

Time Difference in the Social Transformation of China and Korea: A Case Study of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara Paintings of the Song and Yuan Dynasties and the Koryŏ Dynasty

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Abstract: The Water-Moon form of Avalokiteśvara arose in China during the process of nativization of Buddhism in Tang China. Extant images of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara tend to have been painted in either China or Korea, but there is an odd dislocation in the changes of style, with the colorful Koryŏ dynasty images paralleling not contemporary Song trends but rather those from hundreds of years earlier. That this effect might simply be a delay caused by geographical distance seems unlikely given the active cultural exchange between the two realms. Dramatic changes occurred in the Tang-Song era, including the rise of plebeian culture and Zen Buddhism. This carried over to a more minimalist style of art in China. Meanwhile, in Koryŏ, Buddhism continued to receive royal sponsorship and remain influential. This article argues that the differences in images and techniques between Koryŏ and Song-Yuan paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara were caused by the time difference in the social transformations of China and Korea.

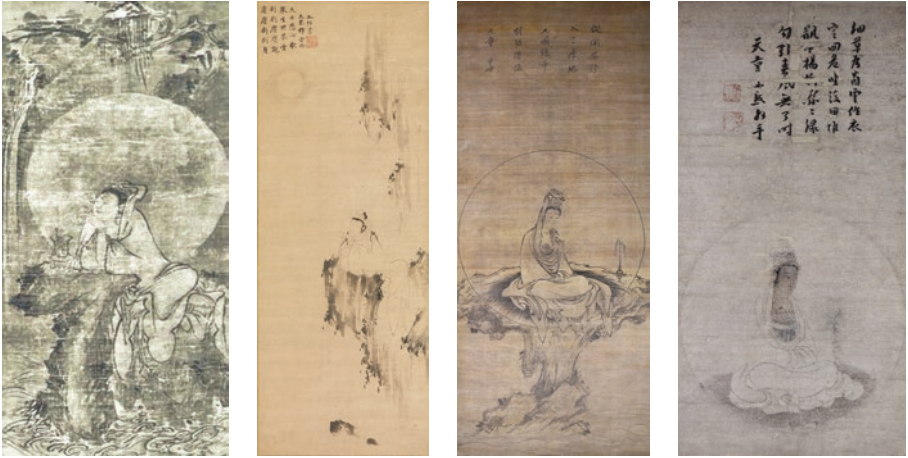
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There are no records of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara in Buddhist scriptures because the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara image was derived from the nativization of Buddhism in China. The *Lidai minghua ji* (歷代名畫記, Annals of Famous Painters of Successive Dynasties) shows that Zhou Fang 周昉 (ca. 730–805) was the painter who first created an image of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara (Zhang Yanyuan 1985: 323). Some scholars argue that according to the *Tangchao minghua lu* 唐朝名畫錄 (Painting Masterpieces of the Tang Dynasty), Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were spread to the Korean peninsula during the Silla dynasty in the form of Zhou Fang paintings (Kikutake 1981: 10).

In the Koryŏ dynasty, a great number of heavily colored paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara were produced, and the approximately forty pieces still extant were mostly created in the fourteenth century. In the corresponding Yuan dynasty, artists, most of whom hailed from south of the Yangtze River, instead painted ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara works (Yan Yamei 2000: 214).



Figures 1a–d. (a) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, ink and color on silk, 229.7 cm×125 cm, Daitokuji 大徳寺, Japan (Kikutake and Chōng 1996: 207); (b) Sō Kubang 徐九方 (14th c.), *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, 1323, ink and color on silk, 165.5 cm×101.5 cm, Sen'oku Hakukokan 泉屋博古館, Japan (Kikutake and Chōng 1996: 204); (c) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, ink and color on silk, 113.7 cm×55.3 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA (Center for Asian Studies, Zhejiang University 2017: 71); (d) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, ink and color on silk, 106.2 cm×53.8 cm, Amore Pacific Museum of Art, Korea (Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 2010: 121).



Figures 2a–d. (a) *Avalokiteśvara*, ink on silk, 76.6 cm×37.4 cm, private collection, Japan (Yan 2000: 230); (b) *Avalokiteśvara*, ink on silk, 91.7 cm×32.8 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA (Yan 2000: 245); (c) Zhengwu 正悟 (14th c.), *Avalokiteśvara*, ink on silk, 124.5 cm×53.0 cm, National Museum of Kyoto, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-2-16); (d) *Avalokiteśvara*, ink and color on paper, 51.3 cm×26.2 cm, National Museum of Kyoto, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-1-25).

Although Koryō and Yuan artists used different painting techniques, both of them produced many Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images following formalized formats. Koryō and Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were drawn on the basis of several original versions (figs. 1a–d, 2a–d).

Differences in the social and Buddhist landscapes at the time led to the two different paths that Koryō and Song-Yuan artists followed in creating Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings. Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images have their roots in Tang China and had been continuously following the style begun by Zhou Fang. However, by the time of the Song and Yuan dynasties, Chinese Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images were no longer painted in China in the Zhou Fang style. The techniques of Koryō and Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings extant today can be seen in figures 1a–d and figures 2a–d. No Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings from the Tang dynasty have survived, so techniques must be inferred from Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings of the Five Dynasties. Although many heavily colored paintings were painted in the Ningbo area during the Song and Yuan eras, only one heavily colored Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting is extant, but many ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings remain. Concerning this change in the technique of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting, most scholars believe that it is related to the development of ink-wash painting in China. However, it is noteworthy that not all Buddhist paintings were painted in ink-wash technique. Because Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting originated in China, this seems to be an important example of the Sinicization of Buddhist art.¹

Most research on Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings has focused on the heavily colored paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara found in Dunhuang or those that can be traced to Western Xia (西夏, 1038–1227) or Koryō, while less attention has been paid to the ink-wash paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara from the Song and Yuan eras. Koryō paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara that can be seen today are all heavily colored ones, and there are no ink-wash technique examples.² This article intends to reexamine the underlying cause of the evolution of these paintings from the perspective of social transformation, as well as the relationship between Koryō and Song-Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings.

Disparities between the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara Painting Techniques and Social Landscapes of Song-Yuan and Koryō

Despite the concurrent existence of Koryō with Song and Yuan, the painting techniques of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara differed greatly between the continent and the peninsula, with ink-wash practiced in Song and Yuan China (fig. 3) and heavy colors adopted in Koryō (fig. 4). The appearance and wide distribution of ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in Song and Yuan are closely related to the Tang-Song social transformation—a concept advanced by the Japanese scholar Naitō Konan 内藤湖南 (1816–1934), the core of which is his thesis on the transition from the Middle Ages to early modern times. This process resulted in two changes: first, plebeian culture replaced aristocratic culture; second, paintings were no longer used as decorative furnishings but became instead a form of expressionist art (Naitō 1992).³ As a result, Buddhist paintings became literati



Figure 3. Yan Hui 顏輝 (14th c.), *Water-Moon Avalokitesvara*, Yuan, ink and color on silk, 111.1 cm×76.2 cm, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, USA (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 6-5-180).



Figure 4. Kim Umun 金祐文 (14th c.), *Water-Moon Avalokitesvara*, completed in 1310, ink and color on silk, 530.0 cm ×300.0 cm, Kagami Jinja 鏡神社, Japan (Kikutake and Chōng 1996: 207).

ones, with heavy colors gradually replaced by ink-wash. Koryō, however, remained an aristocratic society, so it continued to follow Tang's vibrant painting techniques.

