COVER: The seal-shaped emblem of the RAS-KB consists of the following Chinese characters: 槿 (top right), 域 (bottom right), 苹 (top left), 菖 (bottom left), pronounced Kŭn yŏk Ch’ŏng A in Korean. The first two characters mean “the hibiscus region,” referring to Korea, while the other two (“luxuriant mugwort”) are a metaphor inspired by Confucian commentaries on the Chinese Book of Odes, and could be translated as “enjoy encouraging erudition.”

SUBMISSIONS: Transactions invites the submission of manuscripts of both scholarly and more general interest pertaining to the anthropology, archeology, art, history, language, literature, philosophy, and religion of Korea. Manuscripts should be prepared in MS Word format and should be submitted in digital form. The style should conform to The Chicago Manual of Style (most recent edition). The covering letter should give full details of the author’s name, address and biography. Romanization of Korean words and names must follow either the McCune-Reischauer or the current Korean government system. Submissions will be peer-reviewed by two readers specializing in the field. Manuscripts will not be returned and no correspondence will be entered into concerning rejections.
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Cultivating Collective Memories: Seoul’s Changgyeonggung

David Kendall

This article is an attempt to trace distinct changes in the representations of a Korean palace over three periods: the end of Joseon/Colonial period (1900-1945), the Authoritarian period (1945-1993) and the Civilian period (1993-2015). The main focus is on the inclusion and exclusion of information surrounding the Prince Yi Museum, its collection, and a 27-year-old crown prince who was sealed in a wooden chest by order of his father King Yeongjo and starved to death over eight sweltering summer days in 1762. All three subjects are linked to a currently pine-covered plot on Changgyeonggung’s grounds. One small signboard identifies the spot as the former location of a royal residence and modern library. More interesting is what has been excluded from that description.

The manner in which Japanese and Korean officials have chosen to present or conceal information linked to this roughly 30-meter-by-100-meter site reveals major social shifts in Korea from 1907 to 2015, proving Verdery’s observation that “the macro is in the micro.” Analysis of 60 guidebooks and websites also shows how authors tend to pick up the conveniently condensed narratives reflected in publications endorsed by concurrent governments.

References and documentation have been reduced to a minimum in publishing this article. Readers needing full references and a complete bibliography should refer to the author’s online thesis: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/20267/KendallThesisSept3.pdf;sequence=1

1 The official English name of Korea’s first museum is now the Yi Royal Family Museum. However, the most common Colonial-Period name, the Prince Yi Museum, is used throughout the article for consistency.

1. LATE JOSEON/colonial PERIOD (1900-1945):
At the beginning of the 20th century, Japanese authorities were out to prove their empire’s high Social Darwinian rank. Fact-finding missions dispatched abroad in the 1860s had studied how the Western world worked. One aspect entailed the presentation of historical, artistic and industrial achievements. These findings led to the construction of a zoo, museums and gardens within Tokyo’s Ueno Park in 1873. Its museums embodied a chance to craft a national narrative.

On the Korean Peninsula, the Joseon court was struggling to modernize as well through trade concessions with Western nations. These efforts were aborted after Korea became a Japanese protectorate following the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War. The Joseon royal family (the House of Yi) and their property were placed under the supervision of Japanese administrators who devised a plan – on their own or at the behest of the last Joseon king (or emperor; many details depend on the source) – to turn the palace Changgyeong-gung into a public pleasure garden (Changgyeong-won), complete with zoo, museum and botanical garden. Over 80% of the palace structures were demolished to make room for this.

Changdeokgung and Changgyeonggung in 1820

For recent Korean scholars, the erection of Japanese edifices over the few dilapidated palace structures left standing was a calculated humiliation designed to demystify and desacralize a space that had long been off limits to the public during the Joseon period. Non-Koreans scholars tend to concede an assertion of dominance but see Ueno and Changgyeongwon (hereafter simply ‘Changgyeong’) as designed primarily to unify society inwardly while outwardly projecting the image of a cultured, powerful empire.

By the time park construction had ended in 1911, Korea’s first and last two living emperors had been forced to abdicate and Japan had
annexed their entire 518-year-old realm. The largest Japanese icon built on Changgyeong’s grounds occupied the highest spot in the park. The brick, two-story Prince Yi Museum was capped with the high-pitched gables epitomizing Japanese castles. Changgyeong’s transformation was a small part of a much larger picture. Military campaigns from 1894 to 1905 had drained Japan’s treasury and generated bad Western press coverage. Tourism offered a way to soften its image while providing revenue.

The Japan Tourism Bureau (JTB) partnered with newspapers and railroads to attract inbound tourists as soon as the empire expanded. Seoul’s palaces received barely a mention in a 1910 guide released by the Welcome Society of Japan. A year later, Changgyeong was a well-trodden part of a recommended day tour for those en route to Manchuria.

Asserting Japanese dominance was a major concern in the Military Rule Period (1910-1920), and the Prince Yi Museum curators focused on corresponding exhibits. Godfrey Gompertz described Japanese activities in Korea between 1905 and 1916 as a “veritable orgy of pillaging.” Japanese surveyors could excavate wherever they wished on the peninsula whereas on the main islands, the Imperial Household Ministry expressly forbade disruption of the sacred space of imperial tombs.

The first travel guide reviews were unimpressed by the Prince Yi Museum’s collection:

Prince Yi Museum (Iwangga Bangmulgwan) 1911-1938, demolished 1992
It is decidedly inferior to the customary splendid ancient and modern art objects one usually sees in the museums of Japan. There are strangely few antiquities of artistic or intrinsic worth, despite the oft-repeated assertion that Korea was the fountainhead whence the wonderful artisans of Old Japan drew their inspiration (Terry, 1914: 745).

Japanese officials started to apply their proven sales techniques to Korean finds during the Cultural Rule Period (1920-39) with a subsequent rise in the quantity, quality and description of Korean artifacts (Pai, 2013: 93). The Governor-General’s office then began shipping handsome Prince Yi Museum catalogues in English and Japanese to Europe and America (Pai, 2013: 91).

Once Japan started promoting Korea’s cultural legacy, accounts similar to their scholars’ analyses appeared abroad. Andreas Eckardt published Geschichtdes der Koreanischen Kunst (History of Korean Art) in German and English in 1929. The monograph covers several pieces held in the “Prince I Museum.” Eckardt explains that his book is a product of German and Japanese universities’ efforts to fill the Korean art void that exists in Western languages. He then goes on to repeat verbatim Japanese findings that earlier kingdoms, Silla (57 BCE – 935 CE) and Goryeo (918-1392), had exceptional artisans, but as for Joseon (1392-1910), “due to weak governance in the last century, the people had lost their artistic abilities.”

According to Aso, Goryeo relics constituted two-thirds of the Prince Yi Museum’s collection. The sculpture/pottery volume of its 1929 catalogue clearly favored Pre-Joseon kingdoms. Among Eckardt’s 30 illustrations attributed to the Prince Yi Museum, 20 are from Goryeo (13 being celadon). Only two pieces are from Joseon.

S.H. Mok writes that the Prince Yi Museum was “set up purely for the display of old objects rather than functioning with culturally informative intentions.” Mok faults museum managers’ “incompetence and ignorance.” Cultural intentions actually functioned very well if

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4 Japanese delegations to world expositions had begun distributing guides to their own culture in English and other languages back in the mid- to late 19th century.
5 A 23 June 2015 WorldCat search of the Japanese (李王家博物館所蔵品寫真帖) and English (Prince Yi Museum Catalogue) titles revealed 23 U.S. institutions holding copies, with one each also in Germany, the UK, France and Canada (Kendall, 2015: 19).
6 Sekino Tadashi published practically this exact finding in 1904 (Pai, 2000: 50).
degradation of Joseon were the master plan. It should be noted as well that some of the “old objects” preserved by these managers are now prominently displayed in Seoul’s National Museum.

Eckardt reproduces three Prince Yi Museum paintings which he attributes to the Joseon artist Kim Hong-do. The two depictions of Kim’s famed “genre paintings,” however, are too small to discern properly and sit under one large example of what appears to be his uninspiring attempt at Western painting, a reclining “Dog on a Chain” (1929: lxxxix).

Kim’s skill had earned him a commission to paint King Jeongjo’s portrait and perhaps a supervisory role in the Joseon masterpiece *The Uigwe of King Jeongjo’s Procession to His Father’s Tomb* (園幸乙卯整理儀軌). An *uigwe* is a court-commissioned painting and refers here to the chronicle of Jeongjo’s 1795 eight-day visit to bow before Crown Prince Sado’s grave. Sado was the prince whose macabre murder was cut to fit official narratives in later periods. Accompanying King Jeongjo was his mother, Sado’s widow. The counter-narrative contained in her memoirs is often distorted or ignored in official depictions. Nearly 1,800 courtiers, soldiers and servants on foot, horseback or carried in palanquins crossed the Han River upon a bridge of specially prepared pontoons — an unmistakable display of monarchical power, filial piety and engineering prowess. No Colonial Period guide mentions Sado or the 1795 royal procession even though Japanese curators definitely possessed one of the original paintings.

Thirty American and European universities and museums still hold Prince Yi Museum catalogues. The first museum’s collection remained largely intact, albeit often relocated, before entering the
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National Museum in 1955. The ways in which presentations changed when the power to describe the collection passed from Japanese to Korean hands embody much broader processes of political transformation.

2. THE AUTHORITARIAN PERIOD (1945-1993)
Changgyeong and its depictions changed little in the first two decades after independence, apart from war damage and repairs. Had the zoo’s existence been intended to humiliate the Joseon monarchy and Korean people, as Civilian Period guidebooks later came to report, such sentiment was far from prevalent in the 1940s through the 1970s when park attendance likely peaked. Toward the end of World War II and during the 1950-53 Korean War, attendance and the zoo’s animal population plummeted toward zero. However, on both occasions Korean overseers restocked the cages and greatly expanded Changgyeong after the war years, making it the most popular palace.

The first three Republics (1948-1972) had few resources with which to re-craft Korea’s identity. Only two Authoritarian Period publications studied contain examples of Rhee Administration efforts to promote a national image abroad. Masterpieces of Korean Art (Paine, 1957) and Pictorial Korea (1957: 158-170) both feature former Prince Yi Museum artifacts as centerpieces. Such selective promotion from the collection of the virtually unmentioned first museum corroborates Varutti’s collective memory theory: “Through a sapient juxtaposition of objects, images and words, museum displays create meanings that are likely to shape collective memory and imagery.” Being collected means “being valued and remembered institutionally; being displayed means being incorporated into the extra-institutional memory of the museum visitors.” Conversely, the absence of hardly any texts or photographs identifying the first museum has helped it slip from Korea’s collective memory.

During the 1948-60 First Republic, the Rhee Administration enacted measures that reaffirmed colonial-era cultural institutions. Official publications shifted the original Japanese-promulgated rankings but otherwise fully utilized Colonial curators’ methods and collections. The Masterpieces of Korean Art exhibition exemplified Rhee’s heavy reliance on US aid and pieces first displayed in the Prince Yi Museum. A committee of 16 Korean officials and art experts and two US curators gathered what they considered the essence of Korean culture. The US Army packed the 187 treasures and the US Navy shipped them over to tour eight US museums. The US National Gallery of Art director
explained that “if it were not for excavations in the twentieth century, little would be known of this great artistic history…”

Just over 40% of the *Masterpieces of Korean Art* exhibit came from the Deoksu Palace Museum of Fine Arts, which had inherited the Prince Yi collection in 1937. Goryeo artisans crafted a plurality of the collection; 79 pieces (71 of which were celadon). Joseon was now second in importance with 54, followed by Silla with 42. Only one of the *Masterpieces* was attributed to a modern artist: “Dog” now carried a shorter title and a caveat about the artist Danwon (Kim Hong-do): “the painting was formerly attributed to Danwon. The seal is regarded now as a later interpolation” (Paine: 187).

“Dog” makes an appearance in *Pictorial Korea 1956-1957*, but the artist is “unknown.” No English-language books promoting Korean art examined in this study feature “Dog” by any title after 1957. Its vanishing symbolizes the initially hesitant way officials reshuffled the ranking of Korean culture. As “Dog” faded from exhibitions so did the paramount stature of Goryeo celadon, as works by Joseon and modern Korean artists rose to the fore.

Where Colonial Japanese curators had greatly curtailed display of Korean modern art, modern Korean painters and photographers fill the pages of *Pictorial Korea*. The International Publicity League of Korea published this magazine annually after the Korean War. Like the Welcome Society of Japan, the League adamantly denied any connection to the government though ministries and favored conglomerates filled the advertiser lists of both journals.

*Mastepieces of Korean Art, Pictorial Korea, Facts about Korea* and similar official Authoritarian Period publications still laud pre-Joseon dynasties’ superior artistic achievement – just as the Japanese before them had, but Joseon creations, particularly paintings, begin to receive praise as well. “Compared to Koryŏ and Silla, the Yi was austere, almost puritanical, in taste” (Paine: 20). The difference, we come to learn, was in Joseon’s Confucian bent: “Art as a whole gradually declined under the Yi Dynasty. Strong advocacy of Confucianism (which replaced Buddhism) caused the neglect of architectural and sculptural art. The Japanese invasion between 1592 and 1598 destroyed countless monuments. However, painting and calligraphy flourished in this period among the aristocratic classes” (*Facts about Korea*, 1963: 120).

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7 The Prince Yi collection was moved to now Deoksu Palace in 1937 and incorporated into the National Museum of Korea in 1955.
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Cultural pride grew in tandem with the slow ascent from underdevelopment. A clear “take off,” however, needed capital and markets. The Third Republic’s coup-leader-turned-president Park Chung Hee faced immense opposition over resumption of ties with Japan in 1965. He pushed the Normalization Treaty through anyway and stressed that overcoming “one’s sense of inferiority or antipathy toward Japan was to ‘truly love’ the South Korean nation because Koreans, as the argument went, would skillfully use Japanese assistance to strengthen South Korea and make it impervious to further outside influence” (S.M. Park: 72).

Park’s desire for parity with the weaponry and cultural legacies of neighbors became more imperative in 1973 when the United States and People’s Republic of China normalized relations. Koreans were leery of agreements between large rivals. The 1905 Taft-Katsura Memorandum was commonly depicted in the 1960s as a U.S.-Japanese quid-pro-quo to recognize respective spheres of influence in the Philippines and Korea. S.M. Park contends that the First Five-Year Plan for the Revival of Culture and Arts 1974-1978 was also necessitated by the South’s need to compete against the North to prove its standing as the legitimate representative of the nation. Depictions of Korean art followed suit:

Koryo (936-1392) art was generally behind that of Silla, but its artists produced excellent pieces such as celadon ware. Compared with contemporary Chinese celadon, Koryo pottery was more refined, similar to the Buddhist images of Silla. Yi dynasty (1392-1910) art was not so artificial or elegant as Koryo art, but rather bold and dynamic. It was a new style that appealed to reason rather than to emotions (Arts: Korea Background Series, 1973: 7).

Cultural analysts from the West retraced celadon’s descent as the 1988 Seoul Olympics neared:

Its place was taken by a more austere tradition that evolved to meet the needs and tastes of the neo-Confucian order introduced by the Yi dynasty. Punch’ŏng ware … is very different in appearance to the earlier ware, showing a more robust, even abstract, style of decoration and muted colouring. This type of pottery, with its frequent slight irregularities, was much prized by the Japanese, who incorporated some of its characteristics into their own work. (Hoare and Pares, 1988: 142-143)

_Pictorial Korea, Korea Annual and Facts about Korea_ also reflect another Park Chung Hee-initiated policy, the adulation of national heroes.
who had strengthened the country despite strong opposition (Shin, 1998:154). Prior to the Park Administration encouraging such reverence, guidebooks did not mention the life and death of Changgyeong’s Crown Prince Sado. *Guide to Korean Culture* (Ha, 1968) and *Seoul: Past and Present* (Clark and Clark, 1969) are the first guides in this study to mention him.

Great heroes offered an antidote to what Park Chung Hee diagnosed as the factor responsible for colonial subjugation, “weakness caused by factionalism.” Court infighting is often depicted as the root of Joseon’s decline. Hoare and Pares attribute this to “back projection from what is seen as the shameful end of the dynasty.” Clark and Clark link this perceived failure to Sado’s death: “The entire episode is a dramatic example of the useless damage done by the constant factional fighting in the Yi court through three centuries of its history.” “The reason for this tragic murder is difficult to explain” (Adams, 152) – a proper lead-in for the story of a king commanding his only living son to remove his royal robes and enter a roughly 4x4x4-foot wooden box where he succumbed to dehydration. Adams, however, comes to only one conclusion: it was the work of “a senile father encumbered with poor judgment” (1972: 152).

*Hanjuungnok (Records Written in Sorrow)* is a compilation of four separate memoirs written by Sado’s widow, Lady Hyegyeong. Her story is referenced in only one Authoritarian Period text analyzed. It gives the impression that “false accusations” played a key role in Sado’s death and that Lady Hyegyeong would agree. An account even more disingenuous surfaces in the Civilian Period: “Lady Hyegyong contends that the fateful incident was motivated by … factional strife ... and conflict between the dogmatic reigning king and his introverted son” (Lee K.H.).

Few people outside of Korea knew about Changgyeong, let alone Prince Sado. Authoritarian texts of the 1970s stress progress under strongmen, avoiding old palaces and unsightly backstage scenes. Post-1973 authoritarianism united students, intellectuals and laborers within the *Minjung* movement, which sought to expand recognition for and benefits to all Koreans who had struggled during the Colonial Period and current industrialization. Such forces were in play when the Park Administration backed a plan to relocate Changgyeong’s zoo and amusement park to a huge complex south of Seoul. One year after Seoul Grand Park’s groundbreaking in 1978, Park was assassinated. Chun Doo Hwan, the next coup leader-turned-president, went on to implement the original plan and expand government promotion of cultural heritage.
Changgyeong’s second reversal commenced between 1983 and 1986 when its suffix ~won (garden) returned to ~gung (palace), and almost everything built after 1907 was destroyed and/or hauled away, including all Park-era additions intended to outdo more than undo Japan’s modern touches, i.e. the expanded zoo, amusement park rides, giant greenhouse domes, amphitheater and cable car. Korea Annual spoke only favorably about the features of Seoul’s palaces in its first 23 years. The 1987 edition, however, heralds “Ancient Grandeur Through Restoration of Palaces.” Readers discover the beauty of Joseon and that “the Japanese demolished the architectural innovations one-by-one. To the disgrace of the Korean people, the Japanese eventually converted the palace into a zoo” (92-93).

The Civilian Period should technically start with the 1988 inauguration of the democratically elected Roh Tae Woo. The former Prince Yi Musem building was finally demolished toward the end of his term. Roh, however, is a transitional figure tainted by the 1979-80 coup that brought Chun Doo Hwan to power. Only when former opposition leaders Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung gained control in 1993 and 1998, respectively, did Changgyeong promotion take a noticeable turn away from universal concepts of modernity and liminality and toward cultural heritage. M. Kim identifies the driving force as a rising middle class eager to arrest the destructive forces of capitalism and defy any government that assumed “supreme power to reshape” a public space.

Other than native pines planted over the site of the old museum, Changgyeong’s physical appearance changed little between 1993 and 2014. Civilian Period leaders have opted instead to rebuild Joseon’s features by stressing the kingdom’s accomplishments through re-enactments designed to put a pleasing face on a dynasty long denigrated as corrupt, hermitic and ineffectual.

Removal of Imperial Japanese structures from palace grounds became a way to combat the humiliation of Korea’s colonial past. The only Authoritarian Period guidebook writer to fault Japan for creating a zoo in Changgyeong did it mildly, calling the act “a subtle intent to weaken” Korea’s king (Adams: 63). In the Civilian Period from 1993 to 2011, 11 guidebooks blame Imperial Japan for the zoo. Six of these books go on to describe the “indignity” and degradation suffered. Cultural purification has been taken down to Changgyeong’s roots, literally. Whereas many 20th-century guides laud the “exotic” plants in its gardens, 8 21st-century government and Korean-language guides stress the removal of exogenous species and cultivation of indigenous flora. Weeding out non-Korean elements extends to the “History” webpages of the Seoul Zoo

8 “The Botanical Garden is laid out in the formal Japanese style, with lakelets, artistic bridges, etc., and is being stocked gradually with rare plants” (Terry’s Japanese Empire, 1914: 746). “Changkyung Palace features exotic trees, a botanical garden and a zoo” (Facts about Korea, 1963: 158).
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and National Museum as well. Both institutions used glossy 80th and 100th anniversary publications, respectively, to transfer the memories of Changgyeong’s Colonial structures to their existing institutions. Their official 2015 webpages, however, reset creation to post-colonial 1945 for the National Museum and 1983 for the Seoul Zoo.

Few Koreans could hold personal memories of the original Prince Yi Museum; a child aged 10 who gazed upon its last exhibit in 1937 would be 90 in 2015. Most Koreans with whom I have spoken are unaware a museum ever existed there. The official Changgyeong brochure and all post-1990 Korean-language guides analyzed fail to mention its existence. Ignoring the museum has facilitated its slip from collective memory. Official Civilian Period publications display the Prince Yi’s once paramount Goryeo celadon alongside an equal number of Joseon ceramics. The sources for all the pieces are typically left un-credited.

Growing pride in the nation’s own 20th- and 21st-century accomplishments has supplanted Darwinian- and Confucian-based boasting about being among the first countries with a zoo and national museum. Joseon nobility and South Korea’s rapid development are a large part of collective identity today. Perhaps this explains why post-2011 government publications and guides studied report the Japanese changes to Changgyeong in strikingly neutral terms compared to the earlier Civilian Period. This change in tone was also evident in a 2014-15 National Museum exhibition “Collecting Asian Objects in Colonial Korea,” which identified Korea’s first museum as Changgyeong’s (Prince) “Yi Royal Family Museum.” Such objective reporting could suggest Koreans have overcome their “sense of inferiority or antipathy toward Japan” and their old nemesis can no longer seriously threaten the nation’s territory or even its pride. It might also indicate that, after assuming the presidency, Park Chung Hee’s daughter Park Gyeun-hye appointed officials that wanted tourism promotion to once again de-emphasize Japanese ties. The National Museum now once again lists the painting “Dog” (now “투견도” (Pit Bull) as a work by Joseon master Kim Dong-ho.

Government promotion of tourism and the economy clearly pivoted toward the service sector in the 1990s. Economically worded Korea Annual reports began specifying a more measured approach, listing the exact number of inbound tourists lured by international events. Colorful re-enactments became part of the plan to enhance cultural appeal by breathing new life into the formerly barren palaces. Changing-of-the-guard and other photo-friendly opportunities accelerated around the 2002 World Cup co-hosted by South Korea and Japan.
Royal re-enactments often star Crown Prince Sado, his father King Yeongjo and/or son King Jeongjo. The Cultural Heritage Foundation (CHF) sponsored an elaborate display of King Yeongjo’s 50th Birthday as celebrated at Changgyeong in 1743 with a then-eight-year-old Sado weaving through court musicians and dancers to serve his father rice wine (Eoyeonrye Celebrating the 50th Birthday of King Yeongjo, undated). Larger still, hundreds of actors and horses reincarnated King Jeongjo’s 1795 procession to Suwon,9 the uigwe scene that Japanese curators chose not to promote in the Colonial Period. A tile replica of the uigwe now stretches for several blocks along Seoul’s restored Cheonggyecheon stream. It is one of five Sado-related sites (two of which are UNESCO World Heritage) that are labeled major attractions on government webpages. The prince’s story has also generated many books, movies and TV dramas.

Re-enactment of Yeongjo’s 50th Birthday Celebration in 2010

The 21st century international success of Korean popular culture (branded as Hallyu, or Korean wave) helps attract fans to sites connected to popular bands, movies and dramas. Filial piety and revenge run through the Sado-related storylines, and most of the “must-see” sites mentioned above have embraced these intertwined themes.10 Cho Song-rae, Cultural

9 Pictorial Korea (December 1999: 38-42); Suwon City, 2015.
10 Tourists to Suwon Hwaseong Fortress, a Sado-related site, are able to climb into replicas of a wooden chest approximately the size of the one in which Sado died. Signs at a nearby Buddhist temple dedicated to Sado and at his and Jeongjo’s twin tombs laud Sado’s filial piety and blame his death on a hostile
Heritage Administration (CHA) official in charge of Changgyeong in 2012, helped design “Daily Life in the Palace” tours “to reveal everyday life rather than concentrating on a special occasion or ritual ceremony.” One of these daily-life tours shows King Jeongjo discovering “his grandfather’s secret diary” and in it King Yeongjo’s revelation that a “governing group” had coerced him into killing Sado (Korea.net, 2012). This is a scene from popular fiction and Yisan, a 2007-8 MBC drama. Eleven of 39 Japanese reviews of Changgyeong posted on TripAdvisor.com as of 17 September 2015 identify the palace as the site of Sado’s death, while nine mention Yisan by name.  

Just over 14 million inbound tourists visited Korea in 2014. Mainland China (41%), Japan (15%) and the United States (5%) comprised the top three groups (Korea.net, 2014). Add in Southeast Asians and domestic Koreans, and the vast majority of tourists to Sado-related sites come from cultures where examples of filial piety hasten sacralization. Changgyeong’s official 2014 Korean-, Japanese- and Chinese-language brochures favor the pop culture version of Sado’s death (6). Readers learn that “groundless rumors” from the conservative Noron faction and Sado’s sister led to his murder. The English version is more equivocal: “It had been reported to King Yeongjo that Crown Prince Sado was mentally ill and behaving erratically.” One Changgyeong tour guide reported that she cuts Sado out of her one-hour English-language tours because Westerners require much more basic cultural background. When there is a question about the death, however, she lists three factors: 1) personality conflicts between Yeongjo and Sado, 2) increasing estrangement contributing to violent displays by Sado and 3) rival factions exploiting the situation (Kendall, 2015: 73-74).

Some historians cite Sado’s depravity as the cause of the filicide. Others claim King Yeongjo was unjust. Lady Hyegyeong stresses that “both versions are defamatory to the three generations, and neither is factually correct in any way” (Kim Haboush: 335). Her memoirs portray Sado as a loving husband, filial son, compassionate father and sagacious faction.  

11 Sado was mentioned in only one Korean-language post. There were 189 Changgyeong comments in total.  

12 Joseon’s Royal Heritage (2011: 109) reports that Yi In-hwa’s best-selling 1993 novel Everlasting Empire was based on an 8 August 1793 entry in the Annals of the Joseon Court. That passage mentions Yeongjo’s remorse over a shocking incident that still cannot be spoken about in public though it occurred decades earlier. The incident is likely Sado’s death, but it says nothing about his guilt or innocence (朝鮮王朝實錄, 1955-1958: 403-404).
heir who “seemed to be not one person but two” (Kim Haboush: 265). When King Yeongjo chastised the crown prince for breaches of court etiquette, a common occurrence according to her, Sado vented his frustration by raping palace ladies, beheading a eunuch, and beating a once-loved consort to death, among many other alleged murders (Kim Haboush: 282, 301, 312).

Clark and Clark, citing Hulbert, say Yeongjo “never showed remorse for his son’s death.” Kim Haboush, citing court records, says Yeongjo bestowed on his son “the posthumous title Crown Prince Sado” (1996: 327 footnote). Sado translates into “thinking with great sorrow.” His story is riveting by any account. Seven of 25 Authoritarian Period guides (28%) allude to his death, as do 13 of 32 Civilian Period guides (40%). All of the Korean-language guides that cover the murder follow the Sado-as-victim narrative, as did the Authoritarian Period English-language guides. Only after the 1996 release of the Kim Haboush translation does insanity appear as a clear cause of Sado’s demise in three of the relevant 11 English-language guides.

The sign marking Lady Hyegyeong’s former residence neglects the contents of her writing in both its Korean and English versions. Ignoring the Prince Yi Museum and the memoirs’ content facilitate the image of Imperial Japan as destroyer of Joseon culture and Sado as a pious victim.¹³

Pine trees now cover where Jagyeongjeon, residence of the queen mother, was situated. In 1777, King Jeongjo built Jagyeongjeon with a beautiful terraced rear garden for his mother, Lady Hyegyeonggung, on this site in view of the Gyeongmogung Shrine to Prince Sado, his father. Lady Hyegyeonggung wrote Hanjungnok (Memoirs of Lady Hyegyeonggung) in Jagyeongjeon, which was removed in the late 19th century. During the Japanese occupation Jangseogak, a modern royal library, was built here. It was removed in 1992.

Failure to promote Lady Hyegyeong’s writing is ironic however, given the large amount of public funds spent to raise awareness of Korean literature abroad. The memoirs clearly hold Western appeal. McCann writes her life “would have taxed the imagination of a Poe, the narrative capacities of a Gibbon, or an Eliot (George), the tragic sense of

¹³  A CHA official responded via Email 20 August 2015 that size restrictions imposed by the standard sign dimensions is the most likely reason for the exclusion of this information. The Royal Library existed from 1938-1992, the Prince Yi Museum from 1911-1937.

The memoirs cannot be appreciated fully unless read in chronological order, according to Kim Haboush, “as the subjects move from the personal to the public, so do the genres,” i.e. the memoir of 1795, “a family injunction”; 1801, “a memorial”; 1802, “a biography”; 1805, “a historiography.” Very few Koreans read all four memoirs. The often-optional, overly edited middle school text and filial-piety-filled screen accounts color Sado in their minds – with the latter likely dominant as the activation of multiple senses during a film causes more intense memory retention.

The memoirs’ fading is unfortunate. They reveal piercing insight into Joseon politics at the time when 1) Lady Hyegyeong’s husband was killed by order of his father (1762); 2) her uncle was killed by order of her son, King Jeongo (1776); 3) Jeongjo died unexpectedly (1800), and 4) her brother was killed by order of her grandson, King Sunjo (1801). Each year closer to her death (1815) seemed to increase her resolve to provide a thorough accounting. Her last memoir details textbook examples of obsessive compulsive disorder in Yeongjo and Sado’s dissociative identity disorder, vestiphobia and sociopathic outbursts (Kendall, 2015: 79-80). Such detailed descriptions with root causes weaken accusations proffered in books and dramas that she concocted the memoirs to exonerate her family’s role in Sado’s death.

Interest in the ill-fated prince continues to rise. Director Lee Joon-ik released his film about the murder in September 2015. Titled *The Throne* in English and *Sado* in Korean, the box office hit was nominated in the foreign-language category of the 2016 Academy Awards. Across from Changgyeong, the CHA and City of Seoul plan to restore Gyeongmogung, the shrine that King Jeongjo built for his father and that Lady Hyegyeong could see from the now pine-covered perch from which she wrote her memoirs.

**CONCLUSION**

Changes to a tourist site are “a much broader process of identity-building”; a statement “to the wider world of ‘who we are — and are not — now’ and ‘what we aspire to be’” (Light:1070). TripAdvisor reviewers describe the grounds as “park-like” and “serene” and praise the site for being quieter and cheaper than other palaces. The Colonial Period saw large numbers of Japanese and Koreans mingling to sample modern spectacles there amid select ruins from a faceless, denigrated dynasty. In
the Authoritarian Period, huge numbers of people from every corner of the country scrambled to view Changgyeong’s cherry blossoms, exotic wildlife and exciting rides.

Left out was the legacy of the former Prince Yi Museum and the role of the Japanese in the park’s construction. After using the first museum’s collection to raise the stature of Joseon art even higher than during the Authoritarian Period, Civilian Period officials retrained focus on Japanese desecration of the palace and government restoration. Royal reenactments now occasionally populate the halls with bright costumes, faces and names intended to bring out what is currently seen as the best of Joseon culture.

Only indigenous pines and silence have been allowed to grow over the palace grounds where a Korean tragedy that rivals *Hamlet* was written and actually transpired. Internally, Changgyeong’s restorations remind nationals of the symbolic foundation upon which a sense of belonging is based. Externally, they exude a remarkably noble and filial past. Content analysis of publications from three distinct periods of modern Korean history shows that most authors of tourist and cultural guides come to see what they have been told is right before their eyes.
Cultivating Collective Memories

Changgyeonggung’s restored core today

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David Kendall first came to Korea in 1991 as an English teacher. He published 한국인이말할때꼭틀리는영어 (The Precise English Koreans Speak Inaccurately, translated by Jinna Park) in 2004. His interest in Korea’s efforts to promote its national identity developed while editing and writing for Yonhap News and Korea.net. He received an MA in East Asian Studies from his home state Indiana University in 2015. He presently handles international PR and business development for Seoul-based DR & AJU Law Group. He also works freelance as a writer and editor.
Traces of the Imperial Crown Style in Colonial Korea

Nate Kornegay

In the 1920s, a particular architectural feature emerged on the Korean Peninsula. Tented roofs ( hôgyō tsukuri) began to find use as the crowning touch to a handful of modernist- and Art Deco-influenced structures, reflecting an interesting design shift in institutional Japanese architecture, ultimately becoming a part of what was known as the Imperial Crown Style.

Figure 1. Turret of the former Gyeongseong Municipal Office, later Seoul City Hall and now Seoul Metropolitan Library.

The Imperial Crown Style is a niche category of architecture that originated as an amalgam of various styles, briefly popularized under an increasingly nationalistic Japan in the 1930s-40s. Coinciding with a socio-political shift towards conservative thought and aggressive foreign policy, Japan’s modern architecture in general was changing during this time, drawing from a number of sources, with its most Fascist buildings paralleling those of Nazi Germany. The formation of the Imperial Crown Style has its roots in the work of Shimoda Kikutarō who, after significant work experience in the United States that included a stint as a draughtsman in Frank Lloyd Wright’s Chicago office, returned to Japan
and started imagining classical Japanese features in otherwise modern buildings in the 1910s.¹

However, Shimoda was not the first person to blend East and West. The mixture of Classical Japanese and Classical Western architecture goes back to 1850s Yokohama, a place whose buildings would influence the rest of Japan after the 1868 Meiji Restoration. One significant example of this early mixed Japanese-Western style was the First National Bank of Japan in Yokohama, which made use of a basic Western framed structure topped by Classical Japanese irimoya roofs.² Other trends, like the Japonesque art movement, also fused East and West. By the 1920s, culture house design had been popularized in the Japanese upper-middle class, blending architectural features that catered to elements of Western and Japanese lifestyles.³

However, the Imperial Crown Style was distinct from the other mixed styles that came before it. To be clear, while there were certainly overlapping features, Yokohama’s early Japanese-Western structures, the Japonesque movement, and the culture house trend do not appear to have informed the Imperial Crown Style in any way. Rather, the Imperial Crown Style evolved as an institutional one, calling upon design elements found in Modernism, Expressionism, Art Deco, and Wright’s 1923 Imperial Hotel in Tokyo – all topped with one of several available classical Japanese roof types.⁴ In no other place was this more common than in 1930s-1940s Manchuria, where most, if not all, of the government offices in the former capital city, Hsinking (Changchun), were constructed in this style. There, the Imperial Crown buildings were placed in notable public areas, around the present day Peoples’ Square and the puppet state’s Imperial Palace.

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¹ See the 1996 report by the Akita Prefectural Museum entitled A Summary Study of Architect Kikutaro Shimoda: His Life and Professional Achievements (建築家下田菊太郎に関する若干の考察: その生涯と業績について).
² For more on this specific type of architecture, search for examples of what has simply been called by Hatsuta Kō, “Japanese-Western Eclectic Architecture”.
³ See the work of Jordan Sands for more general information on culture houses in Japan. See “A Photographic Introduction to Art Deco Architecture in Korea” in Vol. 91 of Transactions for a brief on culture houses in Korea.
⁴ Frank Lloyd Wright had a significant influence on Japanese architecture throughout the empire once his Imperial Hotel in Tokyo was completed. The Imperial Crown Style would not have developed as it did if the Imperial Hotel had not been built as it was. See the work of Karen Severns for more on Wright’s influence in Japan.

Notable examples in the Japanese metropole consist of two government offices in Nagoya and the Kanagawa Prefectural Office, while in Taiwan buildings like Taipei’s former Japanese justice office still stand. The Kanagawa Prefectural Office is more ornate, having more Art Deco influence. In contrast, the offices in Manchuria were less ornamented, monumental structures, arguably analogous to the Fascist architecture of the Third Reich.

As such, the final appearance of an Imperial Crown Style building could vary quite a bit, and two given examples may not seem to be part of the same architectural style to the casual viewer. This is due to the style’s loose definition, which allows for either a hip-and-gable (*irimoya*) or tented (*hōgyō tsukuri*) roof that “crows” a modernist structure. In Manchuria and in Japan, a tall central tower was common, yet this wasn’t the case when the trend landed on Korean shores.

The first completed structure with a tented roof appears to have been the former South Gyeongsang Provincial Office, built in Busan in 1925. Currently serving as the Dong-a University Museum, this Art Deco building was probably taking architectural cues from the former Gyeongseong Municipal Office, which was under construction at the time and completed in 1926.
The roof of this city hall structure was then in turn drawing from the Imperial Diet Building in Tokyo, which was also under construction between 1920 and 1936. Daegu’s Provincial Hospital, another Art Deco building with Neo-Renaissance flair, went up soon after in 1928.
While these three examples in Korea all share the crowning of a tented roof on an otherwise modernist building, they lack the grandeur of the Imperial Crown styled buildings in Manchuria and the Japanese metropole. The relative plainness of many colonial-era modern structures in Korea was then also reflected in its Imperial Crown Style-influenced buildings.
Some sense of monumentalism could be gathered from these examples in Korea, but rather than having elaborate tented towers or sweeping classical Japanese roofs, they became simplified. All of the examples in Korea have short turrets. This kind of simplification is more apparent when the North Chungcheong Provincial Office is considered. Dating to 1941, this modernist building would have rivaled any government ministry office in Manchuria had a tented or *irimoya* roof been added to the center of the building. Like many institutional buildings in early modern Korea, the completed provincial office was rather plain when compared to similar structures in the metropole, with perhaps only its massive size and layout indicating its purpose.
It is unclear why Imperial Crown roofs were instituted in Korea’s government offices so relatively early, only to go unused during the same time that they flourished in other parts of the Japanese empire. One likely explanation is that these three buildings reflect progressive thought on the part of government designers working in Korea, but were constructed before the elaborate and Fascist versions that came to define the Imperial Crown Style arrived in the 1930s and 1940s. Most of Korea’s had just been built a few years earlier in the 1920s, surely influenced by the Imperial Diet Building in Tokyo.

