

Reinvented and Re-Contextualized: Cultural Property in Korea during Japanese Occupation

Prof. Kang, Heejung
SIEAS, Sogang University
Seoul, Korea.

Abstract

This study aims to review the role of Imperial Japan for the establishment of Korean art history during Japanese occupation. Japanese intellectuals built the theoretical basis for the art history of Korea. The art of Korea was discovered, restored, and re-contextualized by Japan through the art historical system. The paradigm went through the process of de-contextualization and re-contextualization. Those cultural properties were arranged in art historical timeline according to the taste of Imperial Japan. For them, the value of Korean art was supplementing blanks of the oriental art, between China and Japan. Korean art history as a modern academic discipline established by Imperial Japan according to their ideal paradigm. Japan dominated and monopolized the hegemony of knowledge about Korea. They also made Koreans accept their paradigm through public education and school books. The way of seeing in Korean heritage was made by Imperial Japan in Modern Era.

Keywords: Korean Art History, cultural property, de-contextualization, re-contextualization, Imperial Japan, colonialism

I. Introduction

“Civilization” and “Savageness” are symbolic words which divide modern history into the following categories: rational West and non-West; West and uncivilized Orient; white and non-white. This essay will examine the establishment of Korean art history as a modern scholarship which accelerated after the Japanese occupation, and the influence and the meaning of Imperial Japan to the construction of the Korean art history paradigm. In the case of Korean art history, its progress of becoming a modern scholarship was accelerated after Japanese occupation. Following Fukuzawa Yukichi’s statement, Japan was attempting to assimilate its institution, custom, and culture to those of Western Europe by setting European Progress and Imperialism as its model under the slogan “leaving Asia and entering the West” since the Meiji Restoration. Among the movements, “Theory of Leading the Civilization” dealt with the annexation and colonization of Joseon. It stated that superior Japan should “guide” the undeveloped Korea that had no possibility of developing itself.¹

The instruction was “colonization”, and one of the colonial policies was reconstructing the history and art of Joseon from the perspective of the history of civilizations.² As is generally known at this time, the civilization was thought to be continuously evolved from the most primitive to most civilized, linearly. It is well known that Imperial Japan used the culture of Joseon ideologically to assimilate Joseon to a more civilized Japan.³

¹ See Ham, D., “Japan’s Colonial Discourse on Korea and the Colonialistic Turn of the Notion of Civilization,” *Journal of Asian Historical Studies*, 94(2006), 195-197. Already in the early 1880s, Fukuzawa Yukichi stated “Japan is strong and powerful and Joseon is weak. Japan already proceeded toward civilization, and Joseon is still uncivilized.” and added “Joseon must follow Japan’s example and participate in most recent civilization”. Colonial Immigration toward Korea was justified as a project which promotes the civilization of Korea.

² Since the 19th century, Japan tried to reconstruct its own history and art history to proclaim the “imperial lineage of Tenno which remained pure through ten thousand generations.” According to “Lecture Notes of Tenshin”(1890), when Okakura Tenshin gave lectures on ‘Japanese Art History’ in Tokyo Art School in 1890, he said “Studying Art History is most important thing, and this is not merely recording the past. It must reach to the point of creating the art of future.” This attitude affected the selection of the object of art history, thereby generating an inclination toward giving more importance to the “prototypical” art.

³ Lee, J., “A Study on the Japanese Policy of Korean Traditional Culture in the Japanese Imperialism in the 1920~30s,” *The Korean History Education Review*, 75(2000), 78.

By emphasizing that the culture of the underdeveloped Joseon Dynasty is vulgar, Imperial Japan insisted Joseon's assimilation to modern civilization. Before the annexation of Joseon, things called as art today were not categorized under the name of art. Similar to many other academic studies, art history also began with modern times. Here, modernity means the "recognition of a new era". A new era is considered to always be better than and completely different from the past era in this context.⁴ In Joseon, the theory of art history was oriented by the Imperial Japan. As a result, it still stays under the Japanese influence until today.

Imperial Japan which possessed "civilization," asserted itself as a personality donned with the education of aesthetics, and that it was able to appreciate beauty. Guki Ryuichi, who was the first president of the Imperial Museum, clearly showed his position of putting more value on Buddhist art by stating, "Japanese who is cultivated with aesthetics gained a chance to display his ability by acquiring Buddhism."⁵ Japanese intellectuals had the intention to construct the art history of Japan and Joseon that had more emphasis on Buddhism and Buddhist art. The research before the annexation became fundamental data for Joseon Art, and the basis of the paradigm. This played an important role not only as an academic theory of Joseon art history but also in creating and providing the identity and system of knowledge for Joseon people. Moreover, organizing the Japanese tourist party as an introduction of modern tourism to Joseon even before the annexation caused considerable impact to a 'Hobby', or an interest to be undertaken for pleasure, in Joseon. The new word 'Hobby' adopted by the Japanese gave unprecedented meanings for the surveying of cultural properties, tourism, and travel among other parts of daily life.⁶

II. Investigation of Cultural Properties in Joseon and the De-Contextualization

The preliminary survey is well known that Japan began to investigate the industry, regional specialties and historical remains of various parts of Joseon under the direction of the Government-General of Joseon even before the annexation of Joseon.⁷ Yagi Shozaburo carried out this preliminary survey in 1893. After him, Sekino Tadashi executed the survey of the ancient architecture and the cultural properties of Joseon since 1902. After Sekino investigated the ancient architecture of Joseon in 1909 with Tani Seiichi and Kuriyama Shunichi, he published a report "*Joseon gei-jutsu no genkyu*" in 1910 for Takjibu (Ministry of Finance).⁸ While Sekino gave a lecture "About the Transition of Korean Arts" at Guangtongguan in Seoul, Takjibu collected his notes and published it under the name of *Hankhongyeop*. This was the first book of Korean art history. At that time, the survey mostly focused on ancient tombs, architecture, and Buddhist temples. The content of Joseon art history was simple.

