

Female Identity in Chinese Art: A Case Study of Pan Yuliang's Self-Portraits

He Ling^{1,2}, Tetriana Binti Ahmed Fauzi^{1*}

¹Department of Fine Art, School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11700, Gelugor, Penang, Malaysia, ²School of Art & Design, Guangzhou College of Commerce, 511363, Guangzhou, China

Corresponding Author Email: 373180006@qq.com

DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v16-i6/28405>

Published Date: 17 June 2026

Abstract

Pan Yuliang's self-portraits provide an important case for examining female identity, the female body, and women's self-representation in modern Chinese visual art. Existing studies on Pan Yuliang have mainly focused on her life experience, artistic style, Chinese–Western painting methods, and female consciousness. However, less attention has been given to how specific visual elements in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits construct female identity. Therefore, this study adopts a qualitative case study approach and visual analysis to examine how female identity is constructed in three selected self-portraits by Pan Yuliang: *Self-Portrait* (1940), *Self-Portrait* (1945), and *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945). The analysis focuses on posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space. The findings show that female identity in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits is not presented as a fixed feminine image. Instead, it is constructed through changing forms of self-representation. In particular, *Self-Portrait* (1940) presents an idealised and culturally refined image of femininity, while *Self-Portrait* (1945) develops a less decorative and self-aware form of female self-representation. *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945) further strengthens the visibility and self-definition of the female subject. Overall, these findings suggest that Pan Yuliang's self-portraits move beyond conventional representations of feminine beauty and present the female body as a site of self-expression, identity negotiation, and subjectivity. This study contributes to research on Pan Yuliang's self-portraits and female self-representation by foregrounding the visual construction of female identity.

Keywords: Pan Yuliang, Female Identity, Self-Portraiture, Self-Representation, Female Body, Visual Construction, Chinese Visual Art, Visual Analysis

Introduction

The representation of the female body is a significant subject in art and visual culture. Hall (1997) argues that representation is a process through which meaning is produced and exchanged within culture. From this perspective, the female body in visual art is not only a physical image, but also a cultural form through which ideas of femininity, beauty, gender

roles, and social identity are communicated. Studies on Chinese paintings of women suggest that female figures have often been represented through ideals of beauty, elegance, clothing, posture, and social meaning (Shan, 1995; Wang, 2009; Zheng, 2010). More recent research on Chinese women artists further shows that the female body and self-image have become important visual forms for expressing women's subjectivity and self-understanding (Wang, 2022). This issue remains relevant in recent studies on Pan Yuliang, which continue to examine the female body, self-image, female subjectivity, and identity construction in her paintings and self-portraits (Kong & Wu, 2026; Pan, 2025; Wang, 2026). Therefore, the representation of the female body provides an important basis for understanding the visual construction of female identity within Chinese art.

In modern Chinese art, Pan Yuliang is recognised as an important female artist who repeatedly represented herself and the female body. Yang (2016) notes that the female body was central to Pan Yuliang's artistic practice. This concern becomes especially important in her self-portraits, where the female body is not only depicted as an artistic subject but also used as a means of female self-representation. Ng (2019) describes this process as a form of "fashioning the self" in modern China. At the same time, Teo (2016) places Pan's practice within the broader development of modern Chinese women's art and cross-cultural modernism. Recent studies have also expanded this discussion. For example, Wang (2025) examines contradiction, rupture, and visual modernity in Pan Yuliang's oil paintings, while Jin (2025) presents Pan Yuliang's artistic life as a narrative of personal struggle and artistic achievement. Kong and Wu (2026) address identity construction and visual language in her self-portraits, and Pan (2025) discusses self-examination from a female perspective. Overall, these recent studies confirm the continuing scholarly interest in Pan Yuliang's self-image, female perspective, visual language, and subject formation.