However, even structures in Korea that were built towards the end of the Japanese occupation could have been constructed in the Imperial Crown Style had the projects had enough money and resources. In Figure 13, note how effortlessly a Classical Japanese roof fits with an otherwise plain modernist structure.

Figure 13. A stylized image of North Chungcheong Provincial Office, imagined as an Imperial Crown Style building with irimoya and tented roofs.

Perhaps the best example of the Imperial Crown Style in Korea was a government museum in Pyongyang, reportedly opened in October 1933. The museum was more Wrightian than other examples of the Imperial Crown Style throughout the empire, being a horizontal building that hugged the ground with the same sense of scale the Chicago architect enjoyed. Using a low central tower and a garden pool outside the entrance, it was not unlike the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. The Pyongyang Museum also shied away from the elaborate Art Deco ornamentation found in buildings like the Kanagawa Prefectural Office, instead being simplified and stripped-down like some of the Manchurian offices, however lacking the Fascist influence of other government buildings.
It is unclear how many Imperial Crown Style buildings had been constructed in Korea by 1945, but it seems unlikely that there were more of the same quality as the Pyongyang Museum. To be sure, the former Gyeongseong Municipal Office, former South Gyeongsang Provincial Office, and former Daegu Provincial Hospital are somewhat weak representations of the style, having been built before the defining examples of the Imperial Crown Style were made between 1928 and 1945. All of these, including the former Gyeongseong Municipal Office, lean more towards Art Deco than anything else. Of the buildings in Korea with tented roofs, only Pyongyang Museum’s was stepped like those in Japan.

While there could have been other traces of this short-lived subcategory of architecture, it is wise to be cautious and calculating when attempting to categorize the many eclectic buildings found throughout the Japanese Empire. For example, at a glance, the old museum in Changgyeong Palace, built in 1908, [photo on page xx] seems to meet the criteria of an Imperial Crown Style building. It is indeed a modern (Western) structure with a classical irimoya Japanese roof (like the Aichi Prefectural Office). Yet on closer examination, the museum essentially had more in common with Yokohama’s first mixed buildings. Like the previously mentioned First National Bank of Japan (built in 1872), the museum’s basic frame was built in the kind of Western “colonial” style that was typical throughout Asia in the late 1800s, featuring shuttered

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5 Interestingly, aside from shrines and religious structures, this museum seems to have been one of the most classically styled Japanese buildings in Korea.
windows akin to British-Colonial bungalow structures. To be sure, Wright’s design influence plays a significant role in model Imperial Crown buildings, an influence that is entirely lacking in the Changgyeong museum as he had yet to begin working on the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo. Similarly, Shimoda had not yet developed plans for this style of architecture.

![Figure 16. First National Bank of Japan, Yokohama.](image)

With few clear examples on the peninsula, and little evidence suggesting its use in lesser-known minor buildings, the Imperial Crown Style then appears to be a very small footnote in Korea’s architectural history. Even within the scope of the entire Japanese Empire, the style seems relatively unimportant when compared to more common forms of architecture. Yet it is not without meaning, for architecture is often a reflection of society’s values, or at the very least the values of its designers. As a possible representation of Japanese nationalism during the early Showa period, the Imperial Crown Style was cut short by the empire’s defeat in 1945. However, had the Japanese Empire survived, and the style continually used, the Korean Peninsula’s future government offices and public centers could have looked very different.

*Note: The author is grateful to historian Suk Jihoon for serving as editor of this article, as well as briefly advising on the Pyongyang Museum.*

**Figure List**

Figures 1, 8, 9. From building plans in the National Archives of Korea.
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Figure 16. Public domain image obtained from Wikimedia Commons, originally published under what is now the Mainichi Shimbun. Uploaded to Wikimedia by user “あばさー.”

Nate Kornegay photographs and writes about early modern architecture in Korea. He is currently working on a number of projects, including the study of a particular ceramic tile trend found throughout the former Japanese Empire. Research articles and architectural photo essays can be found at his website, Colonial Korea. Visit www.colonialkorea.com.
The Hungnam Evacuation: 
A Korean War Christmas Miracle

Ned Forney

Chosin, North Korea, 1950
Beginning in late November 1950, the world’s attention focused on a little-known reservoir in North Korea’s Taebaek Mountain Range: Chosin or Changjin Reservoir. The battle taking place there, one of the fiercest in U.S. history, was being fought in sub-zero temperatures, gale-force winds, and knee-deep snow. The Taebaek Mountains, a formidable expanse of steep, rocky, and unforgiving peaks and valleys, which in the words of US Marine General Oliver P. Smith “were never intended for military operations,”1 would prove to be a merciless killing ground for both UN and Chinese troops.

By early December, U.N. troops, specifically 1st Marine Division, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 41 Royal Commando and attached ROK soldiers, were surrounded by overwhelming Chinese forces. Suffering from the cold weather and nightly attacks, hundreds of men were dying daily. Weeks earlier General Douglas MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief of UN Forces (UNCOM), and General Edward Almond, the US Army X Corps Commander, had received intelligence reports of large Chinese units crossing the border into North Korea, but both men refused to believe, or as some historians say, chose to ignore, the facts on the ground.

Mao Zedong’s repeated warnings to stay clear of China had gone unheeded, and the UN now found itself fighting a Chinese army four times its size. MacArthur’s “home by Christmas” offensive had come to an ignominious end.

What happened over the next ten days shocked the world. The 1st Marine Division, led by General Oliver P. Smith, did what most people thought was impossible. Against all odds, the Marines broke out of the Chosin trap and made their way to Hungnam, a port on North Korea’s east coast. Fighting the Chinese and the brutal cold every step of the way, acts

of extraordinary sacrifice, courage, and perseverance became commonplace.² The epic “breakout” to the sea would make headlines around the world and arguably save the UN from a catastrophic defeat.

On December 9, 1950, after days of vicious fighting along the MSR, a narrow, ice and snow-covered dirt road leading to Hungnam, the last Marines arrived in Hungnam and soon began embarking for Busan. X Corps had been ordered to redeploy to the South to begin preparing for the defense of Seoul.

The Refugees
But while US Marines and soldiers were withdrawing to the coast and beginning their amphibious evacuation, another story was developing. Tens of thousands of desperate and terrified North Korean civilians were also making their way to the sea. The largest military amphibious evacuation of civilians, under combat conditions, in American history was about to take place.

Refugees making their way to Hungnam.
(photo credit: public domain)

Refugees from countless North Korean villages, towns, and farms were on the move. With personal possessions – clothes, housewares, family heirlooms, occasionally even babies – strapped to their backs, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, wives and husbands were making their way through snow-covered roads, treacherous mountain passes, and enemy-occupied territory. They had hugged their relatives,

² Nearly 18,000 Americans were killed, wounded, or missing in action, with an estimated 60,000 Chinese casualties.
The Hungnam Evacuation

promised to return in a few days, and said good-bye. For most, it was the last time they would see their families.

With the land route to the South blocked, the refugees were hoping to make it to Hungnam, where they heard US Navy and Merchant Marine ships were waiting to take them to freedom. Cold, hungry, and exhausted, they pressed on, knowing they would be imprisoned, tortured, or executed if caught by North Korean or Chinese Communists.

For many of the refugees, suffering from harsh winter conditions and caught between attacking Chinese troops and retreating UN forces, their journey ended tragically. Thousands perished. Over the next few weeks, untold numbers of civilians from northeastern Korea would die from exposure and enemy/friendly fire.

For those who did survive the exodus to Hungnam, however, the sight of U.S. Navy and Merchant Marine vessels greeted them upon their arrival. But as they soon realized, the ships weren’t loading civilians. MacArthur had ordered all U.N. troops and their equipment, supplies, and vehicles to leave first. The refugees were at the bottom of the priority list and would have to wait.

(Photo credit: Ned Forney)

**The Evacuation**

Marine Colonel Edward H. Forney, the Deputy Chief of Staff of X Corps and the man in charge of the withdrawal, immediately went to work loading men and equipment. Appointed by Gen. Almond as the
evacuation control officer, Forney was “responsible for operating the port, withdrawing units to the staging areas, embarking the troops, loading supplies and evacuating the refugees.” There was little time to waste.

A World War II veteran and one of the Marine Corps’ top amphibious experts, Forney had arrived in Japan nine months earlier to train US Army personnel in ship-to-shore operations. He played a part in the Inchon and Wonsan Landings and would now be accountable for withdrawing over 125,000 troops, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of military materiel from Hungnam.

Rear Admiral James H. Doyle, Commander of Task Force 90, the huge armada of ships assigned to evacuate X Corps from Hungnam to Busan, would also play an immensely important role in the operation. As one of the US Navy’s most respected World War II amphibious warfare officers, Doyle had been put in charge of planning and executing the attack on Inchon and the landing at Wonsan. As the senior Naval officer at Hungnam, he was now responsible for everything that did or didn’t happen in the port and surrounding waters.

The two officers and their team had less than two weeks to evacuate Almond’s X Corps. Working from a shed on Hungnam’s Pier #2, Forney and his men never left the port during the entire operation. Doyle, monitoring the withdrawal from his command ship, USS Mount McKinley,

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4 Edward H. Forney, Evacuation from Hungnam Memorandum, June 25, 1953
also stayed in Hungnam harbor throughout the evolution. Neither man would leave the port until the evacuation’s final day.

The job of orchestrating the movement of units and ships, formulating loading plans, fine-tuning operational timetables, and solving the inevitable problems that would arise during the massive amphibious withdrawal was a herculean feat. The biggest challenge, however, was one they hadn’t anticipated. Almost overnight 100,000 North Korean refugees had filled the port, all hoping to board an American ship.

As it was now apparent to the evacuation’s planners, the growing number of refugees presented a serious dilemma: there were simply too many people and too few vessels. Making matters worse, U.S. military guards had caught enemy soldiers disguised as refugees infiltrating the port. If civilians were allowed to board US ships, the chance of a saboteur joining them would increase dramatically. A North Korean spy detonating an explosive aboard a packed troop carrier would kill hundreds.

As the operation entered its second week and refugees continued to flood into Hungnam, MacArthur and his staff discussed their options. In a glimmer of hope for freezing refugees huddled at the water’s edge, a small number of civilians were embarked in mid-December. If the Chinese didn’t attack and more shipping became available, there were also plans to evacuate an additional 25,000 refugees.

Throughout December, as military personnel withdrew to Busan, the refugees watched and waited; many were beginning to lose hope. With Christmas Eve, or D-Day, the evacuation deadline, quickly approaching and the Chinese inching closer, the North Korean civilians were becoming increasingly desperate.

Dr. Hyun Bong-hak, with North Korean boy and his sister, October 1950.
(photo credit: Esther Hyun)
The Hungnam Evacuation

On December 21, after much prodding from X Corps civil affairs officer Hyun Bong-hak, a medical doctor from North Korea who spoke perfect English, and his close confidant and advocate, Col. Forney, the decision was made to evacuate as many civilians as possible if available shipping could be found. Thanks to Dr. Hyun’s frequent meetings with Gen. Almond and his staff, the refugees were finally a priority. Forney and Doyle were now in a race against time.

A Christmas Eve Miracle
During the final four days of the evacuation, a flurry of activity occurred on the docks, piers, beaches, and ships of Hungnam. Doyle had masterfully acquired additional vessels, and Forney and his team were now filling them as fast as possible. As “three Victory ships and two LSTs,” were loaded with thousands of refugees during the waning hours of the operation, US Navy battleships, cruisers, and Corsairs pounded the Chinese in the surrounding mountains.

On December 22, SS Meredith Victory, a Merchant Marine cargo ship skippered by Captain Leonard LaRue, sailed into Hungnam harbor. “As far as my glasses could sweep,” LaRue wrote, “the dock area was dark with masses of humanity, all caught in a giant vise. Behind them were the Communist Chinese who would kill or enslave them; before them was the vast open sea.”

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5 Forney, Edward, “After Action Report,” p.16
6 Lester David, “I Witnessed a Christmas Miracle,” This Week Magazine, December, 1960, p. 1
The next day, Meredith Victory left Hungnam with 14,000 refugees crammed into its cargo holds and on it decks. The *greatest rescue operation ever by a single vessel* had begun. Three days later the ship arrived at Geoje Island with all its passengers – including five babies that had been born during the voyage – alive. Often referred to as the “Ship of Miracles,” Meredith Victory became a symbol of all vessels that participated in the humanitarian rescue of 100,000 North Korean civilians from Hungnam. A decade later, LaRue told a reporter, “God’s own hand was at the helm of my ship.”

When asked about Meredith Victory’s historic voyage, Bob Lunney, a 23-year-old crewman aboard the vessel in 1950, said, “War is also about preserving the integrity of a nation and the dignity of its people – we felt we had done that.”

By 2p.m. on Christmas Eve, a total of 100,000 refugees had been rescued from the port. Writing about the unprecedented military and humanitarian evacuation, two prominent Naval historians said, “No corresponding operation in military history exists.”

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7 David, p.10  
8 Author’s interview with Bob Lunney, November 2015  
9 Malcolm Cagle and Frank Manson, *The Sea War in Korea*, Naval Institute Press, 1957 p.190
On December 24, the last day of the Chosin-Hungnam saga, the lead story in *The New York Times* read: “Evacuation of Hungnam Completed . . . UN Fleet Brings Out 105,000 Soldiers and 100,000 Refugees.”

US President Harry Truman was ecstatic. “I thank God for the success of the Hungnam operation. It is the best Christmas present I’ve ever had,” he proclaimed after receiving a 1 a.m. Christmas call from Omar Bradley, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff\(^\text{10}\).

The United Nations’ first humanitarian rescue operation was over, and Truman, America, and much of the world breathed a sigh of relief. A likely UN withdrawal from the Korean Peninsula – and a possible larger conflict with China and the Soviet Union – had been avoided.

History would show that Doyle and Forney were a near-perfect team. Doyle’s “wise leadership, tireless efforts and profound knowledge of amphibious warfare\(^\text{11}\)” proved to be invaluable to the success of Hungnam. He was the right man, at the right place, at the right time. Doyle, however, would point out in interviews and articles years later that the operation would not have been possible without Forney’s contribution: “Any credit flowing to me for the Hungnam redeployment must be shared with the man who controlled the port, Colonel Forney. No words of praise are too high to describe his performance.”\(^\text{12}\)

But both men would be the first to admit that Hungnam, like Inchon and every other military operation they participated in, was a team effort. Without General MacArthur and Almond’s approval, Dr. Hyun Bong-hak’s passionate pleas and perseverance, and the dedication, courage, and fortitude of every serviceman who participated in the evacuation, the rescue of 100,000 North Korean civilians would never have happened.

*Postscript* – It is estimated that nearly a million descendants of those rescued at Hungnam live in freedom today in South Korea, the United States, and other countries around the world. ROK President Moon Jae-in is one of them.

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*Ned Forney is a US Marine Corps veteran and former educator who lives in Seoul and is writing a non-fiction book about the Hungnam Evacuation. With the*

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\(^{10}\) *New York Times* article, December 25, 1950

\(^{11}\) Doyle, James, Biographical Sketch, Naval History and Heritage Command, December 1953

\(^{12}\) Doyle, James, *Proceedings*, “December 1950 at Hungnam,” p. 49
support of the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) and the Heungnam Evacuation Memorial Committee, Ned has interviewed 30 former North Korean refugees rescued during the December 1950 amphibious withdrawal. Ned is also the grandson of the late Colonel Edward H. Forney, the evacuation control officer during the Hungnam operation. Ned’s writing appears in the Korea Times, Korea Herald, and newspapers and magazines in the United States. He writes a weekly blog (nedforney.com) and frequently gives lectures to university and civic groups in Seoul. He can be reached at ned@nedforney.com
Reinventing the Lost Village of Zandari

Jon Dunbar

Introduction
“Hongdae” is the name we give to a lively part of Mapo-gu in western Seoul, a 15.63-square-kilometer (at one time at least) maze of alleys and overstimulation and youth culture. The name comes from an abbreviation of Hongik Daehakgyo (University), but usually in English we just use it metonymously for the whole area between the university and Hongik University Station on Seoul Metro Line 2, as well as now the Airport Express (AREX) and Gyeongui-Jungang Line. In Korean it is called Hongdae Entrance, Hongdae Street, or Hongdae Front. Before the university moved in, Japanese colonialists called it Saikyo-ri, “Small Bridge Village.” The same name in the Korean language is often stylised as Zandari.

Everyone who knows the area can distinguish it from other areas, such as nearby Sinchon, but its edges are undefined and constantly expanding. For years it had been considered bound by Line 2 to the west, Line 6 to the south, the 79-meter-tall hill Wowsan to the east, and old train tracks to the north still called Gicha-gil by some. It has primarily covered Seogyo-dong, but also now includes parts of Donggyo-dong, Yeonnam-dong, Hapjeong-dong, and Seogang-dong. The area is geographically confusing, full of triangles where one expects squares, with twisting roads that prevent a proper street grid, distorting and

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1 홍대입구, 홍대거리, 홍대앞
2 잔다리
3 왜우산臥牛山, clearly means “sitting cow mountain,” but when I was new I imagined it was named when someone reached the summit and remarked “Wow!” so I continue using that romanisation.
4 기차길
5 Seogang-dong merged with Sangsu-dong and Changjeon-dong in 2007, and also includes Dangin-dong and Hajung-dong.
exaggerating perceptions of physical distances. This makes it easy to get lost, but also enables some brilliant shortcuts and well-hidden corners.

Hongdae area including Hongik University, seen 7 May 2018.

The current Hongdae area is defined around topographical and urban infrastructure features, which have guided development, land value, and human behaviour. Over the decades, it has gone through various modes: industrial/transportation, residential, artistic, agricultural, musical, commercial, and tourist, with one in conflict with the next or several coexisting and overlapping at once. The area has meant many things to many people.

When I moved to Korea in December 2003, at my earliest opportunity I went out in search of Club Drug, the legendary punk venue that birthed not just Korean punk music but also its indie culture. I quickly found myself a part of Korea’s underground music community. Now, almost 15 years later, as that music community finds itself pushed out of the area and the streets I once knew become unrecognizable, I find an intensified interest in looking back and figuring out what Zandari means.

Bridges and Streams Era
The land in western Seoul was basically all part of Yeonhee Township, belonging to Goyang County prior to 1936. Yeonhee Township had covered much of western Seoul north of the river, stretching from Susaek-
Reinventing the Lost Village of Zandari

ri to North Ahyeon-ri and covering most of modern-day Mapo-gu\(^6\), plus parts of Seodaemun-gu\(^7\), and Eunpyeong-gu\(^8\). Yonggang Township covered areas more southern and eastern including, most importantly for this article, Dangin-dong, Changjeon-dong, and Sangsu-dong (the latter two which became Seogang-dong in 2007). In 1944 the boundaries of Mapo-gu were formed, and in 1946 many of the names we know today were formalised.

Yeonhee Township area was much more isolated from the capital to the east, compared to today when a quick drive through Sajik (built 1967) and Geumhwa (1979) tunnels gets you from Yonsei University to Gyeongbok Palace in five minutes.

During Joseon, the area was agricultural. In 1424 Prince Hyoryeong built Huiujeong (pavilion meeting delightful rain), a pavilion where he could oversee farming activities. King Sejong, his younger brother, named it Huiujeong after visiting during a rainstorm. Later, Prince Wolsan (1454-87) renamed it Mangwonjeong (although it is in today’s Hapjeong-dong, not Mangwon-dong). The area was prone to flooding, and the pavilion was damaged in 1925, rebuilt only in 1989.

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\(Bulgwang\) Stream (A), \(Hongje\) Stream (B), name unknown (C), \(Saikyo\) Stream (D)
\(Bongwon\) Stream (E), Seontongmul Stream (F)

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\(^6\) Nogosan-dong, Seogyo-dong, Donggyo-dong, Hapjeong-dong, Mangwon-dong, Seongsan-dong, Jung-dong, Sangam-dong, and Yeonnam-dong

\(^7\) North Ahyeon-dong, Daehyeon-dong, Changcheon-dong, Sinchon-dong, Bongwon-dong, North and South Gajwa-dong, and Yeonhee-dong

\(^8\) Jungsan-dong, Susaek-dong
Saikyo Stream came down from the valley of modern-day Yeonhee-dong in the north, and many small bridges crossed it, giving the area its name. This stream ran south where it met a smaller stream flowing from Hongje Stream to the north and west, right around Donggyo-dong’s border with Seogyo-dong. From there it flowed out to the Han River, dividing today’s Mangwon-dong and Hapjeong-dong. It was buried sometime during the 1910-45 Japanese occupation, and 1925-32 construction of the manmade Seontongmul Stream in the east affected its course or volume. Its course is important, as most manmade passages in the surrounding area are aligned to it where possible, which is why the streets don’t conform to a proper grid plan. It is also worth noting, however, the Japanese often eschewed a square street grid, often building irregular street networks for defence purposes. Whether this current layout is characterised by the Korean sense of harmony with the natural landscape, or by Japan’s desire for placing a labyrinth to thwart northern invaders, or some of both, is probably lost to history at this point.

The area around the stream was divided into Upper Zandari (Donggyo-dong) and Lower Zandari (Seogyo-dong and possibly Mangwon-dong and Hapjeong-dong). It is unclear when the name Zandari came into use. It is widely considered a historic name, but Zandari is also sort of a reverse translation back into “pure” Korean from Saikyo-ri, which has appeared on documents as early as 1700s.

The present-day names Seogyo-dong and Donggyo-dong refer to western and eastern bridges, or sides of a bridge. Although the two dongs are largely situated north-south, where Donggyo-ro passes between them the border runs northwest-southeast, so Seogyo-dong is kind of westward
from that perspective. Elsewhere in Seogyo-dong, there is a Westbridge Live Hall named after this neighbourhood.

The name Zandari itself appears throughout the neighbourhood, in park names (Upper Zandari Park at the former site of Saikyo-ri Station, and Zandari Children’s Park further downstream at the corner between Seogyo-dong, Mangwon-dong, and Hapjeong-dong), as well as apartment buildings, restaurants, even convenience stores. Many streets and alleys in the area bear the name Zandari, most notably Zandari-ro (named in 1993) which runs perpendicular to Donggyo-ro, Line 2, Eoulmadang-ro, and Wowsan-ro, likely a former major route through the area that would have bridged the stream.

And there’s Zandari Festa, a music showcase held every fall since 2012 in multiple venues across the area, turning it into a “city of music.” Festival organiser Dalse Kong Yoon-young saw deeper meaning in the name. “I hope people will experience the broader world through this small bridge,” he told me in a 2016 interview.

9 “작은 다리가 연결되어 좀 더 넓은 세상을 경험할 수 있기를 바란다.”
Steam and Coal Era
Just as the region is now bound between four stations serving four subway lines, it was all built along three earlier aboveground train routes: the Danginri Line, the Gyeongseong Loop, and the Gyeongui Line.

The Gyeongui Line opened in 1905 in time for the 1904-05 Russo-Japanese War. It remained a strategic route for Japan’s colonisation of northern Korea and Manchuria, but it also led to the development and settlement of what is now western Seoul.

The Japanese colonists favoured Yongsan Station over Seoul Station, likely seeing it as a shortcut skipping the city center. That’s why it passed this far south along what’s called the Yongsan Line. Later, in

10 경성순환노선
1921, the Gyeongui Line introduced a more northern route, also a single-track line starting from Seoul Station cutting through Ahyeon-dong and passing through a tunnel to Sinchon Railway Station, then continuing on an elevated track to Gajwa Station and Susaek Station, and from there up through northern Korea and Imperial Japan’s colonial frontiers.

Today’s Gyeongui Line, confusingly, still follows both courses, providing Seoul Metro services on the southern Yongsan Line and wider train services on the Sinchon Line including commuter and tourist trains such as the DMZ Train, as well as cargo trains. The Airport Express (AREX), opened December 2010, basically follows the Yongsan Line’s path deep underground. Above it is the new Gyeongui Line, opened in 2012 and merged with the Jungang Line in 2014 to become today’s Gyeongui-Jungang Line.

Yongsan Line tracks remained until maybe 2005. The name Gicha-gil is commonly found on local restaurants, some of which for a time offered outdoor seating on the inactive train tracks. Today, signs identify the same street as “Ttaeng-Ttaeng Street,”11 due to the train

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11 쩔序幕거리
crossing sound. However, I don’t know anyone who ever heard of this name before. A sign in the park says the street is “still home to a number of decrepit storage spaces where hungry artists produced their work,” saying “Even today, run-down eateries where poor artists and students used to sit and drink…remain…reminding visitors of the good old days.”

Now, the Gyeongui Line Forest Park memorialises the train line with a linear park stretching from Gajwa Station to Hyochang Park Station. The popular Donggyo-dong stretch, previously more of a taxi driver hangout, picked up the nickname Yeontral Park. Southeast of there is the newly opened Gyeongui Line Book Street, a 250-meter park running from Hongdae Station, through Gicha-gil, toward Sogang Station. It recognises the reportedly 3,909 publishing and printing companies active in Mapo-gu, of which 1,047 are said to operate in the vicinity. Munhak Dongne seems to be a major backer of this.

Gyeongseong Loop stations: Gyeongseong (A), Seosomun (B), Ahyeon-ri (C), Sinchon (D), Yeonhee (E), Sogang (F), Dongmak (G), Gongdeok-ri (H), Misaengjeong/Wonjeong (I), Yongsan (J)

12 연트럴파크
13 경의선책거리
There is also a “Book Street Station” stashed under Wow Bridge (the only remaining bridge in the area), which has absolutely no historic origin.

Both sections of the park are pleasant open areas with materials and designs intended to evoke trains. They both receive a robust number of visitors, but discourage rapid flow due to separation by Yanghwa-ro and a construction site. It seems an incredibly wasted opportunity to not have turned the whole thing into a rail trail bicycle commuter path. There was also a very short Sinchon Connecting Line,\(^{14}\) which was a local part of the Gyeongseong Loop, a 10-stop circular train line that opened in 1929. It serviced Seoul Station and Yongsan Station, passing through Sogang Station where it curved north, up to Yeonhee Station in front of Yonsei University, and back toward the aboveground Sinchon Station where it headed straight back to Seoul Station. It serviced many Japanese areas of colonial Seoul, including Saikyo-ri. The trains were short, facilitating shorter interchanges, and they had an engine at either end so they didn’t have to turn around to reverse direction; not useful for a ring line, but likely helpful for the Danginri Line, also opened the same year.

\(^{14}\) 신촌직결선 or 신촌연결선
Yeonhee Station closed in 1939 and many other stations closed in 1944, such as Seosomun, Ahyeon-ri, Gongdeok-ri, and Misaeng-jeong, apparently to repurpose war materials. This date marked the decline of train services here, as the line lost interchanges as well as passenger trains. By 1960, the line was used mostly for cargo. Signage around Hongdae says the line lasted until 1975, closing right after the 1974 opening of Seoul Metro. Today, the narrow connecting line between Sogang and Sinchon clearly serves as the western boundary for Sinchon area.

But it’s the Danginri Line that has defined the Hongdae area more than any other train lines. This spur line curves southward to the river, along the course of what is now known as in various sections as Eoulmadang-ro, Walking Path, Art Street, and Parking Lot Street. The Danginri Line opened in 1929 to serve the riverside Seoul Thermal Power Plant. Intended to deliver anthracite coal and personnel to the plant, it follows a course parallel to the present-day Line 2 from Hongik University Station to Hapjeong Station, just a couple alleys’ widths southward. This rail line started from Sogang Station, which has reappeared recently on the Gyeongui-Jungang Line, veering southward at Saikyo-ri Station, passing through Broadcasting Station before reaching Danginri Station by the river.

Saikyo-ri Station was found in the armpit between the Yongsan and Danginri lines, at the present-day location of Upper Zandari Park, a small park with a public washroom, graffiti, a gazebo, and not much else. Saikyo-ri Station closed in 1944, probably timed with the Gyeongseong Loop closures. Until the early 2000s there remained traces of the old station, but nothing is left now. The area was said to be home to many Japanese establishments, as plant workers could take the train line a couple stops to restaurants or izakaya. Today, Hongdae has many Japanese-style buildings, but all were built within the last four years, designed by Kim Suk of Design Group People. Many of them are Japanese-style restaurants and izakayas. But one of the main ones, Samgeori Pocha on the ground and second floor of a building at the three-way intersection between Zandari-ro and Wowsan-ro, is formerly a seafood tent restaurant at that location, closed in 2010 or 2011. These faux-machiya buildings seem intended to evoke nostalgia for 1970s-1980s Korea, rather than Japan or Japanese-occupied Seoul.

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15 어울마당로, 걷고싶은길 or 걷고싶은거리, 예술거리, 주차장길
16 무연탄
17윗잔다리공원
18 삼거리포차
Traces of Japanese influence are also found in Seogyo365, further down the Danginri Line south of Saikyo-ri Station. It’s a skinny row of one- to three-storey buildings surrounded on both sides by alleys. Where the train tracks used to run, there were still traces in the alley surface until 2016. After efforts to protect the buildings from demolition, they are now mostly commercial spaces housing streetside clothing stores and fortune tellers, these buildings still stand due to preservation efforts. Said to be originally housing for power plant workers, I have trouble believing this as the buildings are right up against the tracks. And their odd configuration, while by today’s standards cozy, suggests industrial or commercial spaces instead.
Just south of Seogyo365 is the next stop on the Danginri Line, Broadcasting Station, located where Eoulmadang-ro connects with what is Wowsan-ro 21-gil to the east and Zandari-ro 6-gil to the west. To the southwest of this intersection is a pizza slice of low-rise buildings, which is the former location of the station. It originally serviced the Kyungsung Broadcasting Corporation (KBS) Yeonhee site, a powerful radio transmitter opened nearby in 1927. This station opened in 1932 and closed in 1974, and traces of the train tracks remained until the 2000s when the “Walking Street” project introduced “improvements” the pavement which covered up the outline of the platform. Until 2016 the outline of the station platform still visible.

Following the line further south, it runs all the way to the power plant. From Zandari-ro to Dongmak-ro (which runs over Line 6), it is still pretty lively, but south of there it is quiet and residential, for now. Down at the end is the former location of Danginri Station, right at the entrance to Seoul Electric Power Plant, also known as Danginri Power Plant.

Danginri was Korea’s first thermal power plant, opening in 1929. Originally generating power by burning anthracite coal, it gradually converted to oil, completing around 1980. In the 2000s, plans were to totally close the plant by 2012.

The plant, surprisingly, has earned impressive goodwill from artists in the local community, which sees it favourably for having powered the area, thus producing culture. From 2008 to 2012, Korean artist Rhee Kang-hee gathered photos and art of the plant on Flickr, calling it the Danginri Project. He wrote:

It’s story about Danginri power station in sangsu, seoul, korea. she will vanish away like smoke in 2012. Nothing can prevent it. she has many political, architectural, enviromental issue. but we don’t care that issue. we don’t have heavy message. Anyway. we love her. just shoot and draw, and write. record. before she disappeared.

Rhee reported sharing pictures of the smoke from the plant agitated city authorities, even though it was only water vapour. Sometimes the media misused pictures of the smokestacks emitting steam to show it as a source of pollution.

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19 방송소앞역
20 경성방송국 연회방송소
The redevelopment project didn’t come to pass, and the current plan is to rebuild it underground before closing it for good. Ultimately, it is expected to become riverside parkland.

The Danginri Line itself, no longer needed for the plant, closed in 1982. The former location of the tracks found new use, and personal accounts describe its conversion to farmland in the 1980s, hosting a market in the late 1980s, then in the 1990s becoming used for parking. It is possible all three uses coexisted at once in different or overlapping sections, and it is also possible the car parking was introduced to force out unwelcomed lower-class elements.

Of course, in 1984 Line 2 opened, with metro service to Hapjeong, Hongik University, and Sinchon stations. That opened up the area to more citizens and probably was the single most important factor to what happened next (sorry, university).

**Arts University and Indie Music Era**

Hongik University original opened as Hong-Moon Higher Education Institute in Yongsan-gu in 1946, only moving to its present location in 1955. The main arch building, Hongmun Hall, only came up in the mid-2000s, and before that the university’s presence was much less prominent, basically just a bunch of easily dismissed plain-looking buildings on a hillside.

The surrounding area has seen a strong arts community develop, with many galleries, studios, print shops, arts supplies stores, and other useful amenities for artists. They can still be found along Wowsan-ro.
running between the university front gate and Gicha-gil, but used to be more widespread.

The three brother members of Sanullim apparently lived here early on, somewhere in the vicinity of Gicha-gil, leading to various businesses in the area named after them, such as Sanullim Small Theater\textsuperscript{21} and Sanullim 1992, a makgeolli bar.

The Hongdae area, in the early stages of the burgeoning Korean youth culture, became known for infatuation with Japanese pop culture, back when that was still taboo here, and newspaper articles criticised the local youth culture for accepting their former colonial oppressors.

Then in 1994, a cafe called Drug opened in the basement of an otherwise unremarkable building in Sangsu-dong. Once it began hosting concerts, it fell into disrepair, with any decorative features torn off until the bare concrete shell of the building was exposed. It was here that legendary bands like Crying Nut and No Brain got their start. In the early days of Korean punk, there was friction between Korean identity and foreign punk, and the term “Joseon punk” was used to alleviate this cognitive dissonance, as seen in Epstein and Tangherlini’s 2001 documentary “Our Nation.”

Drug lit a spark in the area. It could have happened anywhere in the city, really, maybe Myeong-dong or Daehangno, but it had to happen somewhere, and Hongdae won that roulette wheel. The Hongdae location was more coincidental than anything, and Hongdae students had no particular meaningful role in the club or the live music community that grew out of there. For this to happen, it needed a central locale, where people could experiment free from the judgement of mainstream society, and it had to be affordable.

The rise of Drug led to a distinct new indie music culture in Korea, with very little continuity from earlier music movements. Two elements in that era exposed Korean youths to all the foreign music that had been denied them over the past couple decades: the still-recent democratisation as well as the newly introduced internet. In supposedly foreign genres such as punk and hip-hop, Korean youths found a language to express something deeply personal about themselves, which developed as distinctly Korean forms.

However, Korean mainstream society did not fully welcome this new culture, which it saw as disrespectful, amateur, and alien. Its adherents were misfits and misanthropes, marginalised from mainstream society. In the 1990s, strict laws against live music basically handicapped

\textsuperscript{21} 산울림소국장
the music scene financially. Landlords and neighbours despised the existence of live venues, choosing not to embrace the neighbourhood’s newfound vitality as ground zero for indie music. Meanwhile, the neighbourhood was also filling with nightclubs, where many of the stereotypes against live music came true: these were places for boozy bar fights, a promiscuous pickup culture, and lots of high-volume noise. But while live music venues starved, nightclubs could profit off selling canned music and drinks. The law finally changed around 2000, which led to nationwide celebrations.

Then, 2002 was a watershed year, as both Korean indie music and Hongdae culture blew up. Crying Nut became a household name after performing at World Cup events. And Seoul Metro Line 6, opened in late 2000, helped open up the area, facilitating travel to the area. A foreign resident of the time described Line 6, which moves between Sangsu Station and Itaewon Station, as the perfect train line for foreigners. The public washroom in Hongdae Playground was awarded a plaque reading “Seoul Best Toilet 2002,” the last year this would be possible, as it is hideous now.

In 2003, the city government proposed designating the area a cultural district, which fell apart as everybody argued about what this could mean and what to do about it. Artists and musicians in the area had territorial feelings about the communities they had built, while people disagreed about monetising it or preserving its unique culture. The plan stalled due to lack of consensus.

Also dealing a blow to the music community, at least the punk corner of it, the members of Crying Nut began their military service all together. Drug was gutted without its golden goose. I’ve heard of bands abandoning their smaller labels for Drug, only to find themselves stranded. No band could come close to reaching Crying Nut’s level of fame. Drug closed without fanfare after a show on January 17, 2004, which was very poorly attended and had four or five bands, all of which put on a half-assed performance, except the last band, Rock Tigers, which performed like they were playing to a packed stadium regardless of the reality.

But there was a younger, hungrier punk community ready to fill the void. As Drug screened who could play through auditions, many of the rejected bands had formed other labels, such as Munhwa Sagidan and Cuju connected with No Brain, plus hardcore label GMC Records, MF\textsuperscript{22} Crew from Cheongju and BPJC\textsuperscript{23} from Incheon. But most notable was

\textsuperscript{22} M for 무심천, use your imagination to figure out what F stands for
\textsuperscript{23} 부평지랄코어
Skunk Label by Won Jong-hee of 1996-formed streepunk band Rux. In 2000 he opened a basement venue along the former route of the Sinchon Connecting Line, literally the wrong side of the tracks, at the edge of the imposingly named Nogosan-dong. The name was originally Skunk Live Hall, but was modified to Skunk Hell as a joke and stuck that way. Graffiti they left in the alley entrance is still visible today, which may be the oldest standing “modern” graffiti in Korea. Skunk Hell was open until January 2004, according to Jong-hee, but my own memories of that time contradict that timeline.