When the Japanese Government-General of Korea was launched in October 1910 after the annexation, the district department under the Department of the Interior worked on Sekino's investigations. Cultural properties were graded, and investigations to find the fundamental materials of historic articles were executed until the substantial fundamental survey was to be completed in 1913. The head figures were Torii Ryujo and Kuroita Katsumi.⁹ Kuroita Katsumi played a key role when the Investigation Committee of Ancient Remains launched in 1916, and he established the Society for Studies of Ancient Remains in Joseon in place of the Government-General which was under financial difficulties. He also promoted people outside of the government to support the survey project.¹⁰

⁴ Park, J., *Ilgeureojin Geundae* [Distorted Modernity] (Seoul: Pureun Yeoksa, 2003), 27-32.

⁵ Guki, R., "Preface," *Shinbi Taikan* (Tokyo: Shimbishoin, 1899).

⁶ Visiting cultural sites rapidly increased to become an almost common experience after Imperial Japan executed cultural policy. This culture was not especially new only in Joseon, but it was the same in Japan, also. Philosopher Wasuji Tetsuro wrote about his visits to Buddhist and Shinto temples and this became the first account of his pilgrimage in Japan. The article describes this situation very well. Watsuji, T., *Koji junrei* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1917). The book which accounted his visit to Horyuji, Yakushiji, Toshodaiji, etc. was the earliest traveling essays.

⁷ Surveys on relics by Japan were performed from 1888 to 1893, and it was based on the experience and confidence to execute a national survey of relics. The survey attributed relics' author and period, and graded them.

⁸ From 1902 until the annexation of Joseon, various people from Anthropology class of the University of Tokyo carried out the survey, including Imanishi Ryu. See *Sekino Tadashi no Chosen koseki chosa* for the survey.

⁹ Unlike Kuroita, Torii placed more value on the anthropological survey. It was because Torii believed that Sekino's research lacked anthropological and ethnological characteristics. Lee, S., *Mandeuleojin Godae* [Invented Antiquity], trans. by Park, K. (Seoul: Samin, 2001), 217.

¹⁰ After that, Society for Studies of Relics of Joseon led projects related to restoration of relics in the place of Government-General. Ibid. 209-211.

When the fundamental survey was completed in 1913, Seokgulam and the Paldal Gate in Suwon were repaired by the Bureau of Construction Department of Building and Repairing under the Imperial governmental policy. While the repair of cultural properties during the 1910s was for the promotion of imperialism, restoration after the 1920s was to legitimize cultural policies. Imperial Japan believed that ideological and cultural control could be acquired by educating Joseon people about their own culture.¹¹

For the Public Promotion Party for Products Commemorating the Fifth Year of the Establishment of the Japanese Government in 1915, the Museum of the Japanese Government-General of Korea opened. The museum was a renovated building built as an art museum in Gyeongbok Palace. According to <Regulation for Conserving Antiquities of Ancient Tomb Level> issued in 1916, all of the administration concerning the conservation and management were executed by the Museum of the Government-General of Korea under the Bureau of Secretary of the Government General.¹² Cultural properties collected or bought, such as pottery, painting and crafts were displayed at the museum. Thus, one might think that the object of the survey became more concrete and systemized.¹³ <Regulation for Conserving Antiquities of Ancient Tomb Level> was the first Act dealt with ancient remains and cultural properties that Imperial Japan took a lead in. It was issued three years prior to the same Act that was issued in Japan.¹⁴ It seems that Imperial Japan wanted to test the Act in Joseon before issuing it in Japan.¹⁵

Surveys, excavations and its findings during the Japanese occupation became baseline data for the art history of Joseon. In a cultural and ideological aspect, primary data became the subject of *Catalog of Joseon's Ancient Remains*, *Comprehensive Bibliography of Ancient Culture*, and *Joseon Art History*. On the other hand, these cultural properties decontextualized from its original context of fabrication, enshrinement or storage and went through the process of “technical modernization” which were, “restoration and repair”. During this period, the process of conserving or restoring Joseon’s cultural legacy progressed differently from its precedents in pre-modern Joseon society. Imperial Japan restored Joseon's cultural properties with their new techniques which they called “civilization.” Cement was one definitive example. When Imperial Japan restored the stone pagoda of Mireuksa, they used concrete pavement like cement on the pagoda rather than using stones. It was to prevent the pagoda from collapsing, and they put concrete pavement to raise the levels of the pagoda.

The amount of concrete pavement taken out from the Mireuksa in 2001 was 150 tons.¹⁶ Concrete pavement was regarded as the most sophisticated and new building material back then.¹⁷ Including Seokgulam, Imperial Japan used concrete pavement for a number of restorations. New materials that were imported and introduced in the modern era were a symbol of the new technology, and luxury of advanced civilization.

¹¹ Lee, J., op. cit. 55-59. The cultural politics of the Imperial Japan established the policy to respect traditional customs and culture of Joseon with the rise of the theory of utilizing Joseon culture.

