A New Way of Seeing: Commercial Paintings and Prints from China and European Painting Techniques in Late Chosŏn Court Painting

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It is noted that European pictorial technique was introduced during the Chosŏn dynasty via China and that Western objects exchanged through diplomatic activities by Chosŏn envoys played a significant role in the spread of this new painting style in Korea. However, it is not fully understood how Chosŏn people perceived Western painting techniques, which elements they favored and which were less appreciated. Nor do we know by what routes the new visual elements were transmitted. Focusing on multiple channels through which various images were imported and the diverse agents who took part in the cultural transmission between Chosŏn Korea and Qing China, this study explores Chosŏn Korea’s reception and understanding of Western painting techniques and the application of this new style in their works of art, such as “Han Palace” or “Towers and Pavilions” in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, Chinese paintings and prints, which were mass-produced for larger markets and circulated throughout China as well as exported to other foreign countries are investigated as possible sources for the Chosŏn works. Taking paintings by professional painters in Beijing working outside of the Qing imperial court and Suzhou prints as vehicles of carrying the new artistic taste and pictorial techniques, this research proposes the assumption that these Chinese visual materials infused with Western style were imported to and circulated in Korea from the late eighteenth century onward and that these foreign images contributed to Korea’s (mis)perception and (mis)understanding of Chinese art and European pictorial conventions.

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It is noted that European pictorial technique was introduced to the Chosŏn dynasty via China, and that Western objects exchanged through diplomatic activities by Chosŏn envoys dispatched to Beijing played a significant role in the spread of this new painting style in Korea. Court screens depicting state rituals, portraiture and landscape paintings created in the eighteenth and nineteenth century indicate that the presence of Western painting techniques prevailed in Korean art at that time. However, it is not fully understood how Chosŏn people perceived Western painting techniques, which elements were favored and which were less appreciated, nor by which routes these new visual materials were transmitted. Scholarship on the significance of diplomatic exchanges and personal contacts between Chosŏn delegations and Qing Mandarins and Han literati in Beijing and their impact on intellectual discourse in the late Chosŏn period is far too voluminous to cite its entirety here. Nonetheless, researchers have not paid adequate attention to the multiple channels through which various images were imported and the diverse agents who took part in cultural transmission between Chosŏn Korea and Qing China. Thus, this essay calls for the study of Koreans’ reception and understanding of Western painting techniques, the application of this new style in their works of art, the multiple sources and routes, and the various agents involved in the distribution of this artistic trend in the late Chosŏn era.

This study demonstrates that the radical shift observed in late Chosŏn court art was caused by an influx of a new type of Chinese visual material fused with European painting style, the so-called “Sino-European” or “hybrid” style. Court screens collectively entitled “Han Palace” (漢宮圖) or “Towers and Pavilions” (樓閣圖) are explored to reveal how European painting techniques were appropriated by Chosŏn court painters and to determine the important characteristics particular to Korean art in its reception of the European painting style. In addition, Chinese paintings and prints, which were mass-produced for larger markets and widely circulated throughout China as well as exported to foreign countries, are investigated as possible sources for the Chosŏn works. Taking paintings by professional painters in Beijing working outside of the Qing imperial court and Suzhou prints as vehicles for the new artistic taste and pictorial techniques, this study proposes the possibility that these Chinese visual materials infused with Western style were imported to and circulated in Korea from the late eighteenth century onward and that these foreign images contributed to Korea’s (mis)perception and (mis)understanding of Chinese art and European pictorial conventions.

1 The pioneering research on the influence of Western painting style on Korean art in the Chosŏn dynasty was done by Yi Sŏng-mi and Burglind Jungmann. For details, see Yi Sŏng-mi (2000; 2015), Burglind Jungmann (2013), and Munhwa pŏnyŏk [Cultural translation: The Confrontation of Joseon Painters with European Conceptions of illusionism] (2013, 59-80).

2 For example, see Chŏng Min (2011), Pak Sumil (2010), Shin Ik-Cheol (2006), Chŏng ŭnju (2012), and Gari Ledyard (1982).
Screen of Han Palace as a Case Where Tradition Meets Modernity

Screens depicting palatial architecture in the manner of Western painting style appeared in the nineteenth century and replaced the traditional depictions of palace buildings represented as a peaceful and bucolic landscape in spring season. These screens are known by a collective title as “Han Palace,” and most are currently housed in the National Palace Museum of Korea, having been moved from Ch’angdŏk Palace in the late twentieth century. Another group of paintings depicting a similar subject are known as Towers and Pavilions and Palace in Sumptuous Colors (極彩宮闕圖), which are housed in the National Museum of Korea and Gyeonggi University Museum.

As the title indicates, these works commonly depict architecture reminiscent of Chinese palaces against a landscape background. 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. 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.³

Although the paintings collectively entitled “Han Palace” share a repertoire of architecture loosely related to Chinese palaces, the paintings fall stylistically into two distinctive types according to the layout of the architecture and the landscape setting, the color schemes, the adaptation of linear perspective, and the shading effects employed.⁴ The screens belonging to the first type (fig. 1) feature a waterside village surrounded by continuous, gently rolling mountains. The artist dedicates a large portion of the canvas to landscape depiction and architecture, while figures are tiny in scale. The panoramic view of each screen portrays an idealized, romanticized landscape in which palatial architecture serves as a component of landscape painting. 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.

³ For the recent study of court screens of Han Palace, see Pak Chŏnghye (2012), Yoonjung Seo (2014), and Yun Minyong (2018).
⁴ Paintings of the first group, which can be roughly dated to the early nineteenth century, seem to predate the screens belonging to the second groups based on their close affinity with the style of eighteenth-century landscape painting. Those in the second 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.
The representation of architecture complies with Chosŏn convention: traditional isometric perspective 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 while 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 the garden lend a Chinese ambiance 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. A scholar riding a mule or horse accompanied by an attendant crosses a stone bridge. Rice paddies and buildings hinted by their rooftops are visible in the far distance. A waterside village embraced by rolling hills and a warm spring scene with exuberant willow and banana trees, and colorful peach blossoms in profusion is likely to originate from more conventional landscape of the Chosŏn dynasty, such as paintings of the *Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers* in the seventeenth century and *Spring in Jiangnan* (fig. 2).

