

WESTERN-STYLE PAINTING IN PAN-ASIAN CONTEXT: THE ART AND
HISTORICAL LEGACIES OF KURODA SEIKI, LI SHUTONG,
AND GO HUI-DOING, 1889-1916

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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From the late nineteenth century, works inspired by Western art spread to China and Korea through Japan. Thus, Western art came to be accepted in China and Korea as a reinterpretation of Japan's development of Western art, rather than a direct transmission from Western sources. This act of reinterpretation went on to have a lasting effect on the practice of Western-style painters in East Asia with their own acceptance modes. This thesis provides a study of self-portraits and nude paintings, two categories of painting without precedent in East Asia prior to the late nineteenth century, created by Kuroda Seiki, Li Shutong, Go Hui-dong, and Kim Gwan-ho in order to illustrate how East Asian countries established their own versions of modern art.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The turn of the twentieth century marked a culturally tumultuous period for many Asian countries. For over two thousand years, China, Korea, and Japan maintained close relationships as each developed independent cultures within the Sinosphere. This cultural paradigm substantially transitioned when East Asia was confronted with Western Europe. As people within Asia saw the West as modernized, they avidly learned all they could about Western culture. Japan was a pioneer regarding Westernization, and it became a hub in Asia for people who were eager to learn about all aspects of Western culture, including the very different artistic techniques and styles of Western Europe. A new group of artists in Japan began using Western techniques and stylistic modes to create original works. Through Japan, works inspired by Western art spread to China and Korea. Thus, Western art came to be accepted in China and Korea as a reinterpretation of Japan's development of Western art, rather than a direct transmission from Western sources.

This act of reinterpretation went on to have a lasting effect on the practice of Western-style painters in East Asia with their own acceptance modes. I will focus on three important figures in this movement to investigate this chain of influence in their respective countries. First, I will look at Japanese artist Kuroda Seiki (黒田清輝, 1866-1924), a master of Western European-style oil painting, and a key founder of the art education system of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (東京美術学校/Tokyo bijutsu gakkō), Japan's leading institution in the study of Western art. Then, I will examine the

works of Chinese artist Li Shutong (李叔同, 1880-1942) and Korean artist Go Hui-dong (高義東, 1886-1965), who were among the first international students at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts to study Western art. I explore how Kuroda's works and the system of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts influenced their works. In addition to Go Hui-dong, Korean artist Kim Gwan-ho (金觀鎬, 1890-1958)'s works will be analyzed in this thesis to examine how nude painting was presented in the Korean context. After returning to practice art in their respective countries, both Li Shutong and Go Hui-dong were praised as leaders of modern art and their work influenced many painters in China and Korea.

In recent years, two exhibitions were held in China and Korea to commemorate Li Shutong and Go Hui-dong as pioneers of Western-style art. *Long Lasting Fragrance: A Study of Li Shutong's Oil Paintings [sic]* (芳草長亭-李叔同油畫珍品研究展) was held in Beijing in 2013 to reexamine Li Shutong's oil paintings. *Spearhead of Korean Modern Art: A Special 50th Anniversary Exhibition of Go Hui-dong* (한국 근대 화단의 선봉—춘곡 고희동 50 주기 특별전) was held in 2015 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Go Hui-dong's death. Li and Go have both received attention in recent years in many reevaluations of Modern (Ch/J.近代, K.근대) art in Asia. In the past, art historians have generally overlooked early twentieth century art from China and Korea.¹ In China, art created in the early twentieth century was regarded as having little research value. Traditional Chinese art such as landscape painting and watercolor painting created during this period was considered boring and uninspired because it did not change and merely

¹ For further discussions about Modern art and modernity in East Asia, see, amongst others, Hong Sunpyo ed., *Dong asia misul ui geundaewa geundaesung* (Seoul, Korea: Hakgojae, 2009).

imitated previous masters' works. Western paintings by Chinese artists were considered insipid imitations.² Art historian Michael Sullivan, for instance, mentions that Chinese art in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was often reluctantly imitative of Western art.³ In Korea, early twentieth century art carried problems of identity because Korea was colonized by Japan at the time. Kim Yongjun (金瑢俊, 1904-1967), an art historian and artist who also studied in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, writes in *Summary of Joseon Art* (朝鮮美術大要) that art made during the colonial era was considered to be "...in the dark ages when we [Korea] lost sovereignty and tradition, so it can never be Joseon art."⁴

Regardless of the low cultural regard previous historians have had for art created in early twentieth century China and Korea, it is critical to look at this period to understand how Asia accepted Western art. This was the first step toward a widespread acceptance and use of Western art techniques. This art also provides insights into how the turbulent social climates of China and Korea effected interpretations of Western-style art. This thesis provides a study of self-portraits and nude paintings, two categories of painting without precedent in East Asia prior to the late nineteenth century, created by Li Shutong, Go Hui-dong, and Kim Gwan-ho in order to illustrate how East Asian countries established their own versions of Modern art.

² Shi Shouqian, "Considering Frames about Research on Chinese Modern Art History," in Hong Sunpyo ed., *Dong asia misul ui geundaewa geundaesung*, 254.

³ Michael Sullivan, *The Arts of China* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008), 287.

⁴ Kim Yongjun, *Joseon misul daeyo* (Seoul, Korea: Eulyu munhwasa, 1947), 269-270. All translations are by the author unless stated otherwise.

CHAPTER II

THE TOKYO SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS AND KURODA SEIKI

Western-style painting was not widely accepted due to conservative crackdowns on foreign culture during the seventeenth century in Japan.⁵ In eighteenth-century Japan, many painters started studying and creating Western-style paintings.⁶ Western oil painting in Japan did not become more widely popularized until the late nineteenth century with the introduction of a modern educational system.⁷ It is during the Meiji period (1868-1912) that a linguistic distinction was created between Western-style paintings in oil and watercolor, known as *yōga* (洋画/Western painting), and Japanese-style paintings, or *nihonga* (日本画/Japanese painting).⁸ The term *bijutsu* (美術), which indicates a comprehensive visual art, was differentiated from *shoga* (書画), which refers to painting and calligraphy works originating from China. These new concepts of art reflected Japan's new agenda of *Datsu-A ron* (脱亜論), which indicated a separation

⁵ The first contact with Western art in Japan was in 1571 when Catholic missionaries brought religious paintings in Portuguese ships that entered the Nagasaki port. Western painting was forbidden in 1612 due to a prohibition order and suppression of Christianity. Yamanashi Emiko, "19 segi hubanui ilbongeundae yanghwa," *Misulsa yeongu* Vol. 9 (1995), 343-354.

⁶ In 1773, Rangaku (蘭学, Dutch learning) was in vogue, so groups of artists tried to learn Western-style perspectival and painting techniques that were applied to Japanese art.

⁷ Yikuhiko Ōno, "Ilbon geundae yanghwa ui hyeongsung gwa joengae," *Wolgan Misul* (Nov., 1990), 96.

⁸ Much of the Japanese terminology used to discuss art today was created in the Meiji period. The term art (美術/*bijutsu*) was created to reflect the Western conceptualization of art. The terms *yōga* (洋画, Western painting) and *nihonga* (日本画, Japanese painting) were coined to differentiate traditional ink paintings from oil and watercolors. For a more detailed explanation, refer to Satō Dōshin, Nara Hiroshi trans., *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty* (Los Angeles: California: Getty Publications, 2011), Part 1 Chapter 2.

from Asia modeled after Western culture.⁹ Japan started to define new standards of art that were differentiated from an Asian tradition.

The concept of “modernity” in Japan was rooted in two major changes. The first was Japan’s embrace of Western influences and their adoption of new Western cultural institutions. The second was the rediscovery and propagation of pre-Edo Period (1615-1868) Japanese traditions. Japan made these changes in a bid to catch up with Western development. The introduction of a Western-influenced educational system was of vital significance to Japan’s development because it helped propagate wider cultural changes. Art was made a part of the new educational system. A bureaucracy was created to administer these new institutions. Japan’s Ministry of Education (文部省/*monbushō*) supervised Western art, the Ministry of the Imperial Household (宮内省/*kunai-shō*) oversaw Japanese traditional art, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (農商務省/*nōshōmushō*) oversaw craft and decorative art.¹⁰

In 1887, the Japanese government decided to establish the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.¹¹ Education and art were both seen as gateways to develop Japan’s ideal modernized nation, and the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was closely tied with government efforts. When the Tokyo School of Fine Arts held its first course in 1889, the school had three departments: the department of painting (絵画科, which later became the

⁹ For the original text, see David J. Lu, *Japan—A Documentary History* (New York: Armonk, 1997), 351-353.

¹⁰ Satō Dōshin, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*, 58.

¹¹ The first modern national art school in Japan was the Technical Art School (工部美術学校/*Kobu bijutsu gakkō*) established in 1876. The goal of the Technical Art School was to integrate Western technology and Japanese craft along with the promotion of all craftsmanship.

department of Japanese art), the department of sculpture (彫刻科), and the department of craft (工芸科). The school's curriculum was inclined towards nationalism: the department of painting only taught Japanese painting, the department of sculpture only taught wood sculpture, and the department of craft only taught Japanese traditional craft. Western art and techniques were not originally part of the curriculum. Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853-1908) and Okakura Tenshin (岡倉天心, 1862-1913) were two key figures in establishing the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Fenollosa served as the institution's first director.

Fenollosa, a philosopher from the United States, played a significant role in Japan's protection of national art. Fenollosa came to Japan as a visiting professor at Tokyo University in 1878. He was fascinated by traditional Japanese culture, and began suggesting new ways to appreciate it. In 1882, Fenollosa gave an influential speech arguing for the superiority of Japanese painting over Western painting.¹² Fenollosa suggested three methods to stop the decline of Japanese art: establishing art schools, encouraging artists, and promoting the understanding of art by the general public. However, the art education system that Fenollosa suggested then was not a modern school system, but a traditional private art education system (画塾). Fenollosa realized that there was only a limited audience for traditional Japanese art after traditional crafts received unfavorable evaluations at the 1883 and 1884 Paris Exhibitions. He began

¹² “When traditional Japanese painting and Japanese painting in the European style (sic) are compared on the basis of aesthetic principles, there is no question about the superiority of the former over the latter. Why do Japanese people strive to imitate European-style paintings when you have such excellent paintings of your own?” (translation by John Clark) John Clark, *Modernities of Japanese Art* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 83.

searching for new Japanese art. This led to the establishment of the modernized art school and the creation of the department of Western art. He handpicked the students and faculty of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts to work to create an entirely new type of Japanese art by adapting Western techniques to Japanese aesthetics.

Okakura Tenshin oversaw the administration of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts after Fenellosa returned to the Museum of Fine Art, Boston in the United States in 1890. Tenshin's primary institutional goals were cultivating talented students, applying art in a contemporary context, experimenting with the practical uses of art, and promoting art for national and economic interests.¹³ The school focused on educating future masters of painting, sculpture, and design, as well as training teachers for primary schools.¹⁴ There were not enough art teachers to meet the demand created by the inclusion of drawing classes in the national primary school system curriculum created in 1872. Western interest in Japanese art and crafts increased during this period, so the government promoted the manufacture and export of Japanese goods. Following this trend, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts focused on educating students who could contribute to international interest in Japan. In 1896, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts faced new changes with the arrival of Kuroda Seiki. Instead of focusing on traditional Japanese techniques, Kuroda privileged Western fine art education and painting, which he considered key components to developing a modern society in Japan.

¹³ Okakura Tenshin, "Setsumeitokyo bijutsu gakkō," *Okakura Tenshin zenshū* Vol. 3, 369, recitation from Choi Yu-kyung, "Meiji gukga hyeongsung gwa Tokyo misul hakgyo ui seongrip", *Hanyang ilbon hakhoe* Vol. 13 (2004), 169.

¹⁴ Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha kanko yiyinkai ed., *Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha* Vol. 1 (Tokyo, Japan: Yongakuchiyusha, 1987), 112.

It is necessary to examine Kuroda before discussing the change in direction of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts any further. From the Meiji period through the 1950s the main destination for Japanese artists to learn Western painting was Paris.¹⁵ Kuroda Seiki learned Western art during his stay in Paris from 1884 to 1893. Born to a wealthy family, Kuroda originally went to Paris to study law and become an administrator. The Japanese law system was modeled after French law, so France was also an ideal place to study for Japanese law students.

When Kuroda was in Paris, he developed close relationships with numerous Japanese artists, including Yamamoto Hōsui (山本芳翠, 1850-1906) and Fuji Masazō (藤雅三 1853-1916), and art dealer, Hayashi Tadamasa (林忠正, 1853-1906). Through these friends, Kuroda got the opportunity to visit the atelier of French late Impressionist Raphaël Collin (1850-1916) as a translator. Impressed by Collin's work, Kuroda decided to change his path and become an artist, and began studying Western painting in Collin's workshop in 1886.¹⁶ In a letter to his father informing him of his decision to become an artist, Kuroda wrote that although he spent many years studying law, he was not interested in becoming a lawyer, especially as he did not have enough knowledge of Chinese classics and was not a talented speaker.¹⁷ Kuroda also wrote that learning painting was no longer vulgar, and if he were to become a master of painting, it would be

¹⁵ Iwamura To'oru (岩村透, 1870-1917)'s article "Art Students in Paris (巴里の美術学生)" (1901) shows how the young artists thought Paris as an ideal place, and it affected many young art students at that time.

¹⁶ Yiwayashi Yoshikazu, Kang Dukhee trans., *Ilbon geundae hoeihwasa* (Korea: Yekyong, 1998), 93-101.

¹⁷ Yamanashi Emiko, "Kuroda Seiki to Tokyo bijutsu gakko no yōga kyōyiku," *Misulsahak*, Vol. 9 (Aug., 1995), 106.

no different than being a state minister.¹⁸ Kuroda made his decision based not only on his concern about his aptitude, but also on a shift in societal recognition of art.

