

The Production and Copying of Portraits of Meritorious Subjects: *Portraits of Jo Gonggeun and their Related Drawings*

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Introduction

During the Joseon dynasty (1392-1897), the title of *gongsin* was bestowed upon meritorious subjects who supported the royal family during political turmoil, war, and uprisings and rendered distinguished public service to the state. Kings appreciated their loyal service and considered them men of virtue and exemplary statemen. A number of meritorious subjects were awarded this title during the Joseon era (Bak Bongju 2005).

Assigning a person the title *gongsin* involved honor, economic benefit, and administrative prestige, all of which could be passed down through the generations. It was considered the highest accolade to create a large-scale full portrait of a meritorious subject for posterity.¹ Painted images of meritorious subjects were emblematic of the subject's loyalty. Accompanying the portrait was a list of honorable deeds and a royal edict confirming the status of the subject. Thus, portraits of meritorious subjects were treated carefully as precious objects (Sin Myeongho 2003, 321-327).

Portraits of meritorious subjects were produced throughout the dynasty, spanning from a founding contributor during the earliest Joseon period to military officials who suppressed the uprising of Lee In-jwa in 1728. However, most of the paintings



Fig. 1. Illustration of *Portrait of Yu Suk*

predating the Imjin War (the Japanese Invasions of Korea of 1592–1598) were destroyed by fire and only later copies survive today.² In addition, the portraits of meritorious subjects were discarded if the achievements of the subjects were denounced and they were stripped of their *gongsin* titles. A total of six *gongsin* titles were rescinded during the Joseon era. In particular, four titles of *gongsin* bestowed during the reign of King Gwanghaegun (光海君, r. 1608–1623) were stripped away after the Injo Restoration of 1623. Following the related conventions, their portraits were incinerated. Nevertheless, some original copies of these portraits remain, indicating the discrepancy between the prescribed treatment of such portraiture and its value on a practical level.

This essay investigates the production and removal of portraits depicting meritorious subjects in the seventeenth century during the reign of King Gwanghaegun by focusing on the significance of the portraits and their stylistic and formal characteristics. In particular, the styles and painting techniques of two portraits of Jo Gonggeun and thirteen related drawings that have recently been revealed to the public are thoroughly examined as case studies.³ Only a handful of portrait sketches have been discovered, and the scholarly research on this topic is scant.⁴ In this sense, the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* is considered a rare case where the original painting, a copy, and preparatory drawings have all been preserved. Therefore, a close examination of the two versions of the portrait allows us to conjecture on their relationships, functions, and dates of production. This in turn contributes to the understanding of how formal portraits of meritorious subjects and their later copies were produced.

Meritorious Subjects and Their Portraits During the Reign of King Gwanghaegun

Production and Destruction of Portraits of Meritorious Subjects during the Reign of King Gwanghaegun

On the twelfth day of the third lunar month of 1613, five years after the enthronement of King Gwanghaegun, four *gongsin* titles were simultaneously granted. The title of *gongsin* was conventionally awarded to meritorious subjects soon after they had achieved some glorious exploit, but these four bestowed during the reign of King Gwanghaegun were assigned together regardless of when the pertinent virtuous action had taken place. *The Royal Protocols Regarding the Office of Superintendency in Charge of Recording Meritorious Subjects' Accomplishment* was likely produced and bound at this same time. However, this document no longer exists. Over the history of the Joseon dynasty, a total of six *gongsin*

titles were repudiated. Once the title was removed, the social prestige and benefits enjoyed by its recipient were rescinded and their portraits were destroyed. The titles of meritorious subject awarded during the reign of King Gwanghaegun were discontinued in the third lunar month of 1623 when the king was deposed in the Injo Restoration.