In contrast to paintings belonging to the first group, *Han Palace* (fig. 3) in the National Palace Museum shows a radical break with traditional painting concepts. Although its decorative depiction of trees and piles of rocks as well as the use of green and red color reveal its connection to the tradition, the composition is obviously inspired by Western linear perspective. The leaves of the broccoli-shaped trees are painted with dots, and ink outlines are used sparingly in the depiction of trunks and branches. Instead of using ink outlines, trees and columns are modeled with light and shadow, an unusual technique in Chosŏn landscape paintings. While artists of earlier screens stuck to traditional approaches, the artists of this...
work actively experimented with Western techniques of illusionism, although not rendered with complete accuracy. 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.

Western pictorial techniques employing chiaroscuro are also shown in a *Towers and Pavilions* in the National Museum of Korea (fig. 4). The stylistic features of this screen, including the stylized depiction of leaves, the rendition of short lines inspired by hemp-fiber strokes combined with small dots on the mountains, and the application of black color to represent shadows cast on trunks and columns, are features shared with the preceding screen of *Han Palace* (fig. 3). However, the artist’s adaptation of Western techniques here is more conventional; shading is reduced and formatted, and the architecture is shown in a frontal orientation inconsistent with the overall viewpoint. 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 the luxuriant mountains rendered in the blue-and-green landscape style present in the first group of paintings.

Fig. 3. *Han Palace*, late Chosŏn dynasty. Six-panel folding screen, color on silk, each 95.5 x 45.5 cm, National Palace Museum of Korea

Fig. 4. *Han Palace* (Painting of Towers and Pavilions 樓閣之圖), eight-panel folding screen, color on silk, each 113.1 x 38.0 cm, National Museum of Korea
Along with the unusual modeling technique, what is new here in both paintings is the application of a light blue color to the sky, an element most likely deriving from European painting. According to the East Asian tradition, the sky was considered an empty space and thus remained unpainted. Together with the introduction of European illusionism, 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 洪大容 (1731–1783), 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. 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.

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 through the diplomatic channel. In fact, an inspiration can already be detected in works by Chŏng Sŏn 鄭歚 (1676–1759) and Kang Hŭiŏn 姜熙彦 (b. 1738) in the early and mid-eighteenth century.

The blue coloration sky can also be found in late nineteenth-century Japanese woodblock prints known as Ukiyo-e (浮世絵), of the theme Royal Palace of Chosŏn (fig. 5). 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

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5 Exceptions include certain examples of religious paintings and landscapes with a background of winter or night sky, in which ink washes are lightly applied.
6 The Chosŏn envoys visiting Catholic Churches in Beijing and their impressions of the illusionistic decoration of the churches is studied in Shin Ik-Cheol (2006, 21–31).
7 “…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。煙雲明滅。至於遠天空界。皆施正色…” (Hong 2000, 247a)
8 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. Yi Kiji 李器之 (1690–1722), who visited Beijing in 1720 received seven Western paintings, and Yi Ŭihyŏn 李宜顯 (1669–1745) was gifted fifteen paintings in 1720. For Chosŏn intellectuals’ reaction to Western painting, see Yi (2000, 21–31) and Shin (2006, 24).
9 For example, Chŏng Sŏn’s 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 (2000, 153–156) and Jungmann (2013, 82).
10 Ukiyo-e prints were introduced to Chosŏn society in the eighteenth century, as evidenced by Kim Kwangguk’s (金光國, 1727–1797). Sŏngnyang hwawbŏn 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 Hyoŭn (2003, 136–139).
motifs. This work was printed in 1894 by the Japanese publisher Fukada Kumajirō 福田熊次郎 (1874–1898), who was famous for Ukiyo-e depicting the diplomatic events between Japan and Korea and the Sino-Japanese War. The representation of the so-called Chosŏn palace is surprisingly similar to those used by the Chosŏn painters who painted *Han Palace*. Interestingly, the elements used to depict the Chinese palaces by Chosŏn painters, square pavilions with metal decoration, long galleries surrounding an architectural complex, a garden pond with balustrade and 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 no wonder that there are some similarities among Chinese Suzhou prints, Japanese Ukiyo-e, and Chosŏn screens of the *Han Palace* (Hiromitsu 2006, 262–86). A resemblance to the Chosŏn *Han Palace* is even more obvious in *Royal Palace of Chosŏn* (fig. 6), a copper engraving in the collection of the Tokyo Keizai University Library, which is believed to be a later version of the aforementioned woodblock print.

Fig. 5. *Royal Palace of Chosŏn*, published by Fukada Kumajirō, 1894, 72.9 x 37.1 cm, National Palace Museum of Korea

Fig. 6. *Royal Palace of Chosŏn*, copper engraving, 41.0 x 79.0 cm, Tokyo Keizai University Library
While paintings in the first group are closely associated with the style of traditional court painting prevalent in late eighteenth century, paintings in the second groups show the artist’s understanding and use of Western painting techniques. Examples of the latter employ a pseudo-perspective in which architectural structures are arranged on parallel lines, or use a single vanishing point outside of the screen, but objects are painted in frontal or birds-eye view corresponding to multiple moving focal points.