The Tang-Song transformation occurred during the mid to late period of the Tang dynasty, when revolutionary changes, characterized by the rise of Zen Buddhism and spearheaded by Huineng 慧能 (638–713), took place in Chinese Buddhism as well. Neo-Zen Buddhism (Xinchanzong 新禪宗), along with the Neo-Confucianism (Xinruxue 新儒學) and Neo-Taoism (Xindaojiao 新道教), which arose during the Northern and Southern Song dynasties period, formed the three most important schools of thought in China. They represented the emergence of a Chinese plebeian culture that displaced Tang aristocratic culture. Before the appearance of Huineng, Zen was not particularly different from other schools in

the Tang dynasty. Huineng's transformation of Zen made it more secularized and popularized. After Bodhidharma, Zen had traditionally followed the *Lankāvātāra sūtra* (*Lengjia jing* 楞伽經), while the Southern Sect started by Huineng emphasized the Diamond Sutra (*Jingang jing* 金剛經). Zen was easier than before in content and attracted a greater popular following (Liu 2003: 118).

During the Sui and Tang dynasties, there were many debates on Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and Buddhism played an important role in the reconciliation of the three religions. During the Five Dynasties period (907–79) and early Song dynasty, Buddhism underwent popularization and gradually evolved into “a combination of Zen and Pure Land Buddhism.” After the Song dynasty, although aristocratic doctrinal and scholastic Buddhism began to decline, Confucian-Buddhist interactions continued among scholar-officials and lay Buddhists (*jushi* 居士), and lay Buddhist culture continued to thrive (Sun C. 2000: 2297).

But Buddhism was gradually losing its creative vitality and was being replaced by the emerging Neo-Confucianism. The status and role of Buddhism in the field of ideological and scholarly research was greatly reduced. A group of monks well versed in both Buddhism and Confucianism emerged, whom some scholars called “Confucian monks” (*ruseng* 儒僧). These Confucian monks played an important role in facilitating communication between Buddhist monks and other intellectuals, and to a great extent, determined the developmental trajectory of Buddhism (Sun C. 2000: 2259–62). The decline of the status of Buddhism also directly affected Buddhist art. Whereas before the Tang dynasty, Buddhist art could be said to have formed the mainstream, with the decline of Buddhist influence, the number of Buddhist art works also decreased.

Starting with the Song dynasty, images from local Chinese Buddhist art began to treat themes which had not existed in the Buddhist classics: for example, the “cloth bag monk” and “Avalokiteśvara with long belt.” The belief in Avalokiteśvara also continued to grow on the basis of previous beliefs. These new images show that the nature of Buddhist art had begun to change from religious solemnity to literary enjoyment. In the process of this evolution, Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images began to change in style (Ruan and Zhang 2011: 296). Buddha paintings gradually developed into aesthetic appreciation paintings, especially in Buddhist paintings with the themes of the Arhat and Avalokiteśvara. In scroll paintings with the themes of Arhats and Avalokiteśvara, the style changed from the magnificence of the early murals to an elegant and quiet style, pursuing the Zen style of ink-wash painting, and the aesthetic function far outweighed the didactic function. These changes and developments were mainly determined by socioeconomic developments and changes, not simply by changes in theme, style, and technique (Gong 2009: 19).

In the Song and Yuan dynasties, ink-wash paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara became stylized. Some scholars think that the reason for this is that they were produced in workshops. Some Japanese scholars suspect that as early as the Southern Song dynasty, such Buddhist painting workshops also created ink-wash paintings (of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, for example) in addition to heavily colored Buddhist paintings. In the painting *Five Hundred Arhats* (fig. 5) of Daitokuji temple executed in 1178, we can see that the picture of Avalokiteśvara in the



Figure 5. Zhou Jichang 周季常 (1178–1200), *Five Hundred Arhats*, Southern Song dynasty, ink and color on silk, 112.8 cm×53.4 cm, Daitokuji, Japan (Lin 1998: 241).

Arhat's hands is a Zen-style Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting. Thus, it appears that these Buddhist painters clearly had the skills to execute Zen ink paintings (Yan 2000: 215). It is my view that commercial, workshop-produced ink-wash paintings were fairly common during the Southern Song dynasty. We can infer from figure 5 that there was a great demand for Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images at the time. The Arhat in the picture can be understood as a Zen monk or lay Buddhist of the time, and the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara picture was their favorite type of work. Because the entire image of the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is like a landscape painting, the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were not only objects of worship but also objects of people's appreciation (Wang H. 1987: 36).

Naitō Konan has argued that the Song dynasty was the beginning of the early modern period in China, five centuries earlier than in the West. Such a transfor-

mation did not take place on the Korean peninsula until the Chosŏn dynasty, five centuries later than in China. The Korean scholar Hō Hŭngsik believes that the beginning of the early modern period in Korea was closely related to the Neo-Confucian displacement of Buddhism, which was the state religion of Koryŏ.⁴ The social transformation from Koryŏ to Chosŏn greatly resembled that from Tang to Song, as exemplified by the maturity of the imperial examination system, the collapse of the aristocracy, and the entry of ordinary people into officialdom. Koryŏ was an aristocratic society. Despite the practice of imperial examinations, candidacy for exams was limited to men of high social status, and most officials came from aristocratic families. The imperial examination system was introduced to Koryŏ in the ninth year of the Kwangjong 光宗 reign (958), when the royal patronage system (*ŭmsŏje* 蔭絛制) still allowed the children of officials who were of fifth or higher rank opportunities to be admitted and appointed to official positions (Pak Y. 1978: 63–64; Yi N. 2013).⁵ The imperial examination system in China was implemented in the Sui (581–619) and Tang dynasties, but many talented literati were unable to obtain official positions through the examination. According to the *Xuanjuzhishang* 選舉志上 (Annals of Selection of Officials) in volume 4 of the *Xintangshu* 新唐書 (New History of the Tang), the majority of students in Confucian academies were children of high-ranking officials or aristocrats, and only a minority came from families of low-ranking officials or ordinary people (Zhou and Wu 2012: 37–47).

Parallel with the similarities between the societal and Buddhist landscapes of Koryŏ and Tang, the techniques of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara closely followed the techniques of the Tang dynasty (Li Xuanzhou 2019). Kikutake Jun'ichi was the first to mention that Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara was introduced to Korea through Zhou Fang paintings in the Silla era (Kikutake 1981: 10). According to the entry on Zhou Fang in *Tangchao minghua lu* 唐朝名畫錄 (Celebrated Painters of the Tang Dynasty), “At the end of the Zhenyuan 貞元 period (785–805), the people of Silla purchased dozens of [Zhou Fang’s] works at a good price in Jianghuai 江淮 and carried them back to their own countries. His [Zhou Fang’s] paintings of Buddhist statues (*foxiang* 佛像), true immortals (*zhenxian* 真仙), figures and ladies, are all divine works (*shenpin* 神品)” (Zhu 1985: 6).⁶ From this, we can see that Zhou Fang’s paintings were transmitted to Silla at that time. It is likely that his Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were among them.

According to the legend of the Avalokiteśvara sacred place of Putuo 普陀 Mountain in China, Silla merchants obtained a statue of Avalokiteśvara from Mount Wutai 五台山 and tried to bring it back to their own country, but the ship was stranded in front of Putuo Mountain and they had to place it in a palace (Xu Jing 1985: 119). The belief in Avalokiteśvara was also important to merchants crossing the sea (Cho 2011: 310–15). Thus, it is highly likely that there were paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara among the Zhou Fang paintings that ended up in Silla. The influence of Zhou Fang’s paintings on the painting of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvaras was such that the Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvaras are called “Zhou Fang-style Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara” (Kikutake 1981).