However, existing studies on Pan Yuliang have mainly focused on her life experience, artistic style, Chinese–Western painting methods, and female consciousness. Chen (2016) discusses Pan Yuliang's painting practice in relation to her artistic development and visual style, while Chen (2021) and Wu (2021) examine female consciousness and the visual features of femininity in her works. Lian (2020) further discusses self-identity in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits, especially the changing relationship among the body, self-image, and emotional expression.

Although these studies provide important insights, further visual analysis of Pan Yuliang's self-portraits is still needed. In particular, less attention has been given to how specific visual elements contribute to the construction of female identity. This gap is important because self-portraiture allows Pan Yuliang to construct and negotiate her own image as a female subject through visual form.

Therefore, this study aims to examine how female identity is visually constructed in three selected self-portraits by Pan Yuliang: *Self-Portrait* (1940), *Self-Portrait* (1945), and *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945). Using a qualitative case study approach and visual analysis, the study focuses on posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space as key visual elements. By examining self-portraiture as a form of female self-representation, this study contributes to research on Pan Yuliang's self-portraits and female self-representation by foregrounding the visual construction of female identity in modern Chinese art.

Literature Review*Female Identity in Chinese Art*

Female identity in the Chinese context has often been discussed as a culturally and historically shaped concept rather than a fixed category. Li (2000) discusses women's identity in China in relation to cultural conflict, gender roles, and identity recognition. Similarly, Croll (1995) examines how Chinese women's identities changed across different historical moments in the twentieth century. These studies indicate that female identity in China should be understood within specific cultural and historical conditions.

In Chinese art, this culturally shaped understanding of female identity is often visualised through representations of the female body. Studies on Chinese paintings of women suggest that female figures have frequently been represented through ideals of beauty, elegance, clothing, posture, morality, and social meaning (Shan, 1995; Wang, 2009). More recent research further shows that, in modern and contemporary Chinese women's art, the female body and self-image have become important visual forms for expressing women's subjectivity and self-understanding (Wang, 2022). From this perspective, the discussion turns from women as represented figures to women as self-representing subjects. In this context, female identity in Chinese art can be understood through both representations of the female body and women's self-representation in modern artistic practice. Thus, Pan Yuliang's self-portraits provide a basis for discussing female self-representation in modern Chinese art.

Pan Yuliang's Self-Portraits and Female Self-Representation

Pan Yuliang is an important figure in modern Chinese women's art because she repeatedly represented herself and the female body. Chau (2023) notes that after Pan Yuliang returned to China in 1928, she became known as a representative figure of modern Chinese women artists. Yao (2021) also states that her participation in national exhibitions and her teaching career helped increase the visibility of female artists in modern Chinese art. These studies show that Pan Yuliang's artistic practice was closely related to the public visibility of women artists in modern China.

And her self-portraits are especially relevant to female self-representation because they show how Pan Yuliang constructed her own image. Instead of appearing only as a represented female subject, she used self-portraiture to shape her own visual identity. Lian (2020) examines self-identity in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits and discusses how her self-images reflect the relationship between body, emotion, and identity. Chen (2021) further shows that her self-portraits reveal tensions between idealised femininity, bodily presence, and the artist's strong personality. These studies suggest that Pan Yuliang's self-portraits can be understood as visual forms through which she negotiated female identity.

Studies on female consciousness and visual construction further support this understanding of Pan Yuliang's self-portraits as visual forms of female self-representation. Wu (2021) discusses how female consciousness is visually constructed in Pan Yuliang's paintings through clothing, body, space, and self-image. Fan (2023) also argues that Pan Yuliang's paintings are closely connected to her personal experience and reflections on gender identity. As such, these studies provide a basis for understanding Pan Yuliang's self-portraits as visual negotiations of female identity, selfhood, and artistic subjectivity.

Therefore, her self-portraits offer an important case for examining how female identity was visually constructed through self-representation in modern Chinese art.

