

## Editorial Note

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Launched in 2007 under the title *International Journal of Korean Art and Archaeology*, the *Journal of Korean Art and Archaeology* (JKAA) is recognized as a leading English-language forum for cutting-edge research on pre-modern Korean material culture. Drawing on recent archaeological finds and objects in private and public institutions, the authors present nuanced insights into past Korean society through their explorations of the multifarious roles played by cultural artifacts. In the past such research was largely inaccessible to scholars and students outside Korea. However, the increasing number of scholars and students outside Korea who take interest in Korean material culture makes it necessary to disseminate Korean-language scholarship in English. JKAA fulfils an important function in this. Available in hard-copy and online, the journal publishes translations of seminal articles, selected from leading peer-reviewed Korean-language journals.

Carrying on the tradition of offering articles on a special topic, this issue centers on porcelain from the Joseon dynasty (朝鮮, 1392–1910). Also included are articles on tombs of the Silla kingdom (新羅, 57 BCE–935), Buddhist temple architecture from the Joseon dynasty, and eighteenth-century portrait painting. Several of the papers include words and phrases that are not easily translated into English. It is hoped that the addition of Romanized terms, as well as Hangeul and/or Chinese characters will aid comprehension of them. To further understanding of the

articles, some maps and diagrams have been specially produced.

Bridging archaeology, history, and cultural studies, the articles on Joseon porcelain intersect questions of manufacture and use with issues of class, consumption, and economics. They rely heavily on recently excavated material, such as urban sites located in the center of Seoul that in Joseon times encompassed palace, temple, and government buildings in addition to licensed shops. The articles highlight the enormous popularity of Joseon porcelain among the upper and lower social classes alike. To open the issue, Jang Namwon's article on collecting traces how in Joseon times porcelain was used and appreciated by a rising number of consumers in increasingly diverse ways, from ritual objects, functional tableware, scholar's accoutrements, and ornaments to collectibles. The wide-spread want for ceramics even led to high-quality wares being pilfered from the official kilns and traded for profit. Jang makes use of a broad range of source material, from personal diaries and official court records to paintings of books and scholar's accoutrements known as *chaekgado* (冊架圖) and *munbangdo* (文房圖), to highlight why the interest in ceramics as objects of appreciation and profit-making developed in the early eighteenth century. Jang explains that prior to this time, a preoccupation with material goods was largely frowned upon as it was argued to conflict with the pursuit of scholarly and spiritual enlightenment. However, as attitudes changed so did approaches to local and imported ceramics from

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past and contemporary times, among them celadon stoneware from the Goryeo dynasty (高麗, 918–1392) and ceramics from Qing China (清, 1644–1911) and Edo Japan (江戸, 1615–1868). Shifting approaches to objects led to ceramics being regarded as high-value goods that could be used and enjoyed in different ways.

In her study on sixteenth-century Joseon white porcelain with Hangeul inscriptions, Kim Yunjeong brings attention to the use of porcelain within the royal palaces. The focus of the paper is white porcelain bearing either stippled or ink-written inscriptions excavated from sites located within the city wall of Seoul. Dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, the Hangeul-inscribed vessels belonged to members of the royal family. Many were used within their private residences, such as kitchens, but others were for ritual and ceremonial functions. Kim Yunjeong's treatment reveals that not all vessels used within the palace carry Hangeul inscriptions. Rather, it was primarily those that were in the private ownership of members of the royal family. The paper not only emphasizes the royal demand for porcelain, it also sheds light on how influential members of the royal family managed their private assets, including the supply of goods via the private royal treasuries, and addresses the impact this had on the production of white porcelain.

Kim Hyejeong continues the discussion of the popularity of porcelain during the Joseon dynasty, also among those who by law were not allowed to own them. Kim's research evidences how the strict sumptuary laws that regulated the consumption of porcelain were often circumvented, despite the government's efforts to prevent this. The paper closely analyses fifteenth- to sixteenth-century blue-and-white porcelain unearthed from sites within the Seoul city center and examines their use among those who lived and worked in the area at the time. The excavated finds prove that despite the production and use of cobalt-decorated porcelain being heavily regulated, a significant number of vessels changed hands outside the court. Kim reasons that some items, such as jars and cups, were probably gifted to court officials and other high-ranking members of the Joseon administrative system. However, embezzlement, theft, and private commissions were likely to be the main reasons why porcelain from official kilns circulated among the general public. Despite measures taken to prevent this, the demand was such that the outflow could not be stopped and even government officials sold official wares for private gain.