Kuroda's style was hugely influenced by Raphaël Collin, whose art was characterized by a combination of academic technique in his detailed description and an Impressionist influenced use of light.¹⁹ Late-Impressionist artists used colors to represent form rather than creating chiaroscuro by using dark colors. Academic painters mixed gray into colors to shade while Impressionists used blue tones.²⁰ Kuroda was also influenced by Impressionism, and as such tended to avoid static colors, instead using a variety of shades which would shift depending on light.²¹ This technique can be seen in *At Bréhat* (アレハ島にて) (Fig. 1), which is a painting of the Island Bréhat, located in France, in 1891. In contrast with the bright yellow used to depict the sunlit beach, Kuroda used strong, short brushstrokes of blue and violet to depict darkness and shading, giving a paradoxical sense of both roughness and softness.

¹⁸ *Kuroda Seiki Nikki* Vol. 1 (Tokyo, Japan: Chū'ō kōron bijutsu shppan), recitation from *Hakubakai* (Nihon keizai shinbunsha, 1999), 82.

¹⁹ In France, the Impressionist painters were known for their use of atmospheric perspective (utilizing colors to represent forms and depth), rather than the linear perspective associated with Academic painters.

²⁰ Maurice Serullaz, *The Impressionist Painters: Painting* (New York: Universe Books, 1960), 7-25.

²¹ John Clark defines Kuroda's style as "bright-toned open-air painting—plenair-isme (gaikōha)," which was the fourth tendency of Impressionism in Japan and became an academy style in Japan. John Clark, *Modernities of Japanese Art*, 148.



Figure 1. Kuroda Seiki, *At Bréhat* (ブレハ島にて), 1891, Oil on wood panel: 24.1 x 32.1 cm, National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.
(From National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.
http://www.tobunken.go.jp/materials/wp-content/pics/k_work/oil/images/KU-a031.jpg)

In 1893, Kuroda returned to Japan and sought to revitalize Western-style painting there. There was already a group of Western-influenced Japanese artists who were associated with the Meiji Fine Arts Society (明治美術会). They were influenced by the Barbizon School and promoted Western-style oil painting, especially the use of neutral color tones.²² Kuroda created a new sensation by using bright colors in contrast to

²² The Impressionistic colors used by the painters of the New school [Kuroda and White Horse Society] generally ranged in the tones of purple—hence, the school was quite logically called *murasaki* (“purple”). On the other hand, the painters of the Old school [Meiji Art Society] most frequently used resin-based colors, and so were called by the name *yani* (“resin”). Yamada Chisaburō, *Dialogue in Art: Japan and the West* (Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International Ltd., 1976), 91.

previous Japanese trends in Western-style painting, which used predominantly dark colors (Fig. 2), *Lakeside* (湖畔) (Fig. 3), depicts Kuroda's wife Terako (照子) sitting on the riverside wearing a bright blue *yukata*.



Figure 2. Koyama Shotaro, *Cherry Trees in Sendai* (仙台の桜), 1881, oil on canvas image: 39.5 x 60.8 cm, The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art. (From The Niigata Prefectural Museum of Modern Art. <http://kinbi.pref.niigata.lg.jp/collection-kanko/collections.php>)



Figure 3. Kuroda Seiki, *Lakeside* (湖畔), 1897, oil on canvas image: 50 x 61 cm,
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

(From National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

http://www.tobunken.go.jp/materials/wp-content/pics/k_work/oil/images/KU-a117.jpg)

According to an account by Kobayashi Mango (小林万吾, 1870-1947), one of Kuroda's students, the impact of Kuroda returning to Japan was “like having those who had been groping along a dark wild path suddenly become aware of a single ray of brightness.”²³ Kuroda’s paintings gave young artists a refreshing jolt, and Japanese Western-style art now had a new group consisting of Kuroda and his supporters. This

²³ Kobayashi Mango, “Wano junenma’e” *Kokumin bijutsu* 1-9, 1924. 8. Recitation from Yamanashi Emiko, “Kuroda seiki to Tokyo bijutsu gakko no yōga kyōyiku,” *Misulsahak* Vol. 9 (1995. 8), 108.

new group, called White Horse Society (白馬会/*Hakubakai*), actively developed their own style of Western painting.²⁴

Due to the increasing popularity of Western-style art in Japan, Okakura, then principal of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, realized the necessity of creating a Western painting department. In addition, Saionji Kinmochi (西園寺公望, 1849-1940), who was Kuroda's friend and Minister of Education, emphasized Western painting as a way of promoting modernized culture.²⁵ In 1896, seven years after the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was established, the department of Western painting was created with Kuroda as the dean. As the first Western art professor, Kuroda made nearly all departmental decisions, including the curriculum and appointment of professors.

Kuroda's influence on Japanese modern art increased with the commencement of the Exhibition of the Ministry of Education (文展/*Bunten*), referred to hereafter as *Bunten*. Kuroda had discretionary power over the judging panel, and most of the artworks he selected were created at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. According to scholar Kōji Taki, Kuroda used his influence over *Bunten* to advocate Western-style painting, leading to *Bunten* being referred to as Kuroda's *Bunten* academism.²⁶ It is undeniable that Kuroda

²⁴ The Hakubakai was an organization of Japanese Western-style artists formed by Kuroda Seiki and his colleagues in June 1896. Many Hakubakai members were teachers or graduates of the Western-style painting section of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, and Hakubakai artists became a powerful force within the same section of the Ministry of Education's *Bunten* exhibition, which was first organized in 1907. Therefore, while it originally began as an anti-establishment group espousing artistic freedom, the Hakubakai ended up deeply involved in the establishment of academism in modern Japanese art. *Ketsusei hyakunen kinen Hakubakai meiji yōga no shinfū*, (Tokyo: Japan: Bridgestone Museum of Art, 1996), 7.

²⁵ Yisozaki Yasuhiko and Yoshida Chizuko, *Tokyo bijutsu gakko no rekishi* (Tokyo, Japan: Nihon bunkyo shuppan, 1978), 72.

²⁶ Kōji Taki, *Nihon kinzendai bijutsusha jiten* (Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo shuji, 2007), 40.

and other professors of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts played critical roles in setting the standards of modern Japanese art.

When designing the curriculum of the Western painting department, Kuroda imported the French academism that he learned in Paris.²⁷ In Raphaël Collin’s atelier, students, including Kuroda, learned to draw from plaster casts of the Greek gods using charcoal, create paintings of the human body with oils, and anatomical theory. After learning these techniques, students were allowed to paint freely, creating whatever they wanted.²⁸ This education was reflected in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts’ curriculum with little modification. Kuroda saw these basic foundations as key. He required mastery of sketching, still life, and life drawing before his students could advance.

Below is the curriculum table of the department of Western art:

Hours/week	preparatory	first year	second year	third year	fourth year
Practical training	28	33	35	38	39
Anatomy		1	1		
Perspective		1	1	1	
Aesthetics/Art history	2	2			
History/anthropology	4	2	2	1	
Foreign language (English/French)	2				
Western studies	1				
Gymnastics	2	2	2		
Speech (Required for teaching students)					6
Pedagogy (Required for teaching students)					2

Table 1. Time table of the Western painting department at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, 1896²⁹

²⁷ Kuroda Seiki did not directly introduce new art trends such as Impressionism, but instead persistently tried to introduce a system to the Japanese art world that was modeled on French academies. Matsushima Masato, “Japan’s Dream of Modern Art” in *Remaking Tradition: Modern Art of Japan from the Tokyo National Museum* (Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2013), 21.

²⁸ Yamanashi Emiko, “Kuroda Seiki to Tokyo bijutsu gakko no yōga kyōyiku,” 106.

²⁹ Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha kanko yiyinkai ed., *Tokyo geijutsu daigaku*

In practical training classes, for five years students focused on charcoal drawing and oil painting along with pencil drawing and watercolor painting in five different classrooms. In classroom one, preparatory and first-year students learned charcoal drawing. Preparatory students cultivated fundamental drawing skills by making charcoal drawings of plaster casts. The purpose of teaching charcoal drawing was to depict objects accurately, and mimetically, which was the prerequisite for oil painting. In the second year, figure drawing was added to plaster cast drawing, and students started to use various media including pencil, watercolor, and oil paints. In classrooms two, three, four, and five, the second-, third-, and fourth-year students focused on figure drawing using charcoal, and oil painting. Aside from this, second year students created *croquis*, drawings of human poses, still lives, and landscapes using watercolors and oil paints. In their third year, dressed human *croquis* were added, and students had to create watercolor pieces of historical subjects. In their fourth year, students drew every kind of subject matter including figures, still lives, and decorative compositions.

Year	Class	Assignment
Preparatory	plaster cast (charcoal), copy (charcoal)	charcoal
First year	plaster cast (charcoal), human drawing (charcoal), still life (pencil, watercolor, oil painting), landscape (pencil, watercolor, painting)	start creating oil painting work, start creating human body sketch (charcoal)
Second year	human body (charcoal, oil painting), human body <i>croquis</i> (pencil), still life (watercolor, oil painting), landscape (watercolor,	oil painting

	oil painting)	
Third year	human body <i>croquis</i> (pencil), human body (watercolor), still life (watercolor), landscape (oil painting), historical subject (watercolor)	historical subject painting
Fourth year	human body <i>croquis</i> (pencil), human body (watercolor), still life (watercolor), landscape (oil painting), historical subject (watercolor), graduation work	graduation work

Table 2. Subjects of practice class at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts³⁰

Students were evaluated by competitions three times a year. Kuroda wrote the “Draft of Western Art Department Competition Regulations” in 1904, which formed the foundation of these competitions.³¹ The table below shows the department’s training and competition.

	number of competitions	Subject
Entrance exam	first term, 1/year	plaster cast sketch (charcoal)
First exam	first, second term, 2/year	plaster cast sketch (charcoal), landscape sketch (pencil)
Second exam	first, third term, 2/year	human body sketch (charcoal), figure sketch (pencil), still life (watercolor)
Third exam	second term, 1/year	human head (oil painting), landscape (watercolor), preparation of assignment (pencil)
Fourth exam	second term, 1/year	human body (oil painting), still life (oil painting), preparation of assignment

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū: Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō ryūgakusei shiryō* (Tokyo, Japan: Yumani Shobō, 2009), 23-24.

		(charcoal)
Fifth exam	third term, 1/year	dressed human body (oil painting), landscape (oil painting), assignment (oil painting)

Table 3. Exams (competition) of practical training class at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts³²

As seen in the tables above, oil painting was regarded as the quintessence of Western painting. It could be completed only after mastering other techniques. Depicting the human body through basic sketches and complex drawings was a fundamental part of the course.

Kuroda articulated his values in determining the Western art department's curriculum in his article, "Art School and Western Painting" (*Kyoto bijutsukai zashi* Vol. 49 (June, 1896)), which he wrote right before being appointed to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Kuroda highlighted the importance of the sketch. In the institutional regulations of private art education institution, Tenshin Dōjō (天真道場), where Kuroda worked in 1894, he defined practice as "copying plaster casts and copying the human body (塑像臨寫活人臨寫)." He regarded mimetic sketching based on the objects' accurate depiction as the basic element of Western art. This is why Kuroda rigorously taught drawing, and did not allow students to sketch absentmindedly.³³

Another important class was nude study and anatomy. Nudes comprise one of the most long-standing subjects in Western art, and became canonized through a long tradition. In classical Western art, the nude is seen as a presentation of aesthetic ideals

³² Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 24.

³³ Yisozaki Yasuhiko and Yoshida Chizuko, *Tokyō bijutsu gakkō no rekishi*, 75.

based on Humanism, with being nude distinctly demarcated from being “naked.”

Considering the nude genre in Western art, art historian Kenneth Clark has argued:

To be naked is to be deprived of our clothes, and the word implies some of the embarrassment most of us feel in that condition. The word “nude”, on the other hand, carries, in educated usage, no uncomfortable overtone. The vague image it projects into the mind is not of a huddled and defenseless body, but of a balanced, prosperous, and confident body: the body re-formed.³⁴

Following Clark’s definition, the nude embodies aesthetic meaning by cultural consensus and education.³⁵ However, in Asian countries which had long adhered to Confucian tradition, the concept of nudes did not exist, so presenting the “naked body” was restricted, and seen as immoral.³⁶ For Japanese artists at that time, drawing live nude models was unprecedented, and nude painting was criticized for being immoral.³⁷ In spite of this conservatism, Kuroda still regarded nude painting as a critical part of education. Kuroda’s *Morning Toilette* (朝妝) (Fig. 4), which was accepted in the Salon Nationale de

³⁴ Kenneth Clark, *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form*, (NY: New York Pantheon Books, 1956), 3.

³⁵ According to Clark, conceptualization of the “nude” as a genre was established in the eighteenth century. Nude painting was accompanied by European imperialism and colonization. European powers coined the “nude” to make naked people in uncivilized countries understand naked bodies as art. As an art, “nude” was differentiated with “naked body,” which implied barbarism. Therefore, “nude” was the index of culture and civilization after the modern period. It reflected educational efforts to not regard nude as pornography.

³⁶ Satō Dōshin, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State: The Politics of Beauty*, 264.

³⁷ Traditionally in East Asian culture, works corresponding with the concept of the nude in Western culture did not exist prior to the Meiji period. The recognition of the human body as a suitable subject for art was introduced by Western culture. Even then, there was misunderstanding and societal resistance by viewers at large.

Beaux-Arts in 1893, sparked a fierce dispute over nude painting.³⁸ It received a positive reaction in France, but the reaction in Japan was the complete opposite, as seen when Kuroda won second prize the following year with the same painting in the Encouragement of Industry Exposition (勸業博覧会/*Kangyō Hakurankai*). The public abhorred the idea of publicly displaying a nude as art and it elicited a strong negative reaction.³⁹ In response to this criticism, Kuroda wrote a letter to his friend, Kume Keiichiro (久米桂一郎, 1866-1934):

If exhibiting nude painting is not permitted, research on the human body becomes impossible for Japanese people, which poses a serious problem...it is not reasonable to regard nude painting as an obscene image. Nude painting poses nothing harmful in terms of not only general aesthetics of the world, but also future Japanese art. Nude painting should be promoted...In any case, I am ready to share my fate with the painting...⁴⁰

Kuroda's belief regarding nude paintings as a critical part of Western-style art was not influenced by the general perception of nudity in art at that time, and he believed that introducing the nude painting into Japanese art would raise the status of Japanese art internationally.