Female Identity in Self-Portraiture

Self-portraiture is not only a visual record of appearance, but also a form of self-representation. This point is especially important in women's self-portraiture, where the artist becomes both the maker and the subject of the image. Borzello (1998) argues that women artists use self-portraiture to examine the self, the body, and artistic identity. Meskimmon (1996) also discusses women's self-portraiture as a visual practice through which subjectivity, selfhood, and identity are explored. These studies suggest that self-portraiture can function as an important medium for constructing and expressing female identity.

Portraiture studies further support this understanding of self-representation and identity. West (2004) argues that portraiture does not simply reproduce physical likeness, but also communicates identity, status, individuality, and social meaning. In relation to women artists, Chadwick (2020) shows that women's artistic practice often involves negotiations of gender, self-expression, and artistic subjectivity. These discussions indicate that self-portraiture should not be understood only as an image of the artist's appearance. It can also be read as a visual form through which female identity and subjectivity are shaped.

In this context, visual elements in self-portraiture become important for analysing how identity is constructed. Posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space are not only formal features. They also help communicate identity, femininity, social position, and subjective expression in visual art. Rose (2022) argues that visual images produce meaning through visual organisation, representation, and social context. Similarly, Sturken and Cartwright (2018) explain that visual culture is shaped through practices of looking, representation, and interpretation. These ideas support the use of visual analysis in this study because they show that female identity can be examined through the visual organisation of the body, gaze, clothing, and space.

For the present study, self-portraiture provides an important framework for examining female identity in Pan Yuliang's selected works. Existing studies on women's self-portraiture show that identity can be constructed through the body, gaze, clothing, and spatial arrangement. However, less attention has been given to how these visual elements operate specifically in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits to construct female identity within modern Chinese art. For this reason, a visual analysis of Pan Yuliang's selected self-portraits is needed, focusing on posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space.

Methodology

Case Study Approach

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to examine how female identity is visually constructed in selected self-portraits by Pan Yuliang. Case study research is suitable when a study aims to understand a specific case within its real-life, cultural, or historical context. Yin (2018) explains that case study research is appropriate when the boundaries between a phenomenon and its context are not clearly separated. Stake (1995) also emphasises that case study research allows the researcher to understand the particularity and complexity of a specific case. In this study, the case study approach is therefore

appropriate because Pan Yuliang's self-portraits are closely connected to the cultural and artistic context of modern Chinese art.

And the case in this study consists of three selected self-portraits by Pan Yuliang: *Self-Portrait* (1940), *Self-Portrait* (1945), and *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945). These works were selected because they show clear visual differences in posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space. They also allow comparison across changes in the visual construction of female identity. And the selected images were examined through museum records, exhibition catalogues, and published visual references related to Pan Yuliang's work. Rather than treating the paintings as isolated art objects, this study examines them as visual materials through which female identity, self-representation, and subjectivity may be constructed.

Visual Analysis

Visual analysis is used in this study to examine how female identity is constructed through visual form. Rather than treating images as simple illustrations, this approach considers how meaning is produced through visual organisation, representation, and social context. Rose (2022) argues that images create meaning through their visual arrangement and the contexts in which they are viewed. Sturken and Cartwright (2018) also explain that visual culture is shaped through practices of looking, representation, and interpretation. These perspectives are relevant to this study because Pan Yuliang's self-portraits communicate identity not only through subject matter, but also through the visual organisation of the female body.

Based on studies of portraiture, women's self-portraiture, and visual culture, this study focuses on five visual elements: posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space. These elements were selected because they are closely related to how identity, subjectivity, and social meaning are communicated in portraits and self-portraits (Borzello, 1998; Meskimmon, 1996; West, 2004). Visual culture studies further support this focus by showing that visual meaning is produced through organisation, representation, looking, and interpretation (Rose, 2022; Sturken & Cartwright, 2018). In this study, these elements provide a focused way to examine how Pan Yuliang visually constructs female identity through self-representation.