¹² It was Kuroita Katsumi who played an important role in establishing and organizing the legal system. Lee, S., op. cit. 252-253.

¹³ The process of administrative and institutional consolidation is described in detail in the following book. Lee, S., *Iljegangjeomgi gojeokjosa saeop yeongu*[*Study of the survey of relics during Japanese Occupation*](Seoul: Gyeonginmunhwasa, 2009).

¹⁴ First legal regulation concerning the cultural properties issued in Japan was <Bylaw of conservation of Buddhist temples and shrines>. However, this law was related to the survey and conservation. A more direct law similar to <Regulation of ancient tomb and relics conservation> was <Law on Historical Sites, Natural Scenery and Natural Monuments> issued in 1919. See, Sato D., *Meiji Nation and Modern Japanese Art* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan, 1999).

¹⁵ Lee, S., “Kuroita Katsumireul tonghaebon sikminjiwa yeoksahak”[*Colony and Study of History seen through Kuroita Katsumi*], *Hanguk munhwa*, 23(1999), 251-253. Kuroita was especially concerned about the blacksmith's method(Daejangbeop). Among the eight articles of “Regulation of ancient tomb and relics conservation”, five were based on the blacksmith's method which Kuroita emphasized.

¹⁶ Since it was decided to de-construct and restore the stone stupa of Mireuksaji, 150 tons of cement were separated from the pagoda since October 31st, 2001. Furthermore, numerous stone fragments with inscriptions which dated 4th year of Taisho reign(1915) were discovered.

¹⁷ It is known that modern architecture was built with cement after 1906. Buildings of the Residency General and the provost martial headquarters, etc. were built with cement. Most of the material was imported. Onoda cement factory was established in Pyeongyang in 1919. Thus, the domestic production of cement began. Lee L., *Hangeuksa Iyagi*[*History of Korea*] 19(Seoul:Hangilsa, 2003), 115.

The visual materialization of Imperial Japan's "Western civilization" was a construction, thus its new techniques were used in the restoration of Joseon's cultural properties. New technology was the legacy of the West which Imperial Japan aimed for, even though Japan tried to hide it under the slogan "Eastern Mentality, Western Technology." Therefore, a series of processes in which the conservation was promoted through the restoration became part of the "technological modernization of cultural properties" for Japan.

The physical modernization of relics and cultural properties that were completed through this process moved on to the museum as a result. Relics transformed themselves as an object of exhibition, sightseeing or tours in the process of de-contextualization. This was the process of re-contextualization adapted to Imperial Japan's intention. Religious Art was no more a subject of holy worship in newly-constructed Joseon art history. Seokgulam was advertised as "discovery" as if it never existed before. It was relocated as an "art" which visually presents the zenith of the art of the United Silla period. Moreover, Imperial Japan turned Seokgulam into a tourist spot by spending an enormous amount of money for its restoration. Japan restored it as a must-see symbol of its successful colonization by the imperialism.¹⁸ The glorious past of Joseon was resurrected by Imperial Japan with the technology of "civilization." Besides, general cultural properties were collected in the names of antiques and art, and were exhibited in the museum as the objects of "public appreciation". Such phenomena caused illegal excavations and transactions of cultural properties throughout the Japanese occupation. In other words, these were re-contextualized as an emblem of colonial Joseon transformed by the Imperial Japan. The survey, discovery, and excavation of historic sites and relics, which started before the annexation of Joseon by the Imperial Japan, became the basis of the modern scholarship known as Joseon art history.¹⁹ At the same time, by going through the process of repair and restoration, it became the object of "taste" and "tourism," which were included in the sphere of modern culture newly introduced by the Imperial Japan. These relics became the emblem indebted to Japan.²⁰ From this point of view, ancient cultural properties of Joseon became the "Regalia" of the colony, used by Benedict Anderson.²¹ Moreover, Japan publicized their accomplishments through various media and tried to brainwash the people of Joseon.²²

It is noteworthy that "Silla's ancient capital Gyeongju" and "Gaesong" were included in the geography section in the Joseon textbook in 1921.²³ The term "ancient capital" implies nostalgia for the legacy of the past and gives nuances that such a place where the essence of the cultural legacy for Joseon is located is revived by Japan. Through field trips and tours, cultural properties were publicized, without their original context. It was Japan's intention to degenerate cultural properties and historical sites as a mere object of sightseeing.²⁴ The Buddhist art which was once an object of religious devotion now became the object of tourism and liberal arts.²⁵

¹⁸ Kang, H., "Seokgulamui Geundaejeok Jaebalgyon"[Modern Re-discovery of Seokgulam], *Tradition and interpretation of visual culture : festschrift of art history in honor of professor Kim Lena* (Seoul:Yekyong, 2007).

¹⁹ About the formation of the Joseon art history, See Takagi, H., "Ilbon misulsa wa Joseon misulsa ui seonglip"[Establishment of the art history of Japan and Joseon], ed. by Lee, S. & Lim, J., *Geuksa ui sinhwa reul neomeoseo[Beyond the Myth of National History]*(Seoul:Humanist, 2004), 167-195.

²⁰ Park, S., "Imperial Taste- Yi Dynasty Museum and the Cultural Politics of Imperialist Japan," *Misulsa nondan*, 18(2004), 143-169.

²¹ Anderson, B., *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, 2nd(New York:Verso, 1991).