**Paintings in Beijing: Beyond the Imperial Court**

There is no doubt that Western painting style was introduced to Korea by Chosŏn envoys who visited to Beijing, and that the Qing court was the privileged site where intensive cultural interactions between Chosŏn elite and Qing intellectuals occurred. When it comes to art, Jesuit painters and the imperial court painters under the tutelage of European artists produced paintings rendered in a “hybrid” style, which amalgamates traditional Chinese painting style with European pictorial techniques.11 Jiao Bingzhen 焦秉貞 (fl. 1689–1726), one of the most influential painters at Kangxi’s court, pioneered a Sino-Western style in painting through his exposure to Western scientific knowledge and perspective drawing.12 Jiao’s study of Western perspective is reflected his design for the printed imperial edition of *Gengzhi tu* 耕織圖 (Illustrations of agriculture and sericulture), published in 1696. Foreshortened views of rice fields, architecture, and fences or diagonally placed roads in the painting attest Jiao’s attempt to employ linear perspective (Hiromitsu 2006, 262–264). This version of *Illustrations of Agriculture and Sericulture* was introduced to the Chosŏn dynasty as early as 1697, as evidenced by *Painting of Agriculture* done by Chin Chaehae 秦再奚 (1691–1769).13

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11 The designation “hybrid style” and the notion of “hybridity” can be at times opaque. At their best, these terms convey a practical framework for describing the characteristics of Sino-European paintings at Qing court and works of art in the late Chosŏn period. As defined by Homi Bhabha (1994) in his seminal book, *Location of Culture*, hybridity leads to cultural collisions and interchanges while challenging a stable and fixed identity, and contradicting cultural isolation or purity. Bhabha’s most important contributions in this research lies in his emphasis on culture’s “in-between” as the interstitial spaces within and among individuals and cultures, which do not maintain a single position but form identities in an on-going process. Thus, one can affirm that Chosŏn paintings discussed in this paper are the place where the traces of cultural exchange can be found, and a different level of reception and understanding takes place. However, it is problematic if we apply Bhabha’s theory directly in the interpretation of the late Chosŏn paintings described here. As Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibson criticize the notion of ‘hybridity’ with respect to the colonial Spanish American culture, recognizing or naming a cultural product as ‘hybrid’ implies the perception of it as a European by-product, which “homogenizes things European and sets them in opposition to similarly homogenized non-European conventions.” In other words, hybridity is not so much the natural byproduct of an “us” meeting a “them,” but rather the recognition or re-creation of an “us” and a “them.” For Homi Bhabha’s theory on cultural hybridity and its drawback as an theoretical apparatus in analysis of non-European visual culture, see Bhabha (1994) and Dean and Leibsohn (2003, 5–35).

12 Jiao Bingzhen was an official at the Imperial Astronomical Observatory, where Ferdinand Verbiest and other Jesuit missionaries was employed. For the collaborative works by Jiao Bingzhen and Verbiest at the Kangxi’s Emperor’s Observatory, see Grasskamp (2015, 32–38).

13 For a study of the development of *Agriculture and Sericulture* in the late Chosŏn period, see Chŏng (1991, 27–63).
As pointed out by previous scholars, Qing court products transmitted to Chosŏn played a pivotal role in the spread of European painting techniques among Chosŏn court artists. However, such imperial commissioned images with extremely limited accessibility were not widely allowed outside of the palace and it would have been almost impossible for a foreign delegation to obtain these materials unless they were given by Qing emperors as diplomatic gifts. In addition, so-called “European naturalism” achieved by the relatively accurate rendition of linear perspective, plausible representation of space, and three-dimensional modelling in Qing court painting does not appear in the aforementioned Chosŏn screens of palace architecture. For example, *Beauties in the Shade of the Paulownia* (fig. 7) in the Palace Museum of Beijing exemplifies the extremely refined Qing court painting style, which employs European painting techniques. It is evident that the palace artists sought to use Western concepts of light, perspective, and chiaroscuro in their rendition of court ladies and palatial architecture, which results in manifestations of light and the three-dimensional aspect of the depicted figures. However, the faces of figures lack shading and the clothing lacks creases, the architecture features and foliage are outlined and the color is aptly applied by subtle gradation from light tines to deep iridescence, as if each object had its own source of light (Shan 1995, 56–59).

A closer look at Chosŏn screens of palaces confirms the visual differences between such court paintings produced in the High Qing period and Chosŏn works. Chosŏn painters adopted pseudo linear perspective, in which buildings are located along nonvisual multiple parallel lines without the locus of a vanishing point. The architectural structure is drawn in an awkward oblique line and shadows cast on trunks and columns are not done in as a naturalistic

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As a rare case, Yi Sŏngwŏn (1725-1790), who visited Beijing as an emissary in 1789, received a letter from the Qianlong emperor and two scrolls of etchings that depict the emperor’s successful military campaigns against the rebels in East Turkestan and Sichuan Province (Chŏng 2012, 337-338).
manner as their Chinese counterparts by Qing court artists. The piles of odd-shaped rocks and broccoli-like trees are totally distinctive features found only in these Chosŏn screens. If Chosŏn envoys acquired Chinese paintings executed in a European style, it is highly possible that they purchased copies of Qing court paintings by professional painters in Beijing working for private commission or for markets, which were more accessible items than Qing court products. We can infer the kinds of images that were available to foreigners in the second half of the eighteenth century through the collection of Henri-Léonard-Jean- Baptiste-Bertin (1720–92). Bertin was a French high official eager to collect objects from China using his extensive correspondence with the French Jesuit mission based in Beijing. His collection is known to include several hundred Chinese paintings and numerous illustrations, which were included in his seventeen-volume book, Mémoires concernant l’histoire, les sciences, les arts, les mœurs, les usages, & c. des Chinois: Par les Missionnaires de Pékin (Memoires concerning Chinese history, science, arts, customs, usages of Chinese by the Beijing Missionaries) published between 1776 and 1814. Images of Yuanmingyuan 圆明园 (Garden of Perfect Brightness) in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France come from Bertin’s collection (Finlay 2015, 79–94; 2018, 121–137). Three different versions of paintings based on the 40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan (figs. 8, 9, and 10) are housed in the library, which present variations in their composition, color palette, and details. The Qianlong Emperor commissioned paintings entitled the 40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan in 1738 to accompany his poems on the scenic site in the imperial garden of Yuanming yuan. The paintings were rendered in a hybrid Sino-European style that the Qianlong favored. The painting album was completed in 1744 and the imperial printed version of this was done in 1745. Neither the imperial paintings nor woodblock prints were officially available to the public, but their copies soon spread beyond the confines of the court (Finlay 2011).

