However, further meaning can be found in Goryeo Buddhist sculpture as it moved beyond its Chinese origins after the ninth century and began to manifest unique features. During the Unified Silla period, Buddhist figures were depicted with rigid appearances and postures and as overly transcendental beings. By the Goryeo era, they came

to be depicted in a more nativist style. Many scholars opine that Goryeo Buddhist sculptures with their familiar faces, slightly unnatural poses, and subtle smiles most distinctively demonstrate a Korean aesthetic. These features of Goryeo Buddhist sculptures represent a different vision of beauty pursued by the people of Goryeo regardless of the financial capacity of the commissioners or skill of sculptors. Thus, Goryeo art embodies a splendid dignity yet humane simplicity. It was in this period that Korean art was first created to suit the longings of the public.

1 Choe, Songeun (최성은). 2007. "Wooden Seated Amitābha Buddha of Gaesimsa Temple in Seosan and Buddhist Sculpture of the Late Goryeo Period" (瑞山開心寺 목조아미타불좌상과 고려후기 불교조각). In Collection of Seminar Papers on Korean Buddhist Temple Cultural Heritage (한국의 사찰문화재 학술세미나 논문집). Seoul: Cultural Heritage Excavation and Research Team of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism (대한불교조계종 문화유산발굴조사단).