The popularity and cultural significance of porcelain during the Joseon period is further highlighted in Woo Minah's article on white porcelain decorated with underglaze iron-brown. Through in-depth analysis of historical sources and recent excavated finds, the author demonstrates that such wares were manufactured at the official kilns from the mid-fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Having grouped the objects into three

distinct phases, Woo verifies that the official production of iron-painted porcelain was closely linked to that of cobalt-blue wares, to the extent that iron oxide was used as a replacement for cobalt when the latter could not be obtained. This was especially so in the decades that followed the Japanese and Manchu invasions of the Korean Peninsula as shortage of cobalt led to an increased demand for iron-painted porcelain. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the official production of porcelain decorated with underglaze iron-brown witnessed its last heyday triggered by consumers who wanted more decorative and flamboyant wares. Woo argues that this was in part due to the import of polychrome wares from Qing China and that it led to official kilns using iron oxide more profusely than ever before, often in combination with cobalt-blue.

The three articles included in the Feature section present different treatments of material from Silla to Joseon times. Kim Daehwan offers a thought-provoking account of Japanese archaeologists' excavations of Silla tombs during the colonial period (1910–45). In detailing current efforts to reinvestigate their methodologies and findings, the paper highlights the enormous tasks and challenges that continue to face scholars of early Korean material. Focusing on Geumgwanchong Tomb (金冠塚, Gold Crown Tomb), which was first discovered and analyzed in 1921, Kim Daehwan accounts for why the tomb was re-excavated in 2015 by archaeologists from the National Museum of Korea and Gyeongju National Museum. Having rectified earlier erroneous conclusions on its construction and tomb artifacts, the re-excavation led to several new insights into the construction of Silla tombs, including how its layout may have played a central role in the performance of mortuary rituals. It also presented important clues as to the identity of King Isaji (尔斯智王) and why swords bearing his name were found inside the tomb.

Song Unsok's paper brings the focus back to the Joseon dynasty. Drawing on historical sources and detailed studies of temple halls, the author accounts for how the Japanese invasions of the sixteenth century brought about changing attitudes to Buddhism and he traces the impact this had on vernacular architecture. Song argues that in a severely weakened Joseon society, the Buddhist clergy offered consolation and this served to strengthen the social role of Buddhism. The performance of death rites proved especially popular among laypeople, leading to a rising number of Buddhist believers and patrons who frequented temples. This called for larger halls that could accommodate them, and among other developments it led to the use of wooden as opposed to brick floors. It also initiated changes to the size and height of the main altar as well as to the Buddhist sculptures positioned on it.

Questions of how social change shaped cultural production also forms the focus of Chang Jina's paper. Chang's research on an important eighteenth-century portrait album in the

collection of the National Museum of Korea examines the special circumstances that led to its production. The album illustrates the eighteen successful passers of the military division of the special state examination, known as the *deungjinsi* (登俊試). The album is unusual for several reasons. It depicted successful examination passers in album format, was commissioned by King Yeongjo (英祖, r. 1724–1776), and was stored in the palace. Chang argues that this break with convention was caused by the manner in which the king viewed his role in relation to past rulers and current subjects. King Yeongjo attached great importance to the commemoration of ancestors and strove to restore the glory of the Joseon dynasty. Celebration of those who passed the *deungjinsi* played an important role in this, hence the production of the album and its special place of holding.

To close the issue, Kwon Sohyun returns to Joseon porcelain with a paper that explores the relatively under-researched topic of inlaid white porcelain that was manufactured at official kilns during the early Joseon period. Few such wares have survived till today and since only a small number of them are from excavated sites, little is known about their date of production and use. Kwon throws much light on the topic with her detailed

analysis of a cup and stand, now in the National Museum of Korea in Seoul. Of particular significance is the fact that the stand carries an inscription of “Taeiljeon” (太一殿), which was the government office in charge of conducting Taoist rites to the North Star. Through close examination of historical sources that bear mention of Taeil and Taeiljeon as well as stylistic analysis of the inlaid design, Kwon establishes that the cup and stand were manufactured sometime between 1434 and 1478, and that the set was intended to be used for ceremonial purposes in the Taeiljeon located in Uiseong, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province.

The National Museum of Korea has taken a leading role in disseminating scholarship on Korean art and archaeology in English, and the JKAA forms part of this initiative. It is hoped that the current volume will give scholars outside Korea the opportunity to engage closely with recently published scholarship in Korean and that it will serve to further interest in Korean art and archaeology among specialists and students alike. I would like to express my thanks to the translators and editorial staff without whom this volume could not have been made.