While following the original court-commissioned paintings (fig 11) or woodblock prints of 40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan, these three versions contain different elements. This

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15 It is worth exploring to how and why late Chosŏn artists (mis)perceived or failed to correctly use European artistic techniques although it is by no means easy to find clear answers immediately. Lack of adequate reference material and information to learn the principles of Western painting techniques is probably one main reason, and a strong tendency towards conservatism in producing court painting of the Royal Bureau of Painting (Tohwasŏ 圖畵署) in the Chosŏn dynasty is another important basis for this phenomenon. At court, apprentices and junior painters collaborated under the tutelage of senior painters to complete paintings installed for state rituals and in many cases, these paintings were copied after the precedents in conformity to ritual manuals and protocols. Sometimes this may be due to conflicts of taste toward European art and an ambivalent attitude to Western culture, and sometimes it may just be a matter of efficiency to relying on inherited practice. In general, though, it is the process of cultural adaptation, which simultaneously accompanies transformation, modification, and changes until new, foreign culture, techniques, and knowledge are assimilated by indigenous people. Traditional pictorial idioms that had survived for generations would not be replaced too easily or quickly by new ones. It is not only due to technical difficulties but also due to the deliberate choices of artists or patrons. Regarding this question, J.P. Park’s (2018) insightful thoughts are worthy of mention. According to his analysis, the Chosŏn elite considered European paintings featuring the illusionism as mere eye-deceiving curios, not a fine art to be appreciated. Thus, the “artistic merit” of European paintings was rarely recognized and artworks representing an object in a naturalistic way were denounced as a cunning craft (179-195).

16 The painting album was completed by two reading court painters Tangdai (1674–ca.1746) and Shen Yuan in 1744 and was housed in the imperial collection. This album was taken by a French officer in 1860 during the Second Opium War and now in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.
Fig. 8. “Diligent in Affairs and Keeping the Worthy Close,” from *Haitien, Maison de Plaisance de l’Empereur de Chine* (Haidien, pleasure palace of the emperor of China), 1750-1792, 32.7 x 39 cm, gouache, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

Fig. 10. “Apricot Flower Spring Lodge,” from *Paysages chinois tires des jardins de l’empereur, et autres* (Chinese landscapes taken from the gardens of the emperor and others), late 18th century, watercolor on paper, 68.0 x 68.0 cm, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

Fig. 9. “Diligent in Affairs and Keeping the Worthy Close,” from *Maison de plaisance* (Pleasure palace), 1700-1799, 32.7 x 39 cm, gouache, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

Fig. 11. Tangdai and Shen Yuan, “Diligent in Affairs and Keeping the Worthy Close,” from *40 Views of the Yuanmingyuan*, 1744, ink and watercolor on silk, 62.3 x 63.3 cm, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
demonstrates how diverse copies of the original imperial products were produced and circulated outside of the palace. In these works, the buildings are simplified and depicted in brighter colors than those appearing in the original paintings. The exaggerated forms of rock and mountains, and application of blue to sky shows the transformation made by the copyists of these paintings. Remarkably similar albums of painted copies of the 40 Views of Yuanmingyuan also appears in European collections during the late eighteenth century. The album now in the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden, comes from the collection of Jean Theodore Royer (1737–1807). Royer was a lawyer, an antiquarian, a print collector, a member of learned societies, and a sinologist.\(^{17}\) The Bertin and Royer albums share almost identical stylistic features, which suggest both were produced at the same workshop in Beijing (Finlay 2018, 124–125). Although the artists preserve the original composition and follow the hybrid Sino-European style of the Qianlong woodcut illustrations, they add some details and change color schemes and landscape as well. Compared with their imperial counterparts showing the more conventional representation of landscape using brushstrokes (皴, C. cun), these paintings reflect “vulgar” taste and more European elements such as the depiction of shadows, aerial perspective, blue sky, and clouds.\(^{18}\) These stylistic features suggest that the Bertin and Royer albums were painted by skillful Chinese painters outside of the court who were familiar with European techniques of perspective and modeling with light and shade. These images provide an illuminating example of the circulation of Chinese images beyond the confines of the Qing court. Interestingly, geometric-shaped rocks, depictions of trees using modelling techniques, brick buildings, clouds in blue sky, and a surrealistic ambience in these works present the closest affinities with the Chosŏn screens.

**Suzhou Prints as a Possible Pictorial Reference**

Despite the high volume of Western objects in Beijing, the city was not the only place to produce paintings rendered in a Sino-European painting style. There existed multiple local sites to accommodate artists and patrons in favor of these new styles.\(^{19}\) In fact, the influx of Western printed material through the southern ports of China must have exerted a more widespread effect on the visual culture of the late imperial China than did the handful of Western Jesuit painters at the imperial court (Clunas 1987, 18–20). Suzhou was one such place where Western objects were popular from the mid-seventeenth century to the early

\(^{17}\) The Royer’s album has been introduced in Chiu (2000) and van Campen (2000, 360–371).

\(^{18}\) Due to the increasing demand for art from the emperor of the Qing dynasty to nouveaux-riches, the art market enjoyed unprecedented growth and painting studios and shops thrived in the capital city as well as Suzhou, Hangzhou, and other central cities of Southeast China. As a result, some intriguing diversifications emerged: the taste for art diverged from the imperial preference, mimicking literati’s elegance alongside ‘vulgar’ illusionism. In the eyes of Chinese scholar-officials, paintings using deceptively life-like perspectives and shading with ostentatious details were regarded as vulgar, and thus unworthy of mention (Jang 2016).