As there are no surviving works, we cannot show the influence of Zhou Fang’s Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings directly, but we can infer it through

the literature of the time. We find two mentions of Zhou Fang's Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in *Lidaiminghua ji*. The first is in volume 3: "Zhou Fang painted Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara on a partition screen in Shengguang 胜光 Temple located in Chang'an of the Tang dynasty, and the painting, depicting a halo and bamboo, was colored by Liu Zheng 劉整" (Zhang 1985: 36). Zhou Fang's Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara has a round light and bamboo as background. This work is a color painting. Bamboo is rarely seen in the ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings of the Song and Yuan dynasties but is an important feature of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images. The second mention is in volume 10 of the same work: "Zhou Fang, courtesy name Jingxuan 景宣, rose through the ranks to become deputy governor of a prefecture. . . . The Buddhist robes in his paintings became a standard and looked nothing like the clothing worn by ordinary people. They often looked colorful, magnificent and solemn. He is the father of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara" (Zhang 1985: 323). The Avalokiteśvara in the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting in Koryŏ is also a gorgeous and noble image, because it was made at the direction of imperial concubines or noblemen (Kim C. 2001: 137), but the clothing of the Song and Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is commoner's clothing.

The Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is a delicate, heavily colored painting. It uses precious pigments and clay gold. The Uihak Cultural Foundation in Korea, which owns one Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting, analyzed the pigments on the paper during the repair process. The results show that the red is cinnabar, the white is lead white, and the green is a copper compound. On top of this foundation, gold was added (Pak C. 1996: 73–75). Cinnabar is used for the red skirt of Avalokiteśvara, which symbolizes noble status, while the gold color is more brilliant and solemn. This kind of coloring is similar to Zhou Fang's. In Zhou Fang's works, aristocratic ladies often wear red dresses, for which Zhou Fang used cinnabar, which symbolized the dignity and nobility of the Tang dynasty, and he also used gold to great decorative effect (Wang X. 2009: 33).

Other important features of Zhou Fang's paintings in their color setting are the planarization of color application, multiple dyeing, and flat painting using primary colors. Most Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were done using primary colors.⁷ In fact, the intermediate color in Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings is the result of coloring the primary color many times. These images, pigments, and painting methods are different from those used during the Song and Yuan dynasties. The colors and patterns of Song and Yuan Buddhist paintings in Ningbo Province are more diverse than those of Koryŏ Buddha paintings. The Buddhist paintings from Song and Yuan mainly express three-dimensional or realistic feelings through color changes, repeating the use of pigments with a similar color in the same image. For example, for the representation of red, several kinds of red with different tones appear at the same time in a picture. This is not the same as the performance of plane decoration in Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings (Chŏng 2011: 122). This is also the difference between the use of colors in Buddhist paintings of the Song and Yuan dynasties and that of the Tang dynasty. Comparing Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images with the Zhou Fang portraits, the expressions of the lips, face-shaped hands, and transparent white clothes



Figure 6. Hyeohō 慧虛 (14th c.), *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, Koryō, ink and color on silk, 144.0 cm×62.5 cm, Sensōji 浅草寺, Japan (Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 2010: 115).

Figure 7. Zhou Fang, *Lady Holding a Flower* (Zanhua shinū tu 簪花仕女圖), Tang, ink and color on silk, 144.0 cm×62.5 cm, Liaoning Provincial Museum, China (Shanghai Calligraphy and Painting Publishing House 2003: 4).

are similar (see figs. 6 and 7). Records show that Zhou Fang created Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in the Tang dynasty.⁸ When Bu Kong 不空 (705–74) translated the Sutra of Life and Death (*Liaoben shengsi jing* 了本生死經), which involved the metaphor of water and moon, he was one of the distinguished monks valued by the royal family. Zhou Fang was a royal court painter at the time, so it seems this relationship had an important influence on the expression of his art (Li Ling 2002: 53). The painting style of Zhou Fang is a vibrant palace style, so his Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings are also likely to have been painted in that style.

Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara was originally a symbol of the emptiness of the moon in the water, and because of this meaning, it was taken up by the Zen school, where it was influenced by social transformation and evolved into a Zen painting style or more secularized style. Considering Zhou Fang's lifespan (approximately 730–805) (Jin 1957: 34), we can speculate that any Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings he had executed would date back to the mid or late Tang dynasty, when the empire was engulfed in the rebellion of An Lushan 安祿山 (703–57) and Shi Siming 史思明 (703–61) and subsequently entered into a critical period of transformation. This period of massive change left little time for the development of Zhou Fang-style Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings. Therefore, the absence of Zhou Fang-style Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in China is not surprising.

Like the early Tang dynasty, Koryŏ was still an aristocratic society in which Buddhism served aristocrats and the royal family instead of being secularized. Therefore, the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images retained Zhou Fang's painting style of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, rather than adopting the more current ink-wash techniques of China. Furthermore, the style of golden landscape painting (*jimbishanshui* 金碧山水) was frequently used in Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings and was a technique employed by Li Sixun 李思訓 (651–716) and his son Li Zhaoao 李昭道 (675–758) (An 2009: 276). Golden landscape paintings reached the peak of their development during the Tang dynasty, but after Li Sixun and his son, few painters excelled at golden landscapes. This may have been because their magnificent coloring style left little room for further development. Or perhaps it was because of the appearance of Wang Wei 王維 (701–61), whose ink-wash paintings were intended to give a feeling of poetry.⁹ As a result, Li Sixun-style paintings gradually faded in popularity (Li D. 2014: 67).

Tang Hou's 湯垕 (1250–1310) *Gujinhuaqian* 古今畫鑒 (Appreciation of Painting Ancient and Present) documents that the technique of Buddhist painting practiced in the Western Regions of the Tang dynasty can be found in Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, which were elaborate and magnificent.¹⁰

From the above analysis, we can see that Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings differ widely from those of the Song and Yuan dynasties but bear a closer resemblance to those of the Tang dynasty. This is further evidence of how Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were influenced by the social structure and Buddhist practices of Koryŏ.

Characteristics of the Themes of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara Paintings and the Influence of Zen Buddhism

The themes of ink-wash Buddhist paintings were mostly dominated by Zen. Despite the great changes in Buddhist paintings in the context of the Tang-Song social transformation, not all Buddhist themes were expressed in ink-wash paintings. In this regard, we should pay attention to local characteristics and the symbolic significance of the water and moon in Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images.

Xuanzang's 玄奘 (602–64) pilgrimage to India to obtain Buddhist scriptures was a major factor contributing to the appearance of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara imagery. Afterward, a large number of Buddhist scriptures, such as the *Avatam-*

saka sūtra (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經) and the Thousand-Hand Sutra (*Qianshou jing* 千手經), were translated into Chinese. Both provided a detailed depiction of the scene of Avalokiteśvara's enlightenment. Chinese Buddhist believers prayed for the Bodhisattva to build a "palace" in China as well, to show that it was entirely possible to move Avalokiteśvara's site of enlightenment to China (Li Li'an 2008: 404). The literati also played a crucial role in the localization of Buddhism. Images in the background of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, such as bamboo, pines, and water, all resonated strongly with the literati. With the advent and rise of Zen Buddhism in the late Tang dynasty came more frequent interactions between Zen Buddhists and scholar-officials. Scholar-officials who pursued a reclusive life usually grew plants in their courtyards, among which bamboo was one of their favorites (Chi 2014: 31). With the literati increasingly involved in Buddhist art creation, bamboo was more frequently used in Buddhist paintings. At the same time, "the water and the moon," because of their poetic connotations, were also favored by the literati in artistic creations (Meng and Yu 2011: 70).¹¹

Unlike common Buddhist paintings, Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara works do not have image-making rituals associated with them; no direct examples of their creation can be found in classic Buddhist records, and even the name "Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara" is rarely found in Buddhist classics (Meng and Yu 2011: 68).