The analysis was conducted in three steps. First, each painting was observed in terms of posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and spatial arrangement. Second, these visual features were interpreted in relation to existing studies on Pan Yuliang, female self-representation, and women's self-portraiture. Third, the three works were compared to examine how female identity changes across the selected self-portraits. Through this process, the study analyses female identity through visible visual elements rather than through biography or artistic style alone.

Analysis

This section examines three selected self-portraits by Pan Yuliang: *Self-Portrait* (1940), *Self-Portrait* (1945), and *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945). Following the visual analysis approach outlined in the methodology, the discussion focuses on posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space. These visual elements are interpreted in relation to existing studies on Pan Yuliang, female self-representation, and women's self-portraiture. Through a

comparative reading of the three works, this section traces how female identity shifts from idealised femininity towards a more self-aware and self-defined female subjectivity.

Self-Portrait (1940)

In *Self-Portrait (1940)* (Fig. 1), Pan Yuliang presents herself seated beside a table with a flower vase. The figure faces the viewer with a calm and direct gaze, while the body is arranged in a composed manner. The black embroidered qipao, flowers, porcelain vase, table, and decorative chair create an intimate interior space with strong Chinese cultural references. Together, these elements present the figure as elegant, restrained, and culturally recognisable.

This image is closely related to existing studies on Pan Yuliang's self-representation. Chen (2016) states that *Self-Portrait (1940)* is widely regarded as one of Pan Yuliang's most beautiful self-portraits and interprets it as a form of idealised self-beautification. Wu (2021) similarly notes that Pan Yuliang represents herself in this work as an idealised Eastern female figure. The qipao, flowers, porcelain vase, and decorative interior therefore do not function only as background details. They help shape an image of femininity associated with elegance, refinement, and cultural identity.

Yet this idealised femininity should not be read as passive or as a direct reflection of Pan Yuliang's real personality. Chen (2021) points out that Pan Yuliang's surviving self-portraits mainly present the artist through clothed self-representation. In Fig. 1, the qipao covers the body, but the body remains visually present through posture, gaze, and bodily arrangement. The direct gaze and stable seated posture prevent the figure from becoming only decorative; instead, they suggest self-awareness, control, and artistic subjectivity. This reading is further supported by Chen's (2021) reference to Pan Zanhua's 1955 letter, which describes Pan Yuliang as having a strong and unconventional character, including skill in horse riding and archery. This contrast suggests that the soft and refined appearance in the painting should be understood as a constructed self-image rather than a passive feminine image or a direct reflection of the artist's personality.



Figure 1. Pan Yuliang, *Self-Portrait* (1940), 90x65cm. Source: Anhui Museum.

Overall, *Self-Portrait* (1940) constructs female identity through idealised femininity, clothed bodily presence, and controlled self-representation. The qipao, flowers, porcelain vase, and interior space connect the figure to traditional feminine and cultural signs. However, these signs are reorganised through Pan Yuliang's own self-representation. As the first work in the selected group, this painting establishes an idealised and culturally refined image of female identity. And the following 1945 *self-portraits* develop this construction further by reducing idealisation and making female subjectivity more direct, emotionally visible, and self-defined.

Self-Portrait (1945)

Compared with Fig. 1, *Self-Portrait* (1945) (Fig. 2) presents Pan Yuliang in a less idealised and more psychologically direct way. She places herself in front of a window, leaning slightly against the windowsill. One hand rests on the table, while the other is placed near the body. The slightly oblique gaze, bent arm, striped shirt, dark coat, and strong window frame create a firmer visual structure than the smooth qipao and intimate interior arrangement in *Self-Portrait* (1940). These visual features suggest a shift from the idealised feminine image in Fig. 1 to a more self-aware and emotionally visible form of female self-representation in Fig. 2.

Existing studies on Pan Yuliang's 1945 *self-portraits* also identify a shift toward a less beautified and more direct self-image. Chen (2016) notes that Pan Yuliang's 1945 *self-*

portraits show fewer traces of idealised self-beautification than the 1940 self-portrait. The skin and facial features are treated more objectively, and the expression becomes more emotionally visible. Chen (2021) also observes that, in the 1945 artwork, Pan Yuliang places herself before a window, with the body leaning backward and the posture appearing more relaxed and natural. These observations suggest that Fig. 2 no longer constructs female identity mainly through refined beauty. Instead, it begins to reveal a more self-aware and emotionally visible female subject.