\(^{19}\) Wang Cheng-hua (2014) emphasizes the importance of European and Westernized art in local society and the presence of multiple contact zones where East-West cultural encounters occurred in High Qing period.
nineteenth century, and its impact on visual art was significant. Suzhou is famous for its flourishing print industries; during the eighteenth century, there were more than fifty print workshops, and more than a million prints per year were produced (Hiromitsu 2010, 36–37). Suzhou prints gained a great popularity in late imperial China and were circulated domestically as well as globally exported to foreign countries, including Japan, Vietnam, France, Britain, Germany, and Holland.

One notable feature of Suzhou prints is an apt amalgamation of traditional subject matters and Western painting techniques (Hiromitsu 2010, 262–86; Kleutghen 2015, 180–183). Due to the affluence of the region and the long artistic tradition in Suzhou, many talented artists and craftsmen were attracted to the city and employed by print workshops in the Suzhou area. In addition, intellectuals in the city were keen to learn new knowledge and technology imported from the West via a thriving commercial sector located close to the southern trading ports through which European goods were introduced. In particular, Western painting techniques such as linear perspective and chiaroscuro in Suzhou prints is thought to have originated with local painters who had the Catholic connections in Suzhou. In the 1670s, these were associated with the diocese of Suzhou Prefecture, centered in Changshou District, where the Catholic priest commissioned perspectival pictures as well Christian images for the purpose of preaching and making connections with local elites. The perspectival pictures commissioned by Catholic priests may have had a stylistic impact on the local production of art in the Suzhou area (Wang 2014). This exposure to knowledge of Western art and European material culture further deepened and influenced the stylistic development of Suzhou prints.

As many court painters in Beijing originated from the Jiangnan area, it is often difficult to differentiate the styles of the two regions. Nonetheless, there are certain stylistic features of Suzhou prints that are not likely to be found in court painting: the cross-hatching adopted from European engravings and the consistent use of chiaroscuro. Woodblock prints and paintings produced at court rarely employed cross-hatching and they don’t have shadows cast on the ground (Shan 1995, 57). Although Chosŏn painters did not adopt cross-hatching techniques in their paintings, the consistent use of chiaroscuro, producing shadows in a peculiar manner, is reminiscent of Suzhou print rather than Qing court products. In fact, the sharp, stiff lines and flattened surface shown in the Chosŏn screens lack Western illusionistic effects compared to Qing court paintings and are more closely associated with woodblock prints rather than painting. Such features often appear when motifs were transferred from woodblock to painting. In addition, the Chosŏn screens share certain motifs with Suzhou prints, such as the pyramid-roof top pavilion and depictions of trees with flower-like leaves, or bulky rockery with oval patterns (Seo 2018).

In the early period, approximately from the 1660s to the 1720s, Suzhou prints were generally small in scale, exhibiting limited themes, and the standardized print colors consisted of blue, red, yellow and green. The major topics of Suzhou prints are traditional auspicious symbols used as “New Year Prints” for celebrating the holiday season. These include beautiful women, boys, animals, flora, fauna, folktales which are mostly didactic, and
auspicious messages. In the second phase, spanning roughly from the 1730s to the 1780s, Suzhou print studios began to produce large monochrome prints to which bright colors were often applied manually (Hiromitsu 2010; Naruse 1998). This period is characterized by large-scale prints depicting popular panoramic tourist sites, or scenes of urban life rendered in the so-called “hybrid style,” which adopted modified European painting techniques such as the modeling of shadow, linear perspective, and a constant single source of light (Wang 2014). Heavy shading is often applied to architecture to lend a three-dimensional effect, and a long diagonal composition is employed to arrange a series of architectural compounds in rather moderate foreshortening. Many of the Suzhou prints from this time carry inscriptions informing viewers of the title and name of the artist or studio as well as poetic texts. *Three Hundred and Sixty Occupations* (fig. 11), produced in 1734 is one such example. This pair of prints vividly illustrates the lively atmosphere of urban life in Suzhou, depicting the area around the Chang Gate, the busiest water gate and commercial district of the city (Ma 2007, 32–41)

Suzhou prints were brought to the Japanese and European markets from the mid-eighteenth century to the turn of the nineteenth century. According to one inventory of Chinese products shipped to Nagasaki, more than one hundred thousand Chinese single-sheet prints were brought to Japan in the late eighteenth century, most of which are likely to have been Suzhou workshop products. Sino-Japanese transactions of visual objects gradually increased, reaching an apex in the 1760s, when six thousand prints were sent to Nagasaki per year. The agents partaking in Sino-European exchanges and the routes employed were relatively varied; envoys, missionaries, and merchants, for instance, did so for diplomatic, religious, and commercial purposes. Most Chinese prints were traded to satisfy the tremendous demand created by the predilection for Chinoiserie that swept Europe in the mid-eighteenth century. The research project team of “Early Asiatica and Chinoiseries at the Saxonian Court” has created a comprehensive catalogue of an early collection of Asian and Chinese drawings and graphic artworks, listed in an inventory from 1738 and belonging to the collection of the Kupferstichkabinett housed in the Dresden State Art Collection. It includes approximately 159 sheets produced in China for export to Europe.

In the same vein, it is highly probably that Suzhou prints made their way to Korea through the diplomatic activities of Chosŏn envoys in Beijing and their personal contacts. It

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20 Suzhou print is not the only source for artists of Edo Japan to learn Western perspectives and painting techniques. Through direct contact with Dutch and Portuguese merchants in Nagasaki, and books and prints they brought into the archipelago, Japanese artists were able to familiarize themselves with European painting skills as well (Wang 2014, 8–9).