²² Imperial Japan believed that it was effective to control ideologically through publicizing the perception by social reforms using education, media, public offices of the capital and provinces. "Class for Reformation of Provinces" began in 1921, and it promoted social education to have ideological control over provincial residents. Lee, J., op. cit. 61-63.

²³ Imperial Japan already interfered with Joseon's textbooks since the period of the Residency-General, and they executed full-scale educational policies by issuing <Edicts on Joseon's education>, <Regulations for General Schools>, <Regulations for high-general school> in 1911. Based on these laws, they managed all things related to the establishment of the textbooks of Joseon and its development and distribution. Heo, J., *Textbook policy and Korean Language Textbook in Japan's Colonial Rule of Korea*(Seoul: Gyeongjin, 2009), 19-21. Joseon textbooks in the early periods of Japanese occupation notified the circumstances related to the occupation. Great Japan Company in Osaka published these textbooks, and it was intended to educate Joseon's people to become subjects of the Japanese emperor. For related information, see Heo, J., *ibid.* 82-83, 94-101.

²⁴ It is well known that Japan took the assimilation policy to its colonies, unlike Great Britain which maintained indirect control of colonies. Therefore, the colonial policy was executed similarly as it was in domestic Japan. Japan also practiced tourism throughout the country. It was after the Meiji period when tourism began and the travel guidebook was published in Japan.

²⁵ In the aspect of the publicizing "Study of Joseon," tourism and survey focused on Seokgulam. Besides, many intellectuals wrote their admiration of the Joseon culture. See Kang, H., "Sikminji Joseonui pyosang: Seokgulamui

Joseon and Japan were respectively called as the “Land of the Morning Calm” and the “Land of the Rising Sun,” by Westerners and these imply many things.²⁶ Adequately modifying and displaying the culture of the past was one of the ways to promote the formation of a dichotomous paradigm. The Imperial Japan understood this very well and fully used it.

III. Publication of the Catalog and the Mass Reproduction and Distribution of Photographs of Cultural Properties

Since the publication of the first volume of *Joseon koseki zufu* (*Zufu* in abbreviation) in 1915, the Government-General summarized and published the Joseon art in 15 volumes. *Zufu* was actually a series of catalogs, and big and small photographs were arranged inside. The name, location, owner, and the method of production of the cultural properties were written next to the photographs. The publication of *Zufu* began in 1916 under the Governor-General Terauchi Masatake’s plan. It was Sekino who directed and managed the publication in actual business. These books may be valued as a publication which set a standard in the study of cultural legacy of Joseon. The *Zufu* series were evaluated as fully surveyed the relics of Joseon until then. It was effective to offer a basic paradigm for the study of the archaeology and Joseon art history. The important thing is that there were pictures of before and after the restoration side by side for comparison. By making readers compare and contrast two pictures, it visualized how much Japan tried to represent their restoration of Joseon’s past, delegating the people of Joseon.

On the other hand, the publication of *Zufu* was a symbolic product of “modernity” in the way that the book brought the popularization of the cultural properties through a new media called photographs. Through photographs, the cultural properties were duplicated in mass and distributed to the public.²⁷ It was a method to inject their ideology and values far more effectively than visual images, which one could only acquire by visiting the sites. It may be regarded as another example of Japan displaying its “advanced civilization” that could not have happened without the essence of modern technology, a photograph. However, the catalog could be compared in many aspects with *Shinbi taikan* which was the first catalog of Japanese cultural property.

Unlike *Zufu*, *Shinbi taikan* had colored photographs and was extravagantly bound.²⁸ *Shinbi taikan* was published in 1899, fifteen years prior to *Zufu*. Also, the Japanese Art History book, *Kouhon nihon teitoku bijutsu ryakusi* (*Manuscript of the Abbreviated History of the Art of Japanese Empire*) was published at the same time.²⁹ Japanese Art History was published to display the historical tradition of Japan and to exhibit their civilization which amounted to Western civilization. By studying the cultural properties of Joseon, restoring it by “modern technology,” and duplicating it in mass through photographs and catalogs, “civilized Japan” displayed itself as a guide which helped “savage Joseon” through the way to civilization. *Zufu* was used as a means of extensive propaganda by those who insisted the justice of their colonial occupation, as it was when Governor-General Terauchi presented guests from Japan and other foreign countries with *Zufu*.³⁰

Nevertheless, there were similarities between *Zufu* and *Shinbi taikan*. These two catalogs extensively included the artworks of each country, was formed on the basis of a “historical system”.³¹ Besides, these two collections were both compiled by the Japanese government.

Gonglonhwa”[Emblem of Colonial Joseon: Rise of public discussion of Seokgulam], *Dongak-misulsahak*, 10(2009), 115-136.

²⁶ These writings are represented by the travel writing of Isabella Bird Bishop(1831-1904) and George Curzon(1859-1925). See Lee, K., “Mrs. Bishop’s Travel,” *Journal of Chin-Tan Society*, 71-72(1991); Park, J., op. cit. 89-128.

²⁷ Park, Y., “Joseon Image Reflected on the Japanese Travelogues of Korea in the late Nineteenth Century,” *The Korean Historical Review*, 177(2003), 114-119, 124-128.

²⁸ Kang, H., “Jinmidaegwan gwa Ilbon godae bulgyojogak”[*Shinbi taikan* and ancient Japanese Buddhist sculptures], *Misulsa nondan*, 28(2009), 91.