Stories from those days make it sound quite rough, as the kids there, unlike the Joseon punks at Drug, attempted to live lifestyles as close to “authentic” punk as possible under poor economic conditions. Some members of this scene made money as day labourers, and a few bragged they would mug clubbers, especially foreigners, for extra money. Apparently someone, I’m not saying who but he’s now a professional tattoo artist, bought tattooing equipment from Japan, which he and a friend, I’m not saying who but he’s now a famous rockstar here, used to practice on each other.

It turned out Jong-hee had a deal to relocate to a nice new venue. However, the building owner died suddenly, and his family, not knowing about the deal, instead gave the space to the owner of Drug, and the place became DGBD, standing for Drug and Blue Devil (another live music venue in the area). And Skunk moved into the original iconic Drug location.

20 January 2004, was a typical quiet Tuesday night in Hongdae. The pogo punk band Couch played to an empty room in Club Freebird, basically a practice session rather than a concert. Over at Club Drug, Jong-hee was covering over the old paint on the walls. When asked whether he should be covering up the historic graffiti, he said “It’s time to start our own history.”

Skunk Hell II opened on 24 January 2004, with 14 bands playing all night until the subway opened. Among them was Rux, performing “Hongdae Belongs to Me,” a localised version of the 1982 Cock Sparrer song “England Belongs to Me,” as well as other Korean punk anthems such as “Our Minds are All the Same.”24 In those days, Jong-hee carried the whole scene on his shoulders, running a label, a venue, and a band, as well as various other endeavours. I used to remark if you wanted to stop Korean punk, all you needed to do was take out Jong-hee. This was a

24 “우리는 한마음”
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structural weakness, as any calamity to Jong-hee or his venue was a calamity for the whole scene.

One thing Skunk couldn’t get right was a liquor licence, because of the technicality it didn’t have an emergency exit. As a result, people always had to cross the street out front to get to the 7-Eleven for drinks, so what did it matter, other than to economically pressure the club? At a couple shows, someone would bring in large-size bottles of soju, which would be available for everyone for free, including minors. So at least they weren’t profiting off selling alcohol to minors.

It was always a Korean thing that concerts start early, usually around 5 or 7, and then end early before the subways close. Quite often, foreigners would show up around 10, only to find the show about to end. But for those who didn’t catch the last train home, there’d be a full night of activity until the first train. Usually from the venue, we’d all go together to a restaurant, basically depositing money in the hands of unappreciative local business owners who were probably picturing the 1999 movie “Attack the Gas Station.” In the warmer months punks would buy alcohol in bulk at convenience stores and move on to Hongdae Playground. Apparently the grounds had just been cleaned up since
summer 2003, adding in a rubbery brick floor probably made from recycled tires that were clean and comfortable enough to sit or even sleep on.

Hongdae in those days was off-limits to US soldiers, probably good for the area as it prevented it from turning into another military camp town, while also meaning the MPs never patrolled here. But it didn’t stop all USFK soldiers; quite a few responsible soldiers sought out the Korean punk scene.

Once in early 2005, a US Air Force friend asked me, “Where is Hongdae?” I didn’t understand at first, until he elaborated he meant where was the university. It eventually came out he thought it was an insurgent training camp and if we got too close we would be lynched. This was apparently what some USFK personnel really believed back then, perhaps as a white lie so they wouldn’t feel bad about being banned from the area.

In reality, they were banned for a series of high-profile conflicts between soldiers and locals, which never ends well, especially when the media gets involved. In one case, US soldiers disrupted traffic along one road, for whatever reason, and when a taxi driver got out of his car to confront them, one slashed his throat.
On April 16, 2005, there was an incident in the stairwell above Skunk Hell, when a soldier and a female Canadian English teacher went up there to fool around. There were questions of intoxication and consent and the soldier was chased away. It turned out, the two had been bracing themselves against a door, and someone was at home on the other side. Days later, due to complaints made, the venue was forced to cover up a lot of the exterior graffiti, facing allegations it was a sex club. Apparently somewhere among the graffiti it said “group sex.”

Things got worse on July 30, 2005, when Rux was invited to appear on the MBC music show “Music Camp,” in a segment titled something disrespectful, like “Is this bad?” Some elements of the punk scene opposed this sort of cooperation with mainstream society, but the event proceeded. As Rux completed the song “From Now Till the End,” two of their supporters clad in one-piece jumpsuits and Adicts-style clown makeup suddenly disrobed, pogoing around the stage totally nude. Due to producer incompetence, the scene was broadcast live nationally.

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25 때 석
26 “지금부터 끝까지”
Skunk Hell made a surprise appearance in a Japanese comic book. As I joked at the time, it looks like all the white people are out front, as usual.

This ended up very bad PR for the live music scene, with even then-future President Lee Myung-bak calling for a blacklist of musicians. The two flashers spent a couple months in jail, and prosecutors tried to put Jong-hee in there with them. The punk scene went into hiding, and the rest of the indie scene went on the defence. Jong-hee’s new look became clean-cut as he had to do image control. Another punk, who had been wearing a Clash band shirt with a popular design that contained elements of the Rising Sun flag, shaved off his Mohawk and held a press conference.

Skunk saw a dropoff in newcomers, while shows relied on only getting the old guard out. For the next five years, the punk scene aged accordingly. Skunk was a money-losing venture, only kept open due to donations by close friends. Finally after months of inactivity, it had an official final show on 3 January 2009, with Rux and Crying Nut headlining a free show, which resulted in the place being totally flooded with young fans forcing out the longtime supporters.
The writing had been on the wall for years, as the indie scene, in a city of 10 million, was just too small to economically support it. What’s more, Hongdae flooded with live music venues offering weekend shows with the same bands, but it was performers leading the demand for new venues, not consumers demanding more live performances, driving down profits and fragmenting the music scene.

Club Spot opened in late 2005 right next to Hongdae Playground, focusing on late-night concerts to tempt people from Skunk to come to a second show, also catering to foreigners. Unlike Skunk it had a liquor licence, thanks to an emergency exit that led who knows where. Owner Son Jae-woo, a punk with a good head for business, sold his club to other punks and opened the medium-sized venue Prism Live Hall near Hapjeong Station, before selling that and in 2011 opening an acoustic venue near the power plant named Danginri Theater, now closed. Club Spot closed in 2014 and is now a noraebang.
The community that Club Spot served basically split up. Many Spot events moved south to Ruailrock, before that closed and the same people moved to Club SHARP in Mangwon-dong. Many of the hardcore bands migrated to Double A Studio, a practice space absolutely not cut out to be a live music venue.

Club FF, also opened in 2005, was in the alley across the street from Skunk, where it still is today. It caters to newcomers and especially foreigners. Gogos2 seems to be under the same ownership. Both are known for operating partially as nightclubs rather than live music venues, and are known for violent bouncers.

Between FF and Gogos2 was Club Ta, opened in 2006 by singer Jeon Sang-kyu of YNot? and Beatles cover band Tatles. It closed in 2016 when its rent suddenly rocketed from 3.5 million won to 7 million won. During the first RASKB “Hongdae Streets” tour on October 15, 2016, we found Club Ta abandoned with the door open, and venturing downstairs we found the venue stripped down to bare walls, with only temporary lights on and parts of the floor flooded.
Freebird was near the playground, later took over the vast cavernous basement venue 500 and renaming it Freebird Cosmic Live. They later closed the first location, and now the second location is called Con-Vent Hongdae.

Jammers, found along Wowsan-ro, apparently tried to become a burger joint at some point. Surprisingly, it still exists in some form.

Bbang, found on Wowsan-ro 29gil, is another old club, known for its quiet and calm music. There is a saying, “slam on the bread” referring to the impossibility of slam-dancing to Bbang’s usually peaceful music.

Also along the same road is Kopchangjeongol, a vinyl bar with a live music room. It is named after a band formed by Japanese immigrants to Korea in the 1990s, mainly Sato Yukie and Hasegawa Yohei, whose love of Korean psychedelic rock (group sound) brought them here. Their band Kopchangjeongol became famous covering retro Korean rock acts like Shin Joong-hyun. Sato now is a solo acoustic performer, and Hasegawa joined Korean rock band Kiha and the Faces, championing their vintage Korean rock sound which found great success.

There were also other short-lived venues in the mid-2000s like punk venue Minor League and metal venues Sapiens7 and 3Thumbs.

Live music venues had been scattered evenly throughout the area, with most occupying basement storage spaces in nondescript buildings found in out-of-the-way alleys, places you’d have to know about to find. Over time, they started to polarise around two clusters on far ends of the Danginri Line, one by Gicha-gil with Skunk Hell I, Kuchu Camp, Salon Badabie, Bbang, Kopchangjeongol, Ssamzie Space, Strange Fruit, Aura (later Bowie, now All of Rock), and WASP (later Sky High until 2014), and the other around the three-way intersection by Drug/Skunk Hell II, FF, Gogos2, Ta, 500, and Club Steel Face. Both are convenient but not too convenient, best served by stations other than Hongdae Station, and are aligned along paths perpendicular to Eoulmadang-ro. The wide area between them became a no man’s land, where profitable businesses outperform indie live venues economically.

Only large-sized venues can survive in the center of the area. Most are corporate-owned and -branded, such as KT&G Sangsang Madang, Hanatour V-Hall, and Yes24 MUV Hall. The one exception is the 600-capacity Rolling Hall, which opened in 1995 in Sinchon. After a major fire it reopened in its current location in a southern section of

27 “빵에서 슬램하는소리 하네”
28 홍대클럽거리
Eoulmadang-ro, where it intersects Yanghwaro 6-gil which divides Hapjeong-dong on the south and Seogyo-dong north. This location had previously been considered “outside” Hongdae. Together with the tiny basement venues Ruailrock (previously a Skunk Label practice space), Channel1969, and Yogiga, it almost formed a third cluster, but only Rolling Hall survived gentrification, with Ruailrock closing and Yogiga and Channel1969 relocating to Yeonnam-dong.

The widening gap between venues has made it difficult to coordinate events, and regular multi-venue concerts such as Club Day have had to gravitate toward the southernmost cluster, neglecting harder-to-reach venues. The annual Zandari Festa is more inclusive, sending participants on long walks through the area.

**Eviction and Exodus Era**

By 2009, Hongdae no longer felt like the Hongdae I had known, but it brought new comforts: foreign food restaurants. Many disappeared as quickly as they arrived.

The playground was one of the places that witnessed the most change. It used to be you would come here on a Saturday afternoon and run into friends hanging out. But more and more people started coming to the playground, and it became dirty and lost its casual atmosphere. There were performances every weekend, often the same acts each time, such as one cover band that played the same songs each week, and a “silent rave” where people received earphones and could dance along to loud club music while barely making a sound. It threatened the indie community who saw it as a place of relaxation and a refuge from consumer capitalism, where you could hang out without having to spend money. Sometimes we acted out in antisocial ways, such as by setting off fireworks or by holding an actual “fight club.” Around 2010 or 2011, some of the punk bands created the Purge Movement, aimed at taking back the playground through having more punk concerts. But it was pointless. Last year the playground underwent further renovations, removing most of the remaining seating and turning it from a place to hang out with friends into more of a place for holding public events.

Around the start of the new decade saw the proliferation of graffiti, which gave the neighbourhood the aesthetic of the inside of a bathroom stall. Much of this graffiti was done by taggers using a black marker to basically sign their name on flat surfaces. As tagging became more competitive, practiced by Koreans as well as foreigners, every viable surface of the area became covered in black marker or spraypaint: businesses, residences, even legally made murals in the alleys of Sangsu-
dong were defaced and buried under scribblings. Graffiti came here as a precursor to gentrification, becoming an inescapable part of its texture.


On Christmas Eve 2009, gentrification turned violent in a corner up by Donggyo-dong 3-geori, right inside the elbow between the Line 2 section of the station and the Gyeongui-AREX stations. On December 24, 2009, hired goons entered the restaurant Duriban and violently evicted the people inside: workers and customers alike. The next day, owner Ahn Jong-nyeo and her husband, writer Yoo Che-rim, returned and tore off the metal fence placed in front, beginning a 521-day sit-in protest.

Duriban probably would have been quietly destroyed, or its inhabitants pegged as terrorists like the evictees in Yongsan District 4, had the owner not found common ground with the local music community, which also faced gentrification issues and was being priced out of the area. On May 1, 2010, Hongdae musicians held the 51-band 51+ Festival in the area, both within the Duriban building and on the wasteland outside. The musicians involved formed the Independent Musicians’ Collective, or Jarip.29 The proceedings are well-depicted in the documentary “Party 51” by Jung Yong-taek. Duriban won a fair resettlement package and relocated to a nearby location. There is currently a much larger concrete building going up on the old spot, at least eight storeys tall now.

29 자립음악생산조합
The Duriban struggle was a major turning point. It broke the narrative of Hongdae as the nexus of Korean live music, right around the time it was finally gaining official recognition for that, now that the chaebols and entertainment companies like Hapjeong-headquartered YG Entertainment were finding ways to monetise its unique culture.

After Duriban, the Jarip musicians trained their eyes on other parts of the city, setting up shop in other endangered and underused areas, most notably Myeong-dong’s Cafe Mari, Take-Out Drawing in Hannam-dong, a basement room of Korea National University of Arts they called DGBS, and Mullae-dong where some members opened Club Lowrise.

Mullae-dong emerged as an alternative to Hongdae sometime in the mid-2000s, as artists forced out of the area moved south, taking advantage of the high vacancy rate of the old industrial area, located just four subway stops south. Musicians soon followed suit, opening venues like Lowrise as well as Alternative Space Moon, later GBN Live House, plus Skunk Hell. Skunk III reopened in Mullae-dong in 2015, but this time

30 대공분실, the name for an interrogation center for suspected communists
it also featured a tattoo parlour, where they make most of their money. On opening night, Rux performed “Mullae Belongs to Me.” However, Mullae has ended up as more of a consolation prize for Hongdae gentrification refugees, largely because it just isn’t as comfortable: there aren’t as many restaurant options, and washrooms tend to be primitive, which has consequentially left the local music scene male-skewed.

It has become apparent there is nowhere in Seoul to relocate the live music scene, as it is just too intertwined with Hongdae where it grew up. In the Heimlich County Gun Club song “Hongdae Streets,” guest vocalist Ryu Jinsuk of Skasucks sings, “It doesn’t seem like home anymore/But this is where I end up coming back.”

**Consumer Capitalism Era**

Just like 1905 when the Gyeongui Line opened or 1929 when the Danginri Line opened, rail infrastructure continues to play a major role in the area’s development today. While the opening of Line 6 in 2000 connected the foreigner-heavy Itaewon and allowed Hongdae to develop southward into Sangsu-dong and Hapjeong-dong, the opening of the AREX Line in late 2010 threw fuel on the fire. With Hongdae suddenly connected to the airport, property prices rose. Residents moved out and businesses moved in. Guesthouses and hostels increased significantly, and the local hotels raised their prices. Brand shops and luxury labels moved in, while local businesses and Korean restaurants moved out. Spaces for consumer capitalism increased, while spaces for private life and refuges from consumer capitalism, including residential housing and city parks, decreased.

When Paul Brickey, Korean-American member of Rux, Suck Stuff, and Heimlich County Gun Club, returned to Korea in 2012, he was disappointed to see what had become of the area he’d come of age in, writing the song “Hongdae Streets”:

\[\text{Gentrified, crucified like many before} \\
\text{the place that I once called home has been painted into a whore} \\
\text{to every trend and fashion and fickle disease} \\
\text{there’s fewer standing here that can remember the scene} \]

\[\text{Fake plastic class spreading out of control} \\
\text{Contagious affluenza and it’s taking its toll} \]

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31 “더이상 안식처라곤 생각되질 않아 /하지만 돌아갈수 밖에 없는 이곳”
Contaminated, epidemic that no one can stop
the gullible masses swallow every last drop

Hongdae retains its reputation for live music, but now this means street buskers, not groundbreaking underground acts performing to music aficionados in dingy basements. Hongdae has had buskers before, as well as outdoor concerts, but today’s busking is dominated by dance troupes that simply press a button and dance to canned music. There are actual musicians, too, who set up and play acoustic guitar, but they stand in the shadows of the louder dance troupes. Who are these people, and why do they do it? They don’t seem to earn money for taking up space and holding boisterous dance performances. The result is they have flooded the market with meaningless performances, allowing people to sate their desire for live music without paying to come in off the street. Anyone is allowed to sign up to busk, so I suspect if someone were to look closely at the registrations, there’d be a corporate force behind it that has no reason to support street-level independent musicians and every reason to push for the touristification of the area.

People have been saying Hongdae, like punk, has been going downhill since around the time they found a name for it. When we speak of Hongdae now, we think of a zone of bright lights, loud noises, lots of people, graffiti everywhere, all going 24 hours a day, gushing with what the government would want us to call “heung.”

This level of activity, once confined to only a few alleys along Eoulmadang-ro, around the playground and over by Club FF, has been expanding outward. Now it is contiguous all the way from Hongdae Station to Sangsu Station, which makes sense since most people arrive from either of those two stations. Streets that once were quiet now roar with activity.

Nowadays, Hongdae gentrification has moved northward through Donggyo-dong and Yeonnam-dong, all since the opening of the Gyeongui Line Forest Park. People are already starting to refer to it as Hongdae, backed up by the fact that Hongdae Station exit 3 leads directly up into the park. Yeonnam-dong had previously been considered for designation as a Chinatown, as the area has a large Chinese population living near Hanseong Chinese Middle and High School in Yeonhee-dong. Yeonnam-dong had been part of Yeonhee-dong until 1975 when it was broken off and joined Mapo-gu.

Yeonhee-dong itself is an interesting case, where its own form of low-key gentrification has transformed the neighbourhood but preserved a local character, where local shops win out over franchises. The area is
essentially a subway blind spot. Its two most infamous residents, former presidents Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, both live there under police protection. Hongdae could expand toward Yeonhee-dong, but it would be an uphill battle all the way.

The gentrification creeping into Yeonnam-dong and Yeon-hee-dong mirrors what’s happening in Hapjeong-dong and Mangwon-dong. Hongdae gentrification refugees have been moving south to these riverside neighbourhoods for years trying to stay close to Hongdae but on the edge of all the craziness, but gentrification is nipping at their heels. In the future when the power plant is replaced by a park, people will refer to Hongdae as a riverside area.

The area immediately west of Hapjeong Station faces a different kind of gentrification, where middle-class neighbourhoods were replaced with highrise apartments and office buildings. There is now a Homeplus here, as well as a Kyobo Bookstore, two big-box businesses that threaten smaller competitors. YG Entertainment moved its headquarters here in 2010, signaling K-pop’s ascendancy in Hongdae, where it had previously been ignored. The company apparently owns many buildings in Hongdae, including Samgeori Pocha. “Party51” director Jung Yong-taek singled out YG as a gentrifying force.

Hapjeong-dong’s Yeonhee-dong is Mangwon-dong, an area which was less developed than its neighbours, as it had been floodlands prior to the 1990s. Mangwon Market has survived the pressure from the new Homeplus, and signs still hang in the market warning against it. Due to the barrier caused by the large buildings around Hapjeong Station, contiguous Hongdae gentrification would have to slither down Donggyo-ro, which serves as an pleasingly effective aboveground route between Hongdae and Mangwon stations.

So if any efforts are made to daylight Saikyo Stream or beautify Donggyo-ro, depending on which direction it headed, it could be part of a plan to extend Hongdae to Yeonhee-dong or Mangwon-dong. Already some online articles refer to Mangwon-dong’s Club SHARP as a “Hongdae club.”

The outward expansion of Hongdae is a long-running phenomenon, one I’ve always referred to as the “ring theory,” when looking at how the coolest parts around Hongdae often seem to be on the outskirts, which are constantly being redefined outward. Other observers

32 Seoul Film Society “Party51” screening Q&A period, 19 November 2016
have coined the phrase Hongdae Rising Area\textsuperscript{33} to refer to the same phenomenon.

The mechanism behind this phenomenon is not accidental. Certain local actors built up cultural value in a neighbourhood, making it ripe for commodification. Gentrifiers moved in, and those Hongdae elements moved away, somewhere nearby, only for the gentrifiers to expand over toward them, forcing them to relocate further outward. The live music community shares some of the blame for Hongdae gentrification and for its own demise; it’s live music venues that aggravate local residents, acting as sort of shock troops for the bigger changes to come later. Hongdae gentrification isn’t just mindlessly expanding outward, but reaping a crop planted by arts and music communities who end up with nothing.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{map.png}
\caption{Proposed Hongdae tourist zone. Image taken from internet.}
\end{figure}

In late 2016, the city proposed designating Hongdae a tourist zone, which would lift zoning restrictions, at the most extreme even allowing for foreign-only casinos. The local indie music community has rallied against the rezoning, but unlike 2003 this time it is not a conversation. In

\begin{footnotesize}\textsuperscript{33} 홍대 뜨는 지역\end{footnotesize}
order to receive this designation, no more than 10 percent of the land must be unrelated to tourism. Perhaps this is why gentrification is taking the form it has, blanketing the area with a distinct gentrification texture. The Hongdae tourist zone drawn up looked like an American gerrymandered voting district, made with some odd choices. For instance, the housing alongside the slope of Wowsan, northwest of the university, was excluded, which is pretty strange as it would essentially be boxed in between the tourist zone, the university, Sinchon Taeyong Sesiang Apartment, and Wowsan. The deal is still pending, with only a small section of the area currently zoned for tourism. What that likely means is it will continue pending until that threshold is passed.

The next big Hongdae development will be the opening of the Aekyoung department store located above the AREX/Gyeongui-Jungang section of Hongdae Station. This behemoth dominates the skyline from various multiple directions, as all roads seem to point toward it. Its opening drive gentrification northward, ensuring Gyeongui Line Book Street is always crowded (and probably refocusing it away from books), and likely encouraging flow up toward Sinchon and Sogang stations. It will also push gentrification forward in Yeonnam-dong, perhaps forcing out many of the businesses there now.

**Conclusion**

I approached this article with the idea of trying out Zandari as an alternative for rebranding the area. Use of names like Zandari hint at longing for how the area used to be, sort of like how in contemporary music scenes people claim to be “old school.” There is only one weekend a year when you can reasonable ask “Do you want to go to Zandari?” and that is during Zandari Festa in fall. For the time being, Zandari will remain as a subtext of the area, just like the increasingly marginalised cultural communities there. Everyone just knows it as Hongdae, the same way they reach for a Kleenex, package things in Styrofoam, or Photoshop their pictures. I can’t change what people call it, any more than I can restore the Hongdae live music community to its former glory.

Hongdae is experienced on the micro level and has meant many things to many people, and it will take on different meanings in the future. For me, Hongdae is underground music, literally, as most of our concert halls are found in basements, forced below the earth among the streams, train tracks, and power plants. It is the macro level that has driven Hongdae’s development, whether by global ideologies such as imperialism, globalisation and consumer capitalism, or developers who erase and rebuild, or government zoning and designations. Despite being
branded a trendy neighbourhood for the past couple decades, history here is compressed and everything is intertwined.

A look beneath the surface reveals the many layers of history that have turned a small rural village area called Zandari into the cultural behemoth we now call Hongdae.

Note: This author is also grateful to historian Suk Jihoon, and any mistakes contained herein are the author’s.
All maps (except the tourist zone) are made using Daum Kakao images.
“Hongdae Streets” lyrics translation courtesy of Park Solmin.

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Korea in Early Western Cartography

Henny Savenije

A HISTORY OF WESTERN CARTOGRAPHY
Western cartography starts with the revival of knowledge of Claudius Ptolemy’s *Geographia* soon after the year 1400 AD. Greek manuscript copies made in the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries were brought by scholars to Italy from Constantinople and subsequently translated into Latin and widely studied. Ptolemy lived in the 2nd century AD in Egypt. He divided the world into 360 degrees and introduced a method to establish meridians and parallels and project the round shape of the world onto a flat surface. Geographers and astronomers were influenced by his work for about 1500 years. Nothing of his original work remains and we can only see his maps by the diligent work of monks who copied his works and probably made their own small contributions and interpretations as well. The coincidental invention of Gutenberg, the art of printing, made large numbers of copies possible. On the available copies of the maps of Ptolemy the East side ends with land, actually the world image of Ptolemy only reached to the “backside of India”

Marco Polo mentions Korea briefly as *Kauli*. In Marco Polo’s story, *Kauli* was a province of China. Also on Waldseemullers’ famous map (*Tabula Superioris Indiae & Tartariae Maioris from Claudius Ptolemy, Geographia, Strassburg 1522*) we can find no mention of Korea. The sea east of China was called the *Oceanus Indicus*. Japan appeared in a trapezium shape. Waldseemuller has taken information from Marco Polo about *Tartary* and *Zipangri*, translated it into a map and added the world map of Ptolemy.

The Portuguese reached Japan in 1542. Until 1641, when all foreigners, except the Dutch, had to leave the country, missionaries offered the most important cartographic information about the country. The data from the Jesuits was accordingly revised by the official Portuguese cartographers, like Fernao Vaz Dourado (1520 - ca. 1580). He gave Japan the form of the back of a tortoise while Korea was depicted in an upside down pyramid shape. Due to the secrecy of the Portuguese this
map never made it to outside world. It named the whole sea east of the Asian continent the “East Sea.”

DUTCH CARTOGRAPHY
In spite of the turmoil caused by the harsh repression of Philip II of Spain, the Dutch thrived and first Antwerp and later Amsterdam became the centers of the arts and of cartographers. The first eminent Dutch cartographer was Gerard Mercator (1512-1594), who studied in Leuven (Louvain) under Gemma Frisius, a Dutch astronomer and mathematician, and moved later to Duisburg in the Rhineland as a religious fugitive, where he carried out his major work. He was already regarded during his own lifetime as the “Ptolemy of his time.” Mercator regarded himself as an academic cosmographer rather than someone who had to earn his living from making and selling maps. His production was not very large. He left behind a pair of globes, five wall maps and an unfinished cosmography. He was born in Rupelmonde in Flanders, south west of Antwerp, in 1512. He was educated by the “broeders des Gemenen Levens” (brothers of common life: monks) in ‘s-Hertogenbosch, after which he studied at the University of Leuven under Gemma Frisius. He had trained himself in the meantime in the art of engraving. Mercator was the first to employ italic script on maps. This embellished the map to such an extent that it remained customary until the 19th century to print the names on maps in italics. On the world map of Mercator, Korea is prominently absent and Japan has a long stretched shape. In the sea between Japan and China, he wrote: “Magnus Sinus Ptol. Chrise Plin, hodie mare (quod est Mangi) sic a Japanitis appelato”. He did not give the sea between China and Japan any particular name.

His son Rumold inherited the copper plates of his father’s atlas and added an appendix of 34 maps to the atlas his father had made, a year after his father’s death. In order to be able to complete the work quickly, he added his own map of the world of 1587 and had three maps of the continents from his father’s great map of the world of 1569 copied by his two nephews Gerard Mercator Junior and Michel Mercator. The period from around 1550 to the end of the 17th century is called the Dutch age of cartography and a map made in Amsterdam guaranteed good quality.

Ortelius
Abraham Ortelius (1527 - 1598) began his career as an “afsetter van caerten” (illuminator of maps). He later also ran a business in curiosities, Dutch and foreign objects of art. The goods he sold included maps, which he imported mainly from Italy – the center of cartography in the mid -16th
century. He knew Mercator personally and this may have encouraged him not only to sell Italian maps, but also to sell more original work. He was active from around 1560 in producing his own maps. The idea of producing an atlas came most likely from commercial and practical considerations. One of his customers, the merchant Gilles Hooftman, wanted all the maps he could get. But big maps, rolled in cylindrical cases, were unhandy. Hence the idea of producing an atlas in which the maps were shown in a handy format. Basically, he just copied the work of Mercator and nothing new was added. He called the sea east of Asia also simply the East Sea (Mare Orientalis). His great contribution to cartography was the production of Atlases.

Van Linschoten
Initially the ships from the Dutch provinces of Holland and Zeeland imported spices and other oriental goods from Portugal. But when Portugal was occupied in 1580 by the Spanish, this was impossible, due to the Dutch 80-year independence war against Spain. Dutch ships harbored in Portuguese ports were repeatedly confiscated by the Spanish. The Dutch were forced to acquire these products directly from the East. The problem was how to find the right route. In order to find out, Jan Huygen van Linschoten sailed on a Portuguese vessel to the Indies. Once he returned to his hometown of Enkhuizen, he wrote and published two books in which he revealed his findings: Reisgheschrift van de Navigatien der Portugaloylers in Orienten (1595) (Travel document of the navigation of the Portuguese to the Orient) and Itinerario, voyage ofte schipvaert van J.H. van Linschoten naar Oost ofte Portugaels Indien (1596) (Itinerary of the voyage by ship from J.H. van Linschoten to the East or the Portuguese Indies).

Jan Huygen van Linschoten had lived since 1579 as a merchant in Spain and from 1583 until 1598 served as a secretary for the Portuguese archbishop in Goa. There he succeeded, with the help of Dirck Gerritszoon Pomp, nicknamed “Dirck China,” to retrieve the secret sailing instructions with the help of which the Portuguese ships sailed there from harbor to harbor. Pomp, a Hollander, also in the service of the Portuguese, went to sea in 1584 aboard the Portuguese vessel “Santa Cruz”. The ship was richly laden with merchandise and had sailed by way of the trade-settlement in Goa, India, to Macao in China and from there to Japan. He arrived in Nagasaki in 1585, probably the first Hollander to set foot on Japanese soil. Dirck gave oral information to Jan van Linschoten. He wrote: ‘so stretches the coast [from Japan] again to the north, recedes after that inward, northwest ward, to which Coast those from Japan trade
with the Nation which is called Cooray, from which I have good, comprehensive and true information, as well as from the navigation to this Country, from the pilots, who investigated the situation there and sailed there.’

In the Itinerary, which was published one year later, at page 37 we find the following extract: A little above Japan, on 34 and 35 degrees, not far from the coast of China, is another big island, called Insula de Core, from which until now, there is no certainty concerning size, people, nor what trade there is. Later at page 70 he writes more about it: From this corner from the bay of Nanquin 20 miles southeast onwards, there lay several islands with at the end, of which, to know, on the east side lies a very big and high island [This Island is] by many people inhabited, as well as on foot as on horseback. [sic!] These Islands are called by the Portuguese as Ylhas de Core, or the Islands of Core, but the islands, as previously described, is called Chausien, has from one side to the northwest a small indentation. There’s also a small island in the mouth, which is the harbor, but has little deepness, here the lord of the country has his residency. From this main Island off, 25 miles southeast onward, lays the island of Goto, one of the islands of Iapon, which lies at the corner of the indentation from the bay of Nancquin off, east to north seaward on, 60 miles or little more.’ (Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, Reys- Gheschrift van de Navigatien der Portugaloyers in Orienten enz. [1595], bl. 70). [The original text can be interpreted in several ways, so the text is given in as literal a translation as possible] The map added in this itinerary shows Korea as a circle and Japan in the tortoise shape. The sea east of Asia was called the Chinese Ocean (Sinensis Oceanus).

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Skippers stayed away from the coast of Korea, although the Portuguese, the English and Dutch had several encounters with Koreans. We would know more about this if the journals of the ships sailing to Japan had survived. The hostile attitude of the Korean coastguard was reported when the Dutch ship “de Hond” in 1622 sailed accidentally into the waters of Korea. We read: *Immediately the ship was attacked, by not less than 36 war-junks, who shelled de Hond with ‘bassen, roers, boogen ende ontalrijcke hasegaijen’* (cannons, firelocks, bows and numerous wooden lances). So, all the skippers received orders to avoid the coast of Korea.

**Ortelius and Texeira.**

Ludovico (Luis) Texeiro came from a family which was for some generations busy as cartographers. At least we know that two portolans of the Atlantic (1525 -1528) were from his father Pero Fernadez. The first mention of Luis was found when he was examined by the royal chief cartographer Pedro Nunez (1492 - 1577). In 1596 he received a patent to make maps and navigation instruments for the royal fleet. All in all, there are 15 known maps from the hand of Luis Texeira. He did pioneering work with the cartography of the Azores and in 1575 was in Brazil. Neither his birthdate nor death are known. He had intensive contacts with the mapmakers in Holland, among others Jodocus Hondius, Lucas Jansz. Wagenaar and Joannes van Deutecom. He was already in touch with Ortelius since 1582. Their first mutual work was a map of the main island of the Azores. For one or the other reason this map was issued as a single map and not in the *Theatrum*, the extensive Atlas he made.

With a letter dated at February 2, 1592 Texeira sent to Ortelius “*dos piesas de las descriptiones de la China y del Japan.*” Ortelius had asked for these maps in a previous letter, which has not been found. At the same time, he promised a map of Brazil, but only the map of Japan and Korea was used for the *Theatrum* since 1595. The resources of Texeira are probably based on the work of Jesuits, but unless new documents show up, we will never know for sure.

Ortelius made a map and gave it the title *Iaponia Insulae Descriptio.* The map is the first reasonably accurate and recognizable European depiction of Japan and was to remain the standard for more than half a century. Little was known of this mythical and remote land. Korea is shown as an island on the following map and even less was known about it. We will call this shape of Korea, with a long upside-down cone “the Teixeira type.” The sea east of Korea still had no name.
Jodocus Hondius
Another Dutch cartographer, Jodocus Hondius, shows Korea in 1606 in the same way as Ortelius. Mercator’s heirs had sold the copperplates by auction in Leiden in 1604. Jodocus Hondius probably bought the copperplates of Mercator’s Atlas and Ptolemy’s Geographica in a private transaction before this auction. He used them to publish a re-issue of the Ptolemy’s Geographica in 1605 and a new enlarged edition of the Atlas in 1606. Hondius shows clearly that Mercator’s Atlas was an unfinished work. He was the one who had finally made a complete Atlas of it. Several atlases were made and when Hondius died in 1612, his heirs continued his work. For 25 years after the publication of the first Mercator-Hondius atlas the firms of the Hondius-Janssonius cartel were able to profit from their monopoly in the atlas field. Therefore, there were no new developments since there were no competitors. He called the sea south of Korea and Japan the Chinese Ocean (Oceanus Chinensis) but gave no name for the sea east of Korea and north of Japan.

Another example of this shape can be found on a map of John Speed. The cartouche says: A newe mape of Tartary, augmented by John Speede and are to be sold in Popshead Alley by George Humble. Anno 1626. Speed was one of the few English cartographers who produced a
famous atlas. He calls the sea simply: a part of the Pacifique Sea.

**Willem Janszoon Blaeu.**

Around 1630 a new atlas publisher appeared on the scene, Willem Janszoon Blaeu. With him a new trend in Amsterdam atlas production began, characterized by competition and increase in the number of maps. The history of the successive publications is extremely complicated and falls beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice to say that the quality of the maps grew, thanks to the increase of the competition.

The oldest son of Hondius, Jodocus jr., had taken over the production of atlases and the management was taken over by his younger brother Henricus, in about 1620. The relation between the two brothers was obviously not good, since the eldest conceived the plan of bringing a new atlas onto the market by himself. He had around 40 new maps engraved in copper for the purpose, but died before he could execute his plan. One way or another, Willem Janszoon Blaeu laid hands on the copper plates of Jodocus before his brother Henricus and his brother-in-law Johannes Janssonius could.

Blaeu entered the atlas market and became a competitor. Blaeu produced a new map and called his new atlas: *Supplement to the Atlas (Atlantis Appendix, sive pars altera).* The word *Atlas* refers to that made by Mercator. Since the second decade in the 17th century Willem Janszoon added the surname Blaeu to be distinguished from Jan Jansz. (Janssonius). He added the characteristics of Hondius’ work, pictures of people and views of cities. Korea is shown as in Texeira and the sea north of Japan was called the East Sea (*Oceanus Occidentalis*) and the sea east of China, the Chinese Sea (*Oceanus Chinensis*). After that the situation becomes complicated, since Henricus and Johannes wanted to publish a supplementary atlas as soon as possible. In March 1630 they gave the order to replace the missing plates. The new ones were true copies of the originals, since they were made by the same engravers. The result of all this competition was that Blaeu produced a two-volume atlas (around 210 maps) in four languages, Hondius and Janssonius made an atlas in three volumes with around 320 maps (1638). Willem Jansz. Blaeu died in 1638 and his son Joan Blaeu succeeded him.

On a detail from Willem and Joan Blaeu’s *China Veteribus Sinarum*, we can see Korea. It was printed in 1640 in Amsterdam. Below it we can see the same image in Johannis Janssonius’ *Nova et Accurata Iaponiae*, of which the first edition was printed in 1652. This one is from the 1657 edition, both printed in Amsterdam. It was a sea chart which was based on Maarten Gerritszn Vries who in 1643 headed the first European
expedition. The weather was bad which explains the many mistakes but we can see that the shape of Korea was almost the same as in Blaue, so we can call this the Janssonius type.

Joan decided to shunt off the head start which Janssonius enjoyed with his *Novus atlas absolutissimus* from 1658. Joan Blaeu’s Atlas *Maior sive Cosmographia Blaviana*, published in 1662, was the most prestigious book and the “greatest and finest atlas ever published”. In these series of atlases, he also produced the *Novus Atlas Sinensis* by Martinus Martini, published by Joan Blaeu in Amsterdam around 1655. On the back of the map of Korea a description of Korea, written by Martinus Martini is printed (you can find the translation on my homepage.) Since nobody really knew what Korea and Japan looked like, the map makers busily copied from each other or added some details which they received from British or Dutch sailors.