22 I have not yet encountered any records written by Chosŏn envoys attesting Korean ambassadors purchased Suzhou prints in Beijing and brought them back to Korea in the early modern period. However, various Sino-European objects and Western works were transmitted to the Korean Peninsula through different channels. For example, Kim Kwangguk (1727–1797) obtained European etching, *the View of Scultanie* (ca. 1795) by Dutch printmaker Petrus Schenck (1660–ca. 1718) while he visited Beijing as a medical officer of the diplomatic mission in 1776 and 1779. Cho T’aeŏk (1675–1728) received the *Complete Map of the World* (坤輿萬國全圖 Kunyu...
is well known that Korean envoys purchased numerous books, antiques, and artworks on their way to the capital as well as on Beijing markets. Indeed, Chinese merchants or go-betweens often brought their items for sale to the lodging of Chosŏn envoys. A substantial number of books and artworks were brought to Korea within a short lapse of time owing to the Korean envoys’ activities in China. *Gu Jin Tushu Jicheng* (The imperial encyclopedia) and *Pei Wen Zhai Shu Hua Pu* (Illustrations of agriculture and sericulture from Peiwen Studio) were transmitted to the Chosŏn court through this channel. Not only Chinese prints and paintings produced in Beijing but also images originating from Suzhou known as *Suzhou pian* or Suzhou sheets, were imported to Korea in the eighteenth century through this channel. In addition, Chinese merchant ships departing from Suzhou to Nagasaki sometimes drifted on to or stopped by the southern coast of Korea and Cheju island. Furthermore, 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 during late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

It is well known that a quite number of copies of *Spring Festival on the River* 清明上河圖 and the *Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden* 西園雅集圖 existed in Chosŏn collections. For example, Pak Chiwŏn 朴趾源 (1737–1805) saw seven different copies and left two inscriptions on these paintings; one in the collection of Kim Kwangguk, one of the most celebrated collectors of the eighteenth century, another work owned by Hong Taeyong, who had visited China as a secretary of solstitial embassy of 1765-1766 and left one of the most interesting travel accounts of his journey. Pak Chiwŏn was obviously aware that the paintings he had seen were not all authentic works by Qiu Ying 仇英 (ca. 1494–1552) and denounced people in Jiangnan who foisted off Qiu Ying forgeries on Chosŏn customers. In his inscription on Kim Hongdo’s 金弘道 (1745–1806) *Elegant Gathering of the Western Garden* (fig. 12) Kang

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23 For the study of cultural exchange between Chinese and Chosŏn intellectuals at Liulichang market in eighteenth- and nineteenth century, see footnote 2.

24 The term of *Suzhou pian* literally means ‘Suzhou sheet’ and is used to designate a group of paintings and single or multiple-sheet prints produced in the Suzhou area. These are highly commercialized objects targeting the nouveaux-riche people who wanted to purchase famous works of art at a relatively moderate price. For previous research on *Suzhou pian*, see Laing (2000, 265-295), Li (2004, 99-110), and Yang (1997, 53-61).

25 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 during the Persecution of 1801. He baptized Lady Song, Prince Ŭnŏn’s wife and Lady Sin, the prince’s daughter-in-law, the prince’s daughter-in-law. For his religious activities in Korea see *Veritable Records of King Sunjo*, vol.2, year of 1801, the third month, the sixteenth day; the fourth month, the twentieth day and Chŏng (2002).

26 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 Gwangguk 金光旭 (1696-?) and was later acquired by Sŏ Sangsu 徐常修 (1735–1793); one in the collection of a person whose style name was Ilsujae 日修齋; and one was owned by Yi Hagon 李夏坤 (1677-1724). For the original texts, see Cho Yongsok, "清明上河圖跋" and Pak (2004). For a study of Hong Taeyong’s visit to Beijing and his travelogue *Peking Memoir* (Tamhŏn ilgi), see Ledyard (1982, 63-103).

Sehwang 姜世晃 (1713–1791) mentions that he saw scores of the *Elegant Gathering* paintings and evaluated Qiu Ying’s work as the finest version.28

Compared to original pieces by masters, Suzhou sheets were facsimiles of old paintings, sold at relatively low prices in Beijing markets during the late Ming and Qing eras. For example, authentic works by Qiu Ying were quite expensive; Xiang Yuanbian paid 200 taels of silver for a painting of *Spring Morning in the Han Palace* by Qiu Ying, a sum equivalent to the price of a reasonably large house (Chen 1983, 74–75). Likewise, Suzhou prints were also available at bookshops and antique stores in Liulichang, Longfu Temple, and Yuhe Bridge, the centers of the art trade in Beijing. These were famous commodities traded in Beijing market and were more accessible to the public because they were produced in large quantities and purchased at cheaper prices. In the late Ming period, some *Suzhou sheets*, even those exhibiting heavy pigments executed with competent skill, cost only one tael of silver, and the prices for Suzhou prints are likely to have been even lower (Wang 2016, 31–38). To foreign delegations, Suzhou prints became souvenirs attainable at reasonable cost.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine which Suzhou prints were introduced into Korea and how many were imported to Chosŏn because of the paucity of textual evidence.

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28 This six-panel folding screen is in the collection of the National Museum of Collection. Dated to 1778 the inscription reads: “I saw dozens of scrolls depicting the ‘Elegant Gathering’; I thought the work of Qiu Ying was the best. Besides his, the others were not worth recording...”余曾見雅集圖, 無慮數十本, 當以仇十州所畫為第一, 其外瑣瑣, 不足盡記. I refer here to Kumja Paik-Kim’s English translation. For the full text and English translation, see Paik-Kim (1982, 162-163).
However, similar stylistic elements found in the aforementioned screens and circumstantial evidence suffice to prove that Suzhou painting and prints were transmitted to and appreciated in Chosŏn from the eighteenth century onward. A six-panel screen of the Han Palace (fig. 3) shows a close affinity to the Suzhou prints of the mid eighteenth century, such as Afang Palace (fig. 13), 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 court paintings. In the both Suzhou print and Chosŏn screen, architecture is arranged in long diagonal lines, evoking a receding space on the canvas, and shadows cast on one side of the stone platforms allude to a source of light.