³⁸ *Morning Toilette* was criticized for being too radical and too self-indulgent to serve national ends, that is, to enlighten and elevate the sensibility of the Japanese audience. Alice Y. Tseng, "Kuroda Seiki's *Morning Toilette* on Exhibition in Modern Kyoto," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 90, No. 3 (Sep., 2008), 417.

³⁹ In response to Kuroda's nude painting, *Nihonshinbun* ran an article about the exposition on April 14th of 1895: "The model exposes the genital area and stands completely naked. The painting is displayed in the prime location at the exhibition. It lures people to see this painting. ... If this painting is published in a catalogue or a newspaper, it will be a total demoralization."

⁴⁰ Kuroda Seiki, "Kume Keiichiro ate shokan," *Kaiga no shūrai* in Yisozaki Yasuhiko and Yoshida Chizuko, *Tokyo bijutsu gakko no rekishi*, 73.



Figure 4. Kuroda Seiki, *Morning Toilette* (朝妝), 1893. Oil on canvas image: 178.5 x 98 cm.
Destroyed by a fire in World War II
photograph provided by the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo
(From *Remaking Tradition: Modern Art of Japan from the Tokyo National Museum*, 20.)

Kuroda maintained his opinion that nude painting was vital to learning Western-style art and emphasized the importance of nude painting's aesthetics. Kuroda continued creating nude paintings, such as *Wisdom, Impression, Sentiment* (智・感・情) (Fig. 5).

This triptych presents the idealized proportions of the human body, and was used as a model for other *Bunten* artists' nude paintings. The models for this triptych appear to be Japanese, however, the proportions of the bodies are different from the actual proportions of Japanese people at the time.⁴¹ Instead of highlighting verisimilitude, Kuroda tried to suggest a standard of idealized beauty for the human body. The title itself shows what Kuroda considered the goal of painting. Unlike his titles describing the subject matter or the story of the scene, Kuroda gave this painting an abstract title. For Kuroda, painting should not only express idealized aesthetics, but also embody abstract concepts. Three figures in each section have different poses and different expressions even though the faces have more subtle differences in comparison to the bodies. In *Impression* (Fig. 5, middle), the model stands straight with her hands pointing upward as if she is experiencing all five senses concurrently. In *Sentiment* (Fig. 5, left) and *Wisdom* (Fig. 5, right), both models put a hand on their heads, but the meaning behind the gesture is not the same. With tangled hair, an anxious face, and drooped shoulders, the figure in *Sentiment* expresses anxiety. The figure in *Wisdom*, with restrained hands and face, shows intelligence.

The genre of Representational painting, which represents abstract themes using the human body, was highly developed in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, and Kuroda also was greatly influenced by this genre. The pioneers of modern Japanese art, including Kuroda Seiki, emulated adapted exemplary paintings from earlier periods of Western art. However, Kuroda did not just imitate and borrow his artistic

⁴¹ Compared to Gonegai Yoshikiyo's research on Japanese people's body size, the models in *Wisdom*, *Impression*, *Sentiment* show taller height and longer legs than the real Japanese female's average size. Yamanashi Emiko, "Kuroda Seiki Ilbon ui nabureul eottoekkae guerilgeotinga," *Misulsa nondan* Vol.22 (2006), 231-232.

philosophies and ideas from Western art. Kuroda's work shows how the exemplary methods of Western-style art can depict Japanese subjects.

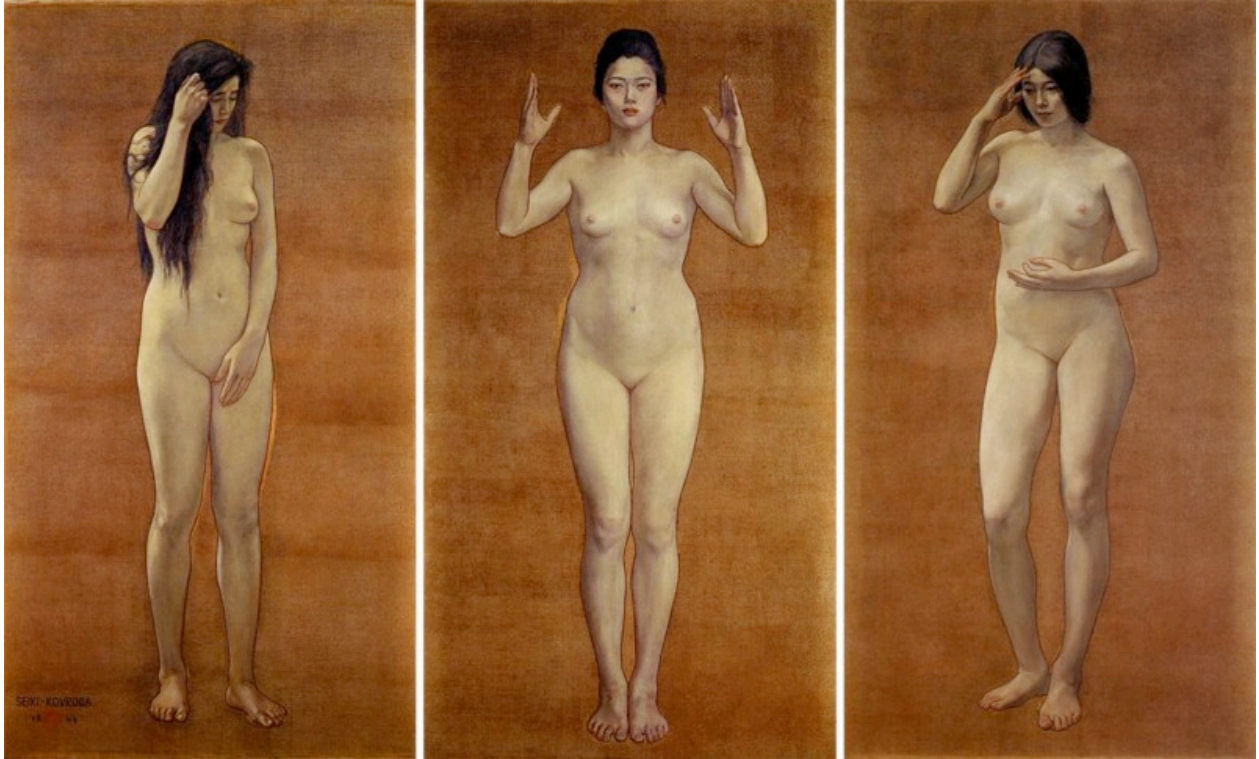


Figure 5. Kuroda Seiki, *Wisdom-Impression-Sentiment* (智・感・情), 1897-1899. Triptych, Oil on canvas image: 180.6 x 99.8 cm, Tokyo National Museum. (From National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo. <http://www.tobunken.go.jp/kuroda/gallery/english/tikanjo01.html>)

Kuroda's dedication to nude painting was reflected by the curriculum at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. From the second year onward, students could draw nude sketches in charcoal, and in the third year, they started painting nudes in oil. Despite the conservative atmosphere and high cost of hiring models, the school hired female nude models from the first day of classes. (Fig. 6) To understand the human body more thoroughly, the school had an anatomy class. Anatomy class was comprised of not only theoretical lectures but also practical training that allowed students to touch the skin and

muscles of cadavers. As students Shirataki Ikunosuke (白滝幾之助, 1873-1960) and Kobayashi Mango remembered, “We could not eat anything because the smell of the cadaver never left from our noses.”⁴²



Figure 6. Nude painting class at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts
(From *Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha*)

Besides nude painting, self-portraiture became a set genre within the system at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Every student had to submit a self-portrait and additional graduation work after finishing the curriculum mentioned above. Influenced by the upholding of the human body as the standard of beauty in Western academic art, the school considered figure painting the main criteria for the evaluation of students' technical skills. Although there are some records of artists drawing a portrait of themselves in traditional Asian art, self-portraits did not constitute a notable genre in East

⁴² Yisozaki Yasuhiko and Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 78.

Asia.⁴³ Self-portraits emerged as an independent genre with the widespread acceptance of Western art. Figure painting was a main part of Western art because of its emphasis on humanism, and the self-portrait functions as a way to investigate the identity of the artist.

Self-portraiture developed rapidly in Asia after the Tokyo School of Fine Arts mandated that students draw self-portraits as a requirement for graduation. Considering that the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was the most prominent art institution in Asia, it is no exaggeration to say that the Tokyo School of Fine Arts established self-portraiture as an important genre in Asia. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts designated students' fourth year as a graduation work year and provided expenses for their graduation pieces. Starting from the self-portraits by graduates Kita Renzō (北蓮藏) and Shirataki Ikunosuke in 1898, every graduate from the Western painting department has been required to submit their self-portraits to the school.

Kuroda regarded self-portraiture as an interesting genre. During his stay in Europe, he visited the Netherlands several times to copy Rembrandt's self-portraits. In the letters Kuroda sent to his mother in 1888 and 1889, he told her about his experiences copying Rembrandt's paintings.⁴⁴ *Portrait of a Man with Feathered Beret* (Fig. 7) by

⁴³ In terms of Chinese traditional self-portrait, refer to Zang Shen, *Zhongguohuashi yanjiu* (Taiwan: Zhengzhongjukan, 1959), 14-21; Taniguchi Tetsuo, "Chugoku no zagazo," *Toyō bijutsu ronko* (Chu'o koron bijutsu shuppan, 1973), 9-26; Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits 1600-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1922); James Cahill, "Ren Xiong and His Self-portrait," *Ars Orientalis* (1995), 119-132; "Self-portraiture was not unknown in Japanese painting before the advent of yōga. But although various artists in Japan painted images of themselves sporadically since the thirteenth century, there was no established genre encouraging artists to peer at mirror-reflections of themselves and endow themselves with "strong flesh at the ready.'" Bert Winther-Tamaki, *Maximum Embodiment—Yōga, the Western Painting of Japan, 1912-1955* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 26.

⁴⁴ Noguchi Reiichi, "Karikyuramu toshitenō jigazo to sono henmō," at the Museum of Tokyo University of Arts, *Yōga no seishun gunzō: yōga no sotsugyō sakusei to zagazō* (Tokyo, Japan: NHK, 2002), 7.

Kuroda in 1889 is actually a copy of Rembrandt's 1637 *Self-portrait in a Plumed Hat* (Fig.8). Kuroda considered Rembrandt as the master of self-portraiture, so he copied these European paintings as models. Comparing Kuroda's painting to Rembrandt's, it is obvious that Kuroda emulated not only the general composition, but also the color scheme and shading of Rembrandt's work. By copying these self-portraits, Kuroda felt the significance of depicting man as subject matter, gaining an understanding of Western culture's underlying idea that man is the center of all.



Figure 7. Kuroda Seiki, *Portrait of a Man with Feathered Beret*, 1889, Oil on canvas: 62.5 x 46cm. The Museum of Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan
(From The University Art Museum, Tokyo University of the Arts,
http://jmapps.ne.jp/geidai/det.html?data_id=4723)

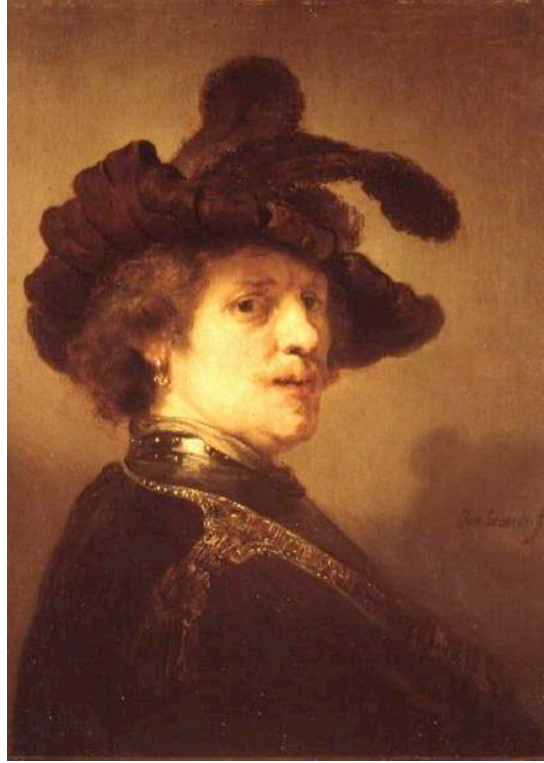


Figure 8. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Portrait of a Man in a Plumed Hat*, 1637, Oil on panel image: 62.5 x 47 cm. Mauritshuis Netherland. (From Mauritshuis, <https://www.mauritshuis.nl/en/explore/the-collection/artworks/tronie-of-a-man-with-a-feathered-beret-149/detailgegevens/>)

Although it is not entirely clear why Kuroda made self-portraits a graduation requirement, this system made Japanese artists familiar with the techniques of self-portraiture. Self-portraiture has advantages in terms of its accessibility because artists become their own models. It is easy to master depicting the human face. In addition to that, artists could find their identities in the process of drawing self-portraits. Discovering one's self-identity had not been a point of focus in Asian culture, which puts more emphasis on a collective harmonious society. At the beginning of the early twentieth century, most self-portraits lacked creative expression of the artists' personal identities. The artists were more focused on rendering techniques they learned in school. It was

from the 1910s on that self-portraits started to develop as a means of showing artists' unique personalities. In Japan, the genre of the self-portrait developed in the stable societal atmosphere of the Taishō period (1912-1926) in tandem with a new trend in literature that highlighted the individual, and the new Western-influenced concept of modern artists.⁴⁵ Although implanting the concept of humanism into his student's minds did not succeed when Kuroda first introduced self-portraiture, the self-portrait system contributed to helping the artists of later generations find their individuality.