In Blaeu’s *Novus Atlas Sinensis* we find another map of Korea. Here we see a major jump forward. This work was based on the work of the Jesuit father Martinus Martini. In his turn Martini had taken the data for these maps from the revised Chu Ssu-pen’s maps, *Kuang yu t’u*, made by the Chinese scholar Lo Hung-hsien (1504 - 1564). Shannon McCune points out that Martini’s map is based on a Chinese map from 1320, which was then (re)published in the 16th century. And this Chinese map is again
based on a Korean map of the early 14th century. So, on the map of Martini the contours of Korea come closer to the real shape. Cheju-do was called *Fungma* on this map, Chinese for wind and horses, Cheju-do was famous for that. In the sea east of Korea, west of Japan, was written ‘the Japanese kingdom (*Iaponia Regnum*) and only the sea south of both countries was named: the Chinese Ocean (*Oceanva Chinensis*).

**Hendrick Hamel.**
The information available about Korea changed drastically when Hendrick Hamel and his companions returned from their adventures on the Korean peninsula. The *Sperwer*, with sixty-four men on board, left Batavia on June 18, 1653. On August 16, 1653, it was wrecked in a storm and twenty-eight men perished. Thirty-six survivors, driven ashore on the western coast of Jeju Island, were interned and spent ten months on the island. One of their biggest surprises was an encounter with Jan Janse Weltevree, a Dutchman in the service of the Korean king. They were then transferred to Seoul, where they were employed as bodyguards to the king for about three years. They appealed to the King to release them but they were always told that it was not his policy to send foreigners away from his land. The King apparently did not want facts about his country to become known to other nations. Then, when a Manchu envoy came to Seoul, the senior navigator and one sailor approached him in an attempt to return to Holland by way of China. They were immediately jailed. After this incident, the remaining thirty-four Dutch sailors were transferred to Byeongyeong, an army camp near Gangjin in Jeolla province.

They lived seven years in Byeongyeong and eleven of them died during that period. After three successive famines in 1660, 1661 and 1662, they were divided into three groups since Pyeongyeong could hardly afford to support them and were sent to Saeseong [*Seasong = Yosu*] (12 men), Suncheon (5 men) and Namwon (5 men). At the time of their escape, 3 years later, sixteen men were still alive, of whom eight first succeeded in reaching Nagasaki. The board of directors of the Dutch East India Company were of course interested in possible mercantile contacts with Korea and Hendrick Hamel was asked to write down a report by the chief of the factory in Deshima.

For about 200 years this report was the only information which was available about Korea, and it was reprinted in many different ways. First, upon Hamel’s arrival back in Holland, it was printed already by 3 different Dutch publishers! Every publisher and translator added his own distortions and fantasies, sometimes to make it more attractive to their readers. But when one goes back to the original manuscript, his report
appears to be as accurate as possible under the circumstances. He also uses native resources when he mentions the distances from Busan to Shimonoseki, and also the length and width of Korea.

In the section titled “Description of the Kingdom of Korea” Hamel’s observations on a wide range of subjects, with which he came into contact or which caught his observant eye, are described. Hamel examined Korean life and customs from the perspective of his own cultural background, Holland and Western civilization in the seventeenth century. Hamel could make observations at close hand because the Dutch sailors were allowed to go about relatively freely with few restrictions. Moreover, Hamel could observe the lifestyle of upper class people because curiosity prompted these people to invite the Dutch to their homes. Many of Hamel’s observations are verifiable either by looking at established historical facts or observing customs which still survive from former times.

Hamel said that the Koreans themselves made maps with Korea shown as an oblong. Though Hamel made no maps himself, his descriptions of the country influenced cartographers. Hamel landed on Jeju-do, which appeared on Portuguese maps before as Ilha de Ladrones (island of thieves), but also the Mariana Islands were referred to as the Ladrones. Interesting in this regard is the fact that Jeju island existed with two different names and was thought to be two islands as well: Fung-ma and Quelpaert Island. Quelpaert is probably named after a type of galleon. Though there is no reference to this type of ship other than in documents from Batavia found in the Dutch East India Company archives. Unfortunately, we will never know for sure, but probably it was the result of a copying error in a document and therefore this type of ship was only known in the east. Jeju-do was doomed to be called Quelpaert island for the next two centuries thanks to Hamel. Due to the fact that he was the first westerner to write an account of Korea, Hamel is sometimes called the “discoverer” of Korea.

French Cartography
The world had to wait until 1732 before a more accurate map of Korea was made. France was the next country where cartography started to bloom. The new century brought great political changes and under the absolutist rule of Louis XIII and XIV map makers were granted a degree of royal support and patronage unknown elsewhere. By the last years of the century Dutch maritime power was in decline and France became the center of geographical science, her cartographers producing the most advanced and beautiful maps of the time.
Prominent among the new generation of scientific cartographers were Guillaume De l’Isle, whose maps of Africa and America were especially influential, Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697-1782) with notable maps of Africa and the Far East, Didier Robert de Vaugondy (1723 - 1786) (Atlas Universel, 1757) and Jacques Nicolas Bellin (1703 - 1772), famous for his sea charts. At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the explorers Comte de la Perouse (1785-88), Louis de Freycinet (around 1812) and others added to charts of the Pacific and the Australian coastline and Dumont d’Urville completed three voyages (1822-40) to New Zealand, and later issued a series of new improved charts of that country.

D’Anville and his Korean source.
Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d’Anville (1697-1782) engraved his first map at the age of fifteen and produced many maps of high quality throughout his career. He became the finest cartographer of his time and carried on the French school of cartography developed by the Sanson and the De l’Isle families. Although he apparently never left the city of Paris, he had access to the reports and maps of French explorers, traders, and missionaries. During his long career he accumulated a large collection of cartographic materials that has been preserved. He was particularly interested in Asia and produced the first reasonably accurate map of China in 1735. He became Royal Geographer and Cartographer to the King of France in the middle of the eighteenth century, at a time when French cartography was still considered to be the best in the world. He was the successor to Guillaume De l’Isle as the chief proponent of scientific cartography, and his influence on his contemporaries was profound.

In his Tartariae Sinensis which was first printed in 1732, d’Anville showed Korea fairly accurately, and it becomes clear that he had used Korean sources. A Manchu survey inspected the region of the Changbaishan, the Chinese name for Baektusan, in the summer of 1677. In 1679 the Manchus made or acquired maps of the whole of the Korean side of the border from one side of the peninsula to the other and they visited a Korean commander in the north and requested information on “present installations, maps and ‘floating iron’ [compass] bearings in the area of Changbaishan.” They allowed him to copy their own map. The Qing prompted stricter controls on Korean frontier dwellers. In 1699 Korean envoys were ordered by the Manchu authorities to execute a map of Korea’s eight provinces with route and distance data. The Manchu emperor Kangxi made a project to map his empire and it took on new energy when the Jesuits joined the effort in 1709. Before the year was
over they had mapped Manchuria and the borders of Korea. By 1716, they and their Chinese and Manchu assistants had mapped the entire Chinese empire plus Tibet and Korea. These maps were printed in Chinese versions in 1717 and 1719, and in a definitive version in 1721.

An explanation of the Jesuit map of Korea produced by father Jean-Baptiste Regis (1664-1738), who with Fathers Pierre Jartoux (1669-1720) and Erhernberg Xavier Fridelli (1643-1743) had surveyed the Manchurian and Korean regions in 1709 and 1710, is given by Jean Baptiste du Halde (1674 - 1743). Since the Jesuits were not allowed into Korea the “Tartar lord” Mukedeng (a troubleshooter and trusted assistant for the Kangxi emperor) was accompanied on a visit to the country by a Chinese surveyor who was trained by the Jesuits. They made measurements and observations. While in Korea the team was under constant surveillance, but the Tartar lord was given a Korean map which was kept at the royal palace. Regis produced a map that came out in the Kangxi atlas and that map was used and edited by d’Anville and published in 1735 in du Halde’s Description de la Chine and also published as “Royaume de Coree” in the Atlas de la Chine (1737). Du Halde was a French Jesuit and geographer living in Paris.
Jean-Francois de Galoup.
Noteworthy however is the cartographic trip of the Jean-Francois de Galoup, Comte de La Pérouse. He was the first explorer to use the name “the Sea of Japan” and his example was followed thereafter. He was born on 23 August, 1741 near Albi, France. He entered the Navy when he was fifteen, and fought the British off North America in the Seven Years’ War. Later he served in North America, India and China. In August 1782 he made fame by capturing two English forts on the coast of the Hudson Bay.

He was appointed in 1785 to lead an expedition to the Pacific. His ships were the Astrolabe and the Boussole, both of 500 tons. They were store ships but reclassified as frigates for the occasion. He left Brest on August 1785, rounded Cape Horn, investigated the Spanish colonial government in Chile, and by way of Easter Island and Hawaii he sailed to Alaska, where he landed near Mount St. Elias, in late June 1786 and explored the environments. A barge and two longboats, carrying 21 men, were lost in the heavy currents of the bay they arrived in (called Port des Francais by La Pérouse, but now known as Lituya Bay). Next, he visited Monterey, where he examined the Spanish settlements and made critical notes on the treatment of the Indians in the Franciscan missions.

He crossed the ocean to Macao, where he sold the furs acquired in Alaska, dividing the profits among his men. The next year, after a visit to Manila, he set out for the northeast Asian coasts. He saw Quelpaert Island (Jeju) on May 21, 1787: We sighted it on May 21 in the finest weather imaginable and in most favorable conditions for observations.

I coasted along the southeast shore at a distance of leagues and we surveyed with the utmost care a length of 12 leagues. One would be hard put to find a more pleasing prospect. ... The various crops which presented a wide range of colors made the appearance of this island even more pleasing. However, he did not anchor on the island where the Dutch
castaways were shipwrecked in 1653, worrying for the safety of his crew members: **Unhappily, it belongs to people who are forbidden to communicate with strangers and who currently enslave those unfortunate enough to be shipwrecked on their coast. This story, of which we had an account before us was not of a nature to encourage us to send a boat ashore,** adding that their appearance caused some alarm among the locals, who began to light signal fires on all the headlands along the coasts. They made a sketch of the relief of the island as they could see if from offshore.

They spotted the present Ulleung-do (which they called “Dagelet,” the name of a crew member) in the East Sea (which he was the first to call the “Sea of Japan”) and some of its inhabitants on May 27. The crew wanted to set foot on the new-found island, with the good intention of making friends with the locals who ran away at the sight of the foreign vessels: **I endeavored to approach it but it was exactly in the wind’s eye; fortunately, it changed during the night and at daybreak I sailed to examine this island, I was very desirous of finding an anchorage to persuade these people by means of gifts that we were not their enemies, but fairly strong currents were bearing us away from the land.**

The French navigators then crossed over to Sakhalin. La Pérouse was enthusiastic about the people of Sakhalin and their friendliness: **Since leaving France, we had not encountered others, who so excited our interest and admiration... It went against our preconceived ideas to find among a hunting and fishing people, who neither cultivated the earth nor raised domestic animals, manners which were in general more gentle and grave–and who perhaps had greater intelligence—than that to be found in any European nation.**

The inhabitants had drawn him a map, showing their country, Yeso (also Yezo, now called Hokkaido) and the coasts of Tartary (mainland Asia). La Pérouse wanted to sail through the channel between Sakhalin and Asia, but failed, so he turned south, and sailed through La Pérouse Strait (between Sakhalin and Hokkaido), where he met the Ainu, explored the Kuriles, and reached Petropavlovsk (on Kamchatka peninsula) in September 1787. Here they rested from their trip, and enjoyed the hospitality of the Russians and Kamchatkans. In letters received from Paris he was ordered to investigate the settlement the British were to erect in New South Wales. Bartholemy de Lesseps, the French vice consul at Kronstadt, who had joined the expedition as an interpreter, disembarked to bring the expedition’s letters and documents to France, which he reached after an epic one-year journey across Siberia and Russia.

His next stop was the Navigator Islands (Samoa). Just before he
left, the Samoans attacked a group of his men, killing twelve of them, among which de Langle, commander of the *Astrolabe*. He then sailed to Botany Bay, arriving on 26 January 1788, just as Captain Arthur Phillip was moving the colony from Botany Bay to Port Jackson. The British received him courteously, but were unable to help him with food as they had none to spare. La Pérouse sent his journals and letters to Europe with a British ship, obtained wood and fresh water, and left for New Caledonia, Santa Cruz, the Solomons, the Louisiades, and the western and southern coasts of Australia. Neither he nor any of his men was seen again, all lost when they were shipwrecked. But his maps and descriptions made it to the West.

**Epilogue**

With La Pérouse began the scientific exploration of the seas round Korea, the aim being to prepare accurate charts that could be published and used in future by merchant ships attempting to trade with the nations that so far refused contact with the outside world. By the end of the 18th century, Britain and France were beginning to expand their colonial activities and their imperialistic attitude to distant lands. Navigators were by now equipped with accurate means of measuring the latitude and longitude of every place and so making detailed charts showing every smallest island, rock or reef. Powered only by wind, the ships advanced slowly, constantly using a lead to sound the sea’s bottom for reefs and sandbanks. La Pérouse was followed ten years later, in 1797, by the British explorer William Robert Broughton who spent several days anchored at Busan then passed close to Jeju Island.

Still completely unknown, however, was the western coast of Korea. La Pérouse had sailed up the eastern coast, although for much of the time the shore was hidden by fog. It was only in 1816 that Basil Hall came from China and began to survey the west coast, with its great labyrinth of islands, sandbanks, and rocks. He soon realized that the maps of Korea so far published had been made without any knowledge of latitude / longitude, that nobody had been able to establish the true position and shape of the Korean coastline with any accuracy, since nobody had seen it:

*On approaching the land, and making observations to ascertain our true place, we discovered that according to one authority, we were sailing far up in the country, over wide forests and great cities; and according to another, the most honest author amongst them, our course lay directly through the body of a goodly elephant,*
placed in the centre of a district of country in token of the maker’s candid confession of ignorance. From this time, for many weeks forward, we shut up our Atlases, Neptunes, and other nautical authorities, and trusted solely to our own resources; or according to the professional phrase, to lead, latitude, and look-out; though, in truth, it was only the first and last that we had to depend upon, it being useless to know the latitude of places as yet laid down on no chart.

It was not until the French came seeking retribution for the murder of nine Catholic missionaries in 1866 that the location of Seoul, the course of the Han River and the whereabouts of its estuary could be determined. It took some time after that for accurate, modern maps to be produced showing the geography of the whole of Korea as it truly was.

Overview of names used to designate the sea between Korea and Japan in some early maps

In the David Lee Collection in America we can find among others the following maps:

*Le Japon, par le Sr. Robert de Vaugondy, fils de Mr. Robert Geog. du Roi avec privilege, 1740. Echelle Iacues d’une heure.* Neither Quelpaert Island, nor Fungma are shown. **Mer de Corée**

David Lee Collection Asia, Plate VI. Japan, Corea, the Monguls, and part of China; examined & improved by Mr. Bolton, engraved by R.W. Seale. [London, 1740] **Mer Orientale ou Mer de Corée**

*Carte de la Tartarie Chinoise, projetée et assujettie aux observations astronomiques par M. Bonne, hydrographe du Roi. A Paris chez laatgreveur ordinaire de Monsieur Le Dauphin rue S. Jacques a la Ville de Bordeaux. avec privilege du Roy. 1771. Mer de Corée**

David Lee Collection A map of Quan-tong or Lea-tonge province; and the kingdom of Kau-li or Corea. [London: T. Kitchin, 1780] (34.5cm x 23.5cm) **Mare di Corea**

*Present Asia, engraved by S.I. Neele. [Stackhouse (T.), London, 1783] Sea of Korea*
A map of the empire of China, from the best authorities. London. Published as the Act directs 31st Decr 1785, by J.Murray, No. 30 Fleet Street. Jn. Lodge. **Corea Gulf**

Map in the university of Utrecht:

*Carte de la Province Quantong ou Lyau-Tong et du Royaume de Kau-li ou Coree Copiee par la Carte Angloise / Kaart van de Provincie Quantong of Lyau-Tong en het Koninkrijk van Kau-li of Korea. Mer de Coree, Zee van Korea*

Map in France:

A manuscript map made by Fr. André Kim Dae-Geon, he was the first Korean Catholic priest. He became a victim of persecution shortly after his arrival in Korea in 1846. Obviously, he made this map before he was captured. The map is archived in the Departement des Cartes et Plans, Bibliotheque Nationale de France (reference number: Ge C 10622), **Mer du Japon**

**Henny Savenij hails from the Netherlands and was always fascinated by history, maps and Asia (in that order). Strangely enough he first got a masters in math and a PhD in psychology but after his first visit to Korea he seriously started to do research into the early Dutch documents of Korea. He has published: A Dutch Adventure in Asia (the adventures of a Dutch soldier, a diary kept from 1895-1905) and a modern Dutch translation of Hamel’s Journal.**
Introduction
Of all forms of Chosŏn-period (1392-1910) literature, the poetic genre of the *kasa* most clearly reflects the social context of production and consumption. Although there are numerous sub-genres and differences between various periods, many *kasa*, particularly from the second half of the Chosŏn period, are highly discursive and directly address a specific audience of readers or listeners, giving explicit expression to the concerns, ideals and realities of the communities they were composed for. Especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries *kasa* increasingly broke loose from the mold of literary or ideological models (although they never entirely abandoned either literary models or ideology) and allowed a much larger share of the real, lived experience of their authors and audiences to enter the texts, while a greater diversity of voices made itself heard. As a genre, therefore, the *kasa* offer promising ground for investigations into the cultural identity and imaginary of the social groups among which they circulated.¹

Identities are never exclusive. Each person has several potential cores of identity, as a man or a woman, as a child, as a parent, as a member of a family, as an inhabitant of a village or citizen of a town, as a member of a guild or professional group, as someone living in a particular region, as a member of a nation or a transnational community; the list can be expanded almost endlessly. Individuals and groups may choose to express one side of their being more emphatically and privilege one identity over another, but generally people’s sense of identity is not reduced to a single choice and remains plural. In fact, I want to argue that in order for a sense of identification with a wider, and therefore more

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¹ The literature on *kasa* is vast. Some basic general works are *Kasa munhak yŏn’gu*, comp. by Kugŏ kungmunhakhoe (Seoul: Chŏngŭmsa, 1979); Chŏng Chaeho (comp.), *Han’guk kasa munhak yŏn’gu* (Seoul: T’aehaksa, 1996); Im Kijung, *Han’guk kasa munhak yŏn’gusa* (Seoul: Ihoe munhaksa, 1998).
abstract, community to take hold it should be integrated with identifications with smaller, less abstract units. Participation in the imagined community of the nation in many cases does not proceed immediately from the level of the individual to that of the nation, but is at least in part based on intermediary identifications. Here one may of course think of the institutions or groups that are often referred to as “civil society,” but the scope of such entities is wider than those that are usually subsumed under this category and may include involuntary associations such as the family. From this perspective, I intend to conduct a brief survey to see what different Late-Chosŏn sub-genres of kasa, each addressing its own constituency, tell us about processes of identity formulation at various levels of society and to examine the question how various identities were integrated or opposed to each other. In view of the considerable quantity of remaining Chosŏn-period kasa and the variety of sub-genres, however, this will be no more than a scratching of the surface.

Pak Illo
The kasa poet who stands out at the very beginning of the period under consideration is Pak Illo (1561-1642), who left seven kasa, among which two he wrote in connection with the 1592-98 Japanese invasions and the continued Japanese threat after their retreat. Pak Illo served as a naval officer directly involved in the fighting and it is sometimes said he wrote the latter two songs to stiffen the morale of the men who served under him. The earliest of these kasa is 1598’s “T’aep’yŏngsa” (Song of Peace), which celebrates the defeat of the Japanese and the victory of civilization. From the very first line this song defines the community it is about: it is the state of Korea in relation to the “island barbarians” from the east, with its great and civilized ally of the Ming in the west. The perspective is Sinocentric: Korea is remote and small, east of the sea, and the source of the country’s civilization is Kija, the Viscount of Ji. This Sinocentrism, however, does not preclude pride in Korea’s own history and culture. In fact, it might just as well be emphasized that the advent of Kija with his mission civilisatrice to Pak Illo is the beginning of a separate existence for the country, which in its subsequent development will match up to the standards of Han, Tang and Song. In the poem, the debt to the Ming emperor for his support is generously acknowledged, but this is more than

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2 In “The Parliament of Histories: New Religions, Collective Historiography, and the Nation,” *Korean Studies* vol.25, 2 (2001), pp. 157-178, I have tried to demonstrate how group identification with the nation in the form of the concept of participation in a shared national history has been articulated at the level of various religious communities.
balanced by due attention to the role of the Korean king and the exploits of Korean officers and soldiers. The framework is firmly Confucian; the influence of the monarch is such that even anonymous nobodies (among whom according to the evidence of another of his *kasa* Pak Illo included himself) turn into servants of the nation, desirous to repay the king’s favor, even at the expense of their lives. In the final part of the song the Chinese involvement in the war completely disappears behind the horizon as the readers/listeners are urged to repay the favor of the monarch and Heaven’s support is invoked for “our country” (我邦國).

If this song is compared with the celebrated, equally Confucian *kasa* “Samiin’gok” (Thinking of the Beloved) by Songgang Chŏng Ch’oll (1537-1594), in which the poet in time-honored fashion appeals to the monarch using the persona of the woman abandoned by her “lord,” there is a vast difference, although Songgang preceded Pak Illo by only one generation. Where “Samiin’gok” is exclusively concerned with the relationship between the monarch and one of his ministers, “T’aep’yŏngga,” even while it emphasizes the importance of the relationship between king and subject, is not about a one-to-one relationship between one man and his monarch, but about the nation as a whole. It does not, moreover, present an entirely idealistic, one might even say romanticized, view, as does “Samiin’gok.” In certain places experienced reality intrudes into the rhetoric of the song, for instance when Pak Illo notes that the troops were so fatigued that they were unable to press their advantage and they let the Japanese escape from their encirclement.

“Sŏnsangt’an” (Sailor’s Lament), composed by Pak Illo in 1605, when he had been called back into active service as a shipmaster because of fears of a new Japanese onslaught, looks back on the invasions. In many ways the contents are similar to those of “T’aep’yŏngga,” but there are significant differences as well. Much more than the latter song, which was written in the euphoria that reigned at the end of the war, “Sŏnsangt’an” suggests that the invasions brought great suffering to Korea and even disgrace — a disgrace that had not yet been wiped out. The Japanese are referred to in even less flattering terms: “thieves of rats and dogs” or “those wriggling island barbarians.” Contemporary China, by contrast, is not mentioned at all, although there are quite a few

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3 It should be remembered that this was the time when, according to Jahyun Haboush in her posthumously published *The Great East Asian War and the Birth of the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), a Korean concept of the nation was formulated.
references to ancient Chinese civilization. Once again Pak Illo states the civilization of Korea (“our Eastern country” 吾東方) is on a par with those of Han, Tang and Song (a refrain that is repeated in his kasa “Tongnaktang”). The final lines picture a Korean king who with his saintly virtue desires nothing but peaceful coexistence and as a ruler matching the legendary Chinese sovereigns Yao and Shun will create a world of peace (太平天下) which allows his subjects a happy and carefree existence. The concept of imperial suzerainty does not enter in the representation of Korea in “Sŏnsang’t’an.” Rather, the terminology used in connection with the king attributes “imperial virtue” to him.

Pak Illo’s treatment of China in this kasa would be typical of that in the kasa of late Chosŏn as a whole. China often appears, not as a political entity, but as a storehouse of cultural tropes. In very much the same manner, Pak Illo’s European contemporaries would freely draw on the treasuries of their own antique civilizations, those of Greece and Rome. It is symptomatic that historically Chinese allusions in the kasa refer to ages long past and very rarely get beyond Song.4

Pak Illo’s wrote his remaining five kasa after he retired from government service. They are mostly about simple, rustic life and the contentment of an existence close to nature, the standard subjects for an important sub-class of kasa that cannot be seen in isolation from the existence of a substantial group of literati who had no hopes of employment by the government. In the background of Pak Illo’s kasa, however, there is always the state, for which, as the author reminds us repeatedly, he risked his life while still on active duty, “with shiny spear and armored horse rushing about, without rest,”5 “stepping on corpses, wading through blood.” 6 “Yŏngnamga” (Song of the Southeast), composed in 1635, is a eulogy to an unusually benevolent governor of Kyŏngsang Province (and, in the background, to the king who sent him). This song speaks from the viewpoint of the population of this area, who suffered the brunt of the Japanese attacks more than 40 years earlier. Behind the poem there is the Confucian model of virtue that suffuses society from above.

4 In her book Chosŏn hugi Chosŏn chunghwa sasang yŏn’gu (Seoul: Ilchisa, 1998) Chŏng Okcha has argued that in this period Korea’s identification with China (as an ideal of civilization) was an expression of self-confidence rather than of dependency on “China.” The evidence of the kasa only confirms this.
5 “Tongnaktang” in Yi Sangbo, Han’guk kasa sŏnjip (Seoul: Chimmundang, 1979), p. 325.
6 “Nuhangsa” in Yi Sangbo, Han’guk kasa sŏnjip, p. 321.
In all of Pak’s kasa, landscapes are not merely rivers and mountains, fields and woods, but they are all covered, to use Peter Berger’s phrase, by the “sacred canopy” of the Confucian order, which is a national order demanding the allegiance of all, even the grey-bearded veteran who spends his last years far from the capital. Hence, 1636’s “Nogyega” (Song of the Reed Stream), a description of the simple pleasures of rustic retirement, ends with praise to the monarch who has made all this possible and a prayer for his longevity, so weapons and armor will be left idle for 10 million years and the peasants will sing cheerfully while toiling in the fields and drawing water. This wish for peace (which as we know would prove vain within the same year) of course reflects the traumatic recent history of the peninsula, to which he refers more explicitly in five of his six other vernacular songs.\(^7\) In the kasa of Pak Illo, Korea is not only a community united by the Confucian order, but also a community of personally experienced suffering.

**Travel kasa**

The traumatic events of the late 16 century are also recalled in an 18th-century kasa by Kim In’gyŏm (1707-17) titled “Il Tongjangyuga.”\(^8\) This is a very long travel diary in poetic form, written by one of the secretaries accompanying the 1763 embassy to Japan (the so-called Kyemit’ongsinsa). Kim In’gyŏm served the government, like Pak Illo, but for him this happened only late in life when he was invited to join the embassy. He had not taken the higher civil service examinations; for him, as he himself stated, the “pure title” of the chinsa degree sufficed.\(^9\) He may be considered, therefore, as representative of the provincial scholars who were somewhat marginal with regard to the center of power. The contents and tone of “Il Tongjangyuga” are much more varied than those of the shorter kasa of Pak Illo, but Kim In’gyŏm represents himself consistently as part of a politically and culturally defined nation, with clear borders and a shared history. Before he was called to serve his county, he relates, he traveled through the eight provinces of Chosŏn Korea and saw all its “famous mountains and great rivers.” He does not elaborate what this traveling at that time meant to him, but in the description of the slow progress of the long train of all those who took part in the embassy from Seoul to Tongnae it clearly transpires that to him

\(^7\) In the sixth kasa, “Sajegok” (Song of the Sedge Bank), the war is not explicitly mentioned but Pak refers to his service to his country.


“mountains and rivers” were not mere geographical features. Imbued with significance derived from history, landscapes assumed an additional, and sometimes national, dimension. After crossing the Han River, the travelers pass the “Two Tombs,” the tombs of Kings Sŏngjong and Chungjong, the Japanese invaders had desecrated, prompting Kim In’gyŏm to shed “tears of indignation thinking of the year imjin.”

This is not the only occasion on which he thinks of what happened 171 years earlier. When he has crossed the Tal River in Ch’ungch’ŏng Province he overlooks a battlefield, the place where nearly two centuries earlier the generals Sin Ip and Kim Yŏmul confronted the Japanese invaders, and is moved to write a poem to comfort their souls. In Ch’ungju, he pays reverence at Ch’ungnyŏlsa (Shrine to Loyalty), dedicated to those who had given their lives for the country, and when he advances into Kyŏngsang Province over a strategically situated mountain pass, he laments that during the Imjin Wars the Korean commander, in spite of his positional advantage, allowed the Japanese to cross. In Tongnae, Kim In’gyŏm visits another Ch’ungnyŏlsa, where once again he is much moved by the heroic feats of those who resisted the first Japanese onslaught. The community of directly experienced suffering in the kasa of Pak Illo in “Iltongjangyuga” has mutated into a community of remembered suffering and it is quite likely literary works like Pak Illo’s kasa were among the vectors that made this possible.

Not all of his historical memories are related to the Japanese invasions. Near Kyŏngju he notes the tomb of the Silla general Kim Yusin and when he enters the town itself he observes that in this former capital the customs of Silla have remained unchanged. Among the lieux de mémoire of Kyŏngju he lists the Chŏmsŏngdae astronomical observatory, the fire beacons, Panwŏl fortress, P’osŏkchŏng and the Five Royal Tombs. These are all “national” memories in the sense that they are places that derive their meaning not in the last place to the fact that Silla is the “ancestor” of Chosŏn. Kim In’gyŏm, however, is not only a subject of Chosŏn; he also is a member of a particular lineage, and this identity, too, gives a special meaning to some places in the landscapes he traverses. Although he lived in Kongju, his lineage was that of the Andong Kim-si

10 “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 23.
12 For both, see “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 28.
13 “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 47.
14 “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 42.
and therefore he devotes several lines to his visiting ancestral graves in Andong and meetings with kinsmen.\textsuperscript{15}

When Kim In’gyŏm subsequently arrives in Japan, this confrontation with the Other obviously calls forth reflections that directly or indirectly concern the identity of the observer. Difference is often interpreted as lack of civilization, as when he notes the naked hairy legs of Japanese men and the unspeakable behavior of Japanese women who make indecent proposals and display their bare bottoms to the Koreans on board the ships that sail along the Japanese coast.\textsuperscript{16} Nevertheless Kim In’gyŏm is not biased and duly notes things he admires, although this never seems to reach the point where he seriously begins to question his own values.

A kasa that is comparable to “Iltongjangyuga” in theme and length is “Yŏnhaengga” (Voyage to Beijing) by Hong Sunhak (1842-?), which describes the embassy to the Chinese court undertaken in 1866. According to the evidence of the last lines of this kasa, Hong composed it to comfort his aged parents. As in “Iltongjangyuga,” here, too, part of the song is dedicated to the journey to the border, and again it turns out the landscape is inscribed with history. Hong faithfully notes the bustle of flourishing contemporary Kaesŏng, but devotes more attention to its history, invoking the literary topos of the contrast between the mountains, which are as in antiquity, and the past glory of the old capital of Koryŏ, of which nothing remains but withered trees and weeds. At Sŏnjuk Bridge where the Koryŏ loyalist Chŏng Mongju was murdered, he is duly impressed by the stains of his blood that in spite of centuries of wind and rain remain clearly visible. This bridge deserves to be called a national monument, with a stele inscribed in the hand of King Sukchong and a balustrade preventing people from defiling it with their feet.\textsuperscript{17} In P’yŏngyang, he visits the shrine devoted to Kija, thanks to whom P’yŏngyang is “the root of our country.” The civilisation Kija created, he notes, is still there, together with the well from which he drank, but old trees and weeds surround his ancient tomb. The stele in front of it had been broken, Hong deplored, by the lawless Japanese during their

\textsuperscript{15} “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 36. From the point of view of social history it is interesting to note Kim In’gyŏm also relates in the same passage that government clerks (ajŏn) with the same family name, who had the same family roots (본시 동근이라), came to see him.

\textsuperscript{16} “Iltongjangyuga,” p. 102, p. 148.

\textsuperscript{17} Hong Sunhak, \textit{Kihaeng kasa chip: Yŏnhaengga}, annot. By Yi Sŏngnae (Seoul: Sin’gu munhwasa, 1976), pp. 15-16.
invasion in the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{18} Nearly 300 years after the fact, this once more demonstrates the enduring role the Japanese invasions played in the living narrative of national history. When the embassy reaches Ŭiju, the year \textit{imjin} again intrudes on the consciousness of Hong Sunhak when he sees the house where King Sŏnjo stayed after he fled north to escape the advancing Japanese armies: “When I think of that time/my indignation knows no bounds.”\textsuperscript{19}

In other passages it becomes clear the connotations of the landscape are not only conceived in historical terms, but also, one might say, “touristic.” The country of Chosŏn is the setting of beautiful scenery as well as battlefields and other places of historical import. Time and again Hong Sunhak notes spots famous because of their natural beauty, such as the steep cliffs of Hoeransŏk and the Pak Yŏn waterfall and he draws comparisons with other spots in other provinces his public apparently is also familiar with.\textsuperscript{20} The scenery of P’yŏngyang makes a very deep impression on him:\textsuperscript{21}

Rumors I had heard  
of the beauty of its mountains and rivers,  
of its pavilions and terraces.  
Enraptured I was by a single glimpse;  
what I had heard was true!

Hong inspected the city and all its famous beauty spots and found that P’yŏngyang equaled the capital in its prosperity and was superlative in natural beauty.\textsuperscript{22}

It was, however, not only the beauty of woods, rivers and mountains that caught his eye, but also the beauty of the \textit{kisaeng}. In such cases it is not necessarily just grace and charm of the women he meets that prompt him to tell the audience about this. He also defers to the topos of the \textit{saekhyang}, locations famous for the beauty of their women. P’yŏngyang was such a place,\textsuperscript{23} as was Sŏnch’ŏn.\textsuperscript{24} No less than the sites related to national history or regions famous for their scenery these \textit{saekhyang} were part of the mental world of Chosŏn geography.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[18] “Yŏnhaengga,” pp. 29-30.
\item[19] “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 34.
\item[20] “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 17.
\item[21] “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 20.
\item[22] “Yŏnhaengga,” pp. 21-23.
\item[23] “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 22.
\item[24] “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 31.
\end{enumerate}
The separate nature of Chosŏn vis-à-vis China in the minds of Chosŏn Koreans is dramatically illustrated by the verses that describe the crossing of the frontier when the travelers reach the Yalu River. While Hong Sunhak previously noted his progress across various provincial boundaries very briefly, here he fell prey to extraordinarily strong emotions, sighing and shedding tears. He linked these emotions explicitly to his two primary identifications, family and country (가족히어/억제하기 어려운 중) and once he crossed the Yalu he “looked back and back again: ‘farewell my country!’”

Even on foreign soil, the travelers find themselves in a spot that recalls to memory an episode from Korean history: the mountain pass where King Hyojong, then still a prince, composed a sijo when he was on his way to Shenyang as a hostage. Hong Sunhak inserts one line of this sijo in his kasa, and adds: “the past came to life again/causing infinite sadness.” This may serve as a reminder that Korean historical identity was also formulated and transmitted through the medium of the sijo, which in many cases in easily memorable form encapsulate the essence of historical incidents that were particularly meaningful to the people of Chosŏn.

Similar emotions are evoked in Hong Sunhak’s breast when they arrive at the Chosŏn’gwan in Shenyang.

How sad: this is the place where we mourn the Three Scholars! It is as if in their loneliness, 10 000 li [from home], They eagerly welcome us… When we enter through the South Gate there is the Chosŏn’gwan, it’s said.

26 “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 52.
29 Hong Ikhan, Yun Chip and O Talche were taken there because they refused to submit to the Manchus and were finally killed. Of Hong Ikhan two sijo were transmitted that conveniently may serve as a vignette of his role in history as it was remembered in Chosŏn, and collectively the Three Scholars were the subject of at least three sijo composed in the 18th and 19th century; Walraven, “River of Living History,” pp. 334-334.
How many years of humiliation the Great King Hyojong suffered after he had entered that place! 
The year pyŏngja is our arch-enemy! 
When shall we have our revenge? 
Passing this spot 
no subject of later generations 
can suppress the anger in his heart!

After their arrival in Beijing, Hong betrays similar emotion, although to a lesser degree, when he sees the place where on the 19th of the third lunar month of the year kapsin (i.e. 1644; Hong provides the exact date) the last Ming Emperor took his own life.30 Behind his emotions there were, one may safely surmise, the tremendous consequences the fall of the Ming had had for Korea. Elsewhere “Yŏnhaengga” confirms the well-known fact that Chosŏn literati considered themselves the true successors to the Ming. Hong Sunhak mentions the Koreans were envied by Chinese officials they befriended, who had had to bow to Manchu fashions, for the Ming-style costumes the Koreans continued to wear.31

National and Local Pride

“Hanyangga” (Song of Hanyang) composed by an author who used the pseudonym Hansan kŏsa (“a scholar without office from the capital”) is a long kasa of 1,528 verses,32 and in effect a eulogy to the capital in all its aspects. It is dated 1844, although in some editions there may be later additions. There is no doubt, however, that it is a description of Seoul as it flourished in the 19th century. The central question here should be not only who the author was and what his social position was, but above all the related question of who were the audience of this kasa and to which sense of identity the song appealed. I will argue that “Hanyangga” appeals both to a sense of national identity and local identity, and that the intended audience occupied a fairly wide range of social niches. Following some verses about the creation of the world, the opening lines of “Hanyangga” contain a description of the capital in terms of geomantic location.33 Such passages are a common feature in many Chosŏn-period

30 “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 97.  
31 “Yŏnhaengga,” pp. 163-164.  
32 There are several versions of the song; this is the number of verses in the longest version.  
33 Pak Sŏngŭi (ed.), Nongga wŏllyŏngga . Hanyangga (Han’guk kojŏn munhak taegye vol. 7; Seoul: Minjung sŏgwan, 1974), pp. 78-81; hereafter referred to as HYG.
literary texts, and were inserted whenever a particular place had to be introduced, but that is no reason to dismiss such descriptions as mere clichés, because the details may contain significant information that is particular to the individual text under consideration. In “Hanyangga,” in conformity with the usual pattern, a quick one-verse reference is made to the Chinese Kunlun mountains, but the remaining verses are all about Korea. The capital is located between Paektusan in the North and Hallasan on Cheju Island in the South. It is striking that the net is cast much more widely than in the usual geomantic descriptions, which limit themselves to mountain ranges in the immediate vicinity of a specific place.