²⁹ Goals of publication of the first catalog of Japan, *Shinbi taikan*, the principles of selecting artworks, and its relationship with *Kouhon nihon teitoku bijutsu ryakusi* are further illustrated in *ibid.* 89-110.

³⁰ Takagi, H., op. cit. 186.

³¹ *Joseon koseki zufu* were published according to historical order beginning from the Naklang period to United Silla, Goryeo and finally to Joseon. *Shinbi taikan* was not strictly published in historical order. However, the artworks were mostly arranged according to historical order. The arrangement also followed the level of each art work’s suitability to become “Paragon of the Art.”

In both catalogs the cultural properties of Joseon and Japan were treated as the concrete, real “history” and the subjects of protection.³² Joseon Art could display its brilliant history only under the “restoration” of Japan. Therefore, Joseon’s contemporary state during Japanese occupation did not connect to its cultural properties of the past and were de-contextualized from its original context. Those cultural properties were only antique arts which required the protection and evaluation from Japan. When Sekino was performing the survey, the cultural properties of Joseon were estimated by grades(following the numbering system used in Chinese calendar). Based on such grades, the Imperial Japan decided to repair and restore the cultural properties.³³

IV. Gaze of Orientalism to the Joseon Art

The art history of Joseon and Japan were both constructed by the Imperial Japan, so the selection of basic art historical materials and the paradigm of description were constructed by them.³⁴ In Japanese art history writings, the Japanese were described as a people of excellent sensitivity in order to show their superiority to the Europeans. On the other hand, about Joseon art history, they only emphasized the declining of civilization. A Korean linguist Kwon Deokgyu wrote a passage that he was proud of when Sekino and Torii had admired Joseon Art.³⁵ And he also described that he felt ashamed when he had compared Joseon’s tomb to the ancient one of Silla. The intellectuals of Joseon not only compared themselves to the present civilized Japan but also to their own past, the glory of Joseon. Japanese people did not disdain Joseon art as inferior. They admired and praised the Seokgulam and its statues as one of a kind. However, it was because they “discovered”, “repaired” and “restored” by themselves.

A colony is considered as pre-modern which is not yet modernized, and it is “modernized” by the imperialism.³⁶ Japanese knew that they were “others” to Western Europe. Therefore, they published *Shinbi taikan* and *Kouhon nihon teitoku bijutsu ryakusi*, and they exhibited these books in various world expositions.³⁷ Meanwhile, it was the people of colonial Joseon who were “others” to Japanese people. Therefore, Joseon art could be explained in the vocabulary of Orientalism, which covers pre-modern characteristics as far as one prefers.

The most representative case was comparing them to immature children or women. Comparing a colony and its culture to children or women was the main ideology of imperialism. In the colonial discourse, women and savageness were fundamentally equal; also the men in colony were also feminized to justify the colonization.³⁸ Since they were considered to be weak and lacked the ability to decide on their own, they were thought to be protected by the Imperial Japan who were “mature” and “male”. Torii Ryujo commented about the eleven-faced Avalokitesvara bodhisattva statue in Seokgulam that “When I look at this sculpture, I am reminded of lovely and amiable thoughts.”³⁹ Torii was not the only one who compared the eleven-faced Avalokitesvara bodhisattva statue to a woman. If one was a Buddhist who worshiped Avalokitevara in Seokgulam, could he say something like this? Comparing Avalokitevara to a mother happened in the past, however it was impossible in the Joseon period to emphasize its femininity and describe the statue in such a sensual way.

³² Sato, D. points out such characteristic in Japanese art history. Kang, H. applied this concept to Joseon art history.

³³ A table separated by four levels was already submitted in 1909. See Hirose, V., “Meijiki ni okeru ‘bunkazai’ hogo gyousei to Sekino Tadashi - bijutsu kara kenchiku si, sosite koukohaku heno tenkai” [Conservation policy for cultural properties during Meiji period and Sekino Tadashi], *Nihon ni wogeru bijutsusigaku noseiritsu totenkai* [The Establishment and Development of the Art History in Japan] (Tokyo: Tokyo bunkazai renkyusho, 2002). “The stone stupa of Mireuksaji, Nirvana Gate of Dogapsa, five level stone pagoda of Gwangju Eupdongri were categorized as “ancient relic which needs urgent reparation” at that time.

³⁴ Since Meiji period, writings emphasizing Japanese’ brilliant sense of beauty were appeared frequently. The prologue written by Guki Ryuichi was the same in this context. Okakura Tenshin was not free from this. He said that Japan was the nation most affluent with the mentality for art.

³⁵ Kwon, D., “Gyeongjuhaeng” [On the way to Gyeongju], *Gaebyeok*(Dec. 1921), 60-76.

³⁶ In the Meiji period, emblems of Japanese civilization were the monarchy and steam train. It seemed that modernity and pre-modernity were mixed. Park, J., op. cit. 55-86.

³⁷ *Kouhon nihon teitoku bijutsu ryakusi* was published earlier as *L'histoire de l'art du japon* in French and was exhibited in the Paris World Exposition. It was translated again in Japanese after two years. Writing an art history book in Western language under the government’s order shows it was intended for the audience in Western Europe.

³⁸ Kim, Y., “The Self-Composition of the Nation in Colonial Period and the Woman,” *Hanguk geundae munhak yeongu*, 8 (2003), 47-74; Kim, Y., “Special: Post-colonialism and Korean Literary History; Imagined Geography Of Occidentalism And The Invention Of Femininity,” *Minjok munhaksa yeongu*, 23(2003), 92-93.