The system that Kuroda established influenced students at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts including Li Shutong and Go Hui-dong, who would go on to impact modern art in China and Korea. These artists were influenced by the Tokyo School of Fine Arts' system. They accepted the visions of Western art introduced by Japanese artists, so the development of Western art and art education in China and Korea underwent processes similar to those in Japan. The complicated political relationships that China and Korea had with Japan led to different reactions to Western-style painting.

⁴⁵ The literary magazine White Birch (*Shirakaba*), famous for its emphasis on humanism and individualism, played a significant role in the development of self-portraiture in Japan. It introduced diverse trends from Western art and also published art criticism emphasizing the artist's goal of self-discovery. The magazine reproduced many paintings, especially figure paintings.

CHAPTER III

WESTERN ART AS A TOOL OF REFORMATION—LI SHUTONG’S EARLY PAINTING

In 2013, the museum of China’s Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA), one of China’s most prominent art schools, held a remarkable exhibition entitled *Long-Lasting Fragrance—Study on Li Shutong’s Oil Paintings*.⁴⁶ This exhibition featured Li Shutong’s forgotten oil painting *Half-Naked Woman* (半裸女像), a painting that had been discovered in 2011. *Half-Naked Woman*, presumed to date to 1909, is thought to be significant because it is likely the first nude painting created in China. The CAFA Museum displayed Li’s *Half-Naked Woman* once again at *The Temperature of History—CAFA and Chinese Representational Oil Paintings [sic]* (歷史的溫度—中央美術學院與中國具象油畫).⁴⁷ In the five divisions of the exhibition, *Half-Naked Woman* appeared in the first section “Eastern Enlightenment 1900-1949 (新學啓蒙 1900-1949).”⁴⁸ The paintings in “Eastern Enlightenment” depicted people and traditions from the Qing dynasty in oil painting alongside paintings representing completely new genres like nudes and landscape paintings created using single point perspective. Li Shutong’s *Half-Naked Woman* showed the dramatic difference between old and new, East and West.

⁴⁶ “CAFA Museum” <http://museum.cafa.com.cn/en/exhibitions/long%20lasting%20fragrance/text>

⁴⁷ “CAFA Museum” <http://museum.cafa.com.cn/en/exhibitions/oilpainting/text>

⁴⁸ The exhibition *The Temperature of History* was comprised of five sections: Eastern Enlightenment 1900-1949 (新學啓蒙 1900-1949); National Narrative 1949-1976 (國家敘事 1949-1976); Artistic Essence 1977-1999 (本體精研 1977-1999); Contemporary Concerns 2000-2014 (當代關切 2000-2014); Foreign Representational Oil Paintings and the Replicas in CAFA Collection (中央美術學院藏外國油畫原作與研摹作品).

As the title of the exhibition implies, Li Shutong's painting played an important role in Chinese modern art within its historical context.

Li Shutong, also known as Great Master Hongyi (弘一大師, *Hongyi dashi*), was one of the pioneers of Chinese modern art. He was a versatile artist and monk who greatly influenced painting, calligraphy, seal carving, music, theater, and Buddhism. Li studied Western art at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Li entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and studied Western art in 1906, ten years after Kuroda Seiki created the Western painting department. According to school records, a student named Huang Fuzhou (黃輔周) is recorded as the first Chinese student in the Western painting department, one year before Li Shutong entered.⁴⁹ Two other students entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts along with Li Shutong in 1906: Zeng Yannian (曾延年 also known as Zeng Xiaogu (曾孝谷, 1873-1937)) in the Western painting department and Tan Yisun (談誼孫) in the sculpture department. The artistic achievement of Huang Fuzhou is unclear as Huang did not graduate from the school. Zeng Yannian concentrated more on theater rather than fine art, becoming a trendsetter in modern Chinese theater. Although Li Shutong became a Buddhist monk in 1918, focusing on calligraphy and religious activities rather than art, Li showed great talent in Western art and taught Western art after he returned to China. Also, Li Shutong was the first Chinese national to graduate from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts' Western painting department, so it is important to

⁴⁹ Detailed information about Huang Fuzhou is unknown. In December 15th, 1905, the magazine *Art News (Meishu xinbao)* reports that Huang Fuzhou was from Zhili province, 22 years old, learned art with the White Horse Society, and was good at Japanese. Liu Xiaolu. "Li Shutong zai dongjing meishu xuexiao," *Hangzhou shifan xueyuan xuebao* Vol. 1 (1998), 47.

examine Li's works to explore how Japanese-style Western art education impacted Chinese art and how China adopted Western art in the early Republican era.⁵⁰

Before examining Li's paintings, it is necessary to understand why Li decided to study Western art in Japan. Li Shutong was born in Tianjin province in 1880 to a wealthy merchant family as the child of a concubine. Li received a good education that allowed him to cultivate his artistic interest. He studied the Chinese classics from childhood, and was especially interested in calligraphy and epigraphy. Li was aware of the crisis created by the foreign invasion of China and the corruption of the Qing government. Some reformers sought national salvation in all aspects of society, and the mood was ripe for revolution.

Li Shutong was also a keen follower of the reform movement. He was persecuted on suspicion of being a revolutionary because he engraved a seal with "South Sea Mr. Kang is my teacher (南海康君是吾師)." Mr. Kang, Kang Youwei (康有為, 1858-1927), was one of the leaders of the Hundred Day's Reform movement in 1898. Kang argued that Chinese art should be reformed, arguing that pursuing Western should be the basis for building a powerful country, which would then enable Chinese to find wrongs that contradict with the Chinese tradition; and, informing others to follow my method and learning to adjust accordingly is the way to stay independent from others.⁵¹ National art reforms were considered to be closely tied to the salvation and enlightenment of China,

⁵⁰ Li Shutong is recorded in the list of graduates as Li An. There were forty-two graduates in the Western painting department. Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hyakunenshi kanko yiyinkai ed. *Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunenshi* Vol. 2, 484.

⁵¹ Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), 79-82.

part of the reformation and revolution, and tied to science and democracy.⁵² Li Shutong was deeply influenced by this idea of art as a part of cultural reform. This seal symbolized Li's support for revolutionaries like Kang.

Li Shutong moved from Tianjin to Shanghai in 1898 to avoid persecution by conservatives. In the late nineteenth century, Shanghai became the most culturally rich city in China due to its geography. After Li Shutong moved to Shanghai, he was able to interact with many artists. Li organized the Shanghai Calligraphy Society (上海書畫工會) and submitted calligraphy and seal engravings to the weekly calligraphy magazine published by the newspaper *Zhongwai Daily* (中外日報).⁵³ During his time in Shanghai, Li was fully engaged in traditional Chinese art.

As a part of its cultural reformation, China dispatched students abroad to study modernization and Japan was the most popular destination for young scholars.⁵⁴ There were reasons that many students chose Japan. After China witnessed Japan's successful modernization during the Meiji Restoration, Eastern Studies (東學), which aimed to study Japanese modernization, flourished as a counterpart of Western Studies (西學) which aimed to study Western science and knowledge.⁵⁵ Japan had advantages for

⁵² Pan Kongkai, *Zijue yu sidazhuyi—Zhongguo xiandai meishu zhilu* (Beijing, China: Peking University Press, 2012), 224.

⁵³ Li Shusheng, “Jungguk geundae misul ui sunguja Li sukdong,” *Misulsanondan*, Vol. 6 (1998), 288.

⁵⁴ The Chinese students who studied abroad were 1,300 in 1903, 2,400 in 1904, 8,500 in 1905, 13,000 in 1906. The number of students in modernized schools were 1,013,000 in 1907, 1,284,000 in 1908, and 1,626,000 in 1909. Lü Peng, *Ershi shiji zhongguo yishushi* (Beijing, China: Peking University Press, 2009), 69.

⁵⁵ Tian Shou, *Hongyidashide qianshijinsheng* (Beijing, China: Dongfang Chubanshe, 2009), 92.

Chinese students because Japan also used Chinese characters (Ch. 汉字, J. 漢字/*kanji*). The languages of Japan and Korea were influenced by Chinese, and have long shared Chinese characters in their languages.⁵⁶ Because each Chinese character connotes meanings, it is possible for Chinese students to understand the general meaning of Japanese language written in *kanji*; therefore Chinese students often felt a sense of intimacy toward Japan in terms of language and culture, in contrast to the West.⁵⁷ There is also the practical fact that expenses in Japan were cheaper compared to Europe.

Many Chinese students went to Japan to study a variety of subjects, including Western cultural systems, politics, laws, and culture. Li Shutong had personal contact with Japanese people and the culture before he decided to go to Japan. In 1901 while staying in Tianjin, Li met Japanese people from the Red Cross and exchanged Chinese poems with them, leading him to have a favorable impression of Japan.⁵⁸ Li learned Japanese language from reformist educator Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培, 1868-1940) when he studied in Nanyang School (南洋公學) from 1901 to 1903, translating Japanese law books.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Charles Holcombe defines sharing Chinese characters in Sino-sphere as “*Kanji* sphere.” Charles Holcombe, *The Genesis of East Asia 221 B.C.-A.D.907* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001), 60-77.

⁵⁷ Japan was believed by Chinese to be close to China in customs and history. Kuiyi Shen, “The Japanese Impact on the Construction of Chinese Art History as a Modern Field—A Case Study of Teng Gu and Fu Baoshi,” in Fogel, Joshua A., ed., *The Role of Japan in Modern Chinese Art* (Los Angeles, California: The Regents of the University of California, 2012), 229.

⁵⁸ Tian Shou, *Hongyidashide qianshijinsheng*, 92.

⁵⁹ Wang Yong, *Zhongwai meishu jialiushi* (Beijing, China: China Youth Press, 2013), 154.

The reason why Li Shutong decided to study Western art instead of politics or law can be traced to his connections in Zhili province. When Yuan Shikai (袁世凱, 1859-1916) established the Zhili Craft Office (直隸工藝總局) in 1903, he invited experts from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts to Zhili, and Zhili officials visited the Tokyo School of Fine Arts to observe their art education system.⁶⁰ Among the delegation were Li's former calligraphy teacher Zhao Yuanli (趙元禮, 1868-1939) and an educator named Yan Xiu (嚴修, 1860-1929) who was acquainted with Li's father. In the spring of 1905, five months before Li went to Tokyo, Li's mother passed away.⁶¹ At the funeral, Li ran into Yan Xiu and learned about the Tokyo School of Fine Arts.⁶² With his mother's death, Li was heartbroken and changed his name into Li Ai (李哀) which means sorrow. Li then decided to go to Tokyo to overcome his grief.⁶³ Li's decision to go to Tokyo was not only personal. Before he departed, Li composed the poem *Farewell to Motherland* (留別祖國) to bid farewell to China.

... Although I startled the world with my writing when I was twenty, what
is

⁶⁰ Zhang Yanli, "Li Shutong liuri santi," *Journal of Hangzhou Teachers College*, Vol. 2 (1999), 50-51; Zhili province sent a delegation of 9 people on September 22nd 1904, and continuously dispatched further delegations for the next four years: 3 people in September 1905, 1 person in October 1905, 3 people in November 1906, 2 people in January 1907, and 2 people in February 1908. Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 36-44.

⁶¹ Li's mother had a significant meaning to Li's life. Li said that "the happiest time in my life was when I was twenty to twenty-six years old. I was so sad between twenty-six years old and before becoming a monk." Li's mother passed away when he was twenty-six years old, and Li started painting to overcome his sorrow. Dou Yongli, ed., *Li Shutong—Hongyi Fashi* (Tianjin, China: Tianjin Guji Chubanshe, 1988), 10.

⁶² Zhang Yanli, "Li Shutong liuri santi," 51.

⁶³ Li Shusheng, "Jungguk geundae misul ui sunguja Li sukdong," 288.

remaining now? I can hear a little blue dragon is roaring in a small box.
Lonely wind noise and worries keep me awake –is there anyone to
understand my desire to savage my people?
How dare I forsake my motherland.

二十文章驚海內，畢竟空談何有。聽匣底，蒼龍狂吼。
長夜淒風眠不得，度群生，哪惜心肝剖。是祖國，忍辜負。⁶⁴

Li Shutong decided to study Western art during this period of personal and national turmoil because he saw Western art as a tool of modernization to increase national prosperity. Li Shutong had passion and a sense of duty to reform China with art like Kang Youwei argued.

When Li Shutong decided to study in Japan, he changed his name again to Li An (李岸) which means waterside or gigantic to express his artistic ambitions in Japan.⁶⁵

Between the time Li arrived in Tokyo and was accepted into the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Li submitted art-related articles to the monthly magazine *Awaken Lion* (醒獅) edited by Chinese student Gao Tianmei (高天梅, 1877-1925). In *Awaken Lion* vol. 3 from December 1905, Li wrote the articles “Practice of Drawing (圖畫修得法)” and “Summary of Watercolor Painting (水彩畫法說略).” These articles were written before he received any Japanese art education, they show that Li Shutong already had a certain level of art understanding and knowledge. A postcard featuring a watercolor landscape

⁶⁴ Xi Lingxia, *Hongyidashi Lishutongde shige rensheng* (Jilin, China: Jilin Chuban jituan youxian zeren gongsi, 2011), 103.

⁶⁵ According to the register list at the Tokyo School of Fine Art, Li Shutong is registered under the name of Li An. Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha kanko yiyinkai ed., *Tokyo geijutsu daigaku hayakunensha* Vol. 2, 468.

painting by Li, which he sent to his friend Xu Yaoting (徐耀廷), also demonstrates the artist's watercolor painting skills.⁶⁶

Li Shutong's art philosophy can be understood in his writings. To Li, art did not only carry aesthetic value, but he also saw it as means of restoring China's waning power. "Practice of Drawing (圖畫修得法)" consists of three chapters with a brief history of Chinese art, and it refers to Japanese scholars Matsuda and Kakiyama. The chapters are "Effectiveness of drawing (圖畫之效力)," "Types of drawing (圖畫之種類)," and "Introduction to free hand drawing (自在畫概說)."⁶⁷ Li analyzed art through social development theory. "As society developed and ideology became complicated, the relationship between the meaning and signs became intimate. ... The societal role of art is not limited to entertainment, but art can supplement the insufficiency of letters."⁶⁸ Li also related drawing to the expositions held by European countries to argue that drawing has a direct relationship with science and therefore, with national power. Li believed that high technical drawing would inspire knowledge and morality.⁶⁹

In the second chapter, "Types of drawings," Li categorized drawing as free hand drawing (自在畫) and technical drawing (用器畫). It is interesting that Li divided free hand drawing into Japanese painting and Western painting, but he applied different

⁶⁶ Qin Qiming, *Hongyidashi Li Shutong Shuxinji* (Xi'an, China: Shanxi renmin chunabshe, 1991), 85-86.