Historical records indicate that the portraits of subjects who lost their *gongsin* titles were supposed to be destroyed by fire. According to *Jungjong sillok* (Annals of King Jungjong), several *gongsin* were later disgraced as traitors and their portraits and any records of their names and accomplishments were incinerated in the tenth lunar month of King Jungjong's reign (1513). Furthermore, the contents related to the meritorious subjects recorded in the entries in the *Gwanghaegun ilgi* (Daily Record of King Gwanghaegun) for the tenth and eleventh lunar months during the first year of King Gwanghaegun's reign (1608) were stricken from the official records. The entry on the twelfth day of the tenth lunar month of 1608 declared that "a portrait was burned only if the subject committed a grievous offense." Under this provision, it seems that not all portraits of meritorious subjects who lost their *gongsin* status were destroyed by fire. Historical texts state that four lists that featured the names of meritorious subjects created in King Gwanghaegun's reign were deleted, but there is no surviving record that indicates that their portraits were incinerated at the time.⁵ It is not certain whether the portraits were discarded or if the record of their incineration was simply omitted. In fact, several portraits of meritorious subjects produced during the rule of King Gwanghaegun have survived. Even after the final titles of *gongsin* ever awarded were given to loyal subjects who helped quell Lee In-jwa's Uprising of 1728, the convention of destroying portraits of meritorious subjects who were deprived of their *gongsin* continued.⁶

The Stylistic Characteristics of Portraiture of Meritorious Subjects During King Gwanghaegun's Reign

Thirteen out of the twenty-eight *gongsin* titles conferred during the Joseon era were bestowed in the seventeenth century. Based on historical records, more than 300 portraits depicting meritorious subjects were produced during this period. The typical characteristics of seventeenth-century portraits of meritorious subjects can be summarized as follows: The figure is seated in a chair wearing a round-collared black official's robe and a low-fitting black hat decorated with cloud-treasure patterns. The head is turned three-quarters to the right. The subject's hands are encased in the sleeves, and his feet are placed on a footrest. The background is blank, and the floor is covered with a colored carpet. There is no representation of spatial



Fig. 2. Portrait of Yu Suk. Color on silk. 178.3 x 102.1 cm. private collection



Fig. 3. Presumed Portrait of Yun Hyojeon. Color on silk. 179.6 x 106.5 cm. private collection

recession. These portraits can be classified into four or five categories according to their formal characteristics (Jo Seonmi 2007, 44–99; Kwon Hyuk San 2007, 63–83).

As mentioned previously, four portraits of meritorious subjects were concurrently commissioned in 1613, the fifth year of King Gwanghaegun's rule, immediately after the titles of *gongsin* had been simultaneously conferred. Representative examples of portraits depicting meritorious subjects from this period include the *Portrait of Yu Suk* (Figs. 1 and 2), the (presumed) *Portrait of Yun Hyojeon* (Fig. 3), the *Portrait of Im Jang* (Fig. 4), the *Portrait of Yun Jungsam* (Fig. 5), the *Portrait of Sim Huisu*, the (presumed) *Portrait of Yun Hyu*, the *Portrait of Yu Geun*, and the *Portrait of Yi Sanhae*. The portraiture of meritorious subjects produced during the reign of King Gwanghaegun reveals that the position and height of the subjects' shoulders were more accurately rendered compared to in preceding examples. A short-sleeve gown (*dallyeong*) and an overcoat with ruffles at the bottom (*cheollik*) can be seen through the left opening of the official's robe with their contours drawn in straight lines. The front of the official's hat has an angular form,

but the back is rather round. The left arm of the chair bends toward the right and is connected to the back. The lower ends of the official's robe are depicted in a triangular form and are draped over the chair's arm. A portion of a patterned mat seen in these paintings slightly recedes into the background. Portraiture from this period displays almost identical formal features outside of the renderings of the faces and chest emblems (Figs. 2–5).

Portraits of Jo Gonggeun and Related Copies

Two official portraits and thirteen drawings of Jo Geonggeun (1547–1629), a scholar-official from the mid-Joseon dynasty, were recently revealed to the public.⁷ Considering that most of the seventeenth-century portraits known at present are later copies rendered after the eighteenth century, it is very rare for both original copies and their later versions to survive intact.



Fig. 4. *Portrait of Im Jang*. Color on silk. 167.8 x 103.2 cm. Yonsei University Museum



Fig. 5. *Portrait of Yun Jungsam*. Color on silk. 183.5 x 108.0 cm. National Museum of Korea

This chapter aims to examine the style, formal elements, and painting techniques of the two copies of the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*.

Portrait of Jo Gonggeun (The Original Version of 1613)

The style, painting techniques, materials, clothing, and mounting of the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* (1613) reflect the typical characteristics of meritorious subject portraiture produced during the reign of King Gwanghaegun (Fig. 6). The subject's face is seen from the left in a three-quarter view. This picture is a full-length portrait depicting the subject seated in a chair.