Each auspicious geomantic site has its “Blue Dragon,” the mountain range that protects it in the East and a “Table Mountain” to the South. In the case of Hanyang the Blue Dragon is T’araksan (also know as Nakt’asan or Naksan), but the capital’s “Outer Blue Dragon” is constituted by the Diamond Mountains, while its “Outer Table Mountain” is Hallasan across the Southern Sea. Thus Hanyang, “a capital created by Heaven,” is at the center of the realm and organically linked to its most outlying regions. Here “Hanyangga” praises the capital as the center of the country, from which the king governs the nation. Yet, in many other places a different view of the city transpires in “Hanyangga”: it is seen as a city in which the monarchy forms a focal point, but where many other people, yangban and non-yangban, live and work. It is perhaps no accident that the first reference in “Hanyangga” to the inhabitants of the city is to the “myriad households of the citizens” (여염은 억만가요).34 Many kinds of city-dwellers are mentioned at various places in the song, including commoners such as merchants, craftsmen like tile-makers and carpenters, as well as policemen and horse handlers. Remarkable are the numerous verses that describe the royal body guards and the non-yangban pyŏlgam, who performed various services in palaces or government offices (often of a rather menial nature), in quite flattering terms and at considerable length.35 Musicians and kisaeng, too, receive considerable attention.36 It is safe to speculate the author of “Hanyangga” belonged to a social stratum that worked in close proximity to the ruling elite (like, for instance, the pyŏlgam) but somewhat at a social distance from the yangban elite. This is confirmed by the meticulous descriptions of the various kinds of merchandise for sale at the markets of Seoul, which often go into trifling detail, as in an enumeration of all kinds of combs. It is

34 HYG, pp. 80-81.
35 HYG, pp. 86-87, 124-125, 128-131.
36 HYG, pp. 130-141.
difficult to imagine an elite scholar stooping to display such an encyclopedic knowledge of the trivia of daily life.\footnote{37}

On the other hand, the author of “Hanyangga” also was conversant with innumerable details related to the organization of government bureaus, the layout of palaces, etc., and he also devoted numerous verses to the civil and military examinations. This matches the assumption that Hansan kŏsa was a typical citizen of Hanyang, where a sizeable part of the population, although not belonging to the yangban status group, in daily life was in close contact with the palaces and government, which gave the city its particular character.\footnote{38} There is a double identification in “Hanyangga.” The kasa takes pride in the nation, but it is also an expression of the more local pride of the city dwellers, who assert their own worth by inserting their identity in the national narrative. There is no doubt such pride existed. Already in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century it had found expression in poetry in Chinese.\footnote{39}

A much shorter kasa that in many ways is reminiscent of “Hanyangga” is “\textit{T’aepl’yŏngsa}” (Song of Great Peace), some variants of which are actually also called “Hanyangga.” To begin with it provides a brief account of the geomantic location of Hanyang (using Paektusan as the point of departure), relates the foundation of the capital and lists the favorably located palaces. “Who [in such an auspicious spot] would not be a loyal servant of the throne?” Lavish praise is heaped on various institutions and functionaries of the government. Of those who worked in the royal library, for instance, it is said: “All the scholars of the Kyujanggak are as erudite as Han Yu.” “Great and glorious it is,/The civilization of cap and robe of our Chosŏn” is the conclusion of this part. The invasions of the Japanese and the Manchus are briefly recalled as rude interruptions to 400 years of peace, but thanks to the monarchs’

\footnote{37} “Yŏnhaengga” by Hong Sunhak, who certainly was a yangban and later in life would occupy several official positions, contains extensive lists of goods offered for sale in Beijing, but in this case the exotic nature of many of the goods on offer may have prompted him to devote so much attention this subject. It is also possible he derived inspiration from “Hanyangga.” One line listing different kinds of comb seems to have been lifted out of that kasa; HYG, pp. 110-111, “Yŏnhaengga,” p. 117.

\footnote{38} For a discussion of the extent to which Hanyang may be regarded as “the King’s City” see Boudewijn Walraven, “Religion and the City,” \textit{Review of Korean Studies}, Vol. 3, No 1 (2000), pp. 178-206.

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virtue the good times had returned. Then the kasa, which most likely dates from 1841, describes very recent developments: the death of King Sunjo in 1834, the regency of Sunwŏn wanghu, and the assumption of personal rule by King Hŏnjong in 1841. As this is followed by the expectation the country now will enjoy prosperity and peace, up to this point the song can be seen as a celebration of this event. The time to rejoice has arrived, “T’aep’yŏngsa” announces in exuberant terms. What follows might be seen as a logical consequence of this, but is still somewhat unexpected, so unexpected that some have suggested the latter half of this kasa is an addition. The poet addresses the young men in the houses of pleasure in the city and reminds them human life is brief — old age and death approach with lightning speed — and they should enjoy youth while it lasts. This point is reinforced with a long enumeration of Chinese heroes and beauties who already for many centuries have been resting in their graves. This kasa has been attributed to a “Queen Kim” (there are several queens who would answer to that description), but Ko Sunhŭi has convincingly argued this is highly unlikely if not impossible and the author most likely was an educated gentleman in Seoul. Whether there was one author or whether it was a joint production is less important for our purposes. What counts is that this kasa circulated in this form and on the one hand projects the idea of the nation in which the citizens of Seoul take particular pride, mixed with pride in their hometown, and on the other hand reflects the preoccupations of a specific group in the city, those who had the leisure and means to indulge in the pleasures the capital offered.

Kyubang kasa
A sub-genre of the kasa that is typical of the late Chosŏn period is that of the kyubang kasa, the “kasa of the inner room” written for and often (but certainly not always) by women. Kyubang kasa continued to be composed after the end of the Chosŏn period. Although most of them are in manuscript, anonymous and undated, from internal evidence it is clear many were written in the 20th century and some of them as late as the 1960s. This poses some problems in the context of the present discussion,

41 Sŏ Yŏngsuk, Han’guk yŏsŏng kasa yŏn’gu (Seoul: Kukhak charyowŏn, 1996); Yi Chŏngok, Naebang kasa ŭi hyanggyuja yŏn’gu (Seoul: Pagichŏng, 1999); Na Chŏngsun et. alii, Kyubang kasa ŭi chakp’um segye-wa mihak (Seoul: Yŏngnak, 2002).
which is limited to the Chosŏn period, and for that reason works of which the date of composition can be established with reasonable confidence will be privileged. This implies the kasa of known authorship, a mere fraction of the total, will receive much more attention than their number would warrant.

At first sight, the kyubang kasa may seem unpromising when considering imaginings of larger communities, as their focus is on the relatively small face-to-face community of the family, which as a daily reality does not depend so much on acts of the imagination as, for instance, the nation. Nevertheless, even kyubang kasa that ostensibly deal with private matters like discord in the family and widowhood presume a social order that transcends family.

Yŏnan Yi-ssi (1737-1815), the wife of a descendant of Yu Sŏngnyong, the writer of Chingbirok, herself is the author of two of the ten or eleven Chosŏn kyubang kasa of known authorship. Of this number, her “Ssangbyŏkka” (A Pair of Jewels), was written in 1794. She composed it when her son and his cousin in the same year passed the highest civil examination, an occasion deemed so special that King Chŏngjo sent a personal emissary with a sacrificial text (chemun) he had composed for the lineage’s famous ancestor Yu Sŏngnyong (1542-1607), to whose influence from beyond the grave (ŭmdŏk) this great success was ascribed.

As a celebration of the Hahoe Yu lineage into which Yi-ssi had married, this song is quite different from the laments about the fate of women that have become best known among the kyubang kasa, although laments about Yi-ssi’s personal situation are not entirely lacking in this song. Yi-ssi makes it clear that she has endured extreme poverty and her life has been “an arduous journey along a path full of thorns and brambles,” and dwells on the hardships of a married woman separated from her natal family, without the support of parents or sisters. She

42 There has been some discussion, however, whether the kasa as it has been handed down was written entirely by Yi-ssi. It is possible some changes and additions were made in the course of transmission within the family. Cf. Kim Sugyŏng, “Ch’angjak-kwa chŏnsŏng-ŭro salp’yŏ pon ‘Ssangbyŏkka’,” in Na Chŏngsun et. al., Kyubang kasa ŭi chakp’um segye-wa mihak, pp. 75-96, and in particularly p. 95, where it is suggested that praise of Yi-ssi herself might have been added by her husband. For the purposes of this paper, it is not crucial whether Yi-ssi wrote the kasa all by herself, nor are the differences between variants essential. The important fact is that this kasa, in one form or another, circulated and both reflected and defined women’s views of the world they lived in. For the text of Ssangbyŏkka see pp. 275-280 of the same book.
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compares these with the fate of an envoy of the Chinese Han Dynasty whom the barbarians he had been sent to did not allow to return home for nineteen years and with the imprisonment of King Wen of Zhou by the last king of Yin, implicitly suggesting that to women marriage equals captivity. The focus of the song, however, is on the glory of her husband’s family. It is reasonable to interpret the juxtaposition of the at first sight disparate elements of the lament and the rejoicing about the family’s success as a conscious maneuver intended to create a narrative of hardship overcome through self-discipline, perseverance and self-sacrifice, not in the last place on the part of women. Such a didactic intent is entirely consonant with the message of many other women’s kasa, which emphasize the crucial role women play behind the scenes. The final triumph justifies all the hardships suffered earlier: “the resentments that had lodged in the deepest recesses of my heart/all have been dissolved at this hour!”

This kasa in its descriptions clearly shows the integration of different spheres of social life. The most fundamental level is that of the women’s own lives, which at times is far from glamorous. In spite of the high standing of Yi-ssi’s husband’s lineage she had, she claims, to dig herbs in the mountains with her “fine, well-cared-for hands.” Then there is the lineage as a whole, which when first introduced is placed in the local setting of its ancestral home in Hahoe. The superb geomantic qualities of this village in the countryside far from the capital are praised as being on a par with a whole list of places from Chinese antiquity that had produced great men. Finally there is the national sphere of the highest examinations for the recruitment of servants of the monarchy, which on this occasion bestows special royal favors on the lineage. In the kasa this is explicitly linked to the sphere of the inner rooms. It is Yi-ssi who because of her virtue has been able to “raise the servants of the state” (社稷之臣 키우시고). The similes used to praise her suggest she exerted herself hidden from the view of the world: “jade comes from the high mountains/gold comes from the depths of the sea.” In the kasa, there is a constant movement from one sphere to another. The first lines, for instance, quickly move from the grace of the monarch to the glory of the lineage and then to the hardships of Yi-ssi as a young bride, while in the concluding part passages about Yi-ssi and her son and nephew are

44 The importance of women for the fate of a lineage is, for instance, explicitly stated in Haengsil kyohun’ga in Kwŏn Yŏngch’ŏl et. al. (comp.), Kyubang kasa I (Sŏngnam: Han’guk chŏngsin munhwa yŏn’guwŏn, 1979), p. 42.
followed by a wish for the peace and stability of the country (“our land”) and an assertion of the undying fame the young men brought to their lineage.

In a sense the very form of the *kasa*, too, connects these spheres. As a *kasa* for the women’s quarters it is of course written in the vernacular, but it makes a very liberal use of allusions that belong to the *hanmun* culture of the male elite, referring for instance to the famous philosophical “Four-Seven Debate” between Kobong Ki Taesŭng (1529-1592) and T’oegye Yi Hwang (1501-1570), and freely quoting phrases from a wide array of Chinese classics.

Yŏnan Yi-ssi also has left us the first *kyubang kasa* that also is known as a travel *kasa*, “Puyŏ nojŏnggi.” This was written in 1804 and mainly recalls events that took place when her son had been appointed magistrate of Puyŏ four years earlier. In fact, it is slightly misleading to refer to it as a travel *kasa* (in spite of the title) because, although a trip from Hahoe to Puyŏ is described in this song, the main emphasis is on family affairs of different kinds, including a tearful reunion on the way with a younger sister Yi-ssi had not seen for thirty years and a banquet held in Puyŏ to celebrate her husband’s sixtieth birthday. The record of the journey itself is slight. Yi-ssi mainly describes the scenic beauty of some of the places she passes and notes her great sense of liberation on this first trip in forty years. Although in this case there is little trace of the attribution of a particular meaning to particular sites because of their historical connotations, in one passage there is an indication that Yi-ssi, too, conceived of the country as a setting for sites of a particular significance. “Only now I saw the Ŭnjin Maitreya in Nosŏng Prefecture,” she says, referring to the megalithic image (actually of Avalokiteśvara) that apparently even then was a “tourist sight” one should have seen. There is less shifting between spheres of life in this song than in “Ssangbyŏkka,” but in a less obtrusive way wider circles than those of the family are present in the background, for instance in reference to the state structure with its examinations and officialdom, in which the son succeeds in doing what the father never had been able to achieve.

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45 Kwŏn Yŏngch’ŏl et. al. (comp.), *Kyubang kasa I* contains twelve travel *kasa*, but some of these are of a relatively late date, with at least one dating from 1963.
47 She also talks of Puyŏ as the ancient capital of Silla.
Two other kasa of known authorship that are regarded as kyubang kasa are “Kim taebi hunmin’ga” (Queen Kim’s Instructions to the People) and “Puin hunmin’ga” (Instructions to the People for Women). It is not disputed that the first was really composed by the wife of King Sunjo (Sunwŏn wanghu; 1789-1857) and not unlikely that she also wrote the second. Some researchers even suggest the two songs were originally part of one kasa.48 “Kim taebi hunmin’ga” is actually less a kyubang kasa than a more general didactic kasa, although it should be noted that manuscripts of it were kept among collections of kyubang kasa, particularly in households of the Andong Kim lineage to which Kim taebi herself belonged.

This kasa successively deals with relations within the family (with parents-in-law, other relatives and spouses), with relations within the village and with friends, and with the need for farmers to work diligently. Although the contents, which describe quite concrete situations rather than just general principles, are addressed to both men and women, Ch’oe Kyusu has pointed out that the text in some places pays particular attention to a woman’s point of view. A perusal of the text confirms this and shows that when men are addressed this is often with women’s interest in mind. Among human feelings those between husband and wife are mentioned as most important and men are warned not to abandon the wives they have lived with for a long time, if there is no valid reason for divorce. They are moreover discouraged to let their wives accumulate grudges because they have to sleep alone (in other words, they should not take concubines), squandering precious resources that should be transmitted to the children. Man and wife should be mutually harmonious, and men should not invite ruin by indulging in drinking and lechery. Walking along the village paths, men should not follow women, maintaining the separation of the sexes that is the sign of civilization. Nor should they visit houses where no men are present, because in that way widows are ruined who try to maintain their chastity.

In the final part, where farmers are urged to work diligently, the state appears in an indirect way. If they don’t, the kasa asks, how will the farmers be able to survive the winter months and in spring pay their taxes? For the rest in this kasa, which deals with the spheres of the family and the lineage as well as that of the village community, the sphere of the nation only appears in the person of the author, but one has to assume that

because of the authorship of Kim taebi the readers of this *kasa* and those who listened to it must have been very aware of it.

The other *kasa* attributed to Kim taebi, “Puin hunmin’ga,” is a very brief text. That it is directly addressed to women is clear from the title and the first lines: “Woman walking over there, don’t walk too fast, but listen to my words,” which create the impression as if the writer accidentally meets another member of her sex in a country lane. Here, paradoxically, full responsibility is allotted to women themselves, who should serve their parents-in-law and husbands with sincerity, be patient with their husbands and not turn against their concubines. Heaven then will acknowledge their virtue and bless them with obedient children. The family should be the focus of women’s lives; they should not needlessly wander about the village and are counselled to avoid men they cross on their way. In the heat of summer they should not go out in a state of undress.

Many didactic *kasa* for the inner quarters, whether written by women or men, aimed to prepare women for their role within the family of their husbands. Poems entitled *Kye(n)yŏga* (Instructions for Daughters), which begin with lines like “My daughter, listen to me! Tomorrow you will go to your in-laws,” are representative of this kind of *kasa*. If we look at one example, anonymous and of uncertain date, but according to all evidence stemming from the late Chosŏn period, it contains the expected generalities of Confucian thinking about the essential human relations: show filial piety to your parents-in-law, never forget that there should be a clear distinction between man and wife, etcetera. It also gives practical advice based on more personal experience, however, and discusses matters that are related to the cardinal Confucian human relationships but do not receive much attention in texts redacted by men. In a sense the daughter is taught how to manipulate her parents-in-law by suppressing her primary reactions. When they are angry with her, she should not immediately talk back, but patiently bide her time and when their anger has subsided quietly explain things. She should revere her husband like Heaven, but she should also encourage him to study and not allow him to be lazy (in the background of this exhortation, though unexpressed, there is of course the examination system run by the central government). When he scolds her, she should answer with a smile,

49 The *kasa* of this kind that will be examined here can be found in *Kyubang kasa* I, pp. 14-20. The *kasa* that precedes this one, also titled “Kyenyŏga,” is not an original text read and recited in the Chosŏn period, but a “representative” composite of several *kasa*, assembled by Kwŏn Yŏngch’ŏl, one of the editors of this volume.
although that might be interpreted as lack of respect. Implied is that the relationship between husband and wife, which should be characterized by harmony and by obedience on the part of the wife, is also based on an emotional tie, to which the wife may appeal, although she should never give her feelings free rein.

A following section of this kasa is dedicated to the relationship with close relatives (in-laws) of the same generation which, the author realistically assesses, is more difficult that that with the parents-in-law and the husband, who are inclined to forgive the younger people or their own spouse. The daughter should handle these relationships carefully and always keep in mind both the ideological and practical importance of maintaining harmony. One might need these relatives in difficult times! How to arrange the offerings for an ancestral sacrifice is another fixed item in such kasa. The need for cleanliness and decorum are emphasized, but it is added that however much the children pester their mother for a piece of the offerings (above all the rice cake, presumably), they should not be given anything before chesa has been conducted. Relations with guests and neighbors are also described in realistic terms: what to do, for instance, if a neighbor comes to borrow something. When guests are around, the daughter should take care not to suggest that harmony and decorum within the household are anything but perfect by raising her voice so that it could be heard by the visitors.

Quite lengthy are the instructions concerning child-raising (even though they are prefaced by the remark “although this is a thing for the future”). Part of this is mere common sense (“don’t feed them meat that has gone off”), but in general the tendency is that the young mother should control her natural impulses and always strike a balance, neither spoiling the children, for instance, nor punishing them excessively. Such controlled behavior is also counseled in the daughter’s dealing with the servants, who always should be treated with due consideration, and in her contacts with the local community.

Other versions of the kyenyōga sub-genre, especially from the later years of the Chosŏn period, show a greater tendency to bring personal feelings to the fore. An example of this is “Hong-ssi kyenyōsa” of 1896, in which the author, Hong-ssi, forcefully expresses the intense sadness she feels when she has to send off her fourteen-year-old daughter for marriage and realizes she herself must have caused her own parents similar pain.\(^{50}\) At the same time, however, she also advises her child to

\(^{50}\) Ch’oe Kyusu, “‘Hong-ssi puin kyenyōsa’-e nat’an an chajonjŏk surhoe ŭi kŭl ssŭgi pansik-kwa ŭimi,” in Kyubang kasa ŭi chakp’um segye-wa mihak, pp.
behave well according to the usual standards, recommending filial piety and striving for harmony as the best way to achieve happiness. Her personal grief does not prompt her to reject traditional values.

Among all the numerous varieties of kyubang kasa, the most poignantly personal are the kasa written by women just before they took their lives after their husbands had died, such “Chŏlmyŏngsa” by Chŏnŭi Yi-ssi (1723-1748) and “Myŏngdo chat’ansa” by Namwŏn Yun-ssi (?-1801). Recent studies have argued these women killed themselves out of despair because of their desperate situation rather than because they followed the socially admired model of the virtuous wife who follows her husband into death.\footnote{Na Chŏngsun, “Chŏnŭi Yi-ssi chemun-gwa ‘Chŏlmyŏngsa’ ŭi sanggwansŏng koch’al,” and “Chŏnŭi Yi-ssi chemun-gwa ‘Chŏlmyŏngsa’-e nat’anan chugŭm-gwa yŏl ŭi munje,” and Kil Chinsuk, “‘Myŏngdo chat’an’ga’ ŭi naemyŏn ŭisik-kwa chat’anjŏk surhoe,” all in Kyubang kasa ŭi chakp’um segye-wa mihak, pp. 31-56, 56-73 and 117-143.} Their despair certainly was not without reason; Yun-ssi, for example, was poor and childless, her parents-in-law were already dead and, although she was still young, social mores forbade her to remarry. The opposition between personal motives and socially inspired motivations is, however, not absolute; the latter intermingle with the former.

If one considers the care with which Yun-ssi prepared for her suicide, writing not only a kasa but also detailed instructions in which she spelled out in detail how all kinds of matters should be arranged, it is clear that her death was not merely a blind act of despair. In any case, after her death her in-laws actively promoted her image as a virtuous woman (yŏllyŏ), putting her writings together in a book, and the local community of Confucian scholars petitioned the government to extend recognition to her as such. The readers of her kasa, therefore, even if they were moved by the description of personal suffering also will have interpreted it as an expression of an ideology that bound individual lives together into the greater communities of lineage and nation.

What goes for “Myŏngdo chat’an’sa” goes, mutatis mutandis, for all kyubang kasa in which women lament their fate. Although these songs were in a sense personal, they were also inextricably linked to particular social configurations, without which women would perhaps have had little to complain about to begin with. It was a fundamental characteristic of these configurations that in their representational imaginary they connected family, lineage, local community and the nation as a whole.
Buddhist kasa
The imaginary of Buddhist *kasa*, perhaps the most widely diffused sub-genre because of their recitation by beggar monks apart from their distribution in manuscript form or printed editions, is largely concerned with the structure of the hereafter. Therefore these songs may seem unpromising material for the reconstruction of the social imaginary of Chosŏn. In fact, exactly those Buddhist *kasa* that concentrate on depictions of the courts of the underworld where the dead are judged and the torments sinners have to undergo also dwell in detail on life in this world and the social ideals that, if realized, will assure a human being rebirth in the Pure Land of Amitābha, or at least allow her or him to escape the worst punishments in the numerous gruesome hells. Reflecting the particular nature of Korean Buddhism in the second half of the Chosŏn period, these songs stress that for Buddhist believers it is essential to be filial to parents, maintain harmony within the family and serve the state with loyalty. Confucian ethics were totally assimilated in Late Chosŏn Buddhist practice and with them Confucian concepts as to the elementary units of society. Consequently, the Confucian nation of Chosŏn is just as present in Buddhist *kasa* as ideas about karma and reincarnation.

Conclusions
In late Chosŏn, more and more voices expressed themselves in the idiom of the *kasa*. Various groups within society produced and enjoyed their own variety of these vernacular songs, but these sub-genres were not completely isolated. New sub-genres developed out of older forms of the *kasa* and it is possible to think of each *kasa* as a palimpsest, a text in which here and there parts of older writings in the same genre shine through in the new text. With its detailed realistic descriptions of the many things Kim In’gyŏm observed on his travels, *Iltongjangyuga* is quite different from earlier *kasa*, but at the beginning of the poem, before Kim In’gyŏm has received the invitation to join the embassy, he draws on conventional motifs of the sub-genre of *kasa* describing the life of the retired scholar. The creative recycling of elements from earlier songs was reinforced by the fact that *kasa* were a traditional formulaic genre in

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which the use of the building blocks of formulae and formulaic systems was an accepted standard technique.\textsuperscript{53}

Once the genre was created, whether it was in late Koryŏ or in the fifteenth century, kasa were never creations \textit{ex nihilo}. This was not just a matter of wording and style. The older sources for new kasa also were “carriers” of implicit identifications, which the adopting group might accept, modify or reject. In this context it is intriguing that “T’aep’yŏngsa” mentioned earlier in some manuscripts functions as the first part of a \textit{kasa} titled “Kŏch’angga.”\textsuperscript{54} The additional verses of “Kŏch’angga” are very different in nature and constitute a critique of local government in Kŏch’ang prefecture. My guess would be that “T’aep’yŏngsa” was used as a kind of counterbalance to the potentially explosive content of the grievances of the population of Kŏch’ang by an appeal to the benevolence of central government, which is so eloquently described in “T’aep’yŏngsa.”

Both within and outside their sub-genre, kasa always continued to share certain discursive modes and common elements, which lent the genre as a whole a dialogic nature. Statements in one sub-genre took up part of the argument of another sub-genre, but subverted it, gave it a different twist or complemented it. By and large the dynamics of this were integrative rather destructive. In spite of laments, women for instance did not radically reject the existing order, and criticism of local government in “Kŏch’angga” was robbed of dangerous rebellious implications by the song of praise to national government that preceded it. The development of particular local identities, whether of family, lineage or town, was not necessarily a threat to identification with a community of a higher order. On the contrary, it may be argued that true participation in more abstract communities is only possible on the basis of a firm identification with one’s more immediate surroundings. Once a link is established with the larger community this again changes daily life in the face-to-face community of the family or lineage, as becomes apparent in many passages from kasa of all kinds, such as the line in “Kyenyŏga” urging the daughter to push her husband to study to pass the government


examinations or gain or maintain status in the local community. In this case, it is through the *kasa* that women are mobilized to achieve success at the national level, even though they themselves do not leave their own sphere.

If it still seems somewhat far-fetched to connect *kasa* that seem very personal, such as the *kyubang kasa*, with the formation of larger communities, one may also note that many of these songs are very much preoccupied with the control of human emotions. This is significant in the perspective of the theory of the civilizing process formulated by Norbert Elias, who put such controls over emotions and behavior in the context of the emergence of more complex social interdependencies, or “figurations” in the course of long-term historical developments, including state and nation formation.\(^{55}\) Political economic and social developments in the late Chosŏn period were of such a scale and nature that one would expect new figurations and changes in habitus (a term Bourdieu borrowed from Elias) and *kasa* like “Kyenyŏga” may be seen as part of the civilizing process that accompanied such developments.

However that may be, it is possible therefore to think of *kasa* as an interface between different layers and sections of the population, thanks to which the destinies of separate spheres or communities imaginatively were joined together into bigger entities. *Kasa* therefore were part of the social dynamics between different groups, but it should not be overlooked that they also functioned *within* groups, acting as a medium through which these communities were created and reproduced. This is quite obvious in songs like “Ssangbyŏkka” and also may be said to be a function of *kasa* like “Hanyangga.”

Of course, one cannot claim that the network of *kasa* covered the entire population. *Kasa* were to a large extent linked to yangban society. But gradually they spread to other groups of the population, such as non-yangban city dwellers. Moreover yangban society itself changed in the course of time, with more people laying claim to yangban status—whether this was recognized by local yangban communities or not—while a

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separate sub-genre of kasa developed for yangban women, broadening the social basis of the genre as a whole. In addition to that, kasa exerted considerable influence on other genres, such as shaman songs and folk songs, so that the scope of the effectiveness of the genre of the kasa as a vehicle for imaginary constructions of communities was substantially enlarged.

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56 Sangyŏ sorī, pall-bearers’ songs, owe a big debt to Buddhist kasa. For another example see Ko Sunhŭi, “‘T’aepy’ŏngsa’nŭn kwayŏn Kim taebi chag-in’ga,” p. 189.
“To devise an escape from destiny”

The role of fortune-telling in Korea’s developmental past and neoliberal present

Matthew VanVolkenburg

This sort of fatalistic resignation shows no spirit of struggle. It is an attitude of submission to fate, not desiring to devise an escape from destiny. Among the masses such shamanistic practices as fortune-telling, phrenology, palm-reading, propitious date-selection and so forth have been prevalent. They have had no courage to attempt to change what seemed impossible and to make everything possible.¹ (Park Chung-hee, 1962)

Introduction

News reports about fortune-telling in Seoul appear periodically in international news coverage of South Korea. Such reports tend to highlight the persistence and popularity of fortune-telling and either juxtapose or contrast it with “ultra-modern” Seoul. A recent article in The Economist highlighted a fortune-telling café in Hongdae with its façade of “pink neon signs and glowing graffiti,” customers sipping lattes, and a hip tarot reader who seemed “more rapper than rune-reader.”² The article went on to offer estimates of the value of the fortune-telling market ($3.7 billion) and the number of fortune-tellers (300,000, as well as 150,000 shamans), which it considered unusual considering South Korea is “a country of evangelical Christians and devout Buddhists.” The inclusion of observations by Korea University professor Andrew Eungi Kim help to normalize the practice, which he compared to occasional churchgoing in

² “Prophets and profits: In South Korea fortune-telling will soon be a $3.7bn business,” The Economist, Feb. 25, 2018.
To devise an escape from destiny

the West and which is passed on within families as “one possible way by which to make sense of the world.”

Implicit in such articles is the perception of a contradiction between belief in fortune-telling, which is perceived to be “traditional,” and the ultramodern sheen of contemporary Seoul. A perusal of literature on fortune-telling, particularly by anthropologists in the 1970s, makes clear that there is far less contradiction than might at first be assumed. Fortune-telling in various forms not only survived Korea’s development period but thrived in an urban environment because it proved to be of great utility in allowing clients to cope with the stresses of that period. One function it served during then, as well as today, was as a form of counseling. As a 55-year old female fortune-teller who worked previously as a nurse described it in 2010:

Most of the clients come to me due to psychological conflict or insecurity. All of them are in a situation where they have to overcome various difficulties such as unemployment, adultery of spouses, failure in business, divorce, even mental depression, and so on…As they steadily communicate with me, they feel comfortable and peaceful in mind. I try to tell them to look at the more positive side of the difficulties, depending on my divination.

Fortune-telling serves its clients in more ways than this, however, and the ability of fortune-tellers to adapt to evolving conditions and new media have helped keep it relevant to modern Koreans, whether during the development period of the 1970s or amid the stresses and uncertainties associated with living in Korea following the neoliberal reforms which resulted from the economic crash of 1997, known as the “IMF crisis.” What follows is a brief history of fortune-telling, a review of ethnography-based dissertations from the 1970s and their analyses of fortune-telling forms and client responses, an examination of how fortune-telling has changed as Korea modernized since that time, an appraisal of fortune-telling as a part of the religious market, and lastly an examination of the way in which fortune-telling operates under neoliberalism.

Existing literature on fortune-telling in Korea

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3 Ibid.

4 Kwangsuk Yoo, Applicability of Religious Economy Model (REM) to the Growth of Fortunetelling in Contemporary Korea, 2012, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 90.
There are a number of works in English about fortune-telling and divination in South Korea. Dawnhee Janelli’s dissertation, *Logical Contradictions in Korean Learned Fortunetelling* (1977), explained how horoscope reading (sajup’alcha) worked and attempted to understand why clients overlooked contradictions and incorrect predictions. It was limited by a narrow focus and based on interviews with only 17 clients and a single fortune-teller, but revealed a great deal about the specific ways fortune-tellers dealt with their clients and how clients perceived their sessions.\(^5\) Elizabeth Young’s 1980 dissertation *Spirits and Other Signs: The Practice of Divination in Seoul, Republic of Korea*, covered a broad range of both “analytical” and “mediumistic” divination practices in an urban context and attempted to understand their ongoing popularity.\(^6\) Jin-pil Kim’s 1989 article, “Fortunetelling Goes Modern,”\(^7\) and Andrew Eungi Kim’s 2005 article, “Nonofficial Religion in South Korea: Prevalence of Fortunetelling and Other Forms of Divination,”\(^8\) explored the ways in which fortune-telling practices had continued and adapted since the 1970s, while Kwangsuuk Yoo’s 2012 dissertation, *Applicability of Religious Economy Model (REM) to the Growth of Fortunetelling in Contemporary Korea*, provided further insights.

**The history of fortune-telling in Korea**

Fortune-telling has a long history in Korea. In the early twelfth century, Koryŏ statesman and poet Yi Kyubo criticized a neighboring shaman, saying of her predictions, “Of thousands of words and volumes of speech, if she’s lucky to have one on target, stupid females and idiotic males receive it with respect and as a benefit.”\(^9\) In comparison to Yi’s bitterly critical tone, in the early sixteenth century Chosŏn statesman and writer Sŏng Hyŏn described an old blind fortune-teller in Seoul whose predictions were so suspect that women joked, “Things become better if

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he foretells a bad thing.” Despite the humor, it is clear he was popular enough to divine as a “full-time job” because “people were quick to meet him.”

It was not only the “people” who utilized diviners, however; according to Young, “Various kinds of ‘book’ diviners also served kings and high government officials throughout Korea’s history,” and they were never as persecuted as shamans were, partly because their practice required literary competence.

In the mid-1890s, British traveler Isabella Bird Bishop described the use of “‘The four columns of a man’s future,’ these being the hour, day, month, and year of his birth, or rather their four combinations” when making divinations, as well as “Pan-su” who would correct misfortune by shooting arrows in certain places. She also described how horoscopes were cast for brides and grooms to find an auspicious day for a wedding.

The reformers who published the Independent, which started publication in 1896, made their views of fortune-telling and shamanism clear to its readers, such as when it described “a large number of sorceresses, mudangs and blind fortune-tellers [who] pull the wool over the ignorant people’s eyes with such nonsensical stories and rob them of their hard-earned cash.” In fact, a police order in March 1897 stated that “The mutangs, fortune tellers, geomancers and other deceptive persons must be arrested by the police wherever they are found.” Months later it worried that “the mutangs and blind fortune-tellers are getting back their old prestige among the women of the city.” Though the order prohibiting fortune-telling was again promulgated in early 1898 and targeted also those who would employ them, in June the newspaper reported that an albino fortune-teller from Pyŏngan-do was “having a prosperous trade, but the journal wonders why the police authorities let him alone.”

Even as police set out to punish fortune-tellers and those who employed them, the few mentions made of them in the Independent make it clear enough that people continued to use their services; the above report also suggested that Seoul, as the nation’s largest urban area, drew such practitioners from across the country. Indeed, by the time of

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10 Yoo, 56.
11 Young, 82.
13 “Editorial Notes,” The Independent, February 18, 1897, 2.
14 “Departmental News,” The Independent, March 4, 1897, 3.
15 “Here and There,” The Independent, October 26, 1897, 2.
17 “Special Telegrams,” The Independent, June 11, 1897, 3.
Japanese ethnographer Murayama Chijun’s pioneering 1933 work *Divination and Prophecy in Chosŏn*, fortune-telling enjoyed widespread popularity. What became clear by the 1970s, however, was that fortune-telling in Seoul was thriving despite, or possibly because of, industrialization and urbanization. As Young described it, “The very word ‘chomjaengi,’ or diviner, in fact, brought smiles to the most severe faces and information as to whereabouts and what-abouts from others.”

**Fortune tellers in 1970s Seoul**

There were various kinds of diviners in Seoul in the late 1970s, whom both Janelli and Young divided into two general categories. For Janelli, they were “learned” or “possessed,” while Young divided them based on “(1) methods which utilize an analytical system based on Chinese philosophy, and (2) methods in which a spiritual inspiration or sign holds primacy,” or “analytical” versus “mediumistic” diviners. For Young, analytical diviners included horoscope readers (sajujaengi, who made up the majority), name readers, face, hand, and bone readers, and birthdate hexagram readers. Mediumistic diviners included spirit diviners (coin and rice readers including shamans, who made up almost half), lot-casting hexagram readers, bird’s sign readers, and lay Buddhist diviners (Posal).

What follows will focus on analytical diviners.

In comparing horoscope diviners and shamans, Young noted that the horoscope diviners tended to be men, were literate and educated in the Chinese classics, worked one-on-one with clients, and tended to focus solely on divining (though they might have a side occupation). They limited themselves to diagnosis and did not perform remedies, and could be self-taught or taught by another diviner. Shamans, on the other hand, were usually women, did not need to be literate, might work in groups when dealing with clients (particularly for kut), performed various rituals besides divining, offered both diagnosis and remedies, and were taught by other shamans and formally initiated.

Diviners could be found in many places, from those in offices or in homes, to itinerant fortune-tellers sitting on mats or stools in the streets, even in the freezing cold (particularly around the new year). Signs could be followed to scattered back alley offices, or they might be found

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18 Yoo, 19-20, 71-72. Maruyama was arguably the first to systematically classify Korean fortune-telling practices.