⁶⁷ Guo Changhai and Guo Junhui eds., *Li Shutong ji* (Tianjin, China: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 2006), 25-34.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 25-27.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

standards for the two categories: Japanese painting is classified by style, such as the Tosa School (土佐派), Kano School (狩野派), and Ukiyo School (浮世派), while Western painting is categorized by the media, like pencil drawing, ink drawing, watercolor painting, and oil painting.⁷⁰ Li Shutong tried to understand contemporary art trends, but this essay showed that Li was still confused about basic art knowledge, like the distinction between style and materials. Despite these minor drawbacks, his writings played a significant role in disseminating Western art in China.

In addition to writing about art, Li also wrote about music and literature. In the preface to *Music Small Magazine* (音樂小雜誌), Li applied similar ideas toward music, which reflected his belief that the arts could change the world. Li thought music could cultivate people and promote morality, so music served an immeasurable benefit to society.⁷¹ Li also explained the importance of the Chinese language by giving examples of Japanese language in his article in 1905.⁷² For Li, the motivation of learning foreign culture was to illuminate and identify Chinese culture.

Unlike other Chinese and Korean students who were sent by the government, Li Shutong studied at his own expense.⁷³ Li Shutong was acquainted with many Japanese officials from Zhili province and he received a recommendation from a former professor in drawing department of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Matsunaga Chōzaburō (松長長

⁷⁰ Ibid., 28.

⁷¹ Ibid., 40-41.

⁷² Tian Shou, *Hongyidashide qianshijinsheng*, 93.

⁷³ Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 145.

三郎). It was probably not difficult to apply for a government grant to study abroad, but Li completed the program on his own. Li lived a relatively affluent life in Tokyo. The October 4th 1906 issue of Japanese newspaper *People's News* (國民新聞) published an interview with Li Shutong titled “A man from Qing bears aspiration of Western art (清國人志於洋畫).” The interview describes Li Shutong’s Western-style two-story house with many paintings, books, and even piano.⁷⁴ Compared to many Chinese students who lived in cheap boarding houses, Li lived like a nobleman.⁷⁵ Li’s choice to go to Japan was not due to financial issues; Li intentionally decided to go to Japan because he wanted learn the process of how Japan accepted Western culture and modernized. With such financial stability, Li could concentrate on artistic pursuits without worry, and he was more passionate than the students sent by the government.

Li Shutong left behind very few oil paintings. Li painted oil paintings mainly during and right after he studied in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. Li Shutong submitted several oil paintings to the White Horse Society Exhibitions. First at the 12th exhibition held in April and May 1909, Li submitted *Relaxed Playing* (停琴). At the 13th exhibition in 1910, he submitted three paintings, *Morning* (朝), *Still Life* (靜物), and *Day* (晝).⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ke Wenhui, *Kuangshifanfu–Hongyidazhuan* (Beijing, China: Beijing University Press, 2010), 63-65.

⁷⁵ From Zhou Zuoren’s memoir, 5 people lived together and everyone paid 7 yen per month. Li’s financial condition was far better than other Chinese students. Tian Shou, *Hongyidashide qianshijinsheng*, 115.

⁷⁶ Li Shutong submitted these paintings with the name of Li An. *Ketsusei hyakunen kinen Hakubakai meiji yōga no shinfū*, 233-250.

Sadly none of them are extant today.⁷⁷ When Li Shutong became a Buddhist monk, he gave away his paintings to friends and students, and many of them have disappeared. Among the few that still exist, *Self-portrait* and *Half-naked Woman* are Li Shutong's most representative oil paintings.

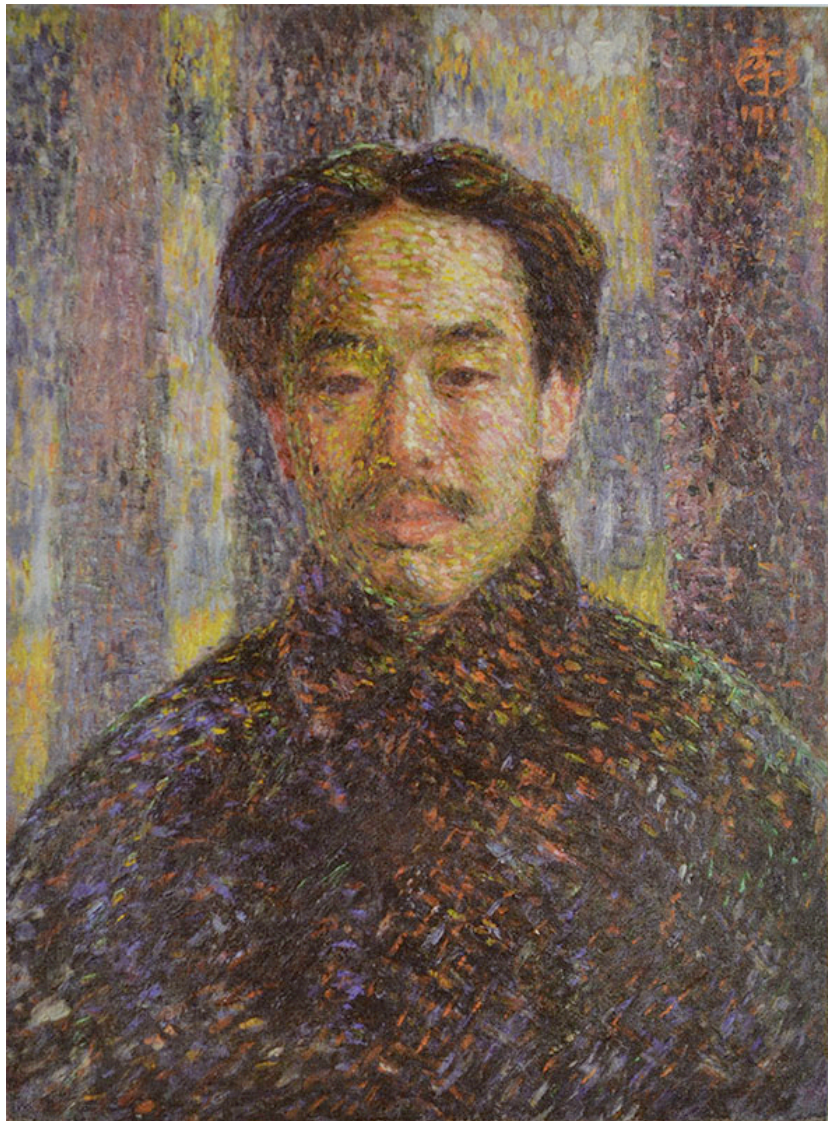


Figure 9. Li Shutong, *Self-portrait*, 1911. Oil on canvas, 60.6 x 45.5 cm.
Tokyo: Tokyo National University of Fine Arts.
(From *Geidaisei no Jigazō*)

⁷⁷ Chen Xing, *Zhihuideng—Hongyidashi yanjiu lungao* (Beijing, China: Zhongguo shehui kexue c hubanshe, 2013), 36.

Li Shutong created *Self-portrait* (Fig. 9) in 1911 as his graduation project. Staring at the front, Li stands in front of a forest wearing a black school uniform. His hair is parted in the middle and he has mustache. There are no clues that give away his nationality in his painting. Li kept his Chinese queue until 1905 right before he went to Japan, but in the self-portrait he has short hair. Liu Xiaolu argues that cutting the Chinese queue represents Li's anti-Qing ideology, but it is more feasible to think that Li is trying to portray himself as a modern intellectual.⁷⁸ Li's face is expressionless, and conveys sorrow through his reddish nose and cheeks, making him look as if he had just cried, reminiscent of his assumed name, Li Ai (sorrow).

In the background there are trees and yellowish grass. The weather is not apparent, but yellow and pink color palette gives sense of warmth. Unlike most other students who had mono-colored or interior backgrounds, Li painted nature. Because most classes were held inside, there is a very small possibility that Li painted *Self-portrait* outside the painting studio in school. Li intentionally associates himself with nature. Among the trees, Li's black clothes assimilate with nature and maximize his calm yet troubled state of mind. Combining landscape and figure shows what he learned effectively.

In *Self-portrait*, Li uses short brushstrokes similar to pointillism, creating a piece that becomes more about applying short brushstrokes than realistic description. The overall color tone of Li's self-portrait is darker than most of Kuroda Seiki's works, but Li added bright colors such as red, blue, orange, and green on the black uniform, which makes up more than one third of the canvas. Kuroda was referred as belonging to the

⁷⁸ Liu Xiaolu, "Li Shutong zai dongjing meishu xuexiao," 195.

“violet school” for using bright colors in his paintings, a technique he learned from Kuroda. Also, the color of the background is similar to Kuroda’s landscape paintings such as *At Bréhat* (Fig.1). A reporter of *People’s News* described Li’s room in the article “A man from Qing bears aspiration of Western art” writing that Li displayed many of Kuroda’s oil paintings in his room. Li modeled his own paintings after Kuroda’s style. Li’s *Self-portrait* is very different from Chinese late Qing oil paintings. Verisimilitude was popular in the Qing court, influenced by artists from Europe including Giuseppe Castiglione (郎世寧, 1688-1766).⁷⁹ Because China adopted Western painting as a science, “close resemblance to the subject” (寫真) was the primary goal.⁸⁰ Li’s painting suggested another way: painting to express ambience, air, and light.

Self-portrait still shows his background in traditional Chinese art. In the right upper corner, Li signed in Chinese inside a cartouche with the year in red ink. Many Western-style painters signed their names using the Roman alphabet, but Li intentionally signed his name in Chinese.⁸¹ Since he was twelve years old, Li Shutong was interested in calligraphy and seal engraving.⁸² The shape and color of Li’s signature in *Self-portrait* is very similar to the seals used to sign Chinese traditional painting and calligraphy.

⁷⁹ Lü Peng, *20 shiji zhongguo yishushi* (Beijing, China: Peking University Press, 2009), 21.

⁸⁰ Satō Dōshin, *Modern Japanese Art and the Meiji State*, 238.

⁸¹ According to Li Shutong’s son Li Duan “...an oil painting depicting a Japanese woman, there was the signature L at the corner of the painting. I suppose that the signature L is from his last name and the model is his Japanese wife whom my father brought from Japan to Shanghai.” Like this, in other oil paintings by Li Shutong, he signed in Roman letters. Ke Wenhui, *Kuangshifanfu–Hongyidazhuan*, 63.

⁸² Ke Wenhui, *Kuangshifanfu–Hongyidazhuan*, 13-17.

Although this self-portrait was created to demonstrate what he learned at the Tokyo School of Fine Art, Li tried to reflect his personal history, identity and inclination toward traditional Chinese art.

As previously mentioned, *A Half-naked Woman* (Fig. 10) was discovered at the CAFA Museum inventory in 2011. The CAFA Museum has estimated that this painting dates to 1909, when Li Shutong was in his fourth year at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. The title and exact creation date is unclear, but this painting was painted around the time Li studied in Tokyo. The magazine *Aesthetic Education* (美育) published this painting with the title of *Woman* (女) in their first issue in April 20th, 1920, *Research of Art* (美術研究) printed this painting under the name *Naked Woman* (裸女) in 1959.



Figure 10. Li Shutong, *A Half-Naked Woman* (半裸女像), 1909. Oil on canvas, 91 x 116.5 cm.
China Central Academy of Fine Arts.

(From CAFA Art Museum,
http://photo.cafa.com.cn/Uploads/KindEditorUpload/KindEditorUploadImages/20140218/20140218094950_1043.jpg)

A woman is sitting on the chair with the upper half of her body naked. She looks like she has just drifted off to sleep, still holding a fan in the right hand. Although the window is not depicted in the painting, from the shadow on her body, it can be said that the light is coming from the left side of the painting. Depicting women beside windows was a popular theme among Japanese painters in the early twentieth century. In 1891 Kuroda Seiki painted a woman reading a book by the window, in *Reading* (読書) (Fig. 11), and Fujishima Takeji (藤島武二, 1867-1943), also a professor at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, painted a woman making flowers by the window, *Artificial Flowers* (造花) (Fig. 12), in 1901. Because Kuroda put emphasis on demonstration of the change in light, a model sitting by the window was an effective way to depict the explicit light and shadow. This painting by Li is faithful to Kuroda Seiki's two principles of painting: the accurate depiction of the human body and demonstration of the change in light.



Figure 11. Kuroda Seiki, *Reading* (読書), 1891. Oil on canvas, 98.2 x 78.8 cm.
National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.
(From National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo
http://www.tobunken.go.jp/materials/wp-content/pics/k_work/oil/images/A-10937.jpg)



Figure 12. Fujishima Takeji, *Artificial Flowers* (造花), 1901. Oil on canvas: 136.5 x 194.0 cm, Art Museum, Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. (From Hakubakai, 59)

The model in *A Half-naked Woman* appears to have just fallen asleep and is hanging her head slightly to the side with her neck relaxed. By looking at the right hand holding a fan and left hand resting, we can see how Li deeply understood the contraction and relaxation of human muscle. The blanket covering the model's legs helps keep the viewer's eye on the model's upper body. Although the model is mainly in the left side of the painting, Li balanced the painting by placing a table and a vase on the right side. Li is trying to present her tiredness and laziness in accordance with the traditional spirit of Chinese art, which is aimed at expressing the painter's inner thoughts and values.