The black hat worn by the official sits relatively lower than is commonly depicted in the late Joseon-period portraiture (Fig. 7). The dark black hat consists of two tiers; the upper front portion has angular edges, and the back of the hat is gently rounded. Two wings attached to the rear of the hat are colored light black and decorated with cloud-treasure patterns. Interestingly, the left wing, which is closer to the viewer, is placed lower than the right wing. This may be considered an odd

arrangement from a Western perspective.

The shading on the face is subdued, and the color of the contour lines applied on the face are close to the actual complexion. However, details such as the beard, facial moles, and age spots are all depicted in a realistic manner. The chest insignia appears on a large scale, occupying most of the upper body from immediately below the collar to the upper belt adorned with horn ornaments. This feature is a typical characteristic of seventeenth-century portraiture of meritorious subjects.

The subject wears a black official's robe with a round collar. White inner clothing can be seen between the neck and the collar, as well as at the ends of the wide sleeves. A blue garment and a green pleated coat show through the side slit of the outer robe that starts at the hips and reaches to the footrest. A triangular flap can be seen behind the top of the chair. These are characteristics of seventeenth-century portraits and appears in portraits of scholar-officials wearing an official robe (Fig. 8).

The colored carpet in this painting is depicted with the



Fig. 6. *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*. 1613. 178.0 x 104.0 cm. Head House of Hanyang Jo Family, Hanheunggun Branch

typical features commonly found in seventeenth-century portraiture of meritorious subjects. The vivid colors and geometric patterns on the rug lend a splendid atmosphere to the picture and complement the simple composition without becoming monotonous. The bottom is presented in a flat manner without perspective, so it resembles wallpaper, which is closely reflective of the style of the period.

The mount that supports and ornaments the painting was preserved intact without any restoration and thus reveals the original mounting format of the seventeenth century (Fig. 9). The portrait is surrounded by white silk decorated with flower and plant patterns, while blue silk with peony decorations is attached to the white silk from the top to the bottom of the picture. The upper and lower scroll rods that would have been used for hanging the portrait on a wall are missing.

***Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* (Copies Produced in the Late Joseon Period)**

This painting (Fig. 10) is considered a later copy based on the aforementioned *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* (the original version of 1613). Except for minor details, including the painting techniques used and the dimensions of the scroll, this work is a faithful copy of the original in that its overall form, style, coloring, and the materials of the piece closely resemble those of the portrait of 1613. Only small discrepancies in the painting technique and the dimensions of the scroll can be detected.

The accurate portrayal of the subject's countenance (Fig. 11) proves that this copy was executed by a talented artist of great skill. The portrait reveals a realistic depiction of the subject's facial features, including an elaborate rendering of his beard, wrinkles, and age spots. In comparison with the original painting of 1613 that shows a restrained shading effect on the face, this work presents a more realistic three-dimensional quality in the facial features. Fine lines are abundantly applied to the face to express the skin texture. Shadowing effects are cast on the areas where the body bends or twists and where the garment is folded. In sum, this copy follows the formal attributes ascribed to portraiture of meritorious subjects in the seventeenth century, but its execution is influenced by techniques developed in later periods. This suggests that the work was created between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

***Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* and the Process of Producing Portrait Sketches**

Method of Sketching for Half-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun

The most challenging task in portraiture is capturing the likeness of the face. A drawing known as a *chobon* is a preliminary step in drafting a composition and provides an outline for a completed version of the work. A portrait sketch is produced in the preliminary stages of painting and refers to a drawing that graphically demonstrates a subject. Twelve sketches of a half-length portrait of Jo Gonggeun have survived. They all depict half of the figure from the official hat to the chest on similar-sized paper. The existence of the twelve drawings naturally leads to the following questions: first, for which painting were these sketches made? Second, why did the artists create twelve copies in three different styles?

Regarding the first point, these half-length portrait sketches were seemingly in preparation for the official portraits bestowed by the king to meritorious subjects. The reason for producing multiple copies lies in the fact that the sketches did



Fig. 7. Detail of the official hat, face, and chest from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*. 1613



Fig. 8. Detail of the official robe and colored carpet from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*. 1613



Fig. 9. Detail of the mount from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*. 1613

not sufficiently resemble the subject or the artist failed to capture his essence. Slight changes in the size, angle, and position of the eyes, eyebrows, and lips can lead to entirely different renderings of the facial features. In contrast, later copies do not require multiple drawings since the original copy provides a model for the later production. A sketch for a later copy could be rendered without difficulty as the artist simply traced the lines and formations visible through semi-transparent oilpaper placed over the original painting. Therefore, multiple drawings were made only when the original official portrait was produced.

