

Abstract:

Western-language scholarship on Korean Buddhist art began in the mid-19th century, initiated by translations of Japanese historical sources, such as the *Nihon Shoki* and the *Kojiki*. These early writings portrayed Korea as the initiator of Japanese art and credited Korean craftspeople for establishing the production of outstanding works of art on the Japanese archipelago. A case in point is *The Pictorial Arts of Japan* by William Anderson, an influential British collector of Japanese art. Published in 1886, Anderson claimed that “the casting of some of the greatest Buddhist bronzes was effected under the superintendence of Korean workmen.” Thus, at a time when little was known about Korea, and Chosŏn had only just opened its ports, early scholarship on East Asia portrayed the Korean peninsula as having been once seeped in Buddhist tradition and rich in Buddhist art. However, in contrast to Korean ceramics which were consumed in increasingly large numbers in America and Europe from the 1870s onwards, Korean Buddhist art did not attract much attention from Western collectors, especially not in the nineteenth century. Rather Western collectors focused their passion for Buddhist art on material and sites found in China and Japan. Given the accolades bestowed on Korean craftsmen by Western scholars and collectors, we may question why. The paper explores the factors that may have influenced early approaches to Korean Buddhist art, from a value oriented understanding of East Asian art to the availability of artefacts, among other issues.

12:20

Maria Sobotka (Humboldt Forum)

The Korean Collections in the Humboldt Forum, Berlin

14:30

Dr. Sungrim Kim (Dartmouth College)

Korean Art from a Women’s Perspective

Abstract:

Yun Suknam (b. 1939) is one of the earliest and most active feminist artists in Korea. Begun her artistic activity in her 40s, Yun passionately pursued creating artworks focusing on gender equality in diverse media. Since her first artistic training with calligraphy and drawing at her age of 36, Yun experimented with oil and acryl paints, woodblock sculpture, drawing, and installation art with mixed media. Collaborating with other women artists, she published the feminist magazine called *If* and attempted re-interpreted the motherhood and wrote Korean art herstory (as opposed to history) last four decades. In this presentation, we will explore the Korean feminist themes, issues, and history through Yun’s artworks and art projects and understand how feminism in Korean art world has developed (and still being challenged).

15:30

Prof. em. Burglind Jungmann (UCLA)

Early Photographs of Korea

17:00

Völkerkundemuseum Heidelberg, von Portheim Stiftung

Museum Visit and Object viewing

We are looking forward to welcome you in Heidelberg or online!

ArtHist.net

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