A sharper gaze, firmer bodily structure, and less decorative clothing further separate Fig. 2 from the idealised femininity of Fig. 1. Lian (2020) argues that, compared with the 1940 self-portrait, the 1945 artwork appears visually firmer: the straight window frame stands parallel to the body, the bent arm forms an angular structure, and the gaze becomes sharper and colder. The striped shirt and dark coat also replace the smooth qipao and refined feminine styling of Fig. 1. In this painting, femininity does not disappear. Rather, it is reorganised through a more controlled, direct, and self-possessed body. Through this combination of gaze, clothing, and bodily presentation, Pan Yuliang presents female identity as more psychologically complex and less dependent on external ideals of feminine beauty.

Window space extends the figure's self-awareness from bodily presentation to the surrounding environment. The window opens the composition beyond the enclosed interior and places the female subject in relation to a wider outside space. Chen (2021) points out that Pan Yuliang placed flowers by the window in her 1945 *self-portraits*, and that this arrangement breaks with the earlier convention of placing women within closed interior spaces. In Fig. 2, the flower vase still carries feminine associations, but its position beside the window connects the female figure to a more open spatial setting. The female subject remains within an interior space, yet she is no longer fully contained by it.

Overall, *Self-Portrait* (1945) marks an important transition in Pan Yuliang's visual construction of female identity. Compared with Fig. 1, which presents an idealised and culturally refined feminine image, Fig. 2 shows a more direct, reflective, and emotionally visible female subject. Through the window space, firmer bodily structure, sharper gaze, and less idealised facial treatment, Pan Yuliang begins to move female identity away from idealised femininity and toward self-expression and identity negotiation. This transition prepares the stronger self-definition and visual authority developed further in *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945) (Fig. 3).



Figure 2. Pan Yuliang, *Self-Portrait* (1945), 73.5x60cm. Source: Anhui Museum.

Self-Portrait in Red (1945)

Compared with Fig. 2, *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945) (Fig. 3) does not strengthen female presence by placing the figure closer to the viewer. Instead, it constructs a more self-defined female image through colour, bodily stability, and spatial openness. Pan Yuliang presents herself in a red dress, with the upper body arranged in a stable seated posture. Although the head is slightly tilted and the gaze remains subtly oblique, the figure appears more composed and self-possessed than in Fig. 2. The red dress, controlled bodily structure, flowers, and open window work together to create a stronger visual assertion of the female subject.

A sense of self-definition becomes clearer through the figure's posture, gaze, clothing, and bodily presentation. In Fig. 2, the leaning body and sharper gaze create psychological distance and inward reflection. In Fig. 3, the body appears more stable, and the visual relationship between the figure and the viewer becomes calmer and more controlled. The red dress carries feminine associations, but it does not create a weak or ornamental image. Instead, the strong colour, stable bodily arrangement, and controlled pose give the female figure a more self-possessed presence. The flowers continue to carry feminine meanings, yet they are placed beside a figure who appears visually stable and self-defined. In this sense, femininity is not rejected, but reorganised into a more assertive visual form.

Spatial openness further develops this self-defined image. Wu (2021) observes that the opened window and outdoor scenery in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits change the earlier convention in which women were often represented within idealised or enclosed spaces. In Fig. 3, the window does not function only as a background detail. It opens the composition outward and connects the female subject with a wider external world. The figure remains

inside the room, but she is no longer visually confined by the interior. Through this spatial arrangement, female identity is linked to openness, self-narration, and stronger control over visual presence.



Figure 3. Pan Yuliang, *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945), 73x59cm. Source: Anhui Museum.