³⁹ Kwon, D., op. cit. 73.

Among descriptions about the celadon and white porcelain of Joseon, the awareness of curved lines' quality which was related to femininity was still valid. As one can find it in Yanagi Muneyoshi or Asakawa Takumi's comments, understanding the beauty of Joseon as delicate and wistful beauty could be located in the same context. It was Imperial Japan that injected the sense of emphasizing the "line" and provoking femininity from the line.⁴⁰ It is no more than an example of Orientalism which emphasizes the pre-modern characters of the colony represented as the image of a woman who is weak, unable to stand on one's own. The curved lines of pottery, roof tiles, and many other artifacts were emphasized as Korean beauty. We need to pay attention to the fact that in the modernity discourse a metaphor of female is located in the private sphere.⁴¹ Emphasizing femininity as a private sphere opposite to modernity, masculinity, and the public sphere is the same with symbolizing "pre-modern" colonial Joseon as a subjugated woman to the "modern" Japan who, as a man, is leading all matters in front.

V. "Rediscovery" of Joseon Art and its Re-Contextualization through the Joseon Art History

Joseon art was surveyed even before the annexation of Joseon and was "discovered" by Japan. It was restored, repaired by Japan and re-contextualized by Joseon history and art history. Before the modern era, Joseon art was studied in fragmented and individual dimensions. Joseon art history was reconstructed in historical order under the name of "art". The re-construction at this time may have gone through the process of "de-contextualization or re-contextualization", because those cultural properties were completely disjointed from certain contexts in which those were meaningful to the people of our country until the pre-modern era. If we consider the process as de-contextualization in which it renamed those historical objects as art or cultural property, composing Joseon art history with those properties may be called as re-contextualization. The core of the re-contextualization of Joseon art history was "praising classics and the antiquity" and "supplementing blank spaces of the oriental art."⁴² The position of a German author, Andre Eckardt, who lived in Joseon during the Japanese occupation, may not have been free from this.

However, in his *Geschichte der Koreanischen Kunst*, he did not follow the dynastic historical system, nor did he intentionally defame or praise Joseon art at any point. He attempted to make a balanced argument, so it provides a good contrast with contemporary Japanese writings.⁴³

In the summary of Sekino's *Joseon bijutsusi*, a compilation of Sekino's lectures, Joseon art was described as progressed from the Three Kingdoms period until the Unified Silla period, rising to the apex of the development. Then he stated that Koryo art showed signs of regression, and Joseon art was continuously declining. Thus, the art of the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla became the "paragon" which should be modeled. Japanese intellectuals were oriented toward this kind of perception since the Meiji period. Reflecting this paradigm, Japanese arranged *zufu* in the dynastic system not considering the number of cultural properties and historical sites in each period. In *zufu*, Nakrang and the Three Kingdoms period were in volumes of one to three. The fact that Silla art was selected as the golden age of Joseon art was the same with contemporary writings about the history of Joseon.⁴⁴ Giving much weight in antiquity and trying to make classics were methods of making history which proceeded in Japan since the Meiji period. On the one hand, there was an intention to link the historical flow with the rule of Tenno. On the other hand, the Three Kingdoms period and the late Silla period, which were deeply related with the ancient Japan, had to be treated seriously in order to track the source of Japanese art. Furthermore, influenced by the Western ideological atmosphere which considered Greek and Roman culture as Classic, Imperial Japan needed to establish the classic which was also "the prototype of art."⁴⁵ The following comment of Sekino explicitly shows such perception. He said, "Mellow out in another world of artistic beauty became waned and declined, lost its sophisticated taste of the past and became crude and artless (during Joseon period)."

⁴⁰ The femininity discussed here is socialized femininity in the concept of gender opposite to the masculinity.

⁴¹ Kim, Y., "Want and Longing, Whang, Soon-Won's The Swam," *Yeosong munhak yeongu*, 3(2000), 262-285.

⁴² Sekino, T., *Joseon misulsa*[Joseon Art History], trans. by Shim, Y. (Seoul:Dongmunseon, 2003), 349.

⁴³ Eckardt, A., *Geschichte der Koreanischen Kunst*, trans. by Kwon, Y.(Seoul:Yeolhwa-dang, 2003). He sorted the relics according to genres and focused on representative works. He was not tied to the paradigm constructed by Japan.

⁴⁴ The perception which considers that Unified Silla is intentionally "discovered" by Imperial Japan is shown in Yoon, S., "Tongilsillau balmyung-gwa, geundae yeoksahak ui seonglip"[The Discovery of Unified Silla and the Establishment of Modern Scholarship of History], Hwang, J. (ed.), *Silla ui Balgyeon*[The Discovery of Silla] (Seoul:Dongguk Univ. Press, 2008).

⁴⁵ "Paragon of the art" was the keyword which became the center of the administration for the protection of cultural heritage at that time. See Sato D., op. cit.