Although Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is not recorded in Buddhist scriptures, there are many metaphors associated with the moon in the water. In academic Buddhist writings, "the moon in the water" is often ranked as one of the top ten Buddhist metaphors (Yu J. 2012: 242). In the Tang dynasty, Xuanzang, after returning from India with many Buddhist sutras, began to promote "consciousness only" and developed his theory based on "dependent co-arising and emptiness" into a school which attracted a large following. The connection between the emptiness of the water and the moon and Avalokiteśvara may be based on the Heart Sutra aka *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā sūtra* (*Mohe boluomiduo jing* 摩訶般若波羅蜜多經). When rendering this sutra into Chinese, Xuanzang translated "Avalokiteśvara" as Guan Zizai 觀自在, which means to "perceive with ease," to emphasize the importance of meditation. In fact, the Heart Sutra was one of the most influential Buddhist scriptures in shaping Avalokiteśvara's theory of meditation,¹² thus offering the possibility for Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings to evolve into Zen Buddhist works of art.

After Neo-Zen Buddhism was established by Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, Zen Buddhism reached its zenith during the Five Dynasties and particularly the Northern and Southern Song dynasties. As a thoroughly Chinese school of Buddhism, Zen combined Indian Buddhism with traditional Chinese Confucianism and Taoism as a religious form that was well suited to the tastes of Chinese scholar-officials. Zen propagates a detached and go-as-you-please attitude toward life. Instead of encouraging believers to chant scriptures, observe precepts, and worship the Buddha, it teaches followers to directly reach the self-nature and attain Buddhahood by means of sudden enlightenment (頓悟). This view found a strong echo in the life philosophy and aesthetic pursuits of Song Chinese literati and scholar-officials (Xu 1991: 12). Thus, Zen Buddhism had a profound impact on the society and culture of the Song dynasty. In this context, Zen Buddhist themes



Figures 8a–b. Li Gonglin, *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, Northern Song, mural stele, Liuhe 六和 Pagoda in Kaihua 開化 Temple, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province (Pan 2000: 92).

expressed through Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and their local relevance, combined with the rise of Neo-Zen Buddhism and lay Buddhism, would inevitably result in the employment of the ink-wash technique in the creation of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings (Li X. 2016: 19–46).

The Song dynasty is a critical turning point in the evolution of the image of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, which was greatly influenced by two painters: Li Gonglin 李公麟 (1049–1106) and Mu Xi 牧溪 (1210–70). Figure 8 is an important turning point in the development of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings. Unlike Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images from Dunhuang, Song Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images exhibit changes in the following three elements: the changed robe, the combination of the willow branch and the water bottle, and the appearance of the straw mat (Yi H. 2016). These changes took place due to a shift in public perception. When the pursuit of enlightenment and the way of the Bodhisattva as preached in the *Avatamsaka sūtra* during the Song dynasty transformed the image of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, the willow branch and the water bottle gradually lost their prominence as ceremonial props of Esoteric Buddhism, becoming separated from the hands of Avalokiteśvara, and were instead placed as part of the background (Song 1999: 49).¹³ This implies that Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings attached greater importance to Zen after Li Gonglin.

The white robe, willow branch, and water bottle and grass mats can be seen in Mu Xi's painting (fig. 9). These had a great influence on later Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings. Compared with the previous instances of the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, the background of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings from the Yuan dynasty is much simpler (see figs. 2a–d). The Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara in the Thirty-Three Body Avalokiteśvara 三十三體觀音 collection features the image of Avalokiteśvara standing on lotus petals to view the moon in the water. This kind of image (fig. 10) is different from that of Zhou Fang's Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and reflects that painters at the time paid more attention to the idea of the space of the moon in the water.

However, Buddhism in Koryŏ was different from that practiced in Song. From the Silla to the Koryŏ dynasty, there had been constant disagreement between Zen



Figure 9. Mu Xi, *White-Robed Avalokiteśvara*, Southern Song, ink on silk, 172.2 cm×97.6 cm, Daitokuji, Japan (Lin 1998: 146).



Figure 10. Yue Hu 月壺 (14th c.), *White-Robed Avalokiteśvara*, Yuan, ink on paper, 77.1 cm×34.8 cm, MOA Museum, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-1-141).

Buddhism and doctrinal Buddhism, which were in opposition and developed in isolation from each other. In the Koryŏ dynasty, the “Nine Mountain” schools of Zen Buddhism coexisted with doctrinal schools, a situation that was similar to Tang. The spread of Zen Buddhism was also impeded by the extreme conservatism of society, and its decline was further accelerated by Ŭichŏn 義天 (1055–1101), who championed the Ch’ont’ae 天臺 school of Buddhism (Ch’oe Pyŏnghŏn 1983).

During the mid-Koryŏ dynasty (1170–1270), military officials rose to political power.¹⁴ They supported Zen Buddhism while suppressing doctrinal Buddhism, as the latter was closely connected with scholar-officials, political clans, and aristocrats. Backed by military officials, a widespread social movement centered on Zen

Buddhism arose. Led by rural intellectuals, this movement was a reflection of, as well as a response to, the collusion between political clans and Buddhists (Ch'ae Sangsik 1979). Yi Kyubo 李奎報 (1168–1241), a scholar during this period of military rule, once described ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in one of his essays.¹⁵ This suggests that the appearance of ink-wash paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara closely paralleled the social situation. Despite the blossoming of lay Buddhism, Koryŏ people in the fourteenth century suffered greatly from the wars that had broken out due to political intrigues by the Yuan.

Under such circumstances, many Buddhists proposed self-consciousness and self-reflection, emphasizing the benefits of chanting Buddhist scriptures and believing in Pure Land Buddhism (Chŏngt'ojong 淨土宗). It is in this context that the upper class of Koryŏ led the mass production of heavily colored Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings (Mun 2015: 382). Thus, unlike the Song and Yuan dynasties, in the Koryŏ dynasty there were virtually no Zen Buddhism-influenced ink paintings, but instead many heavily colored Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, which were commissioned acts of devotion with the hope that they would bring blessings in a troubled time.

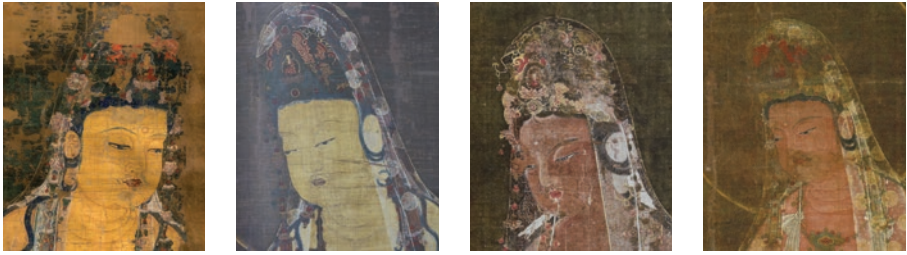
Comparison between Song and Koryŏ Paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara

Generally speaking, Koryŏ paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara adopted the heavily colored painting technique of Tang, but locally, there were many similarities between Koryŏ and Song paintings (Yi H. 2019: 119–213), such as the white robe (figs. 11a–d, 12a–d, 13a–d), the water bottle (figs. 14a–c, 15a–c, 16a–c), and the straw mat (figs. 17a–c). Most current research is centered on the relationship between Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and images of the same found in regions to the west of China like Western Xia (Pak T. 1998). Nevertheless, post-Song aspects of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images are also to be found in Koryŏ paintings. Moreover, these expressions are more similar to each other than are those between the Western Xia paintings and Koryŏ paintings. For instance, in the Song-Yuan and Koryŏ paintings, Avalokiteśvara's gaze was cast downward, which was the manifestation of Avalokiteśvara's meditation (figs. 11a–d and 12a–d). By contrast, the gaze of the Avalokiteśvara in the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images from the Western Regions is slightly upward, while the attire and decoration are conspicuously different (figs. 13a–d).