Afang Palace was published and produced by Guan Yuduan (fl. the first half of the eighteenth century) whose courtesy name is Guan Ruiyu (管瑞玉). Guan’s workshop was located at Shijia Lane 史家巷. Shijia Lane is close to Tongguan Square 通關坊, where the first Catholic Church in Suzhou was built by Frarcuis Brancati (1601–1671), an Italian Jesuit missionary, in 1649 (Xu 2016). This indicates that he presumably saw European paintings, or engravings, and that exposure to European art inspired Guan’s prints. In fact, Unmelted Snow at Broken Bridge in the Chaloner Collection (fig. 14), has a cartouche that includes the following text, “Xinde Studio, Guan Ruiyu from Gusu produced this finely-executed Western

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This was translated from “信德號 姑蘇 管瑞玉 頂細西洋畫 發客.” This image is published in Shigeru and Hiromitsu (1995). The inscription reads as follows: 姑蘇史家巷管瑞玉藏板 Guan shijiaxiang Guan Ruiyu cangban or Guan Ruiyu of Shijia lane in Suzhou holds the woodblocks.
Guan Xinde, who is likely from the same family of Guan Ruiyu, ran a shop of “Western pictures” (洋畫店, C. Yanghua dian) in Suzhou, and he was very active in the Catholic circles in the eighteenth century (Wang 2014, 388–389). The adaptation of linear perspective and chiaroscuro effects are also found in other Suzhou prints in the eighteenth century, such as One Hundred Boys (fig. 15) designed by Yuangu 荊谷 and published by Zhang Xingzhu 張星聚 in Taohuawu 桃花塢 (Peach blossom cove) in 1743.31 While the subject belongs to the traditional repertoire of auspicious paintings in China, the rendition of the architectural complex using a vanishing-point perspective and the cross-hatching imitating European copperplate engravings clearly suggest an introduction of the new European style (Kleutghen 2015, 180–187). However, Chinese artists’ adaptation of European techniques

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30 The Chaloner Collection is now housed in the North Yorkshire County Record Office, U.K. Suzhou prints are included in the Chaloner of Guisborough Archive with the reference ZFM.

31 This print has two texts to inform a designer, a publisher and the date of production. The first text to the lower right margin reads as “published by Zhang Shengju at Taohuawu in Suzhou 姑蘇桃花塢張星聚發客.” The second text is placed at the top of the image. It is as follows: “One Hundred Boys. Accomplished children are auspicious sign of harmony. Therefore upon the birth of a son (I) wish you a threefold blessing: May your offspring be as numerous as a katydid’s! Honor upon the birth of your son! The generations praise a hundred sons in songs of acclaim! Early autumn of 1743, copying European techniques in the Hall of Descendants. (made in) Suzhou (by) Yungu.” I follow Kleutghen’s (2015, 180–182) translation.
is selective; shading is reduced and formatted, and the architecture is shown in a frontal orientation inconsistent with the overall viewpoint.

*Towers and Pavilions* (fig. 3) in the National Museum of Korea has commonalities with Suzhou prints such as *Romance of the Western Chamber* (fig. 16) dated to 1747. This includes the richly decorated palace complex consisting of double-eaved buildings, walls topped by tiles, pyramidal-roofed pavilions lined with gilded ridges, and balustrades surrounding artificial ponds. The flower-foliage and trees and columns with shadow shared by *Towers and Pavilions* and *Romance of the Western Chamber*. In particular, the manner in which shadows fall on columns in the two works is almost identical. Shading effects are employed to represent the volumes of the columns; the highlighted areas lie on one side and the darkest part on the other side. However, subtle difference in expression of shadows are rarely seen in either work. Interestingly, the trees in *Towers and Pavilions* are also modeled with light and shadow, but the direction of their shadows is opposite those cast on the columns. This fact indicates that Chosŏn artists did not use a single consistent source of light and thus the shades appears in wrong direction. In terms of the architectural style, *Towers and Pavilions* presents some elements influenced by Qing Chinese building, such as moon-shaped windows, walls with latticed windows, and brick building. As these Chinese-style features are often found in the aforementioned Suzhou prints, we may comfortably assume a link between the new type of Chosŏn screen of palatial building and Suzhou prints of the mid eighteenth century.

*Fig. 16. Romance of the Western Chamber*, 1747, woodblock print, 97.4 x 51.4 cm, Harvard Art Museums Arthur M. Sackler Museum
Western Painting Techniques to Open Eyes on a New World