This painting utilizes dark tones, such as the earthy brown of the background and the red of the blanket on the model's lap. Here, the artist mainly uses black to create shadows, unlike in his *Self-portrait*, which used yellow and orange in addition to black to shade his face. This use of shading shows that this painting is at an early stage of Li's oil painting education. Compared to *Self-portrait*, this painting has a softer texture, though the color gradation of the model's skin is not smooth. But when he depicts the pillow that the model is leaning on, he uses a similar technique that he uses in the *Self-portrait*, short brushstroke with various colors. (Fig. 13) Li's *A Half-naked Woman* and *Self-portrait* show different stylistic expressions, revealing Li's attempt to experiment with various techniques and skills.

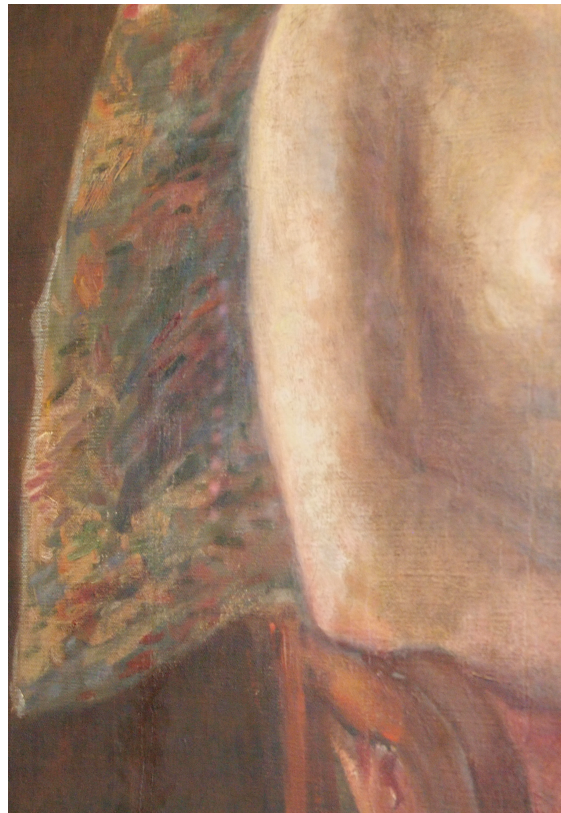


Figure 13. Li Shutong, *A Half-Naked Woman* (part)
(photograph by the author)

The period when Li Shutong studied Western art and began teaching art was a time of reformation for China. The civil service examination system was repealed in 1905, and modernized educational institutions were rapidly established all over China.⁸³ An exponential number of teachers were in demand, so China established schools of education to meet the demand. Zhejiang Secondary Normal School (浙江兩級師範學校) and Nanjing High Normal School (南京高等師範學校) specialized in training teachers. Elementary and middle schools had drawing, craft, and music classes. *Book of Watercolor* (水彩畫冊) and *Book of Pencil Drawing* (鉛筆畫冊) published by Youqing Publishing (友情出版社) and Shangwu Publishing (商務印書館) became the basic textbooks for students.

When Li started teaching drawing and craft in Zhejiang Secondary Normal School, he organized classes that taught sketching, oil painting, watercolor, drawing, and Western art history. He also started a system of art education that included studio and outdoor sketching. Li installed a dormer window in the studio and had students draw plaster casts and live models.⁸⁴ Unlike the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Li hired male nude models, but this was still innovative in China. These are the many revolutionary changes to art education that Li brought to China from Japan.

⁸³ Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen, “The Japanese Impact on the Republican World: The Construction of Chinese Art History as a Modern Field,” *Twentieth Century China*, Vol. 32, No. 1, (Nov., 2016), 4-6.

⁸⁴ According to Wu Mengfei (吳夢非, 1893-1979), “In the class by Li Shutong, he first taught sketch. We sketched plaster cast and still life, and learned model sketch from 1914. We had our class not only in the studio but also outside. West Lake (西湖) was one of our outdoor studios.” Wu Mengfei, “Wusi yundong qianhoude meishu jiaoyu huiyi pianduan” *Research Art (Meishu yanjiu)* Vol. 3 (1959), 42. Recitation from Pan Gongkai, *Zijue yu sidazhuyi—Zhongguo xiandai meishu zhilu*, 263.

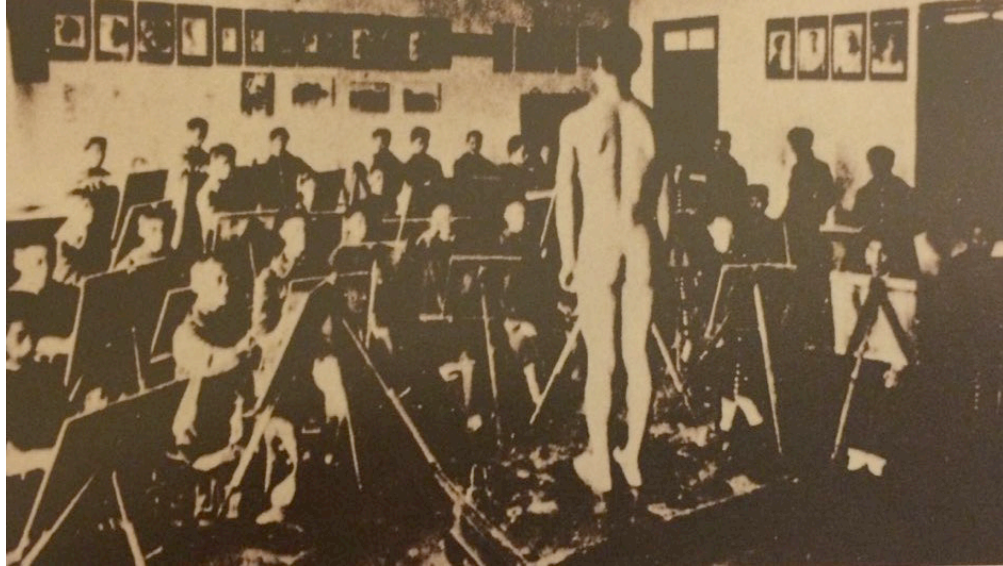


Figure 14. Painting class in Zhejiang Secondary Normal School in 1913.
(From *Zhongguo yishu biannianshi*, 129)

Li Shutong taught his students based on what he learned in Japan, but Li still developed his own ideas about art. Li Shutong thought that “intelligence and refinement go first, and art is second.” This means no matter how outstanding an artist is in technique, if the artist does not have intelligence and refinement, the art is worthless.⁸⁵ It shows how Li kept the perspective of traditional Chinese art even after he learned Western art. For Li Shutong, the purpose of learning Western art was to develop Chinese culture and define Chinese art in the process of comparing it to Western art. In his conversation with Shen Benqian (沈本千, 1903-?) in 1918, Li shows his understanding of Chinese art and how it differs from Western art:

Portraying spirit is important in Chinese art, while describing form is important in Western art. Because of differences in cultural tradition, materials, style, technique, ideology, form, and content are all different. Chinese art always put emphasis on presenting subjective psychology when depicting daily life, which is called (depicting meaning) *xieyi*.

⁸⁵ Li Shusheng, “Jungguk geundae misul ui sunguja Li sukdong,” 294.

Western art pursues accuracy on the basis of realism. Line is the main element of Chinese art while Western art focuses more on creating the overall atmosphere.⁸⁶

Li Shutong clearly understood these main differences between Chinese and Western art, but he wanted to merge both Chinese and Western art together. *Self-portrait* and *A Half-naked Woman* both show accurate depictions of the subject while also showing the abstract meaning behind them such as his identity, history, and feelings in *Self-portrait*, and the model's tiredness and tranquility in *A Half-naked Woman*. However, the major distinction between Chinese traditional art and Western traditional art could be characterized by the respective privileging of expressing spirit and realistic mimesis. Eventually, Li realized the limitations of presenting his spirit or intention through Western styles. After becoming a monk, Li ceased creating oil paintings, and focused solely on calligraphy as a direct expression of spirit.

⁸⁶ Tian Shou, *Hongyidashide qianshijinsheng*, 100-101.

CHAPTER IV
REPRESENTED IDENTITIES OF EARLY WESTERN-STYLE PAINTERS IN
KOREA

In recent years, Go Hui-dong has been discussed with ambivalence. Go is often praised as the father of Western-style painting in Korea, but he is also criticized for using art as an escape from the turbulent reality caused by Japanese colonization because there is a lack of historical consciousness in his pieces.⁸⁷ Kim Gwan-ho who studied Western art at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts one year after Go, came into the spotlight in the 1920s, but Kim did not receive much recognition in art history until the 1980s because he worked in North Korea and did not leave many publically available paintings. These artists' paintings are worthy of examination as they reflect the history of the period.

Korea had a turbulent modern period, and unlike Japan, the nation did not modernize by its own will. Because Western art was accepted in Korea by way of Japan, it is natural that art in Korea in the modern period embraced Japanese reinterpretations of Western art. This art did not necessarily take Korea's political situation and people's perspectives into account. The early Korean Western-art painters were criticized because they merely accepted Western art indiscriminately through Japan without any serious consideration. Go and Kim's Western-style paintings, in particular their self-portraits and nudes, reveal the artists' fraught navigations between individual and national identities. These paintings reflect the complicated realities of Japanese-occupied Korea, raising

⁸⁷ Kim Yun-su, "Chungok Go Huidonggwa shinmisul yundong," *Changjakgwa bipyeong* Vol. 8 No. 4, Changbi (1971.12), 1018.

issues such as the freedoms afforded by studying in Japan and the shifting role of the modern artist in Korean society.

The Tokyo School of Fine Arts played a significant role in establishing Western art not only in Japan but also in Korea. The Korean artists who studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in the 1910s were the first to introduce Western art into Korea.⁸⁸ Beginning with Go Hui-dong's graduation in 1915, forty-six Korean students graduated from the Western painting department over the next thirty-three years. Most artists in Korea learned Western art from Japan, not from Europe, due to similar economic and political reasons that led Chinese students to Japan. Korea had a much more complicated relationship with Japan than China after Japan annexed Korea in 1911. Go Hui-dong said he did not go to France but to Japan to learn Western art due to financial reasons.⁸⁹ Tuition and living expenses were relatively moderate in Japan compared to Europe, and the Japanese government's influence over post-Joseon period culture made Korean students consider Japan a place for learning new culture. There were two admission systems for the Tokyo School of Fine Arts: admissions for the regular program (本科) and the selective program (選科).⁹⁰ Korean students entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts as international students until 1929, so they could enroll in the selective program, which was easier than the regular course. These factors led many Korean students to

⁸⁸ In the late Joseon period, envoys to China first learned about Western art through missionaries. There also are records of foreign artists who resided in Korea during the Joseon Period, such as American artist Hubert Vos (1855-1935) and English artist Henry Savage-Landor. Kim Yeong-na, *20 segi Hangku Misul* (Seoul, Korea: Yekyeong, 1998), 19-20.

⁸⁹ Oh Gwang-su, "Seoyanghwa baeknyun," *Misulpyeondan* Vol. 96 (Spring, 2010), 50.

⁹⁰ Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 11-18.

study at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, but there is also the fact that the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was the only public institutionalized art school in Asia in the early twentieth century. The early stage of Western-style painting in Korea was influenced by the system of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts directly. Because of this influence, it is necessary to examine Korean artists who studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts to trace how Korea adopted Western-style painting from Japan.

The motivation for studying Western art can be seen in Go Hui-dong's personal history. Go Hui-dong's family background deeply informed his interest in Western culture.⁹¹ Go's father, Go Yeong-chul (高永喆), held the positions of Governor of Gowon in Ham-kyeong province and Bonghwa in Gyeong-sang province. Appreciating art and literature was considered virtuous among the literati class in the Joseon period, and Go's father was no exception. With Go's father's interest in art, Go's family was exposed to foreign culture. Go's father served as a Chinese translator, so he often traveled to China. In China, he learned English, and visited the United States as an inspector in 1882.⁹² Through his experience, he recognized the importance of learning foreign languages.⁹³ Under his father's recommendation, Go Hui-dong went to Hanseong French School (漢城法語學校/한성법어학교) where he learned French for four years. Go was

⁹¹ Go Hui-dong's family belonged to the Jeju Go clan which was one of the most successful *jungin* (中人) class. *Jungin* literally means middle people, which was the social class between the elite class, *yangban* and ordinary people. Although they ranked not the top, *jungin* played a pivotal role in Korean enlightenment. Detailed information about *jungin* and Jeju Go, see Hwang Kyung Moon, *Beyond Birth: Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), Chapter 3.

⁹² Hwang Kyung Moon, *Beyond Birth—Social Status in the Emergence of Modern Korea*, 72-73.

⁹³ Choi Ilok, *Salaseoneun gojeon, jukeosoenuen yeoksa* (Seoul, Korea: Clover, 2015), 38.

first exposed to Western painting through Leopold Remion, a friend of Go's French teacher Emile Martel. Go was inspired by Remion's sketch of Martel and became interested in Western painting.⁹⁴ After graduating from Hanseong French School, Go served as an official and translator at a Korean Empire (1897-1910) court. At the same time, Go aspired to be an artist, so he started learning painting under traditional Korean painters An Jung-sik (安中植, 1861-1919) and Jo Seok-jin (趙錫晉, 1853-1920).⁹⁵ Go soon grew frustrated by imitating Chinese masterworks. In February 1909, Go suddenly left for Japan to study Western art.⁹⁶ As the artist described in the *Seoul Newspaper* (서울신문) in 1954:

I was suddenly inclined to learn Western painting. I had attended French schools and spent some time with French people. I had seen Western-style painting at that time. Although I was eager to learn Western art, I could not find a way to learn Western art (in Korea). Going to France was more difficult than climbing up to the sky at that time. I decided to go to the school in Japan's Ueno park as the second best plan, and consulted with an acquaintance who had a relationship with Japan. I could not speak Japanese, so I started to learn Japanese as fast as I could.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ "The first person I met in person was French Remion. He was painting on pottery. I often observed that he sketched human figures in charcoal which was so clear. From then, I had kept company with him, stimulated by him, and finally I went to Tokyo." Go Hui-dong, "Sinmunhwa deuleoodun ddae," *Jogwang*, 1941. 6.