He understood the flow of art as following an evolutionary route, going through “introduction-climax-declination”. This inclination also influenced intellectuals of Joseon. An Hwak, Yoon Hee Soon, Kwon Sang Ro and many others left a comment that “Unified Silla which reached the zenith of Buddhism was the golden age of Joseon art.”⁴⁶

Also, Sekino pointed out that the tombs of Nakrang exhibited something absent in China, and the tomb murals of Koguryo were priceless as it was the oldest painting transmitting the style of the Six Dynasties period. He also mentioned that excavated items of ancient Silla and Kaya were precious data for Japanese cultural properties.⁴⁷ It could be interpreted that the value regarding the existence of Korean art may be valid for discovering the source of Japanese art or displaying what is non-existent in China. However, strictly speaking, Japanese scholars including Sekino may not have clearly known Chinese art. Therefore, the above indication may not be real.⁴⁸ It may only be the fictional value of Joseon art history which they composed and made meaningful. This is also greatly different from the fact that Japan tried to position their art in the art history of the world. When treating Japanese art history, they attempted to find even the feeblest links to the Gandharan art, and insisted that Japan was “the museum of Asia.”⁴⁹

They insisted that Japanese art was the extensive compilation of the essence of oriental art, and Joseon art was meaningful as the element which covered the blank spot of oriental art.⁵⁰ Therefore, it was natural to have comments saying that such cultural properties did not exist in China and Japan.

Joseon art history as a modern scholarship which was established by the Japanese was arranged by the paradigm that the Japanese constructed. It became more precise and solid in its logical system and composition. This indicates that Japanese people dominated and monopolized the “hegemony of knowledge” about Joseon, and that they established the paradigm following their intention. At the same time, the Japanese publicized it in the names of public education, lecture, and training. They made it into a natural thing, which even the people of Joseon consented. The standard of evaluation and one’s point of view of the history which was injected into Joseon during the occupancy of the Japanese was “composed” by Imperial Japan through de-contextualization and re-contextualization, out of its original context of fabrication and location. Our cultural heritage existed for a long time, and its physical value is not altered. The perception towards it changes. One should doubt whether even the part of our perception concerning cultural heritage may be following the paradigm established during the occupancy of the Japanese. This would be possible by identifying “what” was chosen as cultural heritage of Joseon by Japanese imperialist and “how” they spoke about it.

Acknowledgement

This study was supported by the Sogang University Research Grant (SRF.201110017.01).

References

- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities : reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. 2nd. New York: Verso.
 Aoi, T. (2002). Horyuji to Sekai kenchikusi [Horyuji and World architectural History]. *Nihon ni ogeru bijutsusigaku no seiritsu to tenkai [The Establishment and Development of the Art History in Japan]*. Tokyo: Tokyo bunkazai renkyusho.

⁴⁶ Kwon, S., “Silla ui bulgyo munhwa”[Buddhist Culture of Silla], *Jogwang*, 1-1(1935), 336-342.

⁴⁷ He wrote “these kinds of cases are difficult to mention one by one(which means that it is numerous).”

⁴⁸ Japanese people knew that “Japan who is destined to lead the Orient” was behind the Chinese studies. Fujihara Sadao explained this as “melancholy of Orientalist.” Fujihara, S., “Esthetic and Scientific Conflict between Japan and the Occident in the Historiography of the Far Eastern art in the First Half 20th Century,” trans. by Ahn, J., *Misulsa nondan*, 20(2005).

⁴⁹ Japan emphasized Gandhara because contemporary Europe insisted the “Eastward Theory” which insisted that Greek art was transmitted to the East and reached Gandhara. Japan believed that by insisting Japan was influenced by Gandhara, they could occupy a certain position in the art history world. Kang, H., “Ilbon misulsa seonglipgi ui indo misul insik”[The Perception of Indian Art during the Formative Period of Japanese Art History], *Inmun nonchong*, 60(2008). One interesting opinion exists that when Okakura Tenshin made Japanese art as art among the world, Ito Chuta(, 1867~1954) who “discovered” Yungang cave made Japanese architecture as architecture among the world. Aoi, T., “Horyuji to Sekaikenchikusi” [Horyuji and World architectural History], *Nihon ni ogeru bijutsusigaku no seiritsu to tenkai [The Establishment and Development of the Art History in Japan]*(Tokyo: Tokyo bunkazai renkyusho, 2002).

⁵⁰ Takagi, H., op. cit. 188-189.