Research on Pan Yuliang's self-representation provides a broader context for this interpretation. Ng (2019) argues that Pan Yuliang's repeated projection of self-image onto the female body can be understood as a process of redefining herself. Fan (2023) also links Pan Yuliang's paintings to personal experience and reflections on gender identity. In this sense, Fig. 3 can be read as more than a beautiful female image, as it also presents the female body as a visual site of selfhood, subjectivity, and identity construction.

By the final selected self-portrait, Pan Yuliang's visual construction of female identity becomes more assertive. Fig. 1 presents an idealised and culturally refined femininity, while Fig. 2 develops a more reflective and emotionally visible self-image. Fig. 3 further strengthens the visibility, self-possession, and self-definition of the female subject. Through the red dress, controlled bodily presentation, open window, and stable visual presence, Pan Yuliang transforms femininity into a form of visual agency. This work completes the movement from an idealised female image to self-aware and self-defined female subjectivity across the three selected self-portraits.

Discussion

In general, the three selected self-portraits suggest that female identity in Pan Yuliang's work is not a fixed feminine image. Female identity is visually constructed through changing

forms of self-representation in Pan Yuliang's selected self-portraits. In the 1940 *Self-Portrait*, Pan Yuliang presents an idealised and culturally refined feminine image through the qipao, seated posture, calm gaze, and intimate interior space. By 1945, *Self-Portrait* reduces this idealisation and presents a female subject with stronger self-awareness and emotional expression. *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945) then develops this shift further by strengthening bodily stability, spatial openness, and self-defined visual presence. Across the three works, posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space work together to construct female identity through self-portraiture.

A similar concern appears in earlier studies of Pan Yuliang's self-portraits, especially in appearance, body structure, emotion, and visual setting. Chen (2016) and Chen (2021) discuss the contrast between Pan Yuliang's actual appearance, personality, and the idealised feminine image in her self-portraits. Wu (2021) explains how visual elements such as the qipao, flowers, porcelain vase, window, and interior setting contribute to the construction of female consciousness in Pan Yuliang's paintings. Lian (2020) further notes a shift from the softer and more idealised body in the 1940 self-portrait to the firmer body structure and sharper gaze in the 1945 self-portrait. The present analysis extends this discussion by reading these changes as part of female identity construction. Rather than being limited to appearance, style, or emotion, they reveal how female identity is negotiated through the posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space.

Here, the discussion moves beyond biography and style. The selected self-portraits do more than show what Pan Yuliang looked like or how her artistic language changed. And they reveal how the female body becomes a visual site through which femininity, self-awareness, and subjectivity are shaped.

Therefore, this study clarifies how specific visual elements construct female identity in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits. Previous research has focused on Pan Yuliang's life experience, artistic style, Chinese–Western painting methods, and female consciousness. This article instead places posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space at the centre of analysis. It shifts the discussion from what Pan Yuliang's self-portraits represent to how they construct female identity in modern Chinese art.

Conclusion

Together, Pan Yuliang's three selected self-portraits show that female identity is not presented as a fixed image of femininity. It is visually constructed through changing forms of self-representation. Across *Self-Portrait* (1940), *Self-Portrait* (1945), and *Self-Portrait in Red* (1945), female identity shifts from idealised and culturally refined femininity to self-aware and self-defined female subjectivity.

Specifically, posture, gaze, clothing, bodily presentation, and space play a central role in this shift. Through these elements, female identity is expressed, negotiated, and redefined in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits. By focusing on these elements, this study contributes to Pan Yuliang scholarship. It shifts attention from biography, artistic style, and Chinese–Western painting methods to the visual construction of female identity through self-portraiture.

Finally, the study provides a focused reading of three selected self-portraits rather than a complete account of Pan Yuliang's wider artistic practice. Future research may examine more of Pan Yuliang's self-portraits, compare her work with other modern women artists, or further explore how the female body, space, and self-image contribute to the construction of female identity in visual art.