⁹⁵ "I studied paintings under Simjun [An Jung-sik] and Solim [Jo Seok-jin]. Suddenly, I changed my mind to study Western art. Therefore, three years after I started learning painting from two teachers, when forty six years before now, I departed to Tokyo alone." Go Hui-dong, "Nawa Joseon hyeophoe sidae," *Sinchunji*, 1954, 2.

⁹⁶ Kim Lan-gi, *Urinara cheochoeui seoyanghwaga, Chungok Go Hui-dong* (Seoul, Korea: Editor, 2014), 27.

⁹⁷ Go Hui-dong, "Yeonye chunilyahwa 22," *Seoul sinmun*, Seoul sinmunsa, 1954. 3.11.

The acquaintance Go mentioned above was probably Go Hui-dong's uncle, Go Yeong-hee (高永喜, 1849-1916), who was a pro-Japanese official. Go Yeong-hee's son Go Hui-kyung (高義敬, 1873-1934) was staying in Japan accompanied by King Yeongchin (英親王, 1897-1970), the son of King Gojong (高宗, 1852-1919). Most of the international students at that time went to Japan to learn law or politics but Go went to Tokyo to study Western art. Creating Western art was far from being recognized as a successful career in Korean culture, which had a long tradition of regarding painters as lower class when compared to the literati.⁹⁸ It is difficult to say whether Go already subscribed to the Modern concept of the artist, which is detached from the concept of distinguishing classes. The year when Go moved to Japan was a year before Japan annexed Korea. Joseon renamed themselves the Korean Empire to show their independence in 1897. The Japanese interference in Korean domestic affairs increased in the 1900s. Go went to Japan as an official representing the Korean Empire and was supported by the Korean Imperial government, charged with the mission of learning new modern culture. There is a possibility that the Japanese government influenced Go's decision to study Western art, but the Korean Empire realized the necessity of learning Western art as China did and dispatched Go Hui-dong to Japan.

⁹⁸ Burglind Jungmann, *Painters as Envoys: Korean Inspiration in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Nanga* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 25-45.



Figure 15. “The First Western-style Painter,” *Maeil sinbo*, 1915. 3.11.

Go entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts as the first Korean student studying Western painting and completed the selective program, and returned to Korea in 1915. When he came back to Korea, the daily newspaper in Korea *Maeil sinbo* (매일신보/Daily News) introduced Go as “the first Western-style painter” with his graduation project *Sisters* (자매).⁹⁹ (Fig. 15) *Maeil sinbo* was a daily newspaper established in 1910 and supervised by the Japanese Government-General of Korea, with the purpose of promoting the colonialist “Japan and Korea are One (內鮮一體)” policy. *Maeil sinbo* was the only Korean language published daily paper in Korea before 1920s, and it played a pivotal role in controlling public opinion. Considering the philosophy

⁹⁹ *Maeil sinbo*, 1915. 3. 11.

behind *Maeil sinbo*, Go's article supports Japan's desire to showcase their superior education system that produced the first Western-style artist in Korea.

Despite his reputation as the first Western-style artist, Go left only a few oil paintings because he began creating traditional Korean paintings in the mid- to late 1920s. It is easy to assume that Go Hui-dong switched to traditional Korean painting because of his lack of firm identity as an artist and the lack of public interest and critical acclaim for Western art. In the 1920s, Koreans were still ignorant of Western art. In the memoirs of Go, he mentioned the general public's response to Western art when he just returned to Korea.

The international students in Tokyo were less than a hundred. They were breathing the new air and were immersed in new studies. But some of them ridiculed me going to art school. One of my acquaintances even said "the situation we are in makes us not to learn art." When I came back to my country and went out with carrying my sketch box, people regarded me as a taffy seller, some of my friends said "I will not learn that kind of thing by spending a lot of money in foreign country and investing efforts. Why do I learn that disrespectful thing, that plaster, that ointment-like, or poultry waste-like thing."¹⁰⁰

As a government official, Go always had a relatively high social standing. His desire for pioneering a new kind of art was beyond the appreciation of his contemporaries. Art was regarded as extravagant when Korea lost sovereignty, and the general public was unprepared for accepting new art. This social climate likely influenced Go's interest in Western art, so he changed his path to work on traditional art that was familiar to the public. Go himself said he was "bored painting within this

¹⁰⁰ Go Hui-dong, "Nawa Joseon hyeophoe sidae."

atmosphere so I just idled away.”¹⁰¹ After that, Go left his legacy more as an educator and administrator.

Like Go Hui-dong, most Korean artists who were able to study in Japan in this period were from wealthy families. Kim Gwan-ho was born in a prestigious family in Pyeongyang. Kim first went to Japan for the purpose of learning engineering, but he switched to a fine art major with his father’s support. Kim entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1911, two years after Go’s entrance. In terms of financial and administrative support, Kim received a scholarship from the Japanese Government-General of Korea when he studied in Tokyo.¹⁰² Go and Kim had a two-year gap between them, but Go entered the school with a Korean Empire nationality while Kim was a colonial citizen. The Meiji government policy of supporting Western art also affected Korea from the 1910s onwards, and the art school accepted Korean students to showcase their cultural superiority while Japan had intentions to invade Korea.

In the 1910s, the average number of students in the Tokyo School of Fine Arts’ Western painting department was thirty to forty, and there were only two international students, including one Chinese student.¹⁰³ Despite being minorities in the class, Go and Kim had close relationships with their professor, Kuroda Seiki. Go’s name appeared in Kuroda’s diary three times:

May, 19th, 1913, “Two Korean Go [Hui-dong] and Kim [Gwan-ho] came.”

¹⁰¹ Go Hui-dong, “Sinmunhwa deuleoodun ddae.”

¹⁰² Kim Young-na, *20 segiui Hangku Misul*, (Seoul, Korea: Yekyoung, 1998), 67.

¹⁰³ In 1909 in the Western painting department, there was one Chinese student and one Korean student (Go Hui-dong), in 1911, there were also one Chinese student and one Korean Student (Kim Gwan-ho). Yoshida Chizuko, *Kindai Higashi Ajia bijutsu ryūgakusei no kenkyū*, 20-21.

June 4th, 1915, “Joseon student Go visited me.”

April 3rd, 1915, “Joseon graduate Go Hui-dong came to Japan for parting.”¹⁰⁴

According to Kuroda’s diary, very few people, like professors or members of the White Horse Society, were allowed to visit Kuroda’s house. Allowing Go, especially as he was an international student, to visit his house shows how close Kuroda and Go’s relationship was. Go and Kim respected not only Kuroda’s personality but also his art.

Go Hui-dong painted three self-portraits during his lifetime: his graduation piece, *Self-portrait with Hat* (Fig. 16), which is kept in the collection of the Tokyo University of Fine Arts (previous the Tokyo School of Fine Arts), *Self-portrait with Overcoat* (Fig. 17), and *Self-portrait with a Fan* (Fig. 18), displayed in National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Korea. It is widely accepted that *Self-portrait with Overcoat* is the first self-portrait oil painting created in Korea.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Kuroda Seiki, “Kuroda Seiki dairy,” database of National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo.

¹⁰⁵ There is a controversy over which is the first self-portrait oil painting in Korea among the *Self-portrait with Hat*, *Self-portrait with Overcoat* and *Self-portrait with a Fan*, because there are no dates on *Self-portrait with Overcoat*. Looking at the brush work in *Self-portrait with Overcoat*, it is more immature than other two. *Self-portrait with Overcoat* is considered to be painted before Go’s graduation, and *Self-portrait with a Fan* was painted after Go graduated and returned to Korea. Oh Gwang-su, “Seoyanghwa baeknyun,” *Misulpyeongdan* Vol. 96 (Spring, 2010), 52.



Figure 16. Go Hui-dong, *Self-portrait with Hat*, 1915. Oil on canvas, 73 x 53.5cm.
Tokyo: Tokyo National University of Fine Arts.
(From *A Retrospective Exhibition of Ko Hui-dong*, 33.)



Figure 17. Go Hui-dong, *Self-portrait with Overcoat*, 1909. Oil on canvas, 45.8 x 33.5cm.
Gwacheon: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea.
(From *A Retrospective Exhibition of Ko Hui-dong*, 35.)

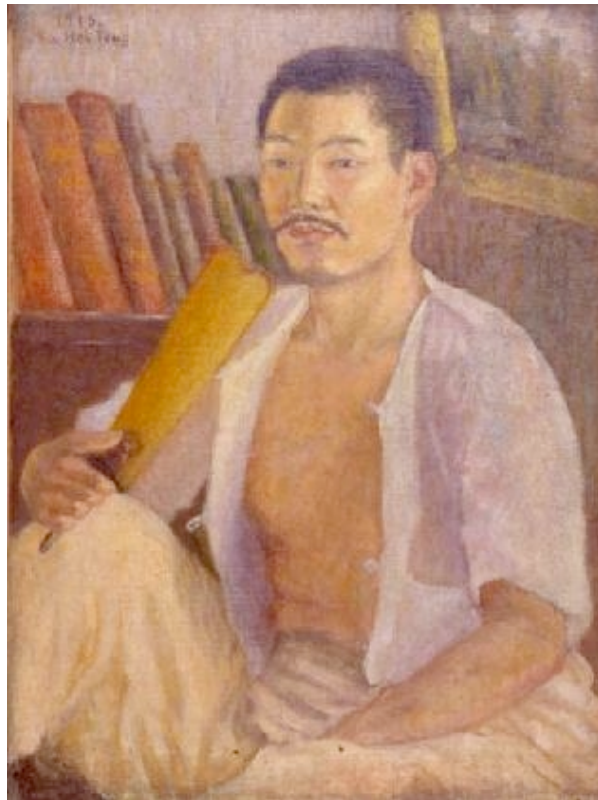


Figure 18. Go Hui-dong, *Self-portrait with Fan*, 1915. Oil on canvas, 60.8 x 45.5 cm.
Gwacheon: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea.
(From *A Retrospective Exhibition of Ko Hui-dong*, 10.)

In all three self-portraits, Go wears traditional Korean garments. Since Go wore traditional attire throughout his life, this is not a particularly interesting fact. However, the clothing and hat he is wearing in the graduation painting do represent how he identified himself among the Japanese students. Against a bright gray background, Go is wearing a blue colored overcoat and *jeongjagwan* – the traditional official hat of nobility in the Joseon period. With a front-facing pose and tight-lipped expression, he exudes sobriety. In Joseon period, married men had topknot, and literati class men wore hat on the topknot. At the year when Go painted *Self-portrait with Hat*, Go already had his topknot cut, however, he is still wearing traditional *jeongjagwan* to reminisce his glorious time, like the photo he took when he was in sixteen years old. (Fig. 19)



Figure 19. Go Hui-dong in Sixteen Years Old, 1901.
(From *A Retrospective Exhibition of Ko Hui-dong*, 134.)

In the other students' self-portraits in the 1910s, there are three main categories of attire: Western styles worn to represent themselves as modern intellectuals, school uniforms to show social identities, and *kimono* worn to represent their national consciousness.¹⁰⁶ Wearing *kimono* by Japanese students implied that Romanticism had enhanced the national literary consciousness that began to emerge in late 1880s Japan.¹⁰⁷ Amidst this climate, Go deliberately presented himself as a historical subject that preserved his Korean national identity even while he was residing in Japan.

Go was dispatched to learn Western art as a government official from Korea in 1909, but he had lost his nation by the time he graduated. Lamenting the loss of the nation, Go felt a responsibility to learn Western art as his mission, so he explicitly presented himself as a typical Korean official in the painting. Some scholars have criticized Go Hui-dong's self-portrait for embodying the pre-modern idea of a nobleman and lacking an artist's self-identity.¹⁰⁸ Go had tremendous responsibilities as the first Western-style artist in Korea; he considered himself to be the representative of the nation, making national identity equivalent to self-identity. In addition to presenting his dual identity, Go also tried to show his social class by wearing the hat. Although Go had an inferiority complex about Korea's powerlessness, he expressed his social superiority over his Japanese classmates.

Compared to *Self-portrait with Overcoat*, *Self-portrait with Hat* employs a lighter color palette, and presents more skilled color variation to create light effects. Although

¹⁰⁶ Atsunori Kawamura. *Geidaisei no Jigāsō* (Tokyo, Japan: NHK Shūbban, 2007)

¹⁰⁷ Lee Gu-yeol, *Geundae Hanguk Misul Nonchong* (Seoul, Korea: Hakgojae), 141.

¹⁰⁸ Yoon Beom-mo, "1910 nyeondae seoyang hoehwa suyonggwa jakgausik," *Misulsahak yeongu*, Vol. 203 (1994. 9), 126-127.

Go learned to paint before he went to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, he painted monochrome ink works that were totally different from what he learned in Japan. Prior to school, Go did not understand how to depict objects accurately or use colors and light effects. Go remembers when he first met Kuroda Seiki:

At that time, I did not have any fundamental knowledge about the art. I just believed that everything would be fine after I entered the school. On the first day, there were about twenty students in preparatory class. They sketched plaster casts with charcoal. I had never seen that, never even heard about that. When I was watching them, one teacher [Kuroda Seiki] came to me... The teacher asked me which part of the plaster cast is the darkest and which part is brightest. I did not know how to answer. The teacher explained to me that the part where it received the light directly is the brightest, and the part where it reflected light is the second brightest, and there is the dark outline between those parts. After I learned to distinguish them, I could start drawing a charcoal sketch, and another one... From then on, I practiced to figure out the refraction, chiaroscuro, and transformation of form of the objects.¹⁰⁹

Go learned about using colors from the school's curriculum, and tried to demonstrate what he learned through his paintings. Considering the more obvious outlines, coarse brushwork and chiaroscuro, it is reasonable to assume that *Self-portrait with Overcoat* was indeed Go's first self-portrait.¹¹⁰

Self-portrait with Fan depicts the artist in more casual settings. This painting was painted in the summer of 1915, after Go returned to Korea. There is the artist's signature "Ko. Hei Tong" and the year "1915" on the left corner. He is wearing an open ramie fabric shirt and holding a fan in his hand. Unbuttoned shirts were not decent to the literati class, but he is sitting in a comfortable position not like a conservative noble man in

¹⁰⁹ Choi Illok, *Sal'aseoneun gojeon, juk'eosoenuen yeoksa*, 56.