- Eckardt, A. (2003). *Geschichte der Koreanischen Kunst*. trans. by Kwon, Y., Seoul: Yeolhwadang.
- Fujihara, S. (2005). Esthetic and Scientific Conflict between Japan and the Occident in the Historiography of the Far Eastern art in the First Half 20th Century. trans. by Ahn, J., *Misulsa nondan*, 20, 353-379.
- Gilloch, G.(2005). *Myth and metropolis : Walter Benjamin and the city*. trans. by Nho, M., Seoul:Hyohyeong chulpan.
- Guki, R. (1899). Preface. *Shinbi Taikan*. Tokyo:Shimbishoin.
- Ham, D. (2006). Japan's Colonial Discourse on Korea and the Colonialistic Turn of the Notion of Civilization. *Journal of Asian Historical Studies*, 94, 177-203.
- Heo, J. (2009). *Textbook policy and Korean language textbook in Japan's colonial rule of Korea*. Seoul: Gyeongjin.
- Hirose, V.(2002). Meiji ni okeru 'bunkazai' hogo gyousei to Sekino Tadashi - bijutsusi kara kenchiku si, sosite koukohaku heno tenkai[Conservation policy for cultural properties during Meiji period and Sekino Tadashi]. *Nihon ni wogeru bijutsusigaku noseiritsu totenkai* [The Establishment and Development of the Art History in Japan]. Tokyo: Tokyo bunkazai renkyusho.
- Kang, H. (2007). Seokgulam ui geundaejeok jaebalgyon[Modern Re-discovery of Seokgulam]. *Tradition and interpretation of visual culture: festschrift of art history in honor of professor Kim Lena*. Seoul: Yekyong, 139-156.
- _____ (2008). Ilbon misulsa seonglipgi ui indo misul insik[The Perception of Indian Art during the Formative Period of Japanese Art History]. *Inmun nonchong*, 60, 173-205.
- _____ (2009). Sikminji Joseon ui pyosang: Seokgulam ui gonglonhwa[Emblem of Colonial Joseon: Rise of public discussion of Seokgulam]. *Dongak misulsahak*, 10, 115-135.
- _____ (2009) *Shinbi taikan* gwa Ilbon godae bulgyo jogak [Shinbi taikan and ancient Buddhist sculpture of Japan]. *Misulsa nondan* 28, 89-110.
- _____ (2010). Iljegangjeomgi Joseon bulgyomisul josa wa bokwon[Survey and restoration of Buddhist art of Joseon during Japanese Occupation]. *Misulsa wa Sigakmunhwa*, 9, 146-173.
- Kim, Y. (2000). Want and Longing, Whang, Soon-Won's *The Swam*. *Yeosong munhak yeongu*, 3, 261-287.
- _____ (2003). The Self-Composition of the Nation in Colonial Period and the Woman. *Hanguk geundae munhak yeongu*, 8, 47-74.
- _____ (2003). Special: Postcolonialism and Korean Literary History; Imagined Geography of Occidentalism and the Invention of Femininity. *Minjok munhaksa yeongu*, 23, 91-114.
- Kwon, D. (1921). Gyeongjuhaeng[On the way to Gyeongju]. *Gaebyeok*, December.
- Kwon, S. (1935). Silla ui bulgyomunhwa[Buddhist Culture of Silla]. *Jogwang*, 1-1, 336-342.
- Lee, J. (2000). A Study on the Japanese Policy of Korean Traditional Culture in the Japanese Imperialism in the 1920~30s. *The Korean History Education Review*, 75, 55-94.
- Lee, K. (1991). Mrs. Bishop's Travel. *Journal of Chin-Tan Society*, 71-72, 119-132.
- Lee, L. (2003). *Hangeuksa Iyagi*[History of Korea] 19. Seoul: Hangilsa.
- Lee, S. (2009). *Iljegangjeomgi gojeok josa saeop yeongu* [Study of the survey of relics during Japanese Occupation]. Seoul:Gyeonginmunhwasa.
- Lee, S. (1999). Kuroita Katsumi reul tonghaebon sikminji wa yeoksahak[Colony and Study of History seen through Kuroita Katsumi]. *Hanguk munhwa*, 23, 243-262.
- _____ (2001). *Mandeuleojin Godae*[Invented Antiquity]. trans. by Park, K., Seoul: Samin.
- Okakura, K., Fukuchi, M. (1916). *Kouhon nihon teitoku bijutsu ryakusi* [Manuscript of the Abbreviated History of the Art of Japanese Empire]. Tokyo:Tokyo National Museum.
- Okakura, T. (1979). Kokka hakkan no zi[Preface of publishing Kokka]. *Tenshin zenshu* [Complete Works of Okakura Tenshin] 3. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- _____ (1979). Lecture Notes of Tenshin. *Tenshin zenshu* 4. Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Park, J. (2003). *Ilgeureojin Geundae*[Distorted Modernity]. Seoul: Pureun Yeoksa.
- Park, S. (2004). Imperial Taste- Yi Dynasty Museum and the Cultural Politics of Imperialist Japan. *Misulsa nondan*, 18, 143-169.
- Park, Y. (2003). Joseon Image Reflected on the Japanese Travelogues of Korea in the Late Nineteenth Century. *The Korean Historical Review*, 177, 105-130.
- _____ (2005). Tourist Party to Japan and It's Character in the Period of Annexation of Korea. *Dongyanghak*, 37, 69-89.
- Sato, D. (1999). *Meiji Nation and Modern Japanese Art*, Tokyo: Yoshikawa-Kobunkan.
- Sekino, T. (1909). *Kankoyo*. Gyeongseong(Seoul): Takjibugeonchukso.
- _____ (2003). *Joseon misulsa* [Joseon Art History]. trans. by Shim, Y., Seoul: Dongmunseon.
- Takagi, H. (2004). Ilbon misulsa wa Joseon misulsa ui seonglip[Establishment of the art history of Japan and Joseon]. Lee, S. & Lim, J. (eds.), *Geuksa ui sinhwa reul neomeoseo*[Beyond the Myth of National History]. Seoul: Humanist.
- Takahashi, K. et al. (2005). Sekino Tadashi no Joseon koseki chosa [Sekino Tadashi's Korean relics survey]. Fujii K., et al. (eds.). *Sekino Tadashi Asia chosa* [Sekino Tadashi's Asia survey]. Tokyo:Tokyo University Press.
- Tokio, S. (ed.) (1910). *Joseon bijutsu taikan- Joseon kunsho taikai* [Great Catalogue of Korean Art] 3, Keijo: Joseon kosho kankokai.
- Watsuji T. (1917). *Koji junrei* [Pilgrimage of Old Temples]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Yoon, S. (2008). *Tongil silla ui balmyung gwa geundae yeoksahak ui seonglip*[The Discovery of Unified Silla and the Establishment of Modern Scholarship of History]. Hwang, J. (ed.). *Sillau Balgyeon* [The Discovery of Solla], Seoul:Dongguk University Press, 125-142.