The paintings and prints with the illusionistic effects produced by linear perspective and the chiaroscuro and verisimilitude achieved by European pictorial techniques impressed Chosŏn intellectuals and opened their eyes to optical instruments, visual curiosities, wonders, and experiments. Kang Sehwang, one of the most influential artists and connoisseurs in the eighteenth century, highly appreciated these and left an interesting inscription on *Wind and Rain Gods* by Kim Tŏksŏng 金德成 (1729–1797): “(Kim’s) brush and coloring methods show that he mastered the wonders of the Western painting techniques. Kim was known to have excelled in paintings of Buddhist deities, and the clouds in his *Winds and Rain God* 風雨神圖 display a definite sense of volume and weight due to his use of shading” (Yi 2000, 39–41). Kang’s remarks reveal that literati’s awareness of value of the Western painting techniques. However, despite their awe of new pictorial styles and the accuracy of these techniques for capturing nature in a realistic manner, the methods provoked criticism among Chosŏn literati who explain that such paintings are nothing but a way of fooling the viewer’s eye, a mere “craft,” like the sciences. Notwithstanding, disdain for European painting techniques, the attempt to employ new visual elements and to experiment with modelling techniques and linear perspective continued apace and appeared in various ways, as shown in *Calling a Dog* 招狗圖 (fig. 17) by Sin Kwanhyŏn’s 申光絢 (b. 1813) and a *Young Prince of Yanping Relying on His Mother* 延平齠齡依母圖 (fig. 18) traditionally attributed to Park Chega 朴齊家 (1750–1805). Sin’s painting depicts a boy followed by a dog against a shaded building. Shading effects, chiaroscuro and the concept of a single source of light were adopted to create a three-dimensional effect and capture the movement of the figures. The salient awareness of a single source of light and of the corresponding shadows casting on columns and roof tiles, and the subtle application of shading along the boy’s body and drapery, and a shadow of the boy and dog on the ground reveals a more advanced understanding of Western painting techniques and their application into the painting. In a *Young Prince of Yanping Relying on His Mother*, the artist depicts a young prince of Yanping, Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624–1662), the Ming loyalist and third ruler of the Kingdom of Tungning in Taiwan in the seventeenth century and his Japanese mother. Intriguing aspects of this painting includes the appearance of a two-story building supported by columns with Western-style capitals. The voluminous appearance of columns and the shade cast under the terrace reveals the artist’s attempt to employ Western painting technique. Dark shadows are applied to oddly-shaped rocks behind the lady and rockery in the far distance. The prince and his mother hold a white small animal in their hands. The Western-style architecture and river bank gradually recede to the far distance, and exaggerated application of shadow in this painting resembles the composition and motifs of paintings produced in Nagasaki during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (fig. 19). In addition, the small animals in the hands of the boy and mother look like dogs. A figure with a dog is a subject frequently found in Nagasaki prints (fig. 20), which depict the domestic life of foreigners living in Nagasaki and their exotic animals. Various kinds of dogs were brought to Nagasaki by Dutch merchants as pets, along with other foreign
animals, and these often appears in Nagasaki paintings and prints of the late Edo period.

The reception of European painting techniques involved a new perception of art as well as of Western culture, articulated around a discourse on the mutual relationships among verisimilitude, visual realism, and artistic value. The verisimilitude and visual wonder achieved by the adaptation of Western pictorial technique opened up discourse on the practical reasons for reconsidering or reevaluating knowledge and technology from the West, which culminated in the motto of Tongdo sŏgi (Eastern sprit, Western instrument) in the later period.

Fig. 17. Sin Kwanghyŏn, Calling a Dog, 19th century, album leaf, ink and light color on paper, 35.3 x 29.5 cm, National Museum of Korea

Fig. 18. Young Prince of Yanping Relying on His Mother, late 18th century, color on paper, 214.0 x 49.5 cm, National Museum of Korea
Fig. 19. “Figure with Landscape” from *A Pair of Nagasaki Paintings*, late 18th century – early 19th century, ink and color on paper, 73.0 x 99.0 cm, private collection

Fig. 20. *Dutch Woman Holding a Dog*, early 19th century, polychrome woodblock print, ink and color on paper, 43.4 x 15.6 cm, the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Conclusion

The frequent contact through diplomatic and commercial channels, the unprecedented influx of foreign objects and the emergence of multiple agents all facilitated cultural exchanges in the late Chosŏn era. The long-established interconnectedness of China and Korea took on a new dimension with this dynamic, and Chosŏn people witnessed a new pattern of cultural exchange. The adaptation of European painting styles featuring linear perspective, modeling techniques, and shading effects were obvious in late Chosŏn visual culture. Expressions of this ‘hybrid’ style have considerable commonalities with their Chinese predecessors, including a predilection for linear perspective and chiaroscuro, but there exist various understandings of Western illusionistic effects and perspectival images in the Korean versions. Koreans were rarely exposed to authentic European sources directly; the time-honored tradition of court painting and the practices of court painters exerted a stronger influence on the process of adapting these new visual effects, as seen in screens of palatial architecture. This results in delightful oddities and unique artistic effects peculiar to Chosŏn art of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The artists transformed Sino-European images available to them by ‘domesticating’ European features to cater to their court patrons. The Western stylistic elements were comparatively less visible in literati painting but the growing interest in European painting techniques is in line with a growing awareness of the versatility of Western science among Chosŏn intellectuals. Thus, the adaptation of the Western painting styles in Chosŏn society not only illustrates Korea’s reception of Western knowledge in the visual arts, but the process also ushered in fresh ideas and altered attitudes toward the “West” and its cultural legacy.

This study suggests that visual objects, through which knowledge and artistic practice were transmitted to foreign countries, could have had a meaningful impact on the art production of the recipient country and lead to substantial changes in a given society. Paintings in Beijing and prints in Suzhou that were produced commercially for markets and foreign visitors were media that served to stimulate these changes as well as to enrich the repertoire of Chosŏn painting. Examining Suzhou prints and painting produced in Beijing for commercial purpose and imported to European countries and Japan in the early modern period provides glimpses into what visual materials were attainable domestically and internationally. It hints at what kinds of images Chosŏn envoys or visitors were able to obtain in China at that time and the multiple networks or circuits shaping the cultural interactions in various forms and at different levels. An understanding of the multiple routes, various pictorial sources, and agents who contributed to the spread of European painting techniques in Chosŏn art can help us to find a link connecting Korea to the rest of world in the transcultural context of the early modern period, a subject rarely discussed among scholars so far. This paves the way to exploring a new dimension of the cultural exchanges in which the diverse agents from various part of the world participate, and to situate Korean art in a broader context beyond East Asian cultural boundaries centered on China, which fundamentally re-evaluates the modernization of Korean society against the backdrop of outside circumstances.
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