This comparison reveals that although Koryŏ artists did not adopt the ink-wash technique, they nonetheless borrowed certain local elements of Song Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings. This local adoption of painting techniques from Song and Yuan was facilitated by cultural exchanges between both sides, which can be proven by abundant historical records (Huang 2009; Sun X. 2007). Between the late eleventh and early twelfth century, Koryŏ engaged with Song to boost its culture and fine arts. During this period, the Northern Song also conceived a military strategy to “ally itself with Koryŏ to contain Liao (907–1125),” hoping to launch a war against Liao, with Song attacking from the south and Koryŏ from the north (Kim W. 2004: 176–80). In addition, maritime trade prospered between the



Figures 11a–d. Comparison of posture, decorations, and headgear, Song and Yuan dynasties: (a) Lin 1998:146; (b) Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-1-25; (c) Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 6-5-180; (d) Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-1-110.



Figures 12a–d. Comparison of posture, decorations, and headgear, Koryŏ dynasty: (a) Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 201; (b) Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 204; (c) Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 2010: 115; (d) Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 207.



Figures 13a–d. Comparison of posture, decorations, and headgear, Five Dynasties, Western Xia: (a) Lin 1998: 15; (b) Ma and Meng 2012: 3; (c) Lin 1998: 74; (d) Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 2010: 207.



Figures 14a-c. Comparison of water bottle, plate, and willow branch, Song and Yuan dynasties: (a) Mu Xi (Lin 1998: 146); (b) Yan Hui (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 6-5-180); (c) Wang Zhenpeng 王振鹏 (14th c.) (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-1-50).



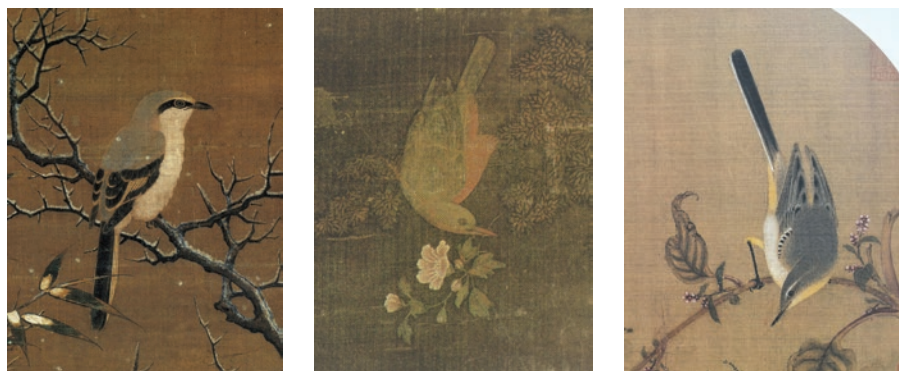
Figures 15a-c. Comparison of water bottle, plate, and willow branch, Koryŏ dynasty: (a) Daitokuji (Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 207); (b) Sen'oku Hakukokan (Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 204); (c) Guimet (Center for Asian Studies, Zhejiang University 2008: 187).



Figures 16a-c. Comparison of water bottle, plate, and willow branch, Western Xia: (a) Yulin cave (Dunhuang Research Institute 2012: 105); (b) Kara Khoto (Kungnip Chungang Pangmul-gwan 2010: 207); (c) Kara Khoto (Kungnip Chungang Pangmul-gwan 2010: 211).



Figures 17a-c. Comparison of straw mat: (a) Song (Lin 1998: 146); (b) Koryŏ (Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 201); (c) Western Xia (Dunhuang Research Institute 2012: 105).



Figures 18a–c. Comparison of techniques of Song paintings and Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara: (a) Li Di 李迪 (1162–1224), *Snow Trees and Cold Birds* (Xueshu hanqin tu 雪樹寒禽圖), Southern Song, ink and color on silk, 52.8 cm×115.2 cm, Shanghai Museum, China (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 2-1-157); (b) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, Koryō, ink and color on silk, 229.7 cm×125.8 cm, Daitokuji, Japan (Yi Tongju 1981: 30); (c) *Polygonum Orientale Waterfowl* (Hongliao huiqian tu 紅蓼水禽圖), Song, ink and color on silk, 25.2 cm×26.8 cm, Palace Museum, Taiwan (Su 2018: 4).

Northern Song and Koryō, with many Chinese merchants traveling to the Korean peninsula almost every year, mainly for the purpose of conducting tributary trade. These activities also facilitated the exchange of paintings between Song and Koryō.¹⁶ It is documented that Kwōn Chōk 權適 (1094–1147), a Koryō student who had studied in Song, returned home with a painting of Avalokiteśvara, which was a gift bestowed by Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1100–1126) of the Song dynasty (Ch'oe 2003: 208). Further, private merchants in Ningbo also possessed a large number of Buddhist paintings at this time. These two groups of people were the two major sources by which Koryō obtained Song Buddhist paintings.

However, the interactions between Koryō and the Southern Song gradually diminished.¹⁷ The early Southern Song dynasty maintained a period of regular interaction with Koryō through the exchange of diplomatic visits and trade via maritime routes. Later, due to threats from the Jin 金 Empire (1115–1234), the two countries' official exchange activities ground to a halt, but their maritime trade continued. Between 1146 and 1170, when Koryō was ruled by Ŭijong 毅宗 (1127–73), an estimated 1,670 Southern Song merchants arrived in Koryō on twenty different occasions (Kim S. 2006: 63). In Koryō paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, we can see techniques similar to those used in the Southern Song paintings (figs. 18a–c) (An 2009: 280; Chin 2010: 47).

These techniques were probably transmitted to Koryō through the trade in antiques among merchants (Yi H. 2019: 206–9). In fact, it was not until the late twelfth century that business activities of Song merchants began to decline in Koryō. The royal families of Koryō and Yuan also had frequent interactions as a result of alliances forged through marriage. Such interactions went beyond royal families and extended to envoys and literati. Exchanges of paintings between Yuan



Figures 19a–b. Comparison of Zhao Mengfu's Avalokiteśvara and Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara: (a) Zhao Mengfu, *Heart Sutra*, Yuan, ink on paper, 22.8 cm×10.8 cm, Liaoning Museum, China (Yu X. 2014: 5); (b) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, Koryō, ink and color on silk, 109.5 cm×57.8 cm, Tanzan Jinja 談山神社, Japan (Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 2010: 129).

and Koryō were most active when Koryō was ruled by King Ch'ungsōn 忠宣王 (1275–1325; r. 1298 and 1308–13), who spent most of his time in Yanjing 燕京 (the capital of Yuan) and governed the state through remote edicts (Kim S. 2006: 536–47). He even constructed the famous library Man'gwōndang 萬卷堂 in Yanjing to collect and store ancient Chinese books and paintings, where he was often joined by prominent local personalities for literary and artistic creations. King Ch'ungsōn once instructed Yi Chehyōn 李齊賢 (1287–1367) to come to Yanjing to be involved in the construction of Man'gwōndang. This assignment offered him an opportunity to socialize with many renowned artists of Yuan, such as Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254–1322), Yao Sui 姚燧 (1239–1314), Yan Fu 閻復 (1236–1312), and Yuan Mingshan 元明善 (1269–1322) (Kim S. 1974).