Secondly, there are two possible reasons why three different painting techniques were employed in creating the portrait sketches. One explanation is that three painters executed the drawings, and a preferred artist was then chosen to draw the official portrait. The practice of testing artists' talent to select the most capable painter was used in the production of king's portraiture during the Joseon dynasty (Yi Seongmi 2012, 244–245). The other feasible reason is that a number of painters were involved at various stages of drawings to complete a sketch. If the first draft was unsatisfactory, a second drawing was made or different painters took the place of the previous artist. Portraits of meritorious subjects were also known to have been produced using this method.⁸

Categorization of Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun

1. The Half-length Portrait Sketches Classified as Group A

Four drawings clustered as Group A (Table 1) were executed in a manner similar to the representation of the official portrait and thus present a more accurate rendering of the subject's countenance than do the sketches belonging to other groups. The contours of the face and the shading effects are subdued and red washes of paint have been lightly applied to the cheekbones. The depiction of the beard is realistic enough for viewers to feel as if they are viewing the actual subject. The black hat features a low crown with a steep angular front and a gently rounded back. The hat's right wing is attached at the rear. Its top starts at the upper middle portion of the hat and its bottom ends somewhere between the eyebrow and eye. The left wing is placed in a slightly lower position than its counterpart and extends halfway to the left ear. With the exception of A-1, the other examples have wings decorated with cloud-treasure patterns. The drapery lines are depicted only in A-1.

Among the drawings associated with Group A, A-1 does not show any particular marking. A-2 has “○” in the upper-right corner of the front paper, and A-3 and A-4 respectively bear inscriptions reading “First Yi” and “Yi” at the three o'clock position on the rear paper (Table 2). Although the information these inscriptions provide is insufficient, it is probable that a painter whose family name is Yi executed these pieces. Since the four drawings in Group A do not include any clues that indicate



Fig. 10. *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*. Copy from the late Joseon period. 150.0 x 94.0 cm. Head House of Hanyang Jo Family, Hanheunggun branch

the sequence of their production, it is impossible to speculate in which order these were made

2. The Half-length Portrait Sketches Classified as Group B

The sketches for half-length portraits assigned to Group B share similar styles and modes of representation (Table 3). The red color washes on the face are enhanced, and the outlines of the facial features and wrinkles are drawn in a relatively bold dark brown. This creates a striking contrast with the drawings in Group A. Multiple angles rather than one fixed perspective are applied to depict the ears, eyes, mouth, and nose. Many portraits from the Joseon period were produced without relying on a single viewpoint. Still, this distinguishes the sketches in Group B from the other examples. For example, the eyes and lips are painted in a frontal view, the nose is seen in an 8/10 or 9/10 view, and the ears are shown from the side.

The black hats are fully divided into upper and lower portions outlined with ink and colored in relatively light ink washes. No patterns appear on the wings. The heights of the two



Fig. 11-1. Detail of face from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* from a copy of the late Joseon period



Fig. 11-2. Detail of face from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* (1613)

wings are equal, and their starting and ending points are even. The drapery is depicted schematically without detail.

Among the drawings in Group B, B-1 has “○” on the back side of the paper; B-2, B-3, B-4, and B-5 carry characters reading “Kim, two,” “Kim, three, soil(?),” “Kim, four,” and “Kim ○, five,” respectively (Table 4). This likely means that these sketches were performed by a painter surnamed Kim and the inscribed numbers refer to their order of creation. Although B-1 has neither a character “Kim” nor a number, considering the pattern of inscriptions found in the drawings in Group B, it can be presumed that B-1 was the first drawing by this painter named Kim.