19 Young, x.

20 Young, 51-52; Janelli, 17.

21 Young, 53-55.
concentrated in certain areas such as Namdaemun or northeastern Seoul (where blind fortune-tellers gathered).\textsuperscript{22}

Ascertaining the number of diviners was difficult. Government estimates of 2,502 diviners in Seoul in 1975 were assumed to be low (other estimates were four to eight times higher), but suggested that more than one-third of Seoul’s diviners were shamans, one-third were analytical diviners (horoscope readers, geomancers, or face, hand, and bone readers), and slightly less than a third were spirit diviners (“chŏmjængi”), a group that may have included hexagram interpreters, “tortoise” diviners, bird diviners, blind diviners or coin and rice readers. The government never defined the latter category, but their statistics revealed that 74\% of analytic divination was carried out by men, while women made up 86\% of shamans and 64\% of spirit diviners.\textsuperscript{23}

The government attempted to pressure diviners to join associations which, particularly after the advent of the authoritarian Yushin system, it attempted to unify with little success. Membership in such associations seemed most popular with horoscope diviners and blind diviners. Some such organizations were affiliated with institutes which taught divination, featuring classes on horoscope reading (sajup’alcha), while the vast majority of blind diviners encountered were graduates of divination classes taught at the School for the Blind, which suggests formal organizations played “at least a minor role in dignifying certain professional distinctions.”\textsuperscript{24}

Professional diviners were usually found in market towns and in large cities where there were more potential clients. Horoscope readers or other analytical diviners who worked in clearly marked offices were easiest to find, while shamans or spirit diviners, who usually worked in unmarked homes, often needed a specific referral. In general, the fees of horoscope readers and blind diviners were higher than those of shamans and much higher than those of street-side diviners; most expensive were kut performed by shamans.\textsuperscript{25}

Young also examined the interactions of other religions with fortune-telling and found that Christians appeared to patronize diviners less frequently than non-Christians due to Christian injunctions against their use, but some Christians either ignored these injunctions, sent others in their stead, or patronized only philosophers (ch’ŏrhakja) on special occasions, such when they arranged their children’s marriages. While

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, 38-40.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, 60-65.
\textsuperscript{24} Young, 65-69.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, 70-74.
Buddhist monks did not sanction fortune-telling, books studied by monks in the past included those detailing the philosophical basis of divination, and many diviners in Seoul in the 1970s said they learned divination at a temple.26

**Horoscope readings and ancillary divinations**

One’s horoscope, or sajup’alcha (four pillars and the eight characters) is the basis of determining one’s place in the universe and location within social relationships and it determines the major events in a person’s life, the features of a person’s character, health, occupation, economic conditions, and how relations with others will unfold, including marital life and relations with parents, siblings and children. It can be used to determine the appropriate action to take in given situations. Calculating it is quite complex, but it begins by translating one’s birthdate into eight characters according to its location in a fixed and repeating calendrical cycle, which is then assessed in terms of its expression of Um and Yang forces, its links to certain ddi, (the 12 animals), as well as certain of the five elements, associated seasons, directions, colours, and body parts. From there horoscope readers can interpret this information, though different readers can use different means to do this.27

Although Young found horoscope reading to be the most popular form of analytical divination practiced in Seoul, certain other types such as face reading (kwansang), hand reading (susang), and name analysis (sŏngmyŏngakh) were also practiced. These were normally done by men and were rarely done on their own but used in conjunction with horoscope reading. Face reading was second in popularity only to sajup’alcha, and was thought to be systemic and statistical. For Young, it seemed to rely on associating (in order of importance) face color, harmony or balance of facial features, and surface area (divided into thirds marking parts of one’s life) with personality characteristics, social relationships, and future events. As well, the ability to assess psychological states added “an increased dimension of sensitivity to a reading.” Hand reading was less common, but operated in a similar way.28

Name analysis was also often done in conjunction with reading horoscopes, but unlike a birthdate, “a name can be selected to balance a birthdate and can also be altered.” Name analysis consists of sŏngmyŏngakh, or the interpretation of one’s fortune according to one’s

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26 Ibid, 93-95.
27 Young, 100-122; Janelli, 43-51.
28 Young, 156-169.
name (which was most common), and changmyŏng, or the creation of a suitable, beneficial name for a baby or an adult who wants to change their name. Reading a name involved analyzing its letters or characters, its sound or pronunciation and the number of strokes in its characters. Consonants of the Korean alphabet are associated with one of the five elements, while brush stroke count was linked to hexagrams in the Book of Changes; in this way fortunes could be told and a name change might be recommended if the fortune looked bad.29

Motivations for using fortune-tellers and patterns of patronage
Young found that while attitudes towards divination were mixed, even those who criticized it as “anti-scientific” or “superstition” still understood a need for it, because “It is the character of human nature to depend on something.”30 She found people consulted diviners at three general times: during certain seasons (particularly in the New Year’s season to see their fortune for the year, but also at Ch’usŏk), on occasions of life cycle events (particularly marriage, school entrance, and birth), and for personal problems or other individual situations. For school entrance, asking about choice of majors or schools was common, while for weddings choosing auspicious dates or calculating the potential harmony between spouses (kunghap) was common. The most commonly stated reason for visiting a diviner was “a feeling of anxiety or depression” (“taptaphada”), and the use of consultations as a counselling service was accepted.31

Young also found, via questionnaire, that people tended to consult diviners during the middle years of life, a time of childrearing “when individuals bear greatest responsibilities for the survival and success of their family,” but tapered off after age fifty-five.32 Women, as supervisors of household harmony, may have seen divination as part of that role, and tended to use divination more often than men, but it was “not exclusively a female prerogative.” Men tended to choose a diviner based on reputation, while women more often chose one based on references. Slightly more women sought listeners or were worried about illness or family problems; slightly more men tended to be more focused on business matters and knowing the future; both sought divination for reasons of anxiety or for marriage (their own or their children’s) at similar rates. Women, on the other hand, focused more on the problems of other household members.

29 Young, 184-194.
30 Ibid, 86.
31 Ibid, 385-393.
32 Ibid, 394-397.
“To devise an escape from destiny”

and when discussing business nearly always talked about their husband’s business problems, not their own.33

Men and women of diverse educational backgrounds consulted diviners and fortune-tellers of various kinds. Young found that “youth, higher education, and being male [were] each factors that tend[ed] to be associated with less use of divination and with use of only analytical divination, while age, little education, and being female [were] associated with greater use of divination, including use of both spirit divination and horoscope divinations.” 34 While Christian churches discouraged divination, it coexisted amicably with Buddhist worship, Confucian philosophy and ancestor rites, and shaman ceremonies. Men were associated with the Chinese-derived systems of ancestor worship and analytical divination, while among women “a diversity of religious practices was reported as was patronage of a diversity of diviners, which might suggest more daily attention to religious matters among women than men.”35

P’alcha, perception of contradiction, and fortune-tellers’ strategies
According to Janelli, when having their horoscopes read, many clients perceived the p’alcha as the equivalent of “fate,” which had the characteristics of uniqueness, inescapability, significance (as in it only affected the major events and circumstances of one’s life), an emphasis on social relationships over economic welfare (a poor woman with a husband and children is thought to have a better p’alcha than a rich widow), conditionality (prior actions may deflect some of the bad fortune their p’alcha has foretold), and interdependence (one is influenced not only by one’s own p’alcha but also by that of others such as parents or spouses). As Janelli noted, inescapability and conditionality were contradictory, but this was not often noticed because of the emotional satisfaction an appeal to conditionality brought.36

Janelli tried to explain the acceptance of logical contradictions within both the sajup’alcha system and the fortune-telling consultation. She found that the professional fortune teller made “a good deal of effort to prevent the detection of disconfirmations,” to establish and maintain their credibility, and to make the consultation emotionally satisfying for clients. Strategies to this end include telling clients good fortune awaits them in the near future, making predictions too general to disconfirm,

33 Ibid, 409-413, 450.
34 Young, 418, 424.
36 Janelli, 125-132, 147.
redefining terms, offering alternatives, using common sense to make inferences, making predictions in the form of questions, elaborating on or repeating correctly made divinations, and using highly technical terms to impress or distract clients. The effectiveness of these strategies was, however, “predicated on the client’s initial willingness to believe.” Only with this initial faith could the fortune-teller “induce…the client to rationalize away the weaknesses of fortunetelling and continue to be impressed with its accuracy.”

Janelli found that clients tended to remember a high number of correct predictions made by fortune-tellers and recorded several sessions to test their memories. She found that clients remembered only a small fraction of the predictions made and selectively retained particularly dramatic or important predictions. They also remembered predictions in a more specific form than as spoken by the fortune-teller and fabricated predictions or made distorted accounts of predictions. Despite this they did recall some disconfirmed predictions, but tolerated them, believing that the fault lay with the mistakes of the fortune-teller and not the system itself. In examining the social characteristics of the clients in her study, she found “no major correlation between either level of income or educational level on the one hand, and perception of contradictions on the other.” She did discover, however, that those female clients in anomalous social positions (particularly those lacking a husband or children who could care for them in old age) were less likely to perceive contradictions. She theorized that such women felt greater anxiety and had a greater need to alleviate it, and that through fortune-telling they could relieve themselves of responsibility for failure to pass through the normal life cycle expected of them by attributing it to the workings of fate. They thus had a strong reason to believe in the validity of the fortune-telling system.

Modern patronage of fortune-tellers
More than a decade after Janelli and Young’s fieldwork, Kim Jin-Pil described the persistence of fortune-telling, writing that its practice was no longer confined to back alleys, but could be found in downtown cultural centers and department stores where computers and telex

37 Janelli, 71-88. See also Janelli’s transcription of a consultation, 150-89. Young explained that when predictions are incorrect during a session, a sudden hand reading can provide “‘extenuating circumstances’ or may allow a diviner to alter the course of a divination with an explanation for doing so.” Young, 184.
38 Janelli, 102-110.
39 Ibid, 110-118.
machines were part of the process. Kim wrote that beyond attracting working-class clients, fortune-tellers reported consultations with government and military officials, and that there were “major companies which will not hire, promote or transfer personnel without consulting their regular fortuneteller.” Similar rumors exist today in regard to chaebŏl such as Hyundai, Samsung, LG and SK. The Chungang ilbo and Tonga ilbo both ran cultural centers teaching courses on fortune-telling well-attended by those hoping to start their own businesses. Fortune-tellers were “often to be found around the big hotels, department stores and train stations” and were even called on by foreigners: “Among the blind fortunetellers on the famous section of road on Miari Hill, Ch’oe Tae-un conducts his business in English, Japanese and Chinese, as well as Korean.” This ability to attract foreign customers marks a trend that continues today as increasing numbers of foreign tourists visit fortune tellers in Seoul, particularly in Myŏng-dong.

Kim highlighted the application of technology to fortune-telling. For example, in different parts of the city one could see a “fortune vendor” who appeared to be selling cheap computers but was actually doing computerized fortune-telling, while at least twelve computer companies were marketing programs for having fortunes told. As well, the government-run telecommunications company had made fortune-telling text The Prophecies of T’ojŏng available to telex users who used it 83,000 times in 1988, making it one of the most popular telex services.

In the early 2000s this trend continued as new business models were applied to fortune-telling. In addition to offices and makeshift booths on busy streets, there were also “fortune-telling cafes” such as Ivy Café, where patrons could sip reasonably-priced beverages and request the services of one of five fortune tellers – a recipe for success that saw the café earn profits during the IMF Crisis. Today similar cafes proliferate in neighbourhoods like Hongdae or Apguŏng where they offer services to younger clientele. Fortune-telling quickly expanded into cyberspace, and by 2002 there were 1,000 fortune-telling websites. Mobile phone
companies also began providing fortune-telling services to users, even selling electronic amulets. In the present day, similar services are available via smartphone applications, with one software developer having launched 13 fortune-telling applications over the past five years. Its most popular has been downloaded over three million times over two years. “Every morning it sends users their personalised fortune for the day. Proffer your palm to the camera or snap a selfie, and another app provides instant face- and palm-reading.”

A 1998 survey revealed that 72% of Koreans had patronized fortune-telling services at least once in their lifetime; it appealed to “people of all classes and backgrounds, irrespective of age, gender, education, or profession.” The most popular forms of divination at the turn of century were sajup’alcha (believed in by 47.9% of men and 54.7% of women, according to a 1999 survey), kunghap (believed in by 37.4% of men and 43.3% of women, according to a 2001 survey), foretelling auspicious days, belief in auspicious names, face-reading, and geomancy. These forms continue to be popular today, though tarot reading – a Western import – has recently become a popular form of fortune-telling among younger people. As one fortune-teller put it, “The young like it. The cards are pretty, it’s cheap and it’s quick.”

In the 1970s Young found that face reading (kwansang), or physiognomy, was second in popularity only to sajup’alcha, and surveys over the decades have highlighted its continued popularity, with 51.7% of respondents believing in physiognomy in 2001 (particularly among those aged 50-59 (59.5%) and women (54.6%). Yoo stated that some companies were even known to have hired face-reading specialists to screen candidates for employment. Face reading went on to gain more popularity after the box office success of the 2013 film “The Face Reader,” set during King Sejo’s rise to power, which sold 9.1 million tickets and was the fourth highest-grossing film of the year. The next year a historical TV drama called “The King’s Face,” also about a face reader, was broadcast, as were TV shows featuring face readers giving readings to celebrities.

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46 Andrew Eungi Kim, 286.
47 “Prophets and profits.”
48 Andrew Eungi Kim, 286.
49 Ibid, 286-287.
50 “Prophets and profits.”
51 Yoo, 291-292.
53 Jason Strother, “Off the Wall: In South Korea, Fortune Tellers Face a Wrinkle,”
One of the more attention-drawing trends related to face-reading was that of people getting cosmetic surgery to change their face for the sake of a better fortune. While some face readers stated that “You can’t change your birthdate, but you can change your looks,” others thought the prevalence of cosmetic surgery in Korea made it difficult for readers to read faces. One said it was “like they are wearing a mask,” and “Plastic surgery can’t change their fortune,” and asked clients for pre-surgery photos. On the other hand, a plastic surgeon who taught himself face reading offered patients options to fix “egocentric noses” and eyes which “mean you won’t make a lot of money.” One plastic surgeon said one in ten of his patients underwent surgery to improve their future fortune, while others said it accounted for only a small fraction of surgeries.

Regarding auspicious names and dates, a 1997 national survey found that more than 43% of the respondents believed in a relationship between their personal name and their fortune, and between 2000 and 2009 the number of applications to change names increased by five times. Since 2008 1.5 million people in Korea have legally changed their names. As for the belief in auspicious days or years, it has even affected demographics in Korea. In 2007, the “year of the golden pig,” which is associated with monetary fortune, 493,189 children were born, an increase of over 50,000 births from the previous year.

**Fortune-telling as part of the religious market**

Andrew Eungi Kim examined fortune-telling and divination and described them as a nonofficial religion, defined as “a set of religious and quasi-religious beliefs and practices that is not accepted, recognized, or controlled by official religious groups” which served people’s pragmatic needs such as “counselling, healing, emotional security, protection from misfortune, and realization of material wishes.” According to Kim, figures from 1997 stated there were more than 300,000 practicing fortune tellers in South Korea, including more than 40,000 shamans, which was...
more than double the combined total of Christian and Buddhist clergy.\textsuperscript{61} Yoo Kwangsuk cited similar numbers from 2007 and suggested the fortune-telling market generated about four billion dollars per year.\textsuperscript{62} According to a 2012 survey, 70\% of respondents said they planned to or already had their fortunes read that year.\textsuperscript{63}

Established religions interact with fortune-telling differently. When responding (in 1999) to the question of whether one should not marry if they received a negative kunghap result, 53.7\% of Buddhist respondents agreed, while 26.9\% of Catholic respondents and only 15.6\% of Protestant respondents agreed.\textsuperscript{64} Yet Yoo found some Christians perceived fortune-telling to offer something their own religion did not. A 54-year-old Catholic woman said, “When I sometimes feel that God is not helpful, I tell fortunetellers my troubles and wishes.” A 44-year-old Presbyterian woman said, “Christianity never provides any concrete solutions for important problems in daily life,” and so sought a fortune-teller to help her with issues surrounding her son’s education.\textsuperscript{65} In 1989, Kim Jin-Pil opined that “it seems that if people have some major worry they will go to the fortuneteller unless the established religions offer something similar,”\textsuperscript{66} suggesting fortune-telling serves a niche that other religions have not filled, much like how during the Chosŏn Dynasty shamanism or Buddhism offered ways to propitiate the gods that Confucian rituals did not.

Yoo argued that due to the challenges modern Koreans face, “they seek a closer and more tangible reward rather than a distant and intangible one,”\textsuperscript{67} something echoed, perhaps, in the increase in kut for good fortune held by small business owners from the late 1980s.\textsuperscript{68} It was this demand, he argues, that led to growth in the number of fortune-tellers, whose ‘start up costs’ are quite modest and allow for easier entry into the religious market. Fortune-telling does not demand fidelity to it alone, while Protestantism has lost members because it is too strict and does not allow members to make use of other religions - or, as the religious

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid, 286.
\textsuperscript{62} Yoo, 8.
\textsuperscript{63} Strother, “Off the Wall.”
\textsuperscript{64} Yoo, 96.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid, 136.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid, 39.
\textsuperscript{67} Yoo, 144.
\textsuperscript{68} Laurel Kendall, \textit{Shamans, Nostalgias, and the IMF: South Korean Popular Religion in Motion} (University of Hawaii Press, 2009), 135-139.
To devise an escape from destiny economy model terms it, to build a “religious portfolio” in order to lower spiritual risk.  

Andrew Eungi Kim has noted that because fortune-telling is a “non-official” religion, respondents who do not identify themselves with official religions of Buddhism, Protestantism, or Catholicism might choose the category of “no religion” in many questionnaires. He thus questioned whether concepts of growing secularization used in the West can truly be applied to Korea and argued an examination of fortune-telling in Korea “clearly indicates that religion, at least in the nonofficial form, is alive and well, as these various nonofficial beliefs and practices are found to be serving the emotional needs of the people in their own ways.”

Fortune-telling as continuing tradition in the neoliberal present
Park Chung-hee set forth his views on divination when he criticized Korea’s “characteristic national negativism” and “fatalistic resignation,” describing the use of fortune-tellers as “an attitude of submission to fate.” In attempting to mobilize Koreans in his drive to achieve the “modernization of the fatherland,” Park and his administrators in the 1960s “saw little merit in Korean tradition for industrialization” and failed to reinvent existing traditions, which has led to them persisting in often unexpected ways. Park’s modernization program led to large-scale industrialization and urbanization, which brought on a host of dislocations and stresses. Young found urban diviners were responsive to urban problems such as adjustment to stressful living conditions and that divination functioned as a “culturally-indigenous counseling service and as a promulgator and interpreter of moral and ethical values” which was “not insignificant in its contribution to survival in Seoul.” Others have also argued fortune-telling links Koreans to their traditions. Andrew Eungi Kim asserted Koreans continue to pursue fortune-telling because it “represents their underlying attitudes and beliefs that have been passed down for generations,” while Yoo argued fortune-telling has come to function as a “bridge that connects modernized individuals with

69 Yoo, 145-150.
70 Andrew Eungi Kim, 295-296.
71 Park, Our Nation’s Path, 76.
72 Yong Chool Ha, “Late Industrialization, the State, and Social Changes: The Emergence of Neofamilism in South Korea,” Comparative Political Studies Vol. 40 No. 4 (April 2007): 368.
73 Young, 483-484.
74 Ibid, 297.
To devise an escape from destiny 

traditional wisdom and culture,” allowing them to “rejuvenate Korean ethics.”

Another reason for the persistence of analytical divination such as sajup’alpha, especially in comparison to more random forms of divination such as “saejŏm” (bird divination, in which a bird picks from an array of folded-up fortunes), may be that it appears systematic while still remaining traditional. As Janelli put it, the complexity of sajup’alpha divination “functions to convince clients of the existence of an impressive theoretical structure which underlies the particular predictions which they receive.” Janelli also found a correlation between being in an anomalous social position, which generated greater feelings of insecurity and anxiety, and having a higher degree of faith in fortune-telling. Considering the degree of social change since the 1970s, and considering the number of people who now lack what were considered normal social relationships in the 1970s, which is reflected in the increase of single-person households, it should not be surprising that patronage of fortune-tellers would continue today, particularly considering the insecurity which has accompanied the competitive realities of post-IMF-crisis South Korea.

The neoliberal social and policy reforms undertaken by South Korea in the aftermath of the 1997 IMF crisis resulted in increased privatization and globalization and left the Korean economy more vulnerable to the whims of transnational capital. As employment became more precarious due to these reforms, personal responsibility for one’s economic wellbeing was demanded which led to transformations of subjectivity that encouraged individuals to engage in “self-management” or “self-fashioning,” a burden that “renders invisible the forces that impinge on one’s choices in life.”

Commenting on this insecurity, Laurel Kendall argued that the “very volatility of the market, the seeming arbitrariness of success or failure, had much in common with the behavior of gods and ancestors”

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75 Yoo, 116.
76 A Google image search for “saejŏm” resulted only in photos of one particular woman in Pusan who continues the tradition. A recent article stated, “It seems like it has almost disappeared.” Kim Sŏngryong, “Sae ga Murŏda Chu nun Haengun... Saejŏm ul Asinayo?,” Chungang Ilbo, August 6, 2016.
77 Janelli, 68.
and led many small businesspeople to seek the aid of mudang. Such anxieties have also attracted even larger numbers of people of all types to fortune-tellers. Rather than use the services of mudang to have the gods intercede on their behalf, the use of fortune-telling allows clients to be more proactive and engage in the “self-management” demanded by the changed economic circumstances. Though Park Chung-hee had bemoaned the fact that people turned to fortune-tellers and had “no courage to attempt to change what seemed impossible and to make everything possible,” the fact that one’s fate is not set in stone and can be altered by one’s own actions has led people who are offered predictions of their future to take action themselves to alter or fulfil it. Yoo argued that fortune-tellers’ predictions and interpretations function as something to be acted on by clients and incorporated into their own lives, and that clients are empowered by the fact that the choice to do so remains entirely their own.

With the aid of new technologies, people can take fate into their own hands in far more ways than they could previously. Tens of thousands of people have legally changed their names, and compared to the past where one’s birthdate or face could not be changed, technology now allows birthdates to be altered via caesarian section and faces to be changed via cosmetic surgery, a procedure which is already advertised as a means to increase one’s marriageability and job potential. Taking such action does not always lead to positive results, however. The use of family planning which led to a spike in births during the “year of the golden pig” in 2007 led to a great deal of competition for these children to find entry to kindergartens in 2012, and such competition was projected to affect their chances when they enter college or find employment.

Fortune-telling’s counseling function served Koreans well during industrialization and urbanization, as did the way it allowed those who had not lived up to personal, familial, or social expectations to attribute this failure to the workings of fate. In the present, fortune-telling still offers this consolation and still serves its counseling function, but it also offers a proactive approach to fate which may be attractive to Koreans living with neoliberalism’s demand for self-management. The ability to act on predictions by fortune-tellers can offer a feeling of empowerment for clients and a belief in their own agency, but may also act to obscure the larger structural forces at play by convincing people that they can

79 Kendall, 136.
80 Yoo, 154-155.
81 Kim and Jung, “Kindergarten spots grow scarce for ‘Year of Pig’ kids.”
change their fates. While fortune-telling has proven adaptable and of great utility during and since Korea’s development, by suggesting that clients may be able to “devise an escape from destiny,” it may also be complicit in Koreans’ acquiescence to the demands of the current neoliberal order.

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Korea as Seen from the Saddle  
(Part Two: Pyongyang)

Robert D. Neff

In early September 1890, missionaries Henry G. Appenzeller and Samuel A. Moffett, along with Homer B. Hulbert left Songdo bound for Pyongyang. Shortly after they left, it began to pour rain and they were forced to seek shelter at the first Korean house they encountered. There did not seem to be anyone home so they “decided to waive ceremony” and barged into the courtyard (but in their defense, they did cough out loud so that if any women were present they could run into the house and hide themselves) and rested beneath the gate hoping the rain would stop but it didn’t. As they were already soaked there was nothing for them to do but go on. Throughout the day they stopped every five or six miles at inns where they would go in and “sit before the general fire-place until partially dry” and then go back out into the rain to continue their journey. Yet, despite his miserableness, Hulbert was able to poetically describe the region:

The region through which we passed that day is probably the most picturesque part of the trip from [Seoul] to [Pyongyang]. Lofty forest clad heights towered on either hand and a narrow valley wound between, whose continual twistings and turning afforded an ever changing panorama of beautiful views. It was the only part of the road that led through a thickly wooded region. In the heart of these mountains we came upon another of those massive stone gates planted right at the most strategic point and entirely blocking

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1 During the nineteenth century, this city was also known as Ping Yang and Pyeng Yang. For the sake of conformity, Pyongyang will be used in this text. Hulbert also used “Soul” as the spelling for the capital but I have converted the text to Seoul, again for conformity and ease.

2 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” The Japan Weekly Mail, July 25, 1891, pp. 103-104.
the way for an invading party. As we stopped a moment under its grim arch we thought how many a tale of fierce encounter and equally fierce repulsed its crumbling battlements might tell if they were only endowed with the power of speech. It was flanked on either side by heavy crenelated walls which spanned the narrow valley and rat part way up the almost precipitous slopes of the enclosing heights. It is a sad pity that Korean history has left us so few and meagre accounts of those old wars, wars whose records would doubtless furnish forth as many deeds of heroism and devotion as those of Europe. These old defences are like the interlocked antlers of deer which the hunter stumbles upon in the forest, telling of war to the death between those “antlered monarchs of the waste,” but giving no details. To the poetic mind the crumbling ruins only are enough, for they tell their own story and the imagination weaves about them whatever tale of romance and chivalry it will, but the more practical observer would fain know what was the cause and what the outcome of the invasion…

In the evening, just as the sun was setting, they finally reached Pyongsan and nearby they could see “the heavy wall of the old fortress of refuge capping the apex of a steep and rocky mountain and silhouetted against the evening sky. For centuries it has hung over the town of [Pyongsan], once looked up to as a haven of refuge, the genius of the place, but now only a nucleus about which to cluster the thrilling legends of early border warfare.” Perhaps these thrilling legends of early border wars he referenced were about General Shin Sung-gyeom (the founder of the Pyongsan Shin clan) who gave his own life in 927 to defend Taejo Wang Geon (the founder of Goryeo) during a battle with Baekje.

They quickly settled down in an inn and were just preparing to eat when they heard the cries of several kisu signaling that the magistrate of Pyongsan – the same magistrate they had met at the inn in Songdo – had arrived. Almost immediately they heard the sounds of a beating and cries for mercy; apparently the servant who had been sent in advance to ensure

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4 Pyongsan County is located in North Hwanghae Province and has only one small town – the population for the entire county was around 120,000 people in 2008.
6 Hulbert described a kisu as “a military servant, escort or body-guard.”
everything was ready had “failed to provide fresh mats and light the tallow dip, and so he was undergoing deserved chastisement…”

Later that evening, the Westerners visited the magistrate and introduced themselves. The magistrate, having never spoken with Westerners, was rather amused at the opportunity and invited them to sit next to him on his embroidered cushion but they, “too well acquainted with Korean etiquette to accept this invitation,” sat on another mat facing him. Their visit was short “and no one was particularly sorry when it was over.” The following morning the magistrate returned their visit, rather to their embarrassment as they were in the midst of their breakfast.

Traveling on Korean roads and ponies was not as pleasant as traveling in Japan but the scenery was comparable. Their journey that day took them over the highest pass between Seoul and Pyongyang, “a steady, hard climb – a beautiful view of mountain and valley, and a winding descent along the course of a rushing stream.” Hulbert argued that “Japanese scenery is characterized by picturesqueness, while in the Korean there is more of grandeur.”

Hulbert’s observations of nature extended to wildlife. It was everywhere if one knew where to look. In the Seoul region, deer were often sighted near the roads and it was not uncommon to encounter men entering the city with large bundles of deer skins. Pheasants were especially plentiful.

From November until March the markets of Seoul are stocked to repletion with magnificent golden pheasants. In the winter pheasants can be bagged within an hour’s walk from the city. A friend of mine shot one on his neighbour’s roof last winter right here in the foreign settlement of Seoul. A gentleman told me that during an afternoon’s walk outside the west gate he flushed twelve cock pheasants.

But in this northern region, it wasn’t deer and pheasants that excited his interest and fear – it was tigers.

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8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
This broad series of plains, which stretches away as far as the eye

can reach, is traversed by an exceedingly wild range of hills, a spur
thrown out from the mountain range to the east. The magisterial
town of Pong-san lies at their foot and many tales are there told of
tigers prowling about the streets and snatching up children and
even men and carrying them away. Three or four years ago an
English resident of [Seoul] had an adventure with a tiger in that
very town. As he lay asleep in the guest room of an inn, a tiger
leaped the wall and seized a dog which lay in the outer room that
serves as a kitchen. The village was in commotion, for tigers when
desperate do not hesitate to enter houses and seize their inmates.
The gentleman got out his repeating rifles and had several
opportunities to shoot the ugly beast, but refrained from doing so
for fear of injuring some of the villagers by accident. The tiger is a
thorough reality in the rural districts of Korea. It is the bugbear that
mothers use to frighten their children. In many parts of the country
the village tiger trap is a recognized institution. They are made of
heavy logs in the shape of a little hut and are fitted with sliding
doors. They are baited with live pigs or dogs, and are said to be
very effective. A Korean innkeeper once stopped me as I was
about to step out from the nauseating air of the guest-room and fill
my lungs with the pure cold atmosphere of a December night. He
thrust a lighted torch into my hand and said, “Here we do not dare
to go out of doors at night without a torch especially in winter.”
Koreans of the lower classes have the superstitious idea that the
tiger is a sort of demon and that he can imitate the human voice.
They tell many tales about tigers coming to the door at night and
assuming the voice of a friend and alluring the inmates out. Tiger-
hunting in Korea, as everywhere else, is a dangerous business,
doubly so to the Korean hunter who goes armed with a rusty old
matchlock of the primitive kind. He carries a long piece of cord
wound around his arm and the end of it is kept smoldering like
punk. When he sights his game he fastens this lighted end of the
cord into a notch in the end of the hammer and when he pulls the
trigger it comes down upon the powder in the pan. Nothing more
clumsy or untrustworthy could well be imagined. The Korean is
thoroughly astonished when he sees the working of a modern
repeating rifle. A Korean describing the difference between tiger-
hunting with a Korean musket and with a repeating rifle, said
“Korean man hunt tiger – bang!! Chug! Chug! Chug!” (imitating

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13 This Englishman was probably Alfred Burting Stripling, a former policeman in
Shanghai who came to Korea in 1883 as a member of the Korean Customs
Service for a couple of years. He later worked for the Korean government in
various roles – including prospector.
the ramming of a fresh charge down the barrel). “Wreough!!” (for the yell of the wounded tiger). “Choogun Saram, mao chochanta” (dead man, very bad), “Foreign man hunt tiger Bang! Click! Bang! Click! Bang! Click! Choodun horangy mao choayo” (dead tiger, very good).  

It was difficult to track down tigers as they traveled great distances in pursuit of food –as much as 50 miles a day during the winter. The only way to ensure success was to use a small loud pig as bait – any tiger within hearing would be sure to make an appearance. “A couple of years ago five male tigers met in an open glade in the woods about Wonsan, the eastern port of Korea, and had a grand battle. Not one of them survived the fight,” recalled Hulbert, and then added, “The Koreans brought them into Wonsan but they had torn each other’s skins to shreds, and they were quite useless.”

Wild boars were even more dangerous than the tigers, “for while the latter will not attack a man unless it is wounded or is desperately hungry, the boar will charge a man at sight without provocation.” These boars were enormous. Unlike domestic pigs, they were not bristly but were heavily covered with long grayish fur, long snouts and armed with wicked tusks.

Fortunately, they encountered no tigers and the only thing resembling a boar that they met was a small herd of domestic pigs at a ferry landing near a wide river. Appenzeller, who had traveled this route before, was surprised to discover the wooden bridge he had used in the past was no longer standing. Hulbert, on the other hand, was not surprised. Only stone bridges were able to withstand the floods that followed the torrential rains of the rainy season – and this year had been a bad one. Usually the government provided ferries at unfordable rivers and this one was no exception.

The water was very swift and muddy and the ferry boats were the most wretched affairs, standing scarcely four inches out of the water when loaded. To add to the unpleasantness of the situation a stiff breeze was blowing up stream and consequently kicking up a good deal of a sea for such craft, so that as we stood watching the

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16 Ibid.
17 This was probably the Ryesong River in Hwanghae Province.
boats coming across to take us we wondered how our animals would stand the tossing about that was evidently in store for them. The ferryman laughed at our fears and hurried us into the crazy craft, where we stowed ourselves away as best we could. We were all pretty shaky excepting the ferryman, who was evidently under the exhilarating influence of several “testimonials.” As we pushed off, I, for one, felt as if we had embarked in the craft made historical by the “Three wise men of Gotham” who, according to the account given by Mother Goose, had the temerity to go to sea in a bowl. To make matters worse the ferryman steered straight across the stream and got us into the trough of the waves. Then our trouble began. The horses fortunately stood at right angles to the length of the boat looking over the sides, otherwise the rolling would certainly have made it impossible for them to stand. As it was they kept their feet although they nearly dipped their noses into the water at every roll. We began to ship water right and left and the horses began to show signs of panic. I had about decided that I should have to call into requisition my natatorial powers when the ferryman, sobered for the instant by the imminence of danger, gave a powerful sweep with the scull and headed up to the waves and finally brought us to land. We scrambled up the slippery bank and heaved a sigh of relief. But our packs were yet to come, and fearing lest some accident might befall them we waited to see them safely across before pushing on. As we stood there watching the ferryboat an amusing incident occurred. But before relating it I must tell you that Koreans of the middle class very frequently travel on horseback. They make one horse carry both themselves and their packs. They have wooden frames like chairbacks which they fasten on top of the packs and there they sit cross-legged high up above everything. Such a traveler was sitting there on his pony waiting to be ferried across. Not far behind him stood a peasant holding in leash five black pigs which he was driving to market. Suddenly, for some unaccountable reason, whether it was the natural depravity of the pig nature or not I cannot tell, these same five black pigs made a bolt. The line slipped through the driver’s fingers. With true pig perversity they spread as wide apart as the length of the line would permit and swept everything before them. The first serious obstacle they met was the heels of that unfortunate traveler’s horse; as the line tightened around them and the five pigs met in wild career beneath his flanks, that horse decided to make a move, and he made one that would have done

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18 According to Hulbert, there was no ferry toll but a small sum of money was generally given (usually at the suggestion of the ferryman) which was then promptly spent on alcohol in a nearby tavern or inn.
credit to Buffalo Bill’s Wild West show. But his rider was no cowboy, at least he did not exhibit any of the distinguishing characteristics of that interesting species, for he went up out of the lofty chair-saddle like a shot. For a moment the air was filled with fluttering coat-skirts, hat strings, tobacco pouches and hobnail shoes, and then the traveler paid the penalty of gravitation and “lay low in the dust,” a thorough Jew in one respect at least – his hatred of pork. At first we could scarcely laugh, for we did not know whether the man was hurt; but when we saw that his clothes and his temper were the only things that were damaged we went off into convulsions of laughter, which were destined to be repeated every time we thought of it during the next week. 19

That night the travelers arrived at the magistracy of Saw Hung 20 where they spent a long night annoyed by the abundance of biting gnats. They left the following morning and made the last 70 miles to the Taedong River and Pyongyang across a great plain, seemingly interminable, cresting one rolling hill after another. The monotony was made worse by the recent rains that had turned the plain and the clay road

20 This was probably Seoheung.
into one expanse of mud, through which they urged their jaded ponies impatiently.  

In the late afternoon they crested a ridge and saw in the distance, much to their relief, their destination.

[There were] still several miles between us and the city and just beneath its wall we could see the waters of the historic river glimmering in the sun. On its farther bank frowned the battlements of the city and the great arch of the [Daedongmun], so named from the river whose waters for a thousand years have reflected its massive proportions. The situation of [Pyongyang] is said to be unmatched by that of any other city of Korea. A mountain on its east and north east, its northern wall running along the crest of a steep incline and protected by the broad river on its south, it is open to attack only from the west. Its position is strategic as well as beautiful.

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22 Daedongmun actually means the “Big East Gate” and was originally built in the sixth century but was burned during the Japanese invasions of the Imjin Wars and was rebuilt in 1635.
But with daylight quickly fading, the fear of not arriving before the gates closed for the evening spurred them to quicken their pace. They passed through a great grove of willows the locals claimed had been planted by Gija, which were lined on one side with a series of “tombs of ancient worthies.” These tombs were freshly painted and kept in immaculate order.

Again they experienced problems with the ferrymen. When they were opposite of the great gate, they waited and waited for a ferry boat but no one noticed them. It was only after a great deal of shouting and wild gesticulating did one of the ferries lazily make its way to the middle of the river and stop. The Westerners and their party had to wade out into the shallow river and then struggle to get their mounts into the vessel and thus cross the deeper channel. After a few minutes they found themselves at the wall of the city and passed under the gloomy arch of the gate as the city’s great bell tolled the curfew and the gatemen closed the great ironclad double doors, studded with huge nails, for the night.

Safely within the gate, they immediately made their way to the magistrate. It was a torturous course through narrow streets and they were struck with the similarity Pyongyang had with Seoul. “In each the main street runs from east to west and the great bell hangs at the point where the street from the South Gate meets the main street. In each this point is called Chong No, and is the point about which are clustered the principal shops and guilds of the city.”

Finally they arrived and after presenting their credentials were given comfortable rooms – all preparations had been made for their comfort and convenience. Food was ordered from a nearby restaurant and after their repast, the exhausted men turned in for the night.

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24 Gija is credited with founding the city of Pyongyang and the first kingdom of Korea (Gija Joseon) and was said to have come from China. There is a good deal of controversy around him – the idea that a foreigner established Korea has been a source of resentment, especially during the Japanese occupation and in North Korea.