One of the works held in the Liaoning Museum is a copy of the Heart Sutra in Zhao Mengfu's calligraphy. The painting of an Avalokiteśvara at the beginning of this artwork features a slightly head-down posture, head decoration, and robe similar to paintings from Koryō (figs. 19a–b). Other historical records show that interactions between Koryō and Song-Yuan monks and literati (Cho 2011: 123–40) provided another channel for ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings to reach Koryō. Considering the transfer of some elements of Song-Yuan ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings to Koryō images, my conclusion is that there were sufficient exchanges between the two countries to introduce Song-Yuan ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings to Koryō. The continued disparities in painting technique and style of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were caused not by a lack of interaction but by the absence of a social environment in which the art could flourish in Koryō. Therefore, when creating Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, Koryō artists stuck with the Tang technique while selectively absorbing local elements of the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings of Song and Yuan.



Figure 20. Zhang Zeduan 張擇端 (1085–1145), *Along the River during the Qingming Festival* (Qingming shanghetu 清明上河圖), Song, ink and color on silk, 24.8 cm×528.7 cm, Palace Museum, China (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 1-2-20).

Figure 21. Li Song 李嵩 (1166–1243), *Salesman Painting* (Huolang tu 貨郎圖), Song, ink and color on silk, 25.5 cm×70.0 cm, Palace Museum, China (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 1-4-114).

Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara's Robe and the Time Difference in Social Transformation to the Early Modern Period

Although both Song-Yuan and Koryŏ artists painted the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara wearing similar white robes, the robes were presented in different ways, as the origins and connotations of the white robe were different in the two countries. The White-Robed Avalokiteśvara of Koryŏ is that of the Esoteric Buddhist sutras. This White-Robed Avalokiteśvara was a Bodhisattva of India and different from the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara created in China.

Prior to the Song dynasty, Avalokiteśvara had always been dressed colorfully. After the Song, Avalokiteśvara started to be presented as wearing a white robe, so Avalokiteśvara paintings were later commonly called White-Robed Avalokiteśvara. There are some research results concerning the origin of White-Robed Avalokiteśvara. The origin of Chinese White-Robed Avalokiteśvara is different from that of the White-Robed Avalokiteśvara of Esoteric Buddhism. Three fac-



Figure 22. Ma Yuan 馬遠 (1140–1225), *Scholars Gathered in the West Garden* (Xiyuan yaji tu 西園雅集圖), Song, ink and color on silk, 18 cm×53 cm, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, USA (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 6-5-130).



Figure 23. Yue Hu, *White-Robed Avalokiteśvara*, Song, ink on silk, 111.4 cm×48.6 cm, Okayama Prefectural Art Museum, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 4-2-20).

tors have been identified in the origins of Chinese White-Robed Avalokiteśvara. First, after the secularization of Buddhism, the robe worn by Avalokiteśvara was painted to resemble the clothing of women at the time (see figs. 20–23). Indeed, the secularization of Avalokiteśvara is depicted mainly as the feminization of Avalokiteśvara. In Song paintings, we can see that women’s clothing is quite similar to Avalokiteśvara’s white robe (Yu J. 2012: 258).

Second, the same robe can be observed in the paintings of a meditating Arhat or Bodhidharma (Chöng 2007: 222) (figs. 24–26). Among them, the earliest is a statue of seated meditation under a tree from the late fifth century found in Yungang 雲岡 (fig. 24). Third, the change was driven by scholar-officials who were lay Buddhists. Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings show a striking resemblance to paintings of high-minded figures (*gaoshitu* 高士圖). Song and Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvaras sit in a much more relaxed way with their hands resting on their knees, a posture much like that of figures seen in paintings of high-minded figures, and differ from other Bodhisattvas, which are usually portrayed in the full-lotus position (Yamamoto 1989; Meng and Yu 2011: 70). Most of these “high-minded figures” in Song and Yuan paintings were dressed in white (figs. 27–29).

Qian Mu mentioned that “after the Song dynasty, it was a purely civilian society. Those who rose to the top of the political class came from the class of ‘white robed scholars (*baiyixiucai* 白衣秀才)’ that is, from a humble background, with few mem-

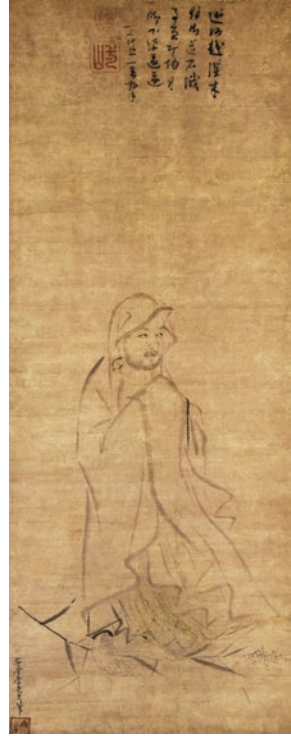


Figure 24. *Buddhist Monk Sitting under a Tree* (Shuxia chanding biqiuxiang 樹下禪定比丘坐像), Sui 隋 dynasty (ca. 600 CE), Yungang 雲岡 Cave No. 7 in Datong 大同, Shanxi 山西 Province, China (Chǒng 2007: 19).

Figure 25. *Mu Xi, Arhat* (Luohan tu 羅漢圖), Song, ink on silk, 105.9 cm×52.4 cm, Seikadō Bunko 靜嘉堂文庫 Museum of Art, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 7-2-136).

Figure 26. *Bodhidharma* (Damo tu 達摩圖), Song, ink on silk, Freer Gallery of Art, USA (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2013: 5-1-30).

bers from the feudal aristocracy or nobility” (Qian Mu 1974: 2). In Song paintings we can see the lifestyle of scholar-officials such as, for example, Su Dongpo (fig. 30).¹⁸ I contend that the white robe is a reflection of the popularization and secularization of Buddhism in Song society, the culture of which favored plain elegance, and where white was seen as a symbol of ordinary people or scholar-officials of humble birth.

Avalokiteśvara is depicted as a prince in the Indian scriptures, but the Song dynasty Avalokiteśvara in China was not a prince but a common woman (Yu J. 2012: 406–48). Avalokiteśvara wearing the white robe was an Avalokiteśvara who had become much more approachable in the eyes of commoners. Koryō accepted in part the style of the white robe from the Song-Yuan ink-wash paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara (figs. 1–2), but significant differences can still be noted in the white robes; these differences arose because they served different purposes.¹⁹ The Song-Yuan white robe worn by Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is mostly made of ordinary cloth, whereas the Koryō white robe is usually made of white chiffon with exquisite lines and adorned with gold thread (Sim 2012: 24). In other words, the white robe of Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara was not painted to show simplicity but to display resplendence. And the Koryō Avalokiteśvara was not the portrait of an ordinary woman but of a worshipful prince.²⁰ The clothing of Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvaras is similar to the clothing of a Zhou Fang painting from the Tang dynasty. Both portray aristocratic clothing (figs. 31a–b).²¹ In Esoteric Buddhist sutras, Avalokiteś-



Figure 27. Li Tang 李唐 (1066–1150), *Scholars in the Forest* (Linquan gaoyi 林泉高逸), Song, ink and color on silk, 134 cm×64 cm, private collection (Pei 2010: 23).