3. The Half-length Portrait Sketches Classified as Group C

Three sketches for half-length portraits affiliated with Group C present different aspects compared to the drawings in Groups A and B (Table 5). It is highly possible that the sketches in Groups A and B were each the work of a single artist based on the similarities in their styles and formal elements apparent within





Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-1)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-2)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-3)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-4)
			

Table 1. Group A: *Half-length portrait sketches of Jo Gonggeun*



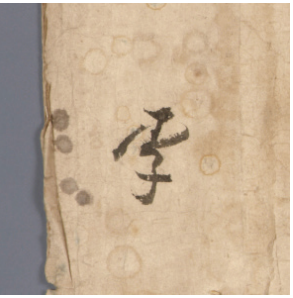
Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-2) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-3) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (A-4) and detail of the marking
		

Table 2. Markings of Group A: *Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun*

each group. However, it is unclear whether the drawings in Group C were executed by the artists who produced the sketches in Groups A or B, or if other touches were added to them in a later period. Otherwise, a third party—a painter or painters from succeeding generations—may have rendered these works. What is clear is that the drawings from Group C feature more advanced stylistic elements relative to the works in Groups A and B. The shading effects on the face are enhanced and the outlines are bolder and clearer than anything found in Groups A and B. In particular, both the contours of the face (C-2) and the outlines of the right side of the face are rendered in dark ink (C-3), something rarely seen in portraiture from the seventeenth century. The red hues around the cheekbones are also distinct from the renderings in the sketches in Groups A and B. These features are not characteristic of 17th-century portraiture.

The shape of the black hat in the Group C sketches differs from previous examples in that light and dark ink washes are separately employed in the upper and lower parts to provide

features distinct from those in the drawings in Group A. In addition, unlike in the sketches in Group B, the bottom line of the hat is not clearly delineated. The lower portion is painted using a slightly dark color. There is an I-shaped pattern applied in dark ink at the center of the upper part, which divides the hat equally into right and left halves. The wings of C-2 and C-3 are decorated with cloud and treasure patterns, the most common design found in seventeenth-century portraiture. However, the wings of the hat in C-1 bear plant and flower decoration, which was rarely seen in seventeenth-century paintings. This suggests that this sketch was repainted in a later period.

C-1 and C-2 bear the character 丕 at the nine o'clock position in the upper right corner on the back of the paper. C-3 has an inscription reading “painted by the painter Yi Eonhong” at the twelve o'clock position in the left lower section of the back side (Table 6). The active dates for Yi Eonhong are unknown, but in 1604 his name was mentioned in the *Royal Protocols regarding the Office of Supervision in Charge of Recording Meritorious Subjects' Accomplish-*

Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-1)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-2)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-3)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-4)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-5)
				

Table 3. Group B: Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun

The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-1) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-2) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-3) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-4) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (B-5) and detail of the marking
				
				
				

Table 4. Markings of Group B: Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun

ment during the Imjin War.

Which of these groups of drawings served as drafts for the official portrait? Considering the overall forms and renderings of the subjects, the drawings in Group A most closely resemble the official portrait (Table 7). This perspective is manifested in the black hat in that recession is represented in accordance with the shape of subject’s head, the width of the hat, and location of the right and left wings. The hat’s right wing is placed slightly

higher than the left wing, as shown in the sketches of Group A. The right wing starts from the middle of the lower portion of the hat and ends somewhere between the eyebrow and the eye, while the left wing begins slightly lower spot and extends to the middle of the ear. The two hat wings in the drawings of Groups B and C remain rather horizontal, both starting from the upper portion of the lower hat and having a similar height. In addition, the white inner garment that separates the face from the body

Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-1)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-2)	Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-3)
		

Table 5. Group C: Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun

The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-1) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-2) and detail of the marking	The back of Sketch of Half-length Portrait (C-3) and detail of the marking
		

Table 6. Markings of Group C: Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun

differs in Group A compared to its depiction in drawings from Groups B and C. In the drawings associated with Group A, with the sole exception of A-3, the lower jaw of the subject is farther from the round neck collar, whereas the collar touches the lower jaw in the sketches of Groups B and C. Ink lines are applied to establish the figure's contours and the drapery of the robe in A-1. The white inner clothing and the representation of the shoulder lines most closely resemble the corresponding elements in the official portrait.

Most prominently, the similarity between the official portrait and the drawings in Group A can be found in the depiction of the subject's ears (Table 7). This area includes the hat's wing, the ears, and the neckline connecting the head and shoulder. The neckline starts at the lower or rear part of the ears and continues to the shoulder. The neck in the official portrait and in the drawings in Group A is not outlined, but it is colored in white. In Groups B and C it is outlined in ink. The shape of the ears is almost identical in the official portraits to the sketches in

Group A.