¹¹⁰ The contention about Go's *Self-portrait with Overcoat*, refer to Joan Kee, "Contemporary Art in Early Colonial Korea: The Self Portraits of Ko Hui-dong" *Art History* Vol. 36 (2013), 397.

Joseon period. There are some clues to draw assumptions about his identity in the background. The books in the back are winding in Western-style, so viewers can assume that the contents of the books might be from the West. Also, there is an oil painting hanging on the right side which can define him as an artist or intellectual with Western knowledge. With the Roman alphabet signature, these factors can define him as a modern and Westernized intellectual rather than solemn official in his graduation self-portrait.

On the other hand, Kim Gwan-ho's *Self-portrait* (Fig. 20) presents his identity in a different way. In this painting, Kim is wearing a black fur hat and overcoat over a brown-toned background. Kim is presenting himself as a modern intellectual with a sophisticated fashion sense. Go and Kim both show their social status, but whereas Go puts more emphasis on his social class and national identity, Kim highlights his wealth and sense of modernity as bourgeois.

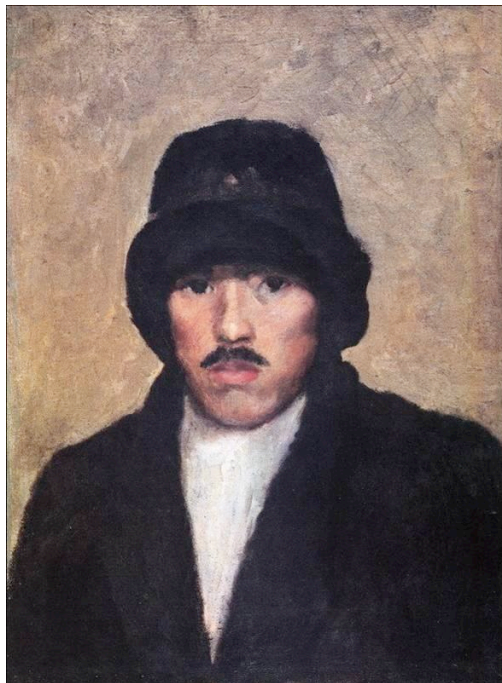


Figure 20. Kim Gwan-ho, *Self-portrait*, 1916. Oil on canvas, 73 x 53.5 cm.
Tokyo: Tokyo National University of Fine Arts.
(From *Geidaisei no Jigazō*)

Nude paintings were first introduced in Korea in the 1910s by Kim Gwan-ho. It can be assumed that Go Hui-dong, the first Western painting artist in Korea, painted the first Western-style nude painting when he attended the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, but none of Go's nude paintings put on public display. The first known nude painting in Korea was Kim Gwan-ho's *Sunset* (해질녘) (Fig. 21), which won the first place prize in the Tokyo School of Fine Art's Western painting department when it was submitted as a graduation requirement in 1916.



Figure 21. Kim Gwan-ho, *At Sunset* (해질녘), 1916, Oil on canvas, 127.5 x 127.5 cm.
Tokyo: Tokyo National University of Fine Arts.
(From *20 segiui Hangku Misul*, 116.)

The daily newspaper in Korea, *Maeil shinbo*, published the article about Kim Gwan-ho's success.

[Kim Gwan-ho is] Twenty-seven years old for this year. [Kim] Graduated from the middle school in Kyeong-sung [presently Seoul], went to Japan seven years ago, studied in Meiji School for the first two years, and entered the Tokyo School of Fine Arts at the third year... *Sunset* depicts two naked women facing backward, and this painting was chosen as the best piece among the 95 pieces of all graduate works. When I visited his house, a tall gentlemen wearing navy school uniform welcomed me. He is a handsome, charming young man. [He] Went to Tokyo to study engineering, but his uncle opposed, which allowed him to study art.¹¹¹

After winning the first place prize, *Sunset* was selected to be included in *Bunten*.

The Korean newspaper *Maeil sinbo* advertised Kim Gwan-ho's success again with an excited tone. Lee Gwang-su (李光洙, 1892-1950), a Korean writer who studied in Tokyo and was friends with Kim Gwan-ho wrote in an article about *Bunten*:

I heard female students say the painting by Joseon and looked at it. It was *Sunset* by Kim Gwan-ho which depicts women take bath in Daedong river's sunset. Oh, Mr. Kim Gwan-ho, I appreciate. ... I appreciate that you outstand your artistic talent in the world on behalf of Joseon people.¹¹²

Lee Gwang-su admired Kim's artistic success and was proud that Joseon had such a great artist. In the same year, *Maeil sinbo* also published Go Hui-dong's painting for the fifth anniversary of Japan's annexation of Korea. Japan promoted the hegemony of Pan-Asianism which promoted the concept of One Asia (in this case, Japan) that would expand its power over all Asian countries. The Japanese Government-General of Korea

¹¹¹ *Maeil Sinbo*, 1916. 4. 2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

executed assimilation policies in Korea to consolidate Korea for Japan, and the successful achievements of Korean artists who studied “advanced culture” in Japan were the right source for propaganda. The Japanese Government-General of Korea showcased their support and achievements in art by showing Kim and Go’s paintings. It illustrated how Japan was leading other Asian countries even in culture.¹¹³

In *Sunset*, two females are bathing nude, turned away from the viewer and revealing their backs.¹¹⁴ The background is Neungra-do, near Kim’s hometown of Pyeongyang. The backs of nudes started to be popular in paintings in Europe beginning in the eighteenth century.¹¹⁵ During the Italian Renaissance, paintings of nudes tended to focus on the waist rather than other body parts due to their belief that the rhythm of the body start at the waist.¹¹⁶ In *Sunset*, two women have different curves of bodies based on their different poses and energy imposed on their waist. The two women’s different poses lead to different light effects that can be accomplished in the depiction of the bodies.

Sunset embodies the standard aesthetics of nude painting promoted by Kuroda Seiki and his followers. The nude as seen from behind, which does not allow immoderate exposure of the human body, creates an atmosphere of mystery. The motif of women bathing or combing their hair while standing with their backs to the viewer was a popular

¹¹³ Lee Gu-yeol, “Hanguk geundae hwadangwa Chungok Go Hui-dong,” *Seouldaehakgyo bakmulgwan yeonbo* Vol. 17 (2005), 106.

¹¹⁴ Another example of nude paintings showing the back by Korean artists are Lee Jong-wu’s *Turning Back Naked Woman* and Oh Ji-ho’s *Nude Study* which Oh submitted in the ninth Joseon Exhibition.

¹¹⁵ Venus in the eighteenth century changed in this noticeable way. She often shows her back, comparing herself to other goddesses. Kenneth Clark, *The Nude—A Study in Ideal Form*, 202.

¹¹⁶ Oh Gwang-su, *Hanguk geundae misul sasang note* (Seoul, Korea: Iljisa, 1998), 10.

subject in the late nineteenth century, popularized by artists like Edgar Degas, Paul Gauguin, and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. It was also painted by some early Japanese Western-style artists including Kuroda Seiki and Okada Kenzo who were influenced by late nineteenth century Western artists. Kuroda's *Morning Toilette* (Fig. 4) is one example.¹¹⁷ The poses of the model in Kuroda's *Morning Toilette* and the left model in Kim's *Sunset* are very similar although their arms are posing in different ways. The painting satisfies the principle of Kuroda Seiki's style that combined French Academism and Impressionism with both the accurate depiction of the body and the use of colors based on light.

Kim deliberately chose the time and space of the painting to emphasize the effects of light on the figures, which was the major element of pleinairism. There is a high possibility that the models in Kim's painting were the nude models from the school's practical classes. Hiring models for painting was difficult in Korea due to the absence of recognition about Western painting. Therefore, Kim had to combine the memory from what he practiced in class with a familiar landscape to create idealized painting. In spite of Kim's honorable graduation, *Sunset* was not published in Korean newspapers as it was considered immoral. Publishing nude paintings was also prohibited in *Bunten*, and regulations prohibited any discussions of nude paintings in Korea.

¹¹⁷ Kim Yeong-na, *20 segiui Hangku Misul*, 125.



Figure 22. Kim Gwan-ho, *Lake* (호수), 1923. Oil on canvas, (catalogue image of second Joseon Art Exhibition)

After *Sunset*, Kim created *Lake* (호수) (Fig.22) and submitted it to the Joseon Art Exhibition (朝鮮美術展覽會), which was modeled after *Bunten*. Like *Sunset*, *Lake* could not be openly displayed in public. This regulation continued through the late 1930s, and controversies about nude painting continued after Korea's independence.¹¹⁸ The Joseon Art Exhibition was established by the Japanese Government-General of Korea as part of their cultural policy during colonization.¹¹⁹ The majority of the judges of Joseon Art Exhibition were related to the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, such as Okada Saburōsuke, Nagahara Gotarō, and Gobayashi Mango, so they selected paintings based on the standards of Western-style painting created in the Tokyo School of Fine Art's curriculum.¹²⁰ The Joseon Art Exhibition functioned to reproduce and promote Japanese-

¹¹⁸ Lee Gu-yeol, "Hangukui nude misul 60 nyun," *Hanguk geundae misul sango* (Seoul, Korea: Eulyoo munhwasa), 1972.

¹¹⁹ An Hyun-jung, *Geundae ui sison: Joseon misul jeonlamhoe* (Seoul, Korea: Yihaksa, 2012), 35-41.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

style academic Western art. There were not many nude paintings included, but nude painting was consistently selected in the Joseon Art Exhibition including Kim Gwan-ho's *Lake* and Doda Gazuo's *Naked Woman*.¹²¹ Nude paintings were still regarded as an important genre, but self-directed discussion about nude painting did not occur in Korea because the public did not have any access to them. Nude paintings were categorized as encompassing ethical or moral issues, and often were not even considered as art.

Nude paintings were difficult to accept for Koreans because of a lack of public understanding. Although they could not exhibit nude paintings in publicly, many Korean artists who studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts painted nudes as their graduation works to show they had achieved modernity.¹²² The students who studied Western art in Europe or Japan realized the importance of depicting the human body, but a disjunction between art and public recognition still remained in Korea.

After few years returning back to Korea, Kim Gwan-ho ceased painting. Go Hui-dong worked more as teacher or administrator than artist. Go not only opened private art studio but also taught students at Whimoon High School (徽文高等普通學校). Go also advised artists in Goryeo Art Society (高麗畫會) and organized Calligraphy and Art Society (書畫美術會). When he taught students, Go put emphasis on outdoor sketch and charcoal sketch which he learned in Tokyo.

¹²¹ The number nude paintings selected for the Joseon Art Exhibition was 46. At least one nude painting was accepted in all except the 17th Exhibition. Lee Gu-yeol, *Geundae hanguk misului jeongae* (Seoul, Korea: Yeolhwadang, 1977), 88-89.

¹²² From 1910s to 1940s, nearly half of the Korean students in Western painting department submitted nude paintings as their graduation works including Kim Gwan-ho, Kim Chan-young, Lee Jae-chang, Do sang-bong, Kim Hong-sik, Kang Sang-pil, Song Byeong-don, Oh Ji-ho, Kim Eung-pyo, and so on.

When we paint the Samgak mountain, the mountain not only has the energy of peaks but also changes itself by different energy. In the morning, our feelings assimilate depending on fresh air and spreading light, on the other hand, in the sunset, we should fully express the sunlight and darkened scenery. This is the technique of Western painting.¹²³

Go understood the principle of expressing the light of Impressionism so highlighted outdoor sketch. However, absence of systemized art institution made him difficult to promote Western art to the public.

¹²³ Kim Young-na, *20 segiui hanguk misul 2* (Seoul, Korea: Yekyoung, 2010), 168.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the late nineteenth century, Japan developed Western-style art in part as a means of presenting a new national ideology and in support of an agenda of modernization. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Chinese artists accepted Western-style art as modern art through Japanese academic institutions, simultaneously struggling to maintain an artistic identity linked to Chinese tradition. Korea experienced a schism in its identity and awareness of reality in the Colonial Period. These different historical contexts are reflected in the artists' works. Kuroda Seiki's paintings faithfully present the standard of Japanized Western art. Li Shutong's Western-style paintings present a feeling of loss intermingled with Chinese tradition. Go Hui-dong presented himself as a symbol of Korean nationhood, while Kim Gwan-ho distanced himself from the complexities of his era.

The Tokyo School of Fine Arts established a system of teaching Western-style art that was transplanted by foreign students into their home countries. Beginning in the 1920s in China, the trend of studying Western art in Japan shifted to studying Western art in Europe, so it became possible for Chinese artists to create their own direct interpretations of Western art. Simultaneously, a number of Chinese art schools were founded with oil painting departments based on Western European models. Korea did not establish professional art schools until after the 1950s, and it remained unrealistic for most Korean artists to study art in Europe until later in the twentieth century.

The standards of art and art education developed by Kuroda Seiki at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts had a great impact on establishing models of Western art education. Self-portrait and nude painting comprised new genres that were unprecedented in Asia. After Li Shutong and Go Hui-dong graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and went back to their home countries of China and Korea, respectively, they both eventually returned to traditional art. These two pioneers had a hard time spreading Western art philosophy in their home countries because their countrymen were not open to accepting Western core values, which were seen as contradicting their own traditional values. The core of traditional Asian art has been in its emphasis on expressing spiritual values that are invisible. Although Li and Go learned skills from Western art, they did not fully understand the history and ideology of Western art. As a result, they failed to spread to their own cultures the ideology of Western art. Go believed that Western values could not be coupled with Asian values and he chose to carry on traditional art. Such dilemmas existed throughout late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Asia, where clashing values hindered the process of accepting Western art.

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