

*The Undiscovered Country* is a qualified success because it offers readers a new, comprehensive take on Yanagita and his work, and will force readers to think seriously about re-evaluating them. It will also encourage a reconsideration of what translation entails, and how it both creates and destroys. The book is best suited for academics and graduate students and will be particularly useful to those interested in Yanagita, *minzokugaku*, modern literature, pre- and postwar language education, minority studies and translation studies.

**Matthew W. Shores**  
University of Cambridge

BURGLIND JUNGMANN:

*Pathways to Korean Culture: Paintings of the Joseon Dynasty, 1392–1910.*

392 pp. London: Reaktion Books, 2014. £40. ISBN 978 1 780 23367 3.  
doi:10.1017/S0041977X1500066X

Recent scholarship has opened up exciting and unexpected understandings of the contexts, purposes and standing of the different schools and traditions of Korean painting. The latest generations of Korean art historians have enriched their discipline by drawing on literary, archival and biographical sources to supplement scholarship previously reliant on close examination of works of art. Burglind Jungmann, one of a very small number of art historians of Korea working and teaching outside of the Korean peninsula, has set herself an ambitious task: “to embed art-historical developments into the larger context of political, socio-economic and intellectual developments” (p. 11). It is inevitable that her focus on selected works leads to inadequate treatment of some periods, artists and stylistic developments which are deemed less representative of key cultural and economic trends. To her credit, she brings clarity and balance to her discussion of these choices. The 17-page bibliography also guides readers to a wide range of (predominantly Korean-language) sources. The colour and black-and-white illustrations include many previously unpublished outside Korea. They underpin the narrative well, although the intractable problem of conveying scale and format is frustratingly apparent, for example when a monumental hanging scroll is reproduced side-by-side with an album leaf, giving a misleading impression of equivalence between the two.

The book follows a broadly chronological arc, beginning with Neo-Confucianism and engagement with the philosophical ideals of ancient China, which dominated artists’ practice during the fifteenth century. The place of women as patrons and artists in the Joseon social order is discussed in chapter 3, with a clear-eyed analysis of the plant and insect paintings once attributed to Sin Saimdang (1504–51), mother of the philosopher Yi I, well known in Korea as a paragon of Confucian virtue. Jungmann notes that although none of the works traditionally associated with Sin are authentic, her reputation and position as “ideal Confucian woman” and “mother of the nation” are to a large extent built on an evaluation of “her” paintings (now credibly dated to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century) as embodying the gentle, picturesque qualities that a female artist might possess. The discussion moves on to Korean artists of the “Southern School” during the seventeenth century and then to the great landscape painter, known above all for his Diamond Mountain paintings, Jeong Seon (1676–1759), six of whose works are reproduced; Yun Duseo (1668–1715), best known internationally for the much-reproduced self-portrait,

illus. 54, often regarded as embodying the essential humanism and directness of the best Korean painting; and Jo Yeongseok (1686–1761).

Kim Hongdo (1745–1806) is discussed in two separate contexts, in a bold authorial choice that directly tackles the challenge of categorizing Kim as either professional painter or literatus. Kim worked on court projects, including the famous screen commemorating King Jeongjo's 1795 procession from Seoul to Hwaseong, illus. 97. He is mentioned among court records of artists who carried out royal commissions. Kim also produced work for sale to clients, including a wealthy merchant, Kim Hantae (chapter 13). The author quotes contemporary accounts of Kim Hongdo's personality, residence and major life events to build a picture of a complex, gifted artist whose talents enabled him to overcome his modest social status to achieve success as a virtuoso painter of landscapes, portraits and genre scenes, an artist whose reputation remains unrivalled to this day. Discussion of Kim's remarkable career allows Jungmann to discuss the social interaction between the classes in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and to throw light on Kim Hongdo's accomplishments inside and outside his studio. A discussion of two possible self-portraits by Kim, pl. 120 and 121, offers intriguing speculation about the hidden messages they contain. Seventeen of the entire book's 135 illustrations are of works by Kim Hongdo.

The complex, contested story of "minhwa", decorative painting outside the literati tradition, is related through a careful choice of examples, each subjected to insightful examination (chapter 14). Starting from a short survey of collecting practices, noting the paucity of sources to document what seems to have been a lively market for merchant and middle class patrons and jobbing artists, the discussion moves on to "study screens", which depict books, scrolls and other precious items of the scholars' studio. Here, reference is made to the path-breaking study by Wagner and Black (*Archives of Asian Art*, 1993) that definitively establishes the identity of a court painter who produced an eight-fold screen depicting books and scholarly objects, illus.123. Earlier scholarship had proposed that "study screens" were the work of anonymous craftsmen, suggesting an unbridgeable divide between court and commoner artists. Further discussion of the screens and their relationship to Chinese and European "precious object" paintings offers insight into the reception by Korean scholar-officials of knowledge brought to East Asia by Jesuit European envoys to the Chinese Imperial Court. A marvellous "leopardskin curtain" screen in the collection of the Leeum Samsung Museum, Seoul (a detail is the basis of the dustjacket design, illus. 125) is perceptively analysed. At some point in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, an open curtain rolled back to reveal a scholar's study was painted over two of the screen's panels. Inside, a pair of spectacles can be seen, on top of a book on a messy, crowded desk. The illusionistic effect is an electrifying piece of evidence for contact between Korean artists and the paintings of the European baroque.

This is a valuable, original and accessible overview of a rich and multi-layered artistic tradition that is not well understood outside Korea. The sixteenth-century Zhe school painter Kim Sik is misspelled as Ki Si (p. 72). The printers have awarded themselves an extra credit on page 48, in error. Jeong Seon's "Complete View of the Diamond Mountains" dates to the 1740s, not the 1940s, as stated on p. 143. These careless errors detract from an otherwise thoroughly researched and lucidly argued monograph.

**Beth McKillop**  
Victoria and Albert Museum