The considerable similarities between the official portrait and the drawings classified as Group A indicate that it was these works that served as drafts for the final version of the official portrait. Once a draft copy was completed, translucent silk was placed over the drawing. The sketch lines and composition could be seen through the translucent silk and copied onto it. Through this process, the official portrait could precisely mimic the drawing but there are bound to be a few discrepancies between a painting and a sketch. Only the outlines defining the overall form and composition and not the details should be transferred intact in the final version of the official portrait. Multiple drawings with slightly different outlines were prepared to select the most suitable version for the painting. For this reason, creating multiple sketches benefits the production of superior portraiture.

Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun

The *Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* (Fig. 12) is an ink














A face of <i>Portrait of Jo Gonggeun</i>	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (A-1)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (A-2)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (A-3)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (A-4)
				
Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (B-1)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (B-2)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (B-3)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (B-4)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (B-5)
				
Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (C-1)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (C-2)	Detail of <i>Sketch of Half-length Portrait</i> (C-3)		
				

Table 7. Comparison of ears from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* and *Half-length Portrait Sketches of Jo Gonggeun*

drawing on oilpaper. The oilpaper opacifies and browns over time. As a result, it becomes earthier and less transparent. In this drawing, the black hat and round neck collar, which appear clearly and at a large scale in the official portrait, are painted with bold, dark lines. In contrast, the facial features, beard, and detailed patterns of the collar and the colored carpet were rendered in light, thin lines.

Two sheets of oilpaper were pasted together to create the horizontal sections of the canvas (Fig.13). To conserve oilpaper, the double sections were used only from the feet to the shoulder and a single width of paper was pasted on to accommodate the face and official hat, which also reduced the blank space. The entire ground consists of alternating lengths of paper glued to each other in order to evenly distribute the joints and enhance

adhesive strength. It is interesting to note that leftover paper surrounding the shoulder was cut away and reattached at the left side of the hat to create additional space for the left wing.

It is also noteworthy that color, shading, and the technique of coloring the back of the silk canvas were not used at all in the *Sketch for the Full-length Portrait*. In general, oilpaper was used for a charcoal sketch or for a later copy of an original portrait in order to get a sense of the finalized version by testing the technique of back coloring. However, if an original copy already existed, there was no need to use oilpaper for a drawing to examine the form, coloring, and background coloring effects. In addition, if a sketch depicting the entire length of the figure was required, it was not necessary to use oilpaper; a more common paper would have been sufficient to meet this requirement in its place. Considering



Fig. 12. Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun. Ink on oilpaper. 172.0 x 100.0 cm. Head House of Hanyang Jo Family, Hanheunggun branch

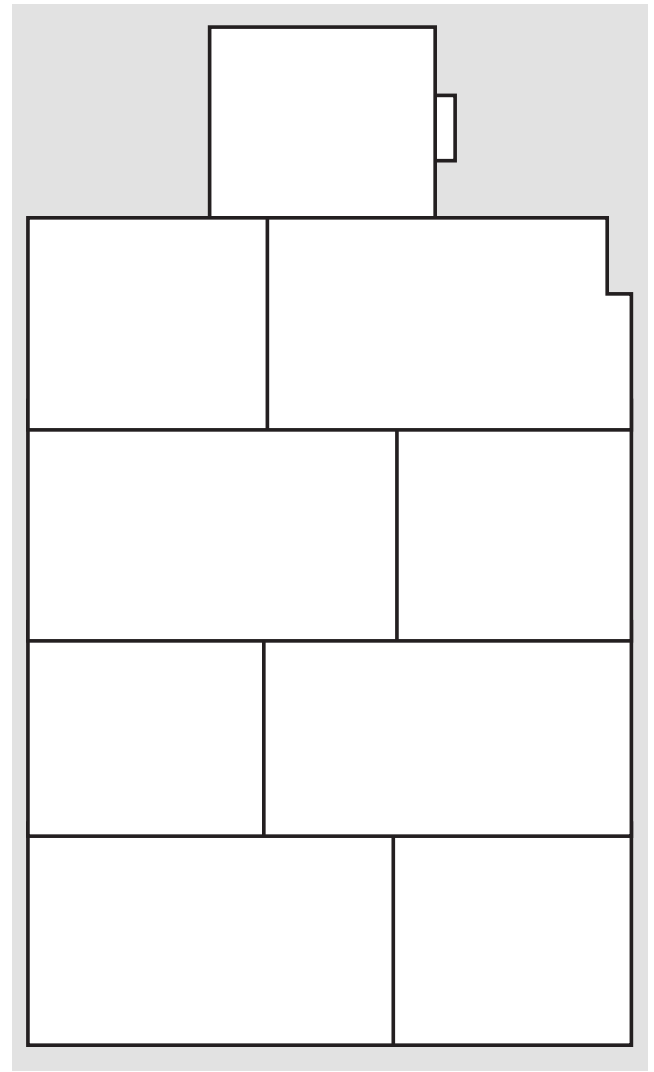


Fig. 13. Arrangement of oilpaper for Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun

all this, this sketch of a full-length portrait was based on the original portrait of Jo Gonggeun of 1613 and probably served as a draft for a later copy of the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* produced in the late Joseon era.