26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.
In the morning, one of the horse handlers informed them they needed to exchange money. This was a very common problem for early travelers. Currencies that were accepted in the trading ports were not accepted in the interior – even if they were issued by the government.28

At 10 in the morning they set out for the governor’s residence, which was on the other side of the city.29 The people of Pyongyang were known for their curiosity and hostility – especially when it came to foreigners – and jostled for a good view of these strangers. Hulbert

28 Hulbert wrote: “The old cash of the country, which is called Yopjon, consists of one-cash pieces, and is the only cash used excepting within a radius of a hundred miles or so about the capital. Within that radius a new kind of cash called Tangho, consisting of five cash pieces has been in use for the past twenty-five years or so. Originally the five cash pieces were equal in size and value to five of the one-cash pieces, but the quality and size have so deteriorated during the past ten years that one piece of the Tangho is by no means equal to five of the Yopjon. In fact when we came to make the exchange we found that we had to give five or the Tang-ho for six of the Yopjon, and since then the Tangho has dropped until the two are exchanged evenly piece for piece.”

29 The governor may have been Min Byeong-seok (1858-1940) who appears to have been fairly popular with the Westerners. Hulbert mentioned that he knew him in Seoul and when Augustine Heard, the American Minister to Korea, visited in 1891, he described him as “a relative of the Queen…with a pleasant face and a frank outspoken address.”
claimed most of the residents had never seen a foreigner and yet he follows that observation with:

The Japanese are called Wa-in here, and that is the term we heard applied to us on every side. All foreigners excepting the Chinese are called Japanese by the Korean countrymen. The Japanese are not extremely popular with the people of [Pyongyang]. They seem to cling to the old hereditary feud against the Japanese more tenaciously than most Koreans. Perhaps it is because of the rough treatment that city received at the hands of the Japanese in the invasion some centuries since. However, that may be the people of [Pyongyang] speak less respectfully of their Japanese friends than do most Koreans.  

Their arrival at the governor’s residence presents us with an example of Hulbert’s tact (which in later years seemed to wane) and understanding of Korean culture. The main gate actually consisted of the main entryway and two smaller entryways – one on each side – and when the Westerners arrived, the central gate was opened and they were urged to enter:

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30 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” The Japan Weekly Mail, August 29, 1891, p. 258.
But Korean etiquette requires that the guest should consider himself of less dignity than the man whom he has come to visit, and so we made them open one of the smaller gates and passing through this found ourselves in a broad court at the farther end of which was the open reception room where the Governor sat surrounded by his officials. He met us very affably, and after the mutual interchange of compliments we all sat down at a foreign table and entered into conversation. The first thing the Governor wanted to know was why we had not entered at the great central gate. We replied by asking with an injured air whether he thought we could be ignorant of one of the first laws of courtesy after living in the country five or six years. He wanted to know what had brought us so far from our homes, and what news there might be from Seoul. We answered as best we could in our halting Korean but made ourselves fairly understood. The Governor’s attendants who had seldom seen foreigners, were astonished to hear us speak in their own tongue and did not conceal their amusement at our odd pronunciation.  

The Korean servants weren’t the only ones entertained by odd pronunciations. In his letter, Hulbert explained that there were about half a dozen different satoori in Korea and that any city resident could tell from what part of the country a stranger came from almost as soon as he spoke. He was also convinced that if a foreigner was careful, he, too, “after a few hours’ practice,” could converse with a resident of any part of the country. Hulbert was somewhat enamored with the Pyongyang satoori which he said has “a certain softness and liquidness of tone that is quite agreeable, and gives the temporary impression of superior culture and refinement, an impression which further acquaintance dissipates.” Quite the backhanded compliment.

This softness of the [Pyongyang] speech is remarkable in that it is in direct opposition to all the other qualities that differentiate the [Pyongyang] people from the rest of Korea. They are noted for being hardy, brave, and impatient of misrule. They are never afraid of making their wants known or of expressing their opinion. When they take in hand a matter that requires hardihood and energy they are pretty sure to carry it through. A few days before we arrived in

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31 Ibid.
32 Hulbert describes satoori as a brogue and not a dialect.
34 Ibid.
[Pyongyang] someone tried to put through a piece of public business that affected the pockets of a certain class of merchants more nearly than they considered equitable. It was soon settled. A hundred or more of the merchants went straight to the man’s house, tore it to pieces, and scattered the debris along the street. That thing never could have happened in the south excepting under the most exasperating circumstances.  

“After partaking of some Korean dainties in the shape of confections and fruit” and promising to contact the governor if they had any troubles, they left his residence and explored the city.  They were urged on several occasions not to anger the residents or risk being stoned to death. Hulbert dismissed it as a great exaggeration but noted that “the people of the city have the unenviable reputation of being expert stone throwers” and “as a reminder of the possession of this accomplishment than as an act of hostility” he had been struck once or twice in the back with small pebbles as he went through the streets followed by a crowd.  

Indispensable to the city was the Taedong riverfront. It was “one of the busiest and most animated scenes to be witnessed in Korea” – the river was filled with ships.  

Each boat is thirty feet long by seven broad, and the gunwale stands perhaps twelve inches from the water. The prow rises a few inches height but the stern is at least five feet above the water. From the centre of the boat rises a mast fifteen or twenty feet high and from its apex to the stern extends a narrow plank. At the top of the mast on the end of this plank sits the skipper cross legged holding in his hand the tiller which is one piece with the rudder the whole being an immense sweep at least thirty feet long. The question that sprang to our lips was “Why does the skipper occupy that lofty position? Our Korean host answered that these boats were intended to bring brushwood down the river and the steersman was perched up there so that when the boat was loaded down with the light, bulky material he might still be above it all and see ahead to steer properly. The boat was propelled by two men who sat in the prow and rowed in foreign style.  

35 Ibid.  
38 Ibid.
In addition to the boats was the timber. Pyongyang was one of the largest timber markets in Korea and thousands of immense logs were floated down the river and were “worked up into timber for houses and junks, and otherwise prepared for market” along its banks. Hulbert poetically described the “continuous strokes of countless adzes and mallets, the flying chip, the gay songs of the carpenters” whose every muscle strained as they shaped the timber. But there were other pounding sounds. Hundreds of women brought their laundry to the river and, laying it out on flat smooth stones, beat it with heavy clubs keeping up “a continual gabble among themselves discussing the gossip of the day and there seems to be plenty of it.”

A common tale told of Pyongyang was there were no wells in the city due to the belief that, because the city was built on an island, it would sink if a well were dug. Hulbert did not mention this tale but he did write:

One of the noticeable features about the city is the entire lack of wells. All the water used in the city is brought from the river that washes its southern wall. It seems almost impossible that this should have always been the case, especially during times of siege when it was impossible to sally forth from the gates. That this has always been the case, however, is indicated if not proved by the tradition that says that when a certain Chinese general attempted to bring the city to terms by lack of water a citizen of the town caused him to give up the scheme by having soldiers of the garrison mount the walls and go through the motions of the bath using fish-scales instead of water. The glitter of the scales completely deceived the Chinese general who, thinking there must be plenty of water in the city, struck camp and tramped back to China. And the intense conservatism of the Koreans is shown in that when the site of the city was changed from a level plain to the steep hill-side not a single well was dug. As a natural consequence of the absence of wells the number of water carriers is immense. The creak of their yokes is probably the most familiar sound in the city. Think of bringing the whole water supply for seventy odd thousand people up from a river through one or two city gates! The waste of energy and time is something enormous. They have to pay pretty well for their water up there too, and as a consequence they use as little as possible and make that little go as far as possible. The next logical step is that [Pyongyang] is probably the most offensive city on the peninsula. So far as my experience goes this is true. The water

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39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
carriers go down to the river in almost endless lines, walk a few paces into the stream and dip up whatever comes along. For a quarter of a mile up stream pigs are wallowing in the water, and women are washing their clothes, but it is all one to the water carriers. Their utter nonchalance is a commentary on the taste and delicacy of the people of [Pyongyang].

The city streets were also constantly buzzing with activity and goods. Unlike other Korean cities, Pyongyang was rich with meat. On the main street, butcher shops were encountered “every few steps” and cattle and pigs were killed right out on the street. For the Westerners, the sound and vision must have been horrible. Years later, Isabella Bird Bishop described the process of butchering cows:

The Koreans cut the throat of the animal and insert a peg in the opening. Then the butcher takes a hatchet and beats the animal on the rump until it dies. The process takes about an hour, and the beast suffers agonies of terror and pain before it loses consciousness. Very little blood is lost during the operation; the beef is full of it, and its heavier weight in consequence is to the advantage of the vendor.”

Apparently pigs were killed in a similar manner. Fresh meat – the fresher the better – was well-appreciated by the Pyongyang inhabitants and whenever an animal was killed “people [would] run up from all directions with handfuls of cash to get pieces of the still warm flesh, and then hurry off home.” Despite little blood being lost, the air was filled with the stench of it, making Pyongyang, in Hulbert’s opinion, the “most absolutely offensive city” he had ever entered – Hulbert was fond of describing Pyongyang as “offensive.” He wasn’t alone with that opinion: “Even those who are accustomed to the ordinary Korean town can hardly enter [Pyongyang] without being nauseated.”

Meat was not the only foodstuff sold on the streets. Apples were very popular and Hulbert claimed that apples from the Pyongyang region were the best in the country – the southern provinces not having “the severity of climate” the apples required. He also described a street food that remains popular today – steamed corn.

Towards evening you will see at every corner women sitting with great baskets before them covered with heavy cloth. A cloud of steam rises from beneath each cloth, and as you approach one of the baskets the appetizing odour announces that the woman has

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43 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” The Japan Weekly Mail, October 10, 1891, p. 441.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
boiled green corn for sale. A child approaches and drops a piece of cash into her hand. The end of the cloth is carefully raised disclosing half a bushel of corn on the ear. The yellow colour shows that it is rather too mature to suit our taste but the child seize the largest one it can see, and runs away in high glee as a Western child would do with a handful of bonbons. It is an amusing fact that Koreans never eat corn seriously. They do not grind it up into meal nor do they feed it to animals, but they boil it and sell it on the streets just as they do candy. And yet corn grows here luxuriantly, each stalk producing from four to seven ears, and might easily become a staple article of food and of commerce.46

“No one could fail, in visiting the city of [Pyongyang], whose history reaches back more than three thousand years, to look about for evidence of its former greatness,” Hulbert wrote, but then caustically noted they would be doomed to fail for “Koreans care lit- tle about preserving any monuments excepting the tombs of their dead.” 47 And yet, Hulbert and his companions did seek out the ruins of the ancient city.

There is no inhabitant of the present [Pyongyang] so ignorant as not to be able to point out the site of the ancient city. As you pass out the western gate of the modern city you almost immediately find yourself in a cut through an embankment. This embankment is all that remains of the outer wall of the original town. It appears that in those days they had an inner wall, or as we might say citadel, within which were the palace and the houses of the higher classes, the official and literary classes. Outside of this, and inclosing a vastly larger space, was the outer wall. It was in this broad space between the walls that the market gardening of the city was done and it was here that the common people lived. It would seem as if the outer wall was an afterthought, a thing not originally planned for, but found necessary to protect the common people from the destructive raids of the northern barbarians who at frequent intervals poured down the valleys from their mountain retreats and swept everything before them. These people who lived between the walls were called the Ouay Song or “The dwellers outside the wall,” having reference of course to the inner wall or citadel. It is a most interesting fact that on or near the site of the ancient city there lives today a clan or tribe called the Ouay Song. They are looked down upon by the people of the modern city, and are ineligible for official position. They are not allowed to live in

46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
the modern city. In appearance they are the same, and there are many among them who are well-to-do, but they seem to be under a ban. Ouay Song is a term of reproach, and none of the surrounding people care to intermarry with them. There is an interesting problem here that has not been worked out yet. Is it possible that these are descendants of the original Ouay Song and that they have preserved their identity so long? It may be that when [Pyongyang] fell, and the site of the city was changed by the new comers, these Ouay Song stuck to their old places and were in a sense ostracized even from those of their own grade who followed in the footsteps of the new comers. This feeling, if once established, would be enough to account for its perpetuation until the present. But this is all hypothesis. Whether it is true or not it seems to be probable that a thorough study of this clan of outsiders might bring to light some deeply interesting points about the ancient history of the country. They are said to be fiercer and more easily enraged than the people of the city, and we were warned more than once that it would be dangerous to go among them; but the presence of a [kisu] ensures safety.48

They also went in search of the tomb of Gija – the founder of Pyongyang who Hulbert described as “altogether unique in the history of his time.”49 In one of his previous articles, he wrote about the three counselors (Wa Ja, Pi Kan and Kija50) but mainly concentrated on Pi Kan and his role in the defeat of the gumiho (nine-tailed fox).51 But the sight of Gija’s tomb had a profound impact on Hulbert and he felt compelled to write most complimentary about this important figure of Korea’s past.

We are directed to a secluded spot outside the north gate52 where we find a simple but substantial edifice which marks the last resting place of a man who was preeminent in his age for learning and statecraft; a man of bold and enterprising spirit; a man whose loyalty was so great that all China was too small to hold both him and the usurper of the throne; a man who founded one of the greatest if not the greatest colony that history records, in a country which was practically unknown, and inhabited only by more than half savage tribes; a man who moulded out of these savage tribes

48 Ibid.
49 Ibid.
50 Weizi, Bi Gan and Gija.
51 For those interested in this long tale see Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” The Japan Weekly Mail, August 1, 1891, pp. 133-134.
52 The North Gate was Chilseong (Seven Star) Gate.
Korea as Seen from the Saddle

an empire larger than the present one of Japan, and that without any considerable war, and who engrafted upon their savage natures the civilization, literature and arts of China so firmly and yet so gently that the Korean nation today dates its inception from his coming; a man who founded a dynasty twice as long lived as any that the chequered history of China affords. At the time in which he lived and in many a century after where was there another man who claims so high a place in history, excepting on account of warlike deeds? Even in scripture we find no name connected with that age that is less familiar with the battlefield than his.\(^{53}\)

![Gija’s tomb / Robert Neff Collection](image)

Once their curiosity was satisfied they left the final resting place of a “man who was relatively more to Korea than Alfred was to England, than Washington to America, than Charlemagne to France, than Garibaldi to Italy” with the wish to just let him rest in peace.\(^{54}\)

It is surprising they didn’t try and find the Kiringul where the fabled mount of King Dongmyeong (the founder of Goguryeo Kingdom) was buried. Its location seems to have been fairly well-known so perhaps they just didn’t have time.

It isn’t clear how long Hulbert remained in Pyongyang but we do know the purpose for his visit was different from that of his missionary companions. He had, at least in part, been sent by Augustine Heard, the

\(^{53}\) Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” *The Japan Weekly Mail*, October 10, 1891, p. 441.

\(^{54}\) *Ibid.*
American Minister to Korea, to investigate the rich coal mines in the vicinity of the city.\textsuperscript{55} Pyongyang coal was well-known in Seoul but very little was known of the mine.

![Chilseong Gate or North Gate / Robert Neff Collection](image)

[There] lies within three miles of [Pyongyang] a seam of anthracite coal that is practically inexhaustible; coal that lies high and dry above any water mark, and of a quality that speaks for itself. It burns without smoke but with a flame, and has been pronounced to be thoroughly good steaming coal. In [Seoul] we prefer the dust of [Pyongyang] coal mixed with clay to the ordinary soft coal of Japan for heating purposes. \textsuperscript{56}

Naturally enough, there was interest in developing this mine but there were obstacles that had to be overcome. There was a lack of infrastructure to move large amounts of coal. Any type of large-scale

\textsuperscript{55} According to Kim Dong-jin, head of the Hulbert Memorial Society, Hulbert wrote a letter to his family stating he had been approached by the American minister. About a year later, Heard traveled to Pyongyang with members of the American warship Alliance to examine the coal fields for himself. Augustine Heard to the Secretary of State, No. 237, January 24, 1892, \textit{American Diplomatic Despatches}; email correspondence with Kim Dong-jin, May 9, 2018.

\textsuperscript{56} Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle,” \textit{The Japan Weekly Mail}, October 24, 1891, p. 504.
mining would also require a strong guard to protect the site from the superstitious common people.

This strong objection on the part of the people [to mining] is a direct result of the demonolatry which prevails to a considerable degree among the lower classes. They have the idea that under the surface of the earth in the home of malignant imps and demons who are in some sort proprietors of the interior contents of the earth, and who avenge any infringement of their prerogative by swarming forth and bringing blight and murrain and pestilence upon the neighbouring peoples. Many stories are told of how the simple country people have risen *en masse* and driven out those who came to dig for gold or other minerals in their vicinity. In some instances, however, where comparatively extensive mining operations have been begun under government auspices the people have been overawed.57

Hulbert’s report to Heard seems to have been fairly favorable and the following year, Heard made his own visit – the first visit by an American minister to Pyongyang. Heard was quite pleased with the “smokeless coal” but it was not until the early 1900s that a “modern” coal mine – under the guidance of an American – was finally established in the area.58

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58 Augustine Heard to the Secretary of State, No. 237, January 24, 1892, *American Diplomatic Despatches*; email correspondence with Kim Dong-jin, May 9, 2018.
Hulbert was a prolific writer and in the decades to follow he wrote several books and a large number of articles [not including those published in the Korea Review] that are still valued by modern researchers. But I think it is these earlier articles and not the later carefully polished articles that give us a real view of the adventurous and amusing Homer B. Hulbert.

Robert Neff is a writer and researcher of the late Joseon era. He has written or co-written several books including Letters from Joseon, Korea Through Western Eyes and Westerner’s Life in Korea. He and Brother Anthony recently co-authored Brief Encounters: Early Reports of Korea by Westerners (Seoul Selection, 2016). He also writes regular columns for The Korea Times.
“Korean Women’s Traditional Outfit and Chador—Cousins?”

Maija Rhee Devine

Traditional Korean women’s skirts (Figure 1) are five times more voluminous than skin-tight Chinese qipaos or Japanese kimonos. Under the billowing Korean dress, hanbok, women could easily carry pregnancy without attracting attention. Why and when did the designers of Korean fashion part their ways from their counterparts in China, Japan, and Vietnam?

Sources make copious references to the various dynasties of China having significantly impacted major areas of Korean life—government and civil affairs, and the arts, including pottery, the tea ceremony, formal gardening, flower arranging, and clothing. For example, the over 1600-year-long evolution of Korean men’s and women’s clothing styles described in The Great Encyclopedia of Korean Folk Culture (한국민족문화대백과) provides exhaustive details on changing fashion features. These include the length of women’s blouses shortening and lengthening over time, the skirt changing from reasonably loose-fitting with a belt around the waist to the voluminous style with many pleats and with no belt, and ribbon ties, instead of belts, to keep the front of the blouse closed. Changes in outer clothing and accessories also fluctuated, reflecting the trends in Chinese dynasties that swayed power over Korea throughout its history. The direct influence of Chinese fashion on Korean clothing seems to have begun around the time of Song Dynasty (960-1275).

Until the 13th century, Korean women’s blouses remained between the waist and hip in length. The short form of women’s blouses, remaining in today’s hanbok, seems to date to the time of Goryeo Dynasty’s King Chungneol (1274-1298), when the Yuan Dynasty of China (1271-1368) brought Mongol influence to Korea. Korean women’s blouses shortened at this time and to the point of barely covering
women’s breasts, which were bound with a band and a pleated skirt hung from it. Belts for the waist of a former hip-length blouse was dropped. Instead, ribbon ties appeared on the blouse. The sleeves transformed from wide to narrow as well. Even though the lengths of the blouse underwent changes several more times throughout Joseon period (1392-1910), the basic style of the shortened form from 13th century held for centuries. This is seen in a famous 18th century painting, “The Beauty,” by one of the most accomplished folk painters of Korea, Sin Yun-bok (pen name, Heywon). (Figure 2). The basics of this style enjoys official status to this day.

Some writings on Korean women’s traditional clothing praise the benefits of this unique dress. One article claimed Korean outfits provided health benefits. The loose-fitting style offered free movement of the body, which promoted health, and the breathing room the clothes generated was good for the skin. Any health gains of wearing the traditional nearly suffocating chest-flattening bands? No such comments have been found. Fortunately, in recent decades, the strapless band has been replaced with less confining, but still breast-flattening, one with wide shoulder straps, from which the skirt hung. In today’s fashion-conscious world, perhaps one might conjure up some other real bonuses of the clothing—no need for breast augmentation nor the stress of keeping up with today’s fashion-model near-anorexic look.

Along with the roomy skirts, even before the beginning of the Joseon era, women wore layers of underwear—all at the same time. However, with the adoption of Confucianism as state ideology by Joseon, which strictly enforced ethics and moral behavior of men and women, the number of underclothing seem to have increased. Within the patriarchal, male-blood-line-based social and governmental structures, particularly from the 15th century Neo-Confucian era on, women became objects of male dominance and producers of required male heirs more definitively. Women’s chastity and fidelity became supreme virtues. In China, too, the Confucian ideology “pervaded traditional Chinese society for more than two thousand years . . . and in most regards, [women] were subservient to and dependent on the male members of their families.” * In Korea, under neo-Confucian influence, women faced more strict limitations on their activities. New rules included restrictions on women’s travel outside their husbands’ homes. Even trips to the women’s family homes required permission from their in-laws, and the young women’s wishes were granted rarely, sometimes only once every few years. And the layers of underclothing increased to up to nine pieces worn simultaneously.
They included dari-sokgot (panties), sok-sokgot (inside knee-length underpants), sok-baji (full-length underpants), chest band, jeoksam (underblouse), dan-sokgot and neoreun-baji (floor-length wide underpants), daesyum-chima (a full-volume underskirt), and mujigi-chima (tiered full-volume underskirt), sok-jeogori (underblouse), and chima and jeogori (outer skirt and blouse). Generally, common class women wore only one to five of these undergarments. (Figure 3) The outer skirt topped these layers, creating a ballooned look—similar to Western hoop skirts.

These neo-Confucian traditions contrast with those of the Buddhist Goryeo period when women’s rights were not as repressed. For example, Goryeo’s marriage system allowed newly-weds to choose between the groom’s or bride’s family to live with, while in Joseon, the groom’s home was the standard. Under Joseon’s strict Confucian code of behavior for women, they were required to carry chastity knives for protection against unlawful sexual advances. (They were expected to use the knives on themselves, not their male attackers.) With the urgency of keeping vigilance over women’s chastity and loyalty to one husband, dead or alive, women’s fashion advisers designed clothing to de-accentuate women’s naturally curvy shapes and encouraged women to wear full-length head-to-toe robes. (Figure 4)

For all the androcentric efforts to keep the women chaste, their curvatures flattened with bands and safely hidden under layers of undergarments, the combination of a short blouse with a long, fully-pleated skirt, held up by a breast band, created ironical and even comical situations. If a woman was carrying a child on her back or something bulky on her head like a water jug, she needed to stretch her arms backwards or upwards to keep her load in place. Such posture often made her blouse to pull up, her skirt band to loosen, and her skirt to slide down. Such a rather common disaster resulted in fully-exposed breasts. Sin Yun-bok (1758-1813) seized such a moment and depicted unintended nudity in another one of his famous folk paintings. In more modern times, too, photographers, domestic and foreign, captured such scenes of women caught in compromising postures. No doubt the fashion designers of the strict neo-Confucian morals would have been mortified.

Even the Chinese, the proprietor of high cultures in Asia, had praised Korea for the high moral standards it upheld and called Korea the Keeper of Asian Morals and Manners (동방예의지국). However, women with inadvertently-exposed breasts were fairly commonly seen during Joseon, the Korean War (1950-53), and post-war decades to about the 1970’s. (Figure 5)
As Confucian principles governed all areas of Korean life from the 13th century on, it seems reasonable to conclude the Confucian aesthetics in clothing fashion kept pace with the sensibilities exhibited in other areas, like ceramic pottery. Comparing the colorful blue celadons of the Goryeo Dynasty and the pottery of the Chinese Ming period (1368-1644) with Joseon’s undecorated Neo-Confucian white ceramics, the literature of The Freer Gallery of Art states Joseon Confucian ceramics, particularly neo-Confucian, embodied “simple forms, spare decoration, and monochrome glazes.” Indeed, “restraint, Spartan choices of color and design, understatement, and great care and precision” were the trademarks of neo-Confucian aesthetic sensibilities.** The excellent example of the white, undecorated ceramic dish in the Freer collection and an equally austere-looking jar represent tens of thousands of pottery pieces loved by Joseon royal families as well as common class folks.

While their Chinese neo-Confucian counterparts embraced elaborate forms and bright colors, and celebrated life by developing decorative arts and sensually-styled fashion for women, Koreans, represented by neo-Confucian scholars Yi Hwang (pen name, Toe gye, 1501-1570), Yi I (pen name, Yul gok, 1536-1584), and their followers, based their ultra conservative brand on the canon annotated only by Zhu Xi. In sync with such interpretation, they advocated elegance found in understatement and imagined beauty in ceramic art as well as what was shrouded under cascading skirts and chastely-flattened breasts.

The Joseon Dynasty’s daily clothing for women in Korea remained in fashion into the 20th century. During WWII, when estimated 200,000 Korean girls, nearly all between the ages of twelve and nineteen, were forced/led away under false promises of employment and ended up working as comfort women for Japanese soldiers, the girls wore the same flat-chested blouse and full-pleated skirt. Former Korean comfort women depicted such clothing in their paintings. (Figure 6, 7)

Other than the Yuan Mongol influence, what other influences could have led to Korean women’s clothing to differ so dramatically from their counterparts in China, Japan, and Vietnam? Could it be Muslim? After all, Muslim merchants arrived in Korea in 1024, and trading continued to 1427.

On the subject of the Muslim female fashion, the Pulitzer-Prize-winning Geraldine Brooks writes in her book Nine Parts of Desire Muslim men felt compelled to keep women veiled in order to prevent them from flaunting the nine parts of desire bestowed upon them by their Creator—as compared to just one part granted men. Neo-Confucians might not have agreed with Muslim view of women possessing stronger
sexuality than men, but the male motivation to keep women under cover and keep tight control over them is common to both cultures.

Like Muslims, Koreans have a history of requiring women to wear a version of the Muslim *chador*. Called *jang-ot* (with sleeves) or *sseu-gae* skirt (without sleeves), this long garment was worn over women’s heads and covered already well-hidden shoulders and legs, exposing only the eyes. Actually, during the earlier Goryeo Dynasty, a gauge-like fabric attached to the *sseu-gae* at the eye level shielded women’s faces from view. Later, during the five hundred years of Joseon, the eye shield was dropped, but the garment remained. Such design complemented the neo-Confucian custom of forbidding men and women, unless married, to make eye contact. In fact, Koreans even erected *nae-oe* (no-eye-contact) walls, separating the male and female quarters in their homes. They also practiced the rule of *nam-nyo-chil-se-bu-dong-suk*—males and females beyond the age of seven not being allowed in the same room.

As for the Muslim influence, contact with the Muslims, minimal to begin with, soon waned. King Sejong issued a decree against them in 1427. Nevertheless, the undocumented link is possible, as the similarities in style are too obvious to ignore. Also, the Korean *chador*-like head-to-toe covers remained down to the 20th century Joseon, and the voluminous skirt style is the trademark of *hanbok* to this day in Korea while many Muslim cultures continue to dress their women in *chador* and/or head scarves.

Korean women’s clothing reflected the culture’s extreme moral conservativism and should be enjoyed or respected for its uniqueness—like *kimchi*.

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**Photos:**
Korean Women’s Traditional Outfit and Chador

#1, A traditional Korean woman’s short blouse and full skirt, 2015. Photo of Maija Rhee Devine

#2, The Beauty, by Sin Yun-bok (1758-1813). In public domain.

#3, Korean women’s traditional nine layers of under garments worn at the same time. A drawing and photo by MJD, 2018.
#4, Korean women’s traditional head-to-toe robe. A drawing and photo by MJD, 2018.

#5, A Korean woman vendor carrying a load on her head with her breasts exposed. A drawing and photo by MJD, 2018

The Korean War, American POWs and the Legacy of Brainwashing

Michael J. Devine

The 1950-53 Korean War transformed American society in numerous and lasting ways. Historians have come to see this “Forgotten War” as clearly marking a pivotal moment in the presidency of Harry S. Truman, altering U.S. relations with the nations of East Asia, solidifying Cold War boundaries, advancing the nation’s military industrial companies, and bringing about profound changes in the domestic society of the U.S., as well as other Western nations who fought beside the South Koreans in the United Nations Command. Among these societal changes in the U.S. was a new fear that the Soviet Union had somehow developed a form of psychological warfare that threatened to undermine and eventually destroy the U.S. and all of Western civilization. This previously unknown threat to free democratic societies so affected Americans that the population began to view the returning Korean War POWs with suspicion, and the government initiated secret experimental programs to counter this frightening form of warfare, leading to the addition of a new term to the lexicon of popular psychology: brainwashing.

Brainwashing like other popular mythologies about the Korean conflict entered American public memory even as the war dragged on over three years of brutal conflict. During the fighting and in the years immediately following the 1953 Armistice, Americans shaped their initial public memories of Korea based on what they viewed as the worst aspects

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of the war. These included a mistaken belief that the U.S. had always fought for complete victory and never before participated in a “limited war.” As the war continued, amid seemingly endless peace negotiations, the mounting casualties and uncertainty about U.S. interests in the “police action” led to discontent and disillusionment. Additionally, the supposedly weak and unpatriotic behavior by some of the nearly 7,200 U.S. soldiers, sailors, and airmen held captive by North Korea and China became an issue of urgent national concern. Air Force Colonel Frank Schwable, with others, created a global sensation when confessing, falsely, to using germ warfare against the North Koreans. More false confessions and anti-American statements followed; it appeared many, perhaps a third, of American POWs had collaborated with their captors, a much higher rate than POWs of other allied nations. Furthermore, 2,730 American POWs (nearly 40 percent, an astonishingly high rate) died in captivity. It would later be proven most who survived had behaved honorably and loyally while enduring extremely harsh conditions. Nevertheless, the lingering POW issue would mean that, unlike veterans of all other American wars in the 20th century, Korean War POWs were stigmatized for decades. The American public was led to believe that never before in U.S. history had so many American POWs behaved in such an atrocious and cowardly manner. And the war’s end revealed an even more shocking revelation: 21 U.S. servicemen refused to return home. In the words of Korean War veteran and historian Dr. Paul Edwards, this news “hit Americans like a sledgehammer.”

An entire literature quickly emerged questioning the toughness, patriotism, and courage of the American male. In 1956, Major William E.

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Myers, an Army psychiatrist, wrote in *U.S. News and World Report* that “too many of our soldiers fell short of the American historical standings of honor, character, loyalty, courage and personal integrity.” He warned the POW issue presented “a problem of fantastic proportions and should cause searching self-examination for all Americans, both in and out of uniform.”⁴ Noted authors such as baby doctor Dr. Benjamin Spock and feminist Betty Friedan even advanced theories for the apparent male weaknesses and put forth recommendations to strengthen the wimpy, overly protected “mama’s boys” who had been reared by domineering mothers.⁵ Even President Dwight Eisenhower acknowledged “the sad record of Americans in Korea.”⁶ Americans needed an explanation for the perceived collaboration of American POWs, and the notion that communists had developed a form of mind control called “brainwashing” was readily accepted by military leaders, government officials, and the public. Edward Hunter, a Miami-based journalist, coined the colorful and inappropriate term. In September 1950, Hunter, who had during World War II served in the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the forerunner of the CIA), wrote a piece in the *Miami Daily News* titled “Brain-washing Tactics Force Chinese Into the Ranks of Communist Party.” Claiming the Chinese people were reprogrammed into “mindless, Communist automatons,” Hunter believed that under brainwashing the individual became “a living puppet – a human robot – without the atrocity being visible from the outside.” That Hunter had no professional training in psychology seemed unimportant. According to the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), his credentials as an expert on mind-altering techniques consisted of only of

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⁷ Boissoneault, “The True Story of Brainwashing.”
his background as a “foreign correspondent, author, editor, world traveler and specialist in propaganda warfare.” In testimony before the HUAC following the Korean War, Hunter nevertheless appeared as an expert on psychological warfare. He ignored the well-documented inhumane conditions in North Korean and Chinese POW camps and attributed the false confessions and POW collaborations with their captors to new Soviet-devised techniques. Hunter claimed specially trained interrogators sought “vulnerabilities” in their American and UNC captives and then “drilled away at weaknesses.” He mistakenly maintained that no American prisoners had escaped North Korean captivity, and that lack of will and character caused the extraordinarily high death rate of American POWs. He further claimed, “discipline among Americans was almost non-existent ... It was dog eat dog.”

During the Korean conflict, the concept of “brainwashing” received official endorsement from CIA Director Allen Dulles. In a 1953 article published in *U.S. News and World Report*, Dulles explained:

> “the brain conditioning program of the Soviet is directed against the individual, case by case. Here they take selected human beings whom they wish to destroy and turn them into humble confessors of crimes they never committed or make them the mouthpiece of Soviet propaganda ... new techniques wash the brain clean of thoughts and mental processes of the past, and possibly through the use of some ‘lie serum,’ create a new brain process and new thoughts which the victim, parrotlike, repeats.”

The concept of brainwashing as a method of turning American POWs into mindless zombies was further advanced by the widely read author Eugene Kinkead, whose articles on brainwashing appeared in the *New Yorker* magazine. Kinkead, a former U.S. Navy war correspondent and contributor to *New Yorker’s* “Talk of the Town,” won a journalism award for his book *In Every War But One*. Assisted by the U.S. military in

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his five-year study of American POWs, Kinkead concluded that brainwashing was a dangerous new psychological weapon of the Soviet Union and a challenge to every American.\(^\text{10}\) FBI director J. Edgar Hoover added to the national paranoia, frequently referencing “mind control” in his *Masters of Deceit: The Story of Communism in America and How to Fight It*. Following the Korean War, brainwashing became an enduring popular memory and the techniques used to control one’s mind after having washed it clean were suspected of having invaded U.S. culture, mass marketing and political campaigns.\(^\text{11}\)

Even when peace came to Korea, it left Americans feeling less secure and in no mood to remember or memorialize an unpopular and unresolved conflict. Nevertheless, popular culture in the United States quickly reflected the Americans’ painful feelings and interpreted the Korean War in literature and movies. Collaboration provided the theme in *The Rack* starring Paul Newman, whose character, a returned POW, faces trial for treason. In 1954, *Prisoner of War* starring Ronald Reagan portrayed the harsh conditions experienced by American POWs in communist camps and brought added public attention to the issue of collaboration. In this film, Reagan plays an American intelligence officer named Sloane who parachutes into a POW camp and manages to pose as a collaborator in order to collect information on how the communists’ treatment of POWs affects their behavior. These films and other equally forgettable Hollywood productions helped shape an initial American memory of the Korean conflict as something extraordinary and disgraceful in the pantheon of American wars. None of the films were box-office sensations or particularly memorable.\(^\text{12}\) The one exception remains *The Manchurian Candidate*, based on a novel by Richard Condon. This movie stands out as something of a cult classic, although it also

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failed as a box office hit at the time of its 1962 release. Directed by John Frankenheimer, *The Manchurian Candidate* is noted for its superb cast and its outrageously paranoid plot. Both Condon’s book and movie sensationalized the brainwashing of prisoners and imagined a horrific scheme in which an American POW returns home to his domineering mother only after being brainwashed and programmed by Communists to murder on command a U.S. presidential candidate.\(^{13}\)

Early on brainwashing had been defined largely in the writings of journalists, autobiographies of former Korean War POWs and U.S. government officials. Among the first to explore brainwashing from a social science perspective was Dr. Albert D. Biderman, who interviewed 235 U.S. Air Force POWs from the Korean War. Biderman discovered the brainwashing techniques were not new at all and succeeded only in extorting false confessions. There were no brainwashed prisoners turned into robots. Communist captors had never washed any POW’s brain clean and placed in his mind a whole new set of values.\(^ {14}\) Indeed, what had been labeled brainwashing was in actuality brought about in POW camps by the use of various tortures, including forced standing in place, sleep deprivation, starvation, solitary confinement and repeated exposure to long ranting lectures of communist propaganda.\(^ {15}\) Various inquisitors had employed these techniques for centuries. Even at the time of the Korean War, many of the world’s police forces used these techniques. They were certainly known to U.S. law enforcement agencies. Nevertheless, the U.S. government initiated studies to determine how to counteract brainwashing, while the U.S. military was anxious to add this supposedly new method of psychological warfare to its own arsenal.

By the end of the 1960s, the notion of brainwashing as a form of psychological warfare and mind control had been clearly debunked. However, the concept had since taken on a life of its own. Even as the Korean War was locked in a stalemate along what would become the DMZ following the 1953 Armistice, the CIA began funding extensive studies on brainwashing that continued for a decade. The mind control

\(^{13}\) Susan Carruthers, “The Manchurian Candidate (1962) and the Korean War Brainwashing Scare,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, No. 74 (March, 1988), 72-77. A remake of the *Manchurian Candidate* set in the Persian Gulf War was produced in 2004 and received a Golden Globe nomination.


\(^ {15}\) Boissoneault.
studies of the CIA, named Project MKUltra, involved the use of LSD, hypnotism, electric shock and sensory deprivation. The goal was to erase an individual’s mind and create a new pattern of thinking and behavior. CIA personnel, prisoners, recovering drug addicts and even prostitutes were used in the experiments, often without their consent. The CIA believed at the time its abuse of human rights was in defense of national security and therefore justified. Interviewed by journalist David Frost more than two decades after MKUltra had run its course, former CIA director Richard Helms stated, “We felt it was our responsibility not to lag behind the Russians or the Chinese in this field, and the only way to find out what the risks were was to test things such as LSD and other drugs that could be used to control human behavior. These experiments went on for many years.”