Reference

- Borzello, F. (1998). *Seeing ourselves: women's self-portraits*. Thames & Hudson.
- Chadwick, W. (2020). *Women, art, and society* (6th ed.). Thames & Hudson.
- Chau, A. (2023). *Paris and the art of transposition: Early twentieth-century Sino-French encounters*. University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.12256143>
- Chen, T. B. (2016). *Research on Pan Yuliang's paintings* [Doctoral dissertation, Nanjing University of the Arts]. China National Knowledge Infrastructure.
- Chen, Y. (2021). *A comparative study of female consciousness in the nude paintings of Pan Yuliang and Suzanne Valadon* [Master's thesis, Shandong Normal University]. China National Knowledge Infrastructure.
- Croll, E. (1995). *Changing identities of Chinese women: Rhetoric, experience and self-perception in twentieth-century China*. Zed Books.
- Fan, B. Q. (2023). The awakening and presentation of female consciousness: A study centred on Pan Yuliang's paintings. *Journal of Huainan Normal University*, 25(6), 104–109.
- Hall, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. Sage.
- Jin, M. (2025). Pan Yuliang: Painting a legendary life with a brush. *Trade Union Expo*, (23), 44–45.
- Kong, G., & Wu, Z. Y. (2026). From "other" to "subject": Identity construction and visual language in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits. *Art Observation*, (5), 83–86.
- Li, X. J. (2000). *Feminism?: Cultural conflict and identity recognition*. Jiangsu People's Publishing House.
- Lian, L. (2020). *A study of self-identity in Pan Yuliang's self-portraits* [Master's thesis, Sichuan Normal University]. China National Knowledge Infrastructure.
- Meskimmon, M. (1996). *The art of reflection: Women artists' self-portraiture in the twentieth century*. Columbia University Press.
- Ng, S. (2019). The art of Pan Yuliang: Fashioning the self in modern China. *Woman's Art Journal*, 40(1), 21–30. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26746738>
- Pan, J. R. (2025). Self-examination from a female perspective: An analysis of Pan Yuliang's self-portraits. *New Art Field*, (5), 25–27.
- Rose, G. (2022). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Shan, G. Q. (1995). An introduction to ancient paintings of beautiful women. *Journal of the Palace Museum*, (s1), 31–45. <https://doi.org/10.16319/j.cnki.0452-7402.1995.s1.005>
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage.
- Sturken, M., & Cartwright, L. (2018). *Practices of looking: An introduction to visual culture* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Yang, L. J. (2016). *Pan Yuliang of oil painting art research "female consciousness"* [Master's thesis, Shandong University of Art & Design]. China National Knowledge Infrastructure.
- Yao, P. (2021). *Women, gender, and sexuality in China: A brief history*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315627267>

- Teo, P. (2016). *Rewriting modernism: Three women artists in twentieth-century China: Pan Yuliang, Nie Ou and Yin Xiuzhen*. Leiden University Press.
- Wang, J. X. (2025). Contradiction and rupture: Visual modernity in Pan Yuliang's oil paintings. *Journal of Art and Design*, (6), 90–92.
- Wang, X. (2022). On the source and flow of “body image” by Chinese contemporary female artists. *Journal of Beijing Normal University (Social Sciences)*, (3), 77–83.
- Wang, X. Y. (2026). Self-line drawing: On the construction of female aesthetic subjectivity in Pan Yuliang's figure paintings. *Beauty & Times (Middle)*, (4), 70–73. <https://doi.org/10.16129/j.cnki.mysdz.2026.04.022>
- Wang, Z. Y. (2009). *The art history of Chinese paintings of beautiful women*. Southeast University Press.
- West, S. (2004). *Portraiture*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Wu, Q. (2021). *The visual construction of female consciousness: A study of Frida Kalo and Pan Yuliang's paintings* [Master's thesis, Qufu Normal University]. China National Knowledge Infrastructure.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Zheng, Y. (2010). *Lingering charm of silk and gauze: Women in famous paintings*. Culture and Art Publishing House.