A comparison of the depiction of the neck in the official portrait, in the later copy, and in the sketch for the full-length portrait further supports this assumption (Table 8). In the drawing of the full-length portrait, the cloud patterns on the official robe are executed in a sophisticated manner. The robe area in the sketch where the figure's neck connects to the chest emblem more closely resembles the later copy than the original version of 1613. This is because the overall outlines of this drawing are faithfully modeled after the original version, but small details such as the cloud decorations were added at the painter's discretion. The later copy exactly replicates this drawing without any changes. Another example of a sketch and full-length portrait can be found in *An Official Portrait of Choe Deokji*

and *A Sketch for the Portrait of Choe Deokji* (National Museum of Korea 2007, 42–44).

Conclusion: The Significance of Portraits of Jo Gonggeun and their Related Drawings

The two portraits of Jo Gonggeun, the twelve half-length portrait sketches, and *Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* provide rich information for investigating the characteristics of Joseon portraiture. The original versions of portraits of meritorious subjects produced after a *gongsin* title was been conferred are very rare after the seventeenth century. However, quite a number of original versions created during King Gwanghaegun's rule remain. There are several reasons for this. First, while the *gongsin* titles he awarded were revoked, the portraits of meritorious




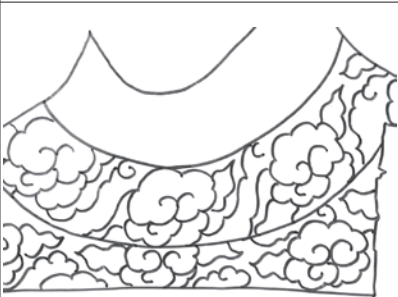
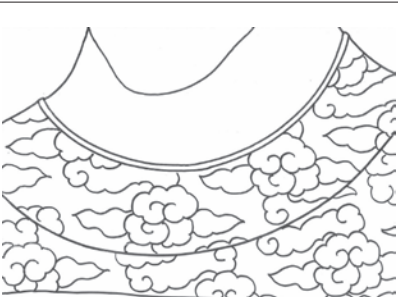
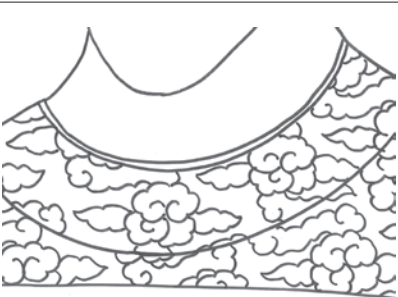
The neck and its drawing from <i>Portrait of Jo Gonggeun</i> (1613)	The neck and its drawing from <i>Portrait of Jo Gonggeun</i> (later copy)	The neck and its drawing from <i>Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun</i> (on oilpaper)
		
		

Table 8. Comparison of cloud and treasure patterns adorning robes around the neck, details from *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun*

subjects were preserved. It was supposed to be the practice for portraits of meritorious subjects to be destroyed once the title of *gongsin* has been stripped from its holder. After King Injo's Restoration in 1623, King Gwanghaegun was dethroned and all *gongsin* titles bestowed during his reign were rescinded. However, no historical records state that the images were destroyed at that time.

Second, portraits of meritorious subjects were frequently used in ancestor worship. When an original painting became damaged, a new copy was made to replace it. However, the portraits of meritorious subjects produced during King Gwanghaegun's reign were supposed to have been incinerated and were thus rarely displayed either on formal or informal occasions. For this reason, these paintings remained in a relatively good condition and there was no need to reproduce the image in later generations.

The version of *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* that is a copy made in the late Joseon period imitates the original portrait in terms of its overall composition, the rendering of the subject, and other details. Only a few variations in the shading of the face, the garments, and the color patterns can be observed. The later copy not only mimics the original, but it also reflects a contemporaneous style. Thus, the copy demonstrates an artistic value independent of the original.