While considering MKUltra appropriate and justified, Helms nevertheless destroyed Project MKUltra records during the Watergate era in 1973. By then, lives had been ruined. The Rockefeller Commission eventually exposed the CIA’s secret program in 1975.

The scientific debunking did not keep brainwashing out of the spotlight during the Vietnam War era. The notion somehow seemed to resurrect itself when captured American soldiers and pilots made false confessions and anti-war statements. However, the Vietnam-era POWs were relatively few in number, compared to Korea, and upon their return they were almost unanimously seen as heroes when the war ended in disaster. Vietnam War POWs were even celebrated in popular films for their bravery. They were romanticized in the Rambo series of Hollywood movies starring Sylvester Stallone, and a few former POWs were elected to Congress. One, Senator John McCain (R. Arizona), became the Republican Party’s 2012 nominee for the presidency.

Just weeks before the Tet Offensive in Vietnam, brainwashing again surfaced in the unended Korean War. The crew of the USS Pueblo, a spy ship patrolling in the East Sea just a few miles off the coast of North Korea, was captured on January 23, 1968. In addition to its crew, the North Koreans took almost all of the ship’s highly classified documents and secret intelligence-gathering equipment. For a time, this crisis in Korea even overshadowed the conflict in Vietnam. Subjected to the same

16 Quoted in Weiner.
18 Weiner.
harsh treatment earlier Korean War POWs had received, Captain Lloyd Bucher and crew provided their North Korean captors with information on their mission. After eleven months as captives, the crew was released in time for Christmas 1969. One anxious father, awaiting a reunion with his son, told a local newspaper, “We were aware of the effectiveness of the North Koreans at brainwashing and we were naturally apprehensive about that aspect.” Following a tense period of examination, investigation and consideration of possible court martial, Captain Bucher and his crew were returned to duty or honorably discharged by the Navy and eventually welcomed home by the American public.

Perhaps the most famous self-confessed victim of mind control during the Vietnam era was former Michigan governor and presidential candidate George Romney. In a wide-ranging interview on September 4, 1967, with Lou Gordon on Detroit’s WKBD-TV 50, Romney discussed his visit to Vietnam where he was briefed on the remarkable progress of the war by optimistic high-ranking military officers and U.S. government officials. He was given information that proved to be false, resulting in a change in the governor’s support of the war effort. “I just had the greatest brainwashing that anybody can get,” he declared. “They do a very thorough job.” Of course, Romney had misused the term, as no one had tried to wash his mind of previous thoughts and values while installing a new ideology in his brain. Romney was merely fed erroneous information by people he thought he could trust to give him straight answers. However, by associating himself with brainwashing, his political career was ended.

In the 1970s, brainwashing surfaced again in the trial of Patty Hearst. This young wealthy heiress had been kidnapped by a radical and violent gang of black nationalists. She then seemed to adopt her captors’ ideology, even seemingly joining them in a bank robbery. After her capture, Hearst’s legal team tried unsuccessfully to use brainwashing as her defense. Also, about the same time, people attracted to odd religious cults, such as the Unification Church of Moon Sun-Myung, were frequently considered victims of brainwashing. In 1997, for example, a

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group of cult members in Heaven’s Gate committed mass suicide upon the arrival of the Hale-Bopp comet. The cultists were said to have been brainwashed into believing they could board a spaceship tailing the comet. Americans expressed fear that they or their children might be susceptible to vicious and clever cult brainwashers. However, while manipulation and coercion can occur, most in the social sciences and psychological fields consider brainwashing to be an oversimplification of a more complex issue. The American Psychological Association, nevertheless, still lists brainwashing as a possible root cause for a “dissociative disorder.”

The definition of brainwashing appears to have considerably morphed over more than six decades since the Korean War. Many now seem to feel, as Governor Romney did, that to be brainwashed is to be misled or fooled. But there are additional popular meanings. Aggressive salesmanship and repeated political propaganda have been equated with brainwashing. An article in a leading business journal even suggests that “more business people than not are brainwashed and don’t even know it.” The author claims that, using the latest jargon, never questioning management, always siding with management, and sucking up to the boss are all symptoms of corporate brainwashing. Such employees are “drinking gallons of toxic lemonade” like zombies whose minds have been overtaken by corporate culture. And then there is the War on Terror.

In the seemingly never-ending wars in the Middle East, brainwashing is considered a common technique used by Muslim extremists, such as ISIS, to enlist male and female followers from abroad or to indoctrinate children into the ISIS ideology. Of course, children in their formative years need little re-working of their young, yet-to-be-formed values and characters, and recruits from abroad are already predisposed to the ISIS cause upon their arrival in Syria or Iraq. At the

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21 Michael Nedelman, “Are you susceptible to brainwashing?” (February 13, 2018) CNN International
23 For examples, see “Teenager ‘brainwashed’ by man when she helped transfer $18,000 to ISIS, court hears,” Australian Associated Press (April 21, 2017); “How ISIS attracts women and girls from Europe with false offer of ‘empowerment,’” Independent (August 25, 2017); and “In Mosul, Iraqi volunteers train to rehabilitate kids ‘brainwashed’ by Islamic State,” (February 17, 2018), Agence France-Presse, Global News
same time, while fixated on the use of brainwashing by Muslim extremists and terrorists, the U.S. in the post 9-11 years attempted its own brainwashing program. In what one critic termed “a remarkable case of historical amnesia,” Americans sought to use old, discredited brainwashing techniques on suspected terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay. Interrogators employed the same post-Korean War chart Albert Biderman had developed and entitled Communist Attempts to Elicit False Confessions from Air Force Prisoners of War. Apparently they had overlooked the words “false confessions” in Biderman’s chart.

So, what of the maligned American veterans of the Forgotten War? Today few Americans are likely to remember much at all about the Korean conflict, the POW issue or the origins of brainwashing. Furthermore, American attitudes towards the Republic of Korean have evolved since the 1950s and become far more positive following the success of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the arrival of democracy and free elections in the 1990s, and the rise of South Korea as an Asian “Economic Tiger.” In recent decades, Korean War veterans and the American public have come to view the Korean War as a courageous, selfless, and worthwhile sacrifice to save a fledging country from domination by a cruel communist dictatorship. The Korean War is now seen as a victory, and the successful efforts of Vietnam War veterans to secure a memorial to their service on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., inspired Korean War vets to pursue a memorial of their own. In addition to the striking memorial in the nation’s capital, most states and many municipalities in the United States now have monuments to Korean War veterans. One veteran, noting the attitude reversal of the American public and his fellow vets, stated with irony, “You go to reunions and you find yourself trying to remember what you spent the last 50 years trying to forget.”

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Center at the University of Wyoming, Illinois State Historian and Director of the Illinois State Historical Society, and Assistant Director of the Ohio Historical Society. In 2014 he was awarded the Robert Kelley Memorial Prize from the National Council on Public History for life-time achievement.
Imaginative Awakenings: Dream Writing in South Korea

Loren Goodman

Introduction
While much of the work produced in creative writing courses in the academy appears to focus on and arise from waking life experience, imagery and perception, this paper attempts to demonstrate, through reflection on several years of teaching dream writing at the university level in South Korea, the myriad possibilities of dreams as a rich and vibrant source of material for literary and artistic production.

Students tap into this source through keeping a daily dream journal, presenting, discussing, and revising dream works on a weekly basis. The often striking imagery, emotion and uncommon logic of dream works makes them optimal templates for instruction on clarity of expression, concision and originality—lessons which may be applied in all fields of writing, creative and expository. While examining the dream works of authors such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Louis Stevenson and Mark Twain, students also experiment with rendering dream material in multiple forms and genres.

With forays into the work of Patricia Garfield Robert Moss and Stanley Krippner, exploration of various types of dreams, including lucid, precognitive, and taemong (Korean birth dreams), leads us to the therapeutic qualities of dream writing, and how the recording, self-analysis of and reflection upon our dreams can occasion healing, growth and positive reconstruction of personal mythology.

Background
I began teaching courses in Dream Writing at Yonsei University’s Underwood International College in 2012, after a student from California asked me to supervise his Senior Thesis on taemong. The student had taken my Imaginative Writing course some years earlier, modeled on the course I took in college from Kenneth Koch, during which we spent one week writing and discussing our dreams. “What’s taemong?” I asked.
“Birth dreams,” he said. It’s a big part of the culture here in Korea. Whenever a child is conceived, someone has a dream that forecasts the birth. Not only the birth of the child, but through specific symbols of nature and narrative, his or her gender, personality and future career.” Fascinated, I agreed. A couple weeks later we met Jeremy Seligson, the author of Oriental Birth Dreams—the only book on the subject of taemong in English:

Long ago, it may have been that no one could be born into this world without such a dream forecasting his or her birth. This was believed true not only of future saints, heroes and other gifted persons, but of ordinary children as well.¹

Taemong are lyrical in their repetitions, with prose poem-like quality of language. One of their defining features—how you know a taemong is a taemong—is incredible clarity; unforgettably vivid, they are by nature imagistic. According to Seligson, they are also love stories:

These are stories about love . . .
Love is the source of birth and of the dreams which reveal the conception, sex and destinies of children who may be just entering the womb.²

And they are not just stories, but correspondences, as made clear by the book’s epistolary epigraph: This is a Love Letter to the World.³ Upon reflection, there is something pleasant about the realization that this is what led me to devote a whole course—not just a week—to dream writing: LOVE.

While the therapeutic⁴ aspect of dream work is important, our primary goal as a creative writing class is to approach dreams as a rich—if not limitless—source for artistic discovery, inspiration and expression, to produce literary art out of dreams.

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² Ibid.
³ Ibid., p 5.
Pedagogy/Methodology
While most students enter the course without much experience inscribing their dreams, and many with some experience keeping a diary or journal, I prescribe the following method: to record our dreams as accurately and in as much detail as possible. Doing so helps enable us to realize our goals of capturing and composing with:

1. Striking, Uncommon Imagery and Action
2. Original Language/Music/Lyricism
3. Psychological Depth
4. Intensity of Emotion
5. The Dramatic, Vivid, and Evocative

Through these approaches, our project of dream writing becomes a recording art—and thus as much a documentary and journalistic project as a poetic or literary one.

Patricia Garfield’s, Robert Moss’ and Bert States’ instruction and techniques at once demystify and open up the possibilities for inscriptive dream work. One of the ways they demystify is by viewing dreaming and dream writing as practices like any other:

“Writing and dreaming are closely related in daily practice.”\(^5\)
“One of the first uses of writing—which was invented in Sumer—was to record dreams… and one of the great things that emerged from recording dreams… was literature. Writers have always been dreamers.”\(^6\)
States “compares the mental state of the creative writer to that of a lucid dreamer.”\(^7\)
Robert Louis Stevenson gave credit to his “Brownies”—tiny troupes of actors that populated his dreams, “for accomplishing more than half his literary work.” He only needed to watch their performances and record them upon waking.\(^8\)

On Seemingness, Suddenness, and Doubling
Another way to demystify may be to accept without strict division our dreaming and waking lives as a continuum, in such a way that our experiences in both realms are wholly connected, interpenetrating. Still, a common tendency is to approach our dreams with a sacredness, distance

\(^6\) Ibid., 102
\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Ibid., 104.
and sense of mysteriousness corresponding to the degree to which we view as separate and distinct our waking and dreaming lives. Such separation can manifest in dream writing through oddly elevated or juxtaposed diction, uncertainty and its side-effect, what we might term “seemingness”—the propensity to flood dream works with a diluting ambiguity, apparent in the following excerpt:

I find myself riding a truck with a stranger on a highway. I say “stranger,” but in the dream she seems [emphasis mine] more like a partner. I somehow know that the world came to an end. The landscape seems [emphasis mine] a little rough and there are no colors in the dream as if they have been ripped out forcefully.9

Does this passage sound better without the “seems”? Is the landscape more post-apocalyptic, rougher without “a little”? “Somehow” is also of the lexicon of seemingness, though here it may serve to infuse the piece with a bit of mystery. Regular tests for sound and clarity during revision may help dream writers sharpen their works.

In dream writing, the vividness and dramatic qualities of a piece depend on the precision and accuracy with which the dream is recorded. This example of incongruent elevated diction arose from the title of one of our dream telepathy experiments, which required students to pair up, plan out, and engage in dream travel to a mutually agreed upon destination: “A Journey to our Student Cafeteria”10

What kind of person goes on a “journey” to the cafeteria? The pairing of the mundane eating space with the epic adventure of movement toward it results in an odd juxtaposition.

Kenneth Koch’s pronouncement on a line someone wrote from a subterranean New York City dream helps to clarify the issue:

I’m on the subway platform. It’s dark. I’m alone. The subway pulls in and the doors open with a whoosh. I enter the subway.11

Koch’s comment:
You don’t enter a subway, you get on. Only the Queen of England enters a subway.12

12 Kenneth Koch, lecture, 1989.
The often striking imagery, emotion and uncommon logic of dream works makes them optimal templates for instruction on clarity of expression, concision, evocativeness and originality—lessons which may be applied in all fields of writing, creative and expository.

One dream lesson in evocativeness and originality derives from the preponderance of the word “Suddenly” in dream writings. So many things happen so suddenly in dreams. But how might we express this suddenness without using the word “Suddenly”? Take this example from a *taemong*:

My Dad was driving alone and suddenly a red cat appeared on the passenger seat. He thought it adorable so he took the cat to my Mom and the cat licked the back of her hand.\(^{13}\)

Now let us read it again, slightly revised:

My Dad was driving alone and a red cat appeared on the passenger seat. He thought it adorable so he took the cat to my Mom and the cat licked the back of her hand.\(^{14}\)

Sometimes things are more sudden without the “suddenly.”

Another lesson in evocativeness arises from a specific form of redundancy I term “doubling” which commonly occurs in the writing of dreams. It generally arises from desire for emphasis, and ultimately has the opposite effect:

I squint my eyes and think I see something far away. But it grows larger and larger until it is only a few hundred meters away; the ruins of a castle standing lie in the distance. I rush toward it with a sense of urgency.\(^{15}\)

The first doubling occurs immediately: “I squint my eyes”—as opposed to my ears? Notice the second doubling in the last line: imagine “rushing toward” something with a sense of… insignificance. Now let us consider an excerpt from this airport dream scene:

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\(^{13}\) Anonymoust student writing, 2016.

\(^{14}\) Anonymous student writing, 2015.

\(^{15}\) Anonymous student writing, 2016.
I hastily scamper through the random people to the security inspection area.\textsuperscript{16}

“Hastily scamper”—as opposed to slowly scamper? “To scamper” means “to run with quick light steps.”\textsuperscript{17}

Another dreamer, relating an episode of dream paralysis (qawi), states:

I try to get out of bed, but my body does not move. My body is too heavy. I cannot move even my little fingertips.\textsuperscript{18}

As Ted Berrigan discovered in his Sonnets, inversion can be a most productive poetic device\textsuperscript{19}; one wonders about the surrealistic possibilities of enormous fingertips! To be fair though, the writer is probably referring to the tips of his or her pinkies. This dreamer, describing a protective, “devoted pastor and fearless shepherd,” recalls:

He had a strong metallic sword which stands for his faith and his holiness as his weapon.\textsuperscript{20}

Do you mean to tell me he didn’t have one of those strong plastic swords? Describing a nightmare scene in which corpses with severed heads are hung on telephone wires, this dreamer recalls:

From below the corpses, a low bellow followed by the sharp intake of air resonates throughout the forest.\textsuperscript{21}

There’s some nice assonance and lyricism in this line, but “a low bellow”—as opposed to one of those high-pitched bellows? The definition of “bellow” is “a deep roaring shout or sound.”\textsuperscript{22} Another dreamer opens with the following establishing shot:

\textsuperscript{16} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{17} dictionary
\textsuperscript{18} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{20} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{21} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{22} Bellow [Def. 1] In the English Oxford Living Dictionaries Online, Retrieved May 19, 2018, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/bellow
A low rumble sounds in the distance.\textsuperscript{23}

Here too, one might think fondly of those high-pitched rumbles of the nostalgic past, the definition of rumble being “a continuous deep, resonant sound like distant thunder.”\textsuperscript{24}

Delineating a scene of confrontation with her boss at a cram school, this dreamer relates:

The head teacher at the hagwon I work in during the weekends, my employer, stood towering over my bed. Rimless glasses revealed tired eye bags from running the private education business twenty-four hours a day.\textsuperscript{25}

There’s some lovely internal rhyme and alliteration in these lines, but the phrase “tired eye bags” makes one wonder about the possibilities of energetic, invigorating eye bags.

Through such counter-examples illustrating the de-emphasis of doubling, one comes to appreciate even more the truly evocative, original oppositional technique of the Surrealist juxtapositions.

**Dream Telepathy & Travel Experiments**

Once one begins—through practice—to entertain the notion that waking and dreaming life are not separate but form a continuum, the mystifying distance begins to close and the possibilities expand: one can experiment with lucidity, dream telepathy, dream travel, and so on. Here are a few examples of such experiments from our classes.

Students were presented with six historical figures (the “Masters of the Three ‘Only’ Things”\textsuperscript{26}) whose lives revolved around dream practice (Joan of Arc, Harriet Tubman, Lucrecia de León, Wolfgang Pauli, Mark Twain and Winston Churchill) and attempted to induce a dream meeting with the dream hero of their choice. The following two students successfully met Mark Twain in dreams:

*It is sunset. I am standing at a harbor which is quite a distance away from a city much like Los Angeles in that there are many buildings but none too tall. The sun is splashing onto the* 

\textsuperscript{23} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{24} Rumble [Def. 1] In the English Oxford Living Dictionaries Online, Retrieved May 19, 2018 https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rumble.
\textsuperscript{25} Anonymous student writing, 2016.
\textsuperscript{26} Moss, p. 145-253.
buildings. It is beautiful. I am admiring the view when Mark Twain startles me. He asks, “Isn’t it beautiful?” I nod and for some reason, I know that he is the architect behind all these buildings. Twain then goes on a long detailed explanation of how he built the buildings, why he laid them out that way, the benefits and shortcomings of the layout. I listen attentively, nodding fervently. Then he asks me out of the blue: “What do you like about the architecture?” I am nervous. I didn’t know that I would have to do any of the talking. So I think for a few minutes while staring hard at the buildings and something comes to me. A building has cast its shadow on another one behind it and this somehow makes the building behind seem taller. I mention this to Twain and tell him that’s cool. He stares at the shadow for a while and nods. I am satisfied with my answer and wake up.27

Twain, a believer in crossed-letters and practitioner of mental telegraphy, was an avid noticer. Here the dreamer emulates Twain—when he “stares hard at the buildings” and notices the elongating effect of the interplay of shadows. There is also something of an unspoken correspondence—a mutual assent—in the reciprocal nodding. Twain’s question about architecture—following immediately after his explanation of it—is rather pop quiz-like, so could reflect the classroom context of the experiment. On the other hand, it could serve as a test or bridge serving to relieve the distance between the “Master” (Twain) and the student, resulting not only in a more comfortable dialogue, but—perhaps influenced by Twain’s honest self-reflections, through similar depth of contemplation (e.g., “So I think for a few minutes while staring hard at the buildings”)—a significant self-empowered emotional shift from nervousness to satisfaction.

Another student induced her Twain dream by drawing pictures of him: “while drawing, his wide forehead reminded me of the phrenology tip that people with broad foreheads are creative. His hair and mustache reminded me of a schnauzer, and I wondered if he would appear as one. I liked his original name, Sam Clemens, better than his pen name and thought of calling him Sam instead of Mark—I wanted to call him by his first name for a friendlier approach and casual conversation.”28 In this dream, the student achieved it:

He reminds me of grapes, a cabin painted in white, beach and a chair. I say “grapes.” He tells me grapes are creative. In the last picture I drew, I covered his forehead with hair. He says, “Don’t cover my forehead with hair.” I tell him that he looks like a schnauzer, and he replies “thank you.” He says that “Voyage is going to wonderful places. Every dream is a voyage” and “My favorite place is the moon, because the Earth looks beautiful there.” I tell him I like his original name better. He replies “Yeah, it is my original name!” I tell him I liked his quotes, and he says he does too. I ask him if he liked walnuts (I was eating walnuts while dreaming). He laughed. I ask him, “Why do you laugh?” He tells me “well, walnuts, they are funny.”

I later searched if Mark Twain had anything to do with grapes or walnuts. I found out that his grave is on Walnut Street.

The way in which this autobiographical detail—whether unconscious or coincidental—manifests concretely within the dream draws attention to its impressionistic and synesthetic qualities, resulting in a Twain portrait of Arcimboldo effect. It also resonates with the other gustatory element of the grape—the definition of which recalls both Gertrude Stein’s *Tender Buttons* and Freud’s rebus method of dream interpretation. Highly associational, this dream is remarkably telepathic not only in its travel and encounter, but its dialogue, which unfolds according not just to what is spoken, but what is thought. When the dreamer thinks of the portrait she drew of Twain, covering “his forehead with hair,” Twain responds aloud, “Don’t cover my forehead with hair.” As in the previous Twain dream, there is a progression from confrontation (in reprimand/imperative of “don’t”) through the colloquial to intimacy, then via agreement and laughter to accord. In this sense, both dreams serve to alleviate anxieties, while enabling the dreamers to recalibrate and enhance their own personal mythologies through dream apprenticeships with a dream Master.

In addition to our meetings with Moss’ six Masters, we also conducted a dream rendezvous experiment. One team of three met at a Korean dry sauna to formulate their telepathic dream rendezvous

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29 Ibid., 2016.
strategies and sleep in close proximity with the hope of increasing their chances of success. One member recorded the plan in dialogue form:

A: Where should we meet, then?
K: How about Angkor Wat?
A: Hmm… It would be cool to meet in Angkor Wat, but first of all I’ve never been there, so I think it would be difficult for me to even imagine that location in the first place.
I: How about somewhere that’s familiar to us?
A: Yeah, that sounds like a better plan! That might increase our possibility of actually succeeding.
I: School Cafeteria?
K: Yeah, I guess that’s a place where we won’t have a difficult time imagining, since we basically go there every day.  

Of all places the students could have chosen to meet in dreams… Angkor Wat feels much more in the spirit of the experiment. That said, one of these three students actually made it to the cafeteria:

Waiting for his teammates, he sits down and starts humming the Beatles’ “Yellow Submarine.”
He looks down at his feet. He is on top of a stone structure. There is rain coming down from the cloudy skies. There is a vast ocean in front of him. The waves of the ocean violently clash into the stone. A yellow submarine pops out from the ocean. The hatch door opens and out comes a bald Caucasian man smiling. He is wearing a black sailor uniform.
Bald Man (with a very strong Welsh English accent): Ahoy there, lad! Whatcha doing on top of Angkor Wat?  

Patricia Garfield emphasizes the importance of song in dreams, and we know from Robert Moss that both “Yesterday” and “Let It Be” derived from dreams. So it is neat to see how even more Beatles’ songs serve as vehicles for further dreams (or dreams within dreams).

Another team member dreamt of driving to the edge of a cliff, then noticing:

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33 Anonymous student writing, 2016.
34 Anonymous student writing, 2016.
35 Garfield, p. 92.
36 Moss, p. 131.
A woman with long hair is standing in front of the car. She is enwrapped in a mass of hair that is both silver and golden at once. Her eyes, which have slits instead of pupils, observe us emptily.  

This female figure bears a striking resemblance to the Devatas who appear in silver and gold, with slit-like eyes on the stone friezes at Angkor Wat. Even more striking, perhaps, is how the female figure blocks the driver from the precarious fall off the edge of the cliff while observing each passenger “emptily.” According to Cambodian mythology, Devatas—wives of the gods—serve as guardians, giving “their divine blessings to those who face them respectfully.” Could this be the way to the cafeteria? The last team member dreamt:

On top of a hill I am watching the stars from a night sky. There is just the right amount of darkness and breeze to appreciate the beauty of the stellar objects. Just then, one of the stars radiates light so bright. I try to have a closer look so I stand up. Suddenly I lose my sense of gravity from the Earth. I start to hover and within a few seconds am thrown out into the galaxy at the speed of light. I pass a myriad of stars and planets and reach the star that has been emanating such a bright light. It is, to my astonishment, planet Earth. Somehow I came back to where I was. I am stunned. Not because of the beauty of the planet Earth, but because I was only going in a straight line, never making any turns.

Like many ancient pyramidal structures, some theorize Angkor Wat was designed as an astronomical observatory or Earth Portal to the heavens, its construction corresponding with that of a specific constellation. In the dreamer’s stargazing there is something—if not Manichean, perhaps Taoist—in the essential balance of cosmological darkness and light. Might this sense of “thrownness” also indicate a cosmos, a nature which is “not resource but source” and which “gives rise to a type of existential bond, which can be broadly understood as an ethical relation”?

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37 Anonymous student writing, 2016.
As these students aptly demonstrate, drawing from our dreams to produce work in the creative writing classroom can lead us, in and at the speed of radiant star light, well-beyond; not just to Angkor Wat—or even outer space—but back to an Earth we never even knew we left. Such work can lend the power of flight, leading back to an enlightened Earth, and a sense of beauty and astonishment in it—a return to the beauty and astonishment of our illuminated selves. Or at least the cafeteria.

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Recreating the visual chronicle of my recent trip to North Korea, the most difficult, perhaps, is to recollect and merge back together all the fragmentary thoughts and impressions left after visiting this unique country surprising a rare tourist in so many unexpected ways.

The main purpose of this trip was to trace the roots of my Korean ancestors also known as *Koryo Saram* or the Korean people who migrated from the very north of the Korean Peninsula to the Russian Far East more than 155 years ago, having crossed the border of present-day North Korea with China and Russia over the Tumen River. The majority of them originated from North Hamgyong Province and it was the first time Western tourists were ever allowed to visit this remote and isolated DPRK’s most-northern province and enter the Russian territory from there on a regular passenger train, thus directly repeating the ancient route of my ancestors from Korea.
In the course of this train journey, we traveled North Korea for a week, crossing its industrially developed part first from west to east – from Pyongyang to Hamhung – and then all the way up north along the coastline and to the very edge of the East Korea Bay, past the towns and fishing villages of South and North Hamgyong provinces – to Kimchaek and Chongjin – as well as the free economic area of Rason located on the actual tri-border with China and Russia.

PART I: THE [UN]USUAL PYONGYANG
In the first part of my photo-narrative, you will see the capital of North Korea, Pyongyang, as I witnessed it myself on the two-and-a-half February days – simple and unparalleled, and very different from the fantastically solemn image of the "powerful center of the axis of evil" often and very generously rewarded to it by the press. On the contrary and at first glance, I could not entirely understand this city densely covered with fog and, possibly, even smog. However, the grayish veil of this haze hid a special charm, for there in its banal everyday mystery, real life unfolded at the same time.

What can you see, learn and say about the real life of ordinary people in the capital of the most isolated, scandalous and criticized country in the world in two and a half days? Probably not so much, especially given the fact tourists in North Korea are banned from free movement, and at all places, in all directions and on all planned routes we were always accompanied by guides – even on the train itself – the guides...
whose main task was not to let us stumble in the perception of fundamental ideas and values of the Juche planet’s state system.

Our guide stands in front of the USS *Pueblo*, captured by North Koreans in 1967.

A bird’s-eye view of central Pyongyang, seen from Juche Tower, shows the symmetrical layout of the city.
Therefore, I can only keep vague memories and images left in my mind – of the unsmiling faces in crowded and slow buses on linear streets during the rush hour, of short and slender people in dark winter clothes hurriedly walking in even rows to work in the morning, accompanied by the crystal-clear female voices rising like the elegant crane flocks into the sky together with the sounds of North Korean military marches bursting into the air from all the city’s megaphones and loud speakers...

A military fragment at the Liberation War Victory Museum

The frozen Taedong River

The wind howling early in the morning on the 39th floor of the (in)famous Yanggakdo Hotel – where all foreigners are bound to stay – that also sounded like a military march at the wee hours to my sleepy ears… The view of the frozen Taedong River at dawn from my frosty
window. The city from a bird’s-eye view, the smiles and jokes of our guides, war propaganda on the hand-drawn and watercolor-painted posters, barbecue, draft beers and bowling in the center... And at the end, the song "My Korea" with a microphone on the bus on our last night in Pyongyang.

A barwoman serves up beer in central Pyongyang.

Bidding farewell to our Pyongyang guide Ms. Kim

Part II: TUMANGANG FULL OF TEARS
Our journey became the first DPRK-Russia trans-country crossing over the Tumen River – from the town of Tumangang in North Korea to the neighboring Khasan in Russia. Thus it resembled completely the original route my Korean ancestors took while crossing the Tumen River to China and Russia more than 155 years ago, never to return again to their historical motherland.

So many words were said and so many songs written about the Tumen River “full of cry and tears” – a symbolic and de facto border that has forever separated Koryo Saram from Korea, having only left memories about the unknown, mysterious and thus even more desirable land, the memories kept in the imagination of posterior generations, in their diasporal folklore and in the literature of Soviet Koreans.

Piles of frozen-solid human and animal manure are used as “organic” field fertilizer.

Naturally, I also desired to see North Korea with my own eyes and even more so I wished to visit the land where my Korean ancestors were born in the faraway emptiness of Hamgyong – now split into two: northern and southern – the cold and barren wilderness which they in their own time fled starving and to where later all unwilling and/or purposeful offenders of the new national ideological cult were mercilessly brought.

Our group became the first ever allowed to visit the earlier restricted and sealed North Hamgyong Province. We could see it with our own eyes from the windows of our train and at the random passenger stations, and those unique moments have stayed reflected in our pictures.
Outdated infrastructure at one of the train stations in South Hamgyong Province

Here are the images shot during my journey through South and North Hamgyong, where – likewise earlier in Pyongyang – I wanted most of all to understand the details revealing common people’s lives – a task almost impossible for an ordinary tourist.

Fieldwork in the middle of winter in South Hamgyong Province

Foreigners in North Korea live on a separate planet, restricted from any real interaction with locals and their everyday realities by all kinds of barriers – linguistic, cultural, ideological, etc. – by being constantly spied on, but also by the parallels systems of mobile
communication and money exchange. North Koreans cannot call foreigners by phone even inside their own country, there’s no internet as we know it, and foreigners are not allowed to use the local currency (DPRK won) or even buy anything at small shops or the majority of street markets.

Local residents wait along the tracks at a train stop.

Train attendants and security guards at work

This is how paradoxically, maybe, our train – free of the systematic control over foreign tourists – became an unexpected window into the real-time North Korea and we were able to cross it almost
“freely,” look at it from the different angle and “dive” into it along the way. How much we have digested and understood is difficult to say.

Most likely, we were only able to catch (and record) a handful of random moments and these are the glimpses on display in my photo diary of this journey across North Korea.

Many more of such moments stayed hidden and undisclosed – although never forgotten – at the nameless stations of this most northern province buried in snow, where the paperless locals were desperately trying to hop on the trains that cross the country like the blood flow rushing through veins in a human body. Limited from this only available form of transportation on the frozen roads – besides bicycles and oxen – and unable to pass multiple levels of control comprised of the railway security, military and train attendants, so many people were left fighting and crying outside the train windows and behind the camera, with only the traces of their real lives staying behind.

III. RASON TO KHASAN: ONE-WAY BORDER CROSSINGS
We concluded our journey across the DPRK in Rason (formerly Rajin), the northeastern special status territory isolated from the rest of North Korea. Foreigners have much easier access to Rason than locals and five currencies are officially operated here: U.S. dollars, euros, Chinese
renminbi, Japanese yen and Russian rubles. Rason also had its special mobile communication system unreachable from other parts of the DPRK.

Having crossed most of the country by train, we came here to familiarize ourselves with the local economy’s latest achievements and enjoy all the beautiful scenery of North Korea’s Far East. During the following couple of days and with the help of our new guides – both
sharing my surname Kim – we saw a new salmon breeding factory, a new soft drinks and spirits production plant, a new shoes factory and store, the only branch of Golden Triangular Bank operating solely in Rason and a North Korean secondary school specializing in foreign languages.

The bank branch was normally closed on the weekends; however, they opened it especially for us as we were preparing to cross the neighboring Russian border and needed to exchange our renminbi, dollars and euros into rubles. They also allowed us to open bank accounts in the DPRK and even gave special cash cards as souvenirs for our memories. Needless to say, this was the only place we could ever use them.

One of our trip’s highlights in Rason was visiting the five-star Emperor Hotel on Pipha Island. Its owner – a famous Hong Kong millionaire – has opened here one of the very few casinos in North Korea; currently, it is incredibly popular among Chinese tourists.
And the most special part of the program for me was our visit to the secondary school where during one half-hour English language session we could communicate directly with North Korean students, having been first instructed on which topics we could not talk about with them (namely, religion, sex and politics in the DPRK).
Our final destination in North Korea was Tumangang – a town on the very border with Russia. There we entered the Friendship House, where the DPRK and Soviet (now Russian) leadership regularly met, and saw the Tumen River – the river my Korean ancestors crossed over 155 years ago, searching for a better future. Thus we repeated their historical one-way crossing – not to return back to North Korea but travel further into Russia, passing through the villages of Kraskino and Posyet on our way to the strategically important military port of Vladivostok.
This unique journey across North Korea has left me with unforgettable memories and mixed feelings. Its most original part was our train trip through the Hamgyong region, with a very short nighttime stopover in Riwon – a little coastal fishing town where my grandfather’s whole family was from.
Oxen are still the most vital mode of transportation in rural North Korea.

A cyclist walks the road to Tumangang.

Following the steps of *Koryo Saram*, I could visit and get acquainted with the most isolated and rare country in the world and the most important outcome I could make for myself out of this trip was the mere thought that even in such a brutal and heavily militarized state as the DPRK there are a lot of completely normal and actually very nice people, most of whom have been granted with a very complex fate from the beginning due to the simple fact of being born and raised there.
I truly hope for positive changes in their lives and in their motherland – and this probably is the only thing I will continuously wish for.
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100 *Great Books of Korea*

Notes by Richard Rutt

*Transcribed and introduced by Brother Anthony*

In 1970 the Hyeon Am Publishing Company in Seoul published a 1,348-page volume, *Great Books of Korea*, containing information on, some photographs of, and Hangeul translations of extracts from one hundred celebrated older Korean texts. At the end of the book was a brief description written by Richard Rutt in English of each of the works covered, with a romanized transcription and the author’s name, and with minimal publishing information. Since this book is almost impossible to find, it has seemed worthwhile to reproduce Rutt’s text in *Transactions*, if only to remind readers of how many major works were written in Korea in times past, the originals of which very few of us (even Koreans) are now able to read and almost none of which have been translated into English.

**Richard Rutt** (1925-2011) was an Anglican priest who arrived in Korea in 1954. A scholar by temperament, he grew to love Korea’s traditional literary culture, mostly written in Classical Chinese using Chinese characters. He served for a time as Anglican Bishop of Daejeon before resigning and returning to England in 1973/4, where he served as Bishop of Leicester. Long active in the RASKB, he was its President at the time of his departure from Korea. He published many books, including his classic *A History of Hand Knitting* in 1987 and a remarkable new translation of the Chinese *I Ching* in 2002: *Zhouyi: A New Translation with Commentary of the Book of Changes*. But perhaps his finest achievement was his edition of James Gale’s *History of the Korean People* (RASKB, 1972) which includes a deeply researched biography of Gale. He shared Gale’s love of Sino-Korean poetic texts and he published a collection of translated *sijo* in 1971: *The Bamboo Grove: An Introduction to Sijo*. This was one of the earliest volumes of English translations of Korean poetry to be published in North America.
Great Books of Korea: Preface by Richard Rutt

This book contains introductions to 100 of the most significant books written and published in Korea since the 7th century. Each has been treated by a different Korean scholar, who is an authority in the field about which he writes.

The majority of the books were written in Chinese, and are thus not easy for modern Koreans to read. The account of each title gives a résumé of the author’s life and his importance in the development of Korean thought and culture, together with an account of the contents of the book and its place in Korean history. Full bibliographical details of the original editions and also of the critical writings on each famous book are given together with a brief account of the career of the scholar who has written about it.

The books chosen cover a wide range, from Buddhist religion to astronomy and geography on the one hand and music and poetry on the other. The most important works of the twentieth century have also been given a place. A brief note in English is given for each of the titles dealt with.

The whole work gives a concise account of Korean writings over 13 centuries, with enough quotations and translations to allow the original authors to speak for themselves, and enough critical comment to show the historical lines along which Korean thinking has developed. To the beginner in Korean studies it is a useful compendium, and for Korean students it is an epitome of right national pride in the achievements of the nation.

The illustrations show the appearance of the books in their original editions, and the traditional portraits of the authors. The whole work has been designed to give authentic and reliable information.

1969. 7. 20

Richard Rutt
Taesŏng kisin nonso  大乘起信論疏  Wŏnhyo  元曉  (617-686)  Date of publication unknown.

The great monk of Silla, Wŏnhyo wrote the Taesŏng kisin nonso as an introduction to Mahayana Buddhism according to his own personal interpretation. It was intended for use as a textbook in the second of four courses of instruction on Mahayana doctrine, and aims at inculcating right belief. Wŏnhyo emphasizes that the Three Treasures (Triratna: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) must be seen from a singleminded standpoint.

Kŭmgang sammae kyŏngnon  金剛三昧經論  Wŏnhyo  元曉  Date of publication unknown.

A three volume work on Mahayana doctrine in the form of a commentary on the Vajrasamadhi sutra by the Silla monk Wŏnhyo. It expounds the