Figure 28. Liang Kai, *Story of Eight Eminent Monks* (Ba gaoseng gushi tu 八高僧故事圖), Song, ink and color on silk, 24.6 cm ×64.0 cm, Shanghai, Museum, China (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 2-2-56).

Figure 29. *Drawing of Pine Shade and Cudgel* (Songyin cezhang tu 松蔭策杖圖), Yuan, ink and color on silk, 28 cm×28.7 cm, Palace Museum, China (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 1-7-34).



vara's white robe is described as being made of chiffon, which was the same as that worn by Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara.²² The white robe of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is characterized by transparency, which is shown according to the image of the Esoteric Buddhist sutras (Chin 2010: 131).²³ During the Koryŏ dynasty, Buddhist paintings were strongly shaped by Esoteric Buddhism because of the close ties between Koryŏ royal families and their Yuan counterparts, the latter of which practiced Esoteric Buddhism (Chin 2010: 158). The white veil of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is identical to the veil of Esoteric Buddhism Avalokiteśvara paintings (figs. 33a–b); see, for example, the Thousand-Handed Avalokiteśvara of Song and Yuan Ningbo Buddhist paintings (fig. 32).

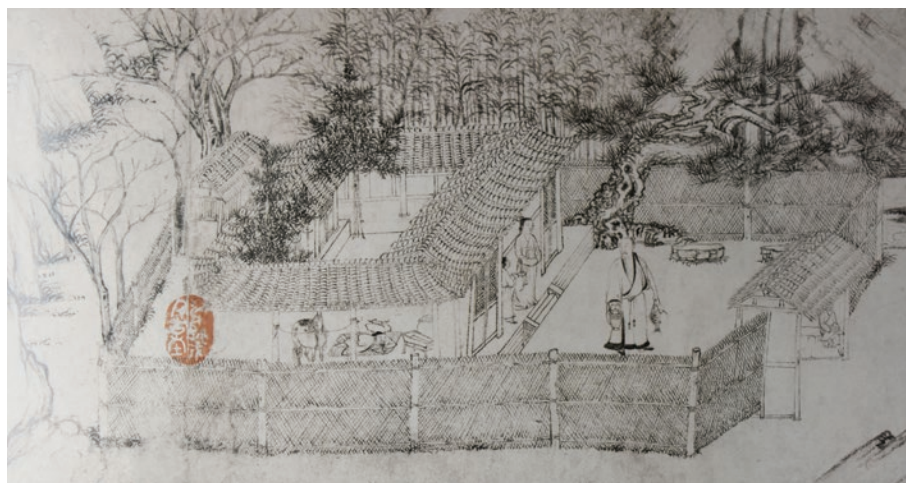


Figure 30. Qiao Zhongchang 喬仲常 (12th c.), *Painting of Second Ode to the Red Cliffs* (Hou chibi fu tu 後赤壁賦圖), Song, ink on silk, 29.3 cm×560.3 cm, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, USA (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 6-5-46).

In the Chosŏn dynasty, however, the magnificent and transparent white robe typical of Koryŏ disappeared and was displaced by the Chinese-style simple and plain white robe (figs. 34–36). This is because Chosŏn, like Song and Yuan, had become a society of ordinary people where Zen gained dominance among Buddhist believers. As a result, Song- and Yuan-style ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings became dominant during the Chosŏn dynasty.

In addition, the Chosŏn dynasty's Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings were now much more similar to the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings in China. The differences in style previously seen between the Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and Song and Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara had largely disappeared (figs. 37a–c).

Conclusion

The painting in figure 38 is regarded as heralding the beginning of a literati painting trend in Chosŏn Korea. Some scholars believe it to have been influenced by the Chinese ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings (Hong 1985: 101).

Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara is a good example of the localization of Buddhism in China, while Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings represent the adapted version of Chinese Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara after it spread to Koryŏ. Both Yuan and Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images owe their origins to Zhou Fang, but they followed two divergent paths due to the different social and cultural environments of the two countries. Social transformation and the secularization of Buddhism during the Tang and Song dynasties gave birth to ink-wash Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, while the aristocratic Koryŏ society retained Zhou Fang's heavily colored technique featuring magnificence and solemnity. Although the Koryŏ painting techniques of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara



Figures 31a-b. Comparison of costumes in Tang and Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara: (a) *Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, Kagami Jinja, Japan (Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 201); (b) *Lady Holding a Flower*, Liaoning Provincial Museum, China (Shanghai Calligraphy and Painting Publishing House 2003: 4).



Figure 32. *Thousand-Handed Avalokiteśvara*, Song, ink and color on silk, 190.4 cm × 104.6 cm, Eihoji 永保寺, Japan (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 7-2-171).



Figures 33a–b. Comparison of cloth of Thousand-Handed Avalokiteśvara and Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara: (a) detail of *Thousand-Handed Avalokiteśvara* of Song (Research Center for Ancient Calligraphy and Painting, Zhejiang University 2008: 7-2-171); (b) detail of *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara* of Koryŏ (Kikutake and Chŏng 1996: 204).



Figure 34. *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, completed in 15th c., ink and color on silk, 144.3 cm×63.7 cm, Kōfuku gokoku zenji 廣福護國禪寺, Japan (Kim R. 2011: 247).

Figure 35. Kim Hongdo 金弘道 (1745–?), *The South Sea Avalokiteśvara*, Chosŏn, ink and color on silk, 30.6 cm×20.6 cm, Kansong Museum, Korea (Kungnip Chungang Pangmulgwan 1995: 200).

Figure 36. *Avalokiteśvara*, Chosŏn, ink and color on soil wall, Muwi Temple 無爲寺, Korea (Kim R. 2011: 290).



Figures 37a–c. Comparison of Chosŏn and Ming Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara: (a) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, completed in 1550, by Yi Chasil 李自實 (16th c.), Chosŏn, ink and color on silk, 235 cm×135 cm, Chion'in 智溫院, Japan (Kim Rina 2011: 298); (b) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, completed in 1439, Ming, ink and color on wall, 450 cm×450 cm, Fahai Temple 法海寺, China (Heritage Press 文物出版社 2019: 1–3); (c) *Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara*, completed in 1730, by Ŭigyŏm 義謙 (18th c.), Chosŏn, ink and color on silk, 143.7 cm×105.5 cm, Museum of Korean Buddhist Art, Korea (Kim R. 2011: 232).



Figure 38. Kang Hŭian 姜希顔 (1417–64), *Scholar-Official Looking at Water* (*Kosa kwansu-do* 高士觀水圖), Chosŏn, ink on paper, 23 cm×16 cm, National Museum of Korea, Korea (Kang 2011: 80).

differed markedly from those of the Song and Yuan, Koryŏ nonetheless absorbed some new elements of their ink-wash paintings, including Avalokiteśvara's white robe, due to their frequent bilateral interactions; still, there were differences between Yuan and Koryŏ in the meaning of the white robes. Thus, Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara represents a selective adaptation of Chinese Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, and its unique imagery is a result of the difference in timing in the social transformations of China and Korea.