The discovery of the twelve half-length portrait sketches of Jo Gonggeun is unprecedented in the history of the study of Joseon portraiture. These sketches were performed by at

least three different artists, with each artist responsible for producing various copies at the same time. These works include inscriptions and numbering that allow conjecture on the identity of painters and the order of production. In addition, unlike other sketches for late Joseon portraiture, the technique of coloring the back of the silk was not applied to these drawings.

The *Sketch for the Full-length Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* was likely used as a draft for the copy of the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* executed in the later Joseon period. The use of oilpaper without coloring indicates that this sketch was not a draft for the original official portrait, but instead a drawing made in preparation for copying the original version.

Although the *gongsin* titles bestowed in the mid-Joseon era were withdrawn, the original version of *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* survives. The twelve drawings show unique aspects distinct from those of sketches made in the late Joseon period. These works illuminate the process of producing portrait sketches, which had previously been known only through written texts. Examination of the later copy allows the contemplation of the high level of achievement of such pieces, which can be comparable to the original paintings. It is possible to conjecture on how the later copy was produced based on an investigation of the *Sketch for the Full-length Portrait*. Fruitful results can be anticipated from further research that explores the various aspects, characteristics, and the significance of portraiture of meritorious subjects throughout the Joseon dynasty with the discover of further valuable resources including paintings and relevant records.

This article is an abridged and revised English version of “Production of Portraits of Meritorious Subjects and Their Copies during the Reign of King Gwanghaegun: A Focus on the *Portrait of Jo Gonggeun* and its Sketches” (光海君代의 공신화상과 이모본 제작: <조공근 초상>과 초본을 중심으로), previously published in 2015 in *Misul jaryo* (美術資料) 88.

- 1 There are several terms to designate portraiture depicting the meritorious subjects. For example, the image of the meritorious subject, portraiture of the meritorious subject, and a painting of the meritorious subject were frequently used. To avoid confusion, ‘portrait of subject’s name’ is exclusively used in this essay. Only when it is mentioned in the historical texts recording the bestowal of the *gongsin* title, the term of ‘portrait painting of meritorious subject’ is used.
- 2 For further study of portraiture of meritorious subjects, see Jo Seonmi, *Study of Portraiture: Portraiture and its Theory* (Dolbegae, 2009), 433–507; *Meritorious Subject in the Joseon Dynasty* (Academy of Korean Studies, 2012); Kwon Hyuk San, “A Study of Meritorious Subject’s Portraiture in the mid-Joseon Dynasty” (Hongik University, 2010).
- 3 The thirteen drawings discussed in the essay can be divided into two groups; the first group includes twelve sketches of half-length portraits and the second contains one drawing of a full-length portrait. As the size and function of drawings belonging to these two groups are distinct, it is necessary to separately discuss the first and second groups accordingly. ‘A drawing of half-length portrait’ refers to a sketch showing only the upper half of the body from the head to the chest, while a drawing of a full-length portrait refers to a sketch depicting the full body length of the subject.
- 4 For research materials regarding portrait sketches, see *Portrait Sketches of the Joseon Period* (National Museum of Korea, 2007); Yi Sumi, “Types of Portrait Sketches and Representation Techniques in the Late Joseon Dynasty,” *Misulshak* 24 (2010); “Two Processes in the Production of Portraiture during the Joseon Era: Drawing Sketches and the Technique of Coloring the Back of the Silk” in *Secret of Portraiture* (National Museum of Korea, 2011).
- 5 *Injo shilok* (Annals of King Injo) 1623.
- 6 *Yeongjo shilok* (Annals of King Yeongjo) 1725; 1755.
- 7 The several pieces of these portraits were displayed at the special exhibition entitled *The Fifth Exhibition: A Reputable Family of Yangpyeong, Hanyang Jo Family from Neungmal* held in December of 2014 at the Museum of Environmentally-friendly Agriculture in Yangpyeong. The portraits were published in the exhibition catalogue. See *The Fifth Exhibition: A Reputable Family of Yangpyeong, Hanyang Jo Family from Neungmal* (Museum of Environmentally-friendly Agriculture in Yangpyeong, 2014).
- 8 *Hoseong seonmu jeongran gongsin dogam uigwe* (September 27, 1646) 593–594.

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