In the final analysis, the time difference between China and Korea in the transition to the early modern period was caused by the time difference in the ideological environment. Artistic style can encode social values. What does not follow is the notion that different values correspond to a stable and distinct culture (Powers 2013: 313). Any artistic image is simply a manifestation of ideas and concepts in a particular society and period of history. Ideology is the substance, whereas art is the form. With any change in ideology will naturally come a change in the form of art, as people cannot live in isolation from their historical environment and current ideology. Hence, artistic imagery should be examined in the broader context of social and intellectual history. By examining the evolution of the image of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara, we can conclude that the time difference between the Chinese and Korean transitions to the early modern period was a common cultural phenomenon, which, to some extent, also created diverse art forms.

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NOTES

1. Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846) lived in seclusion in Xiangshan 香山, Longmen 龍門, after his political defeats. His praise of the Bodhisattva in a Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting reflects his indifference and negative views. Thus, Wang Huimin argues there are profound social reasons for the emergence and spread of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara (Wang H. 1987: 37).

2. It is recorded that there were ink-wash paintings called Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara during the Koryŏ dynasty, but no such works have survived. One Zen-style Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting has survived, but it is not an ink-wash painting (Yi H. 2016: 221–23).

3. “In China aristocratic politics declined during the transitional period from the end of the Tang dynasty to the Five Dynasties and was replaced by an autocratic monarchy. As a result of the aristocracy losing power, the monarch's position grew closer to that of the people. This system developed gradually after the Song dynasty. Although China did not recognize the people's right to participate in politics, after the elimination of the aristocracy, the monarch and the people directly opposed each other, and this was certainly the case after entering the politics of early modernity. Compared with the way in which official positions were off-limits to the

common people in the era of autocratic monarchy, equal opportunity was allowed. Literature used to be the province of the nobility, but subsequently became the property of the common people” (Naitō 1992: 10).

4. From an intellectual historical perspective, the end of the Middle Ages results from the replacement of Buddhism by Neo-Confucianism as the state religion, and with this change came also a shift in social structure (Hō 1994: 62).

5. Those who came from family backgrounds like that of Yi Ŭimin 李義旼 (?–1196) were occasionally appointed as low-ranking military officials, but most military positions were filled by men from powerful or wealthy backgrounds.

6. “貞元末, 新羅國有人於江淮以善價收市數十卷, 持往彼國.”

7. To investigate the pigment composition of Koryō Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, modern scientific methods were used: the results of X-ray or ultraviolet radiation on the original painting were analyzed to determine the composition, and the pigments remaining on the paper on the back of the painting were analyzed during the repair process (Yi T. 1997: 46).

8. Matsumoto Eiichi was the first to claim that Zhou Fang was the father of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings (Matsumoto 1937: 348). His opinion was based on the records in *Lidaiminghua ji*, vol. 3: “He is the father of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings” (Zhang 1985: 323). But some scholars reject this view.

9. Wang Wei, styled Mojie居士, was proficient in poetry, calligraphy, painting, and music. Later generations regarded him as the ancestor of the Southern School of landscape painting (a sort of ink-wash painting). Su Dongpo 蘇東坡 (1037–1101) commented: “there is a picture in the poem of Mo Jie 摩詰, and there is a poem in the picture when you look at the painting of Mo Jie (味摩詰之詩, 詩中有畫; 觀摩詰之畫, 畫中有詩)” (Su 2020: 166).

10. “Koryō Avalokiteśvara paintings look expert and owe their origins to Yuchi Yiseng 尉遲乙僧 [seventh–eighth centuries]. Their paintings later became extremely exquisite” (Tang 2009: 469).

11. Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846), a renowned poet of the Tang dynasty, once expressed his feelings in the poem “Appreciating the Paintings of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara” as follows: “Upon the pure water, between the white light, my eyes alight upon the image, and all turns empty. Your disciple Juyi, determined to convert. Through my ups and downs, you shall be my master (淨淥水上, 虛白光中, 壹睹其相, 萬緣皆空。弟子居易, 誓心皈依, 生生劫劫, 長為我師)” (Bai 1979: 888).

12. “Avalokiteśvara” was called “Guanshiyin” 觀世音 to emphasize his mercifulness when the Indian Buddhist monk Kumārajīva translated the Heart Sutra and *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā sūtra* (Chōn 2015: 4).

13. Yi Kyōnghūi believes that this change comes from the idea of “provide a willow branch and pure water for Avalokiteśvara” as described in the *Saḍakṣaravidyāmantra sūtra* 六字神咒王經 (Yi K. 1987: 21).

14. Military officials started a successful military revolt that resulted in the deposition of Ŭijong 毅宗 (1127–73) and the appointment of Myōngjong 明宗 (1131–1202) as well as the killing of many civil officials. Koryō was in its infancy when Yi Ŭibang 李義方 (?–1174), Chōng Chungbu 鄭仲夫 (1106–79), and Yi Ŭimin 李義旼 (?–1196) ruled; in its maturity when Ch'oe Ch'unghōn 崔忠獻 (1149–1219) and his following three generations ruled; and in its decline thereafter (Pyōn 1978: 87–88).

15. “When seeing the Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara painting that Hwan Changno 幻長老 (12th–13th c.) asked an artist to paint, I was full of praise, saying . . .” (Yi K. 1985: 201). There are records showing the existence of Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings during the Koryō dynasty, but none of the works have survived.

16. During the 260 years between the Koryŏ kings Hyŏnjong 顯宗 (992–1031) and Ch'ungyŏl 忠烈 (1009–1278), nearly five thousand Chinese merchants came to Koryŏ on more than 210 occasions (Kim S. 1954: 65).

17. According to historical records, eighty-seven delegations of Northern Song merchants and thirty-one delegations of Southern Song merchants arrived in Koryŏ (Kim W. 2004: 258).

18. The painting is a landscape figure work, divided into several segments and recorded on the screen according to the narrative sequence of “Second Ode to the Red Cliffs” (Houchibi fu tu 後赤壁賦圖) by Su Dongpo.

19. Although scholars note the association between Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara and Western Xia Avalokiteśvara because of the white veil, it can be seen that the form of the white robe is more similar to Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara images in ink.

20. In the Indian scriptures, Avalokiteśvara is described as a prince. In the Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara paintings, Avalokiteśvara has a beard and is dressed in colorful costumes, which can be seen as princely. Song-Yuan Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara was portrayed as a woman dressed as the common people, which was influenced by the secularization of Avalokiteśvara, a feature not seen in Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara.

21. According to vol. 68 of *Baibao Kouchao* 白寶口抄, the image of Avalokiteśvara dressed in a translucent white robe has its origins in the Tang dynasty (Chin 2010: 59). The clothing of Koryŏ Water-Moon Avalokiteśvara was similar to clothing popular in the Tang dynasty. This kind of light outer dress or robe has a gorgeous pattern and is tied under the chest.

22. Bu Kong translated *Sheng guan zizai pusaxin zhenyan yujia guanxing yigui* 聖觀自在菩薩心真言瑜伽觀行儀軌 (Sutra of the Mind of the Bodhisattva of the Holy View of Freedom and the Practice of Yoga). In this sutra the image of the Avalokiteśvara is described as follows: “Crossed legs, golden body, round light behind, wearing a chiffon veil and a red skirt.”

23. Pan Liangwen divides White-Robed Avalokiteśvara style into two systems. One is developed in the esoteric system, the other in Zen painting (Pan 2000: 89). From the perspective of Pan Liangwen's distinction and the content of Guanyin belief, the White-Robed Avalokiteśvara in Koryŏ originated from the esoteric system (Chin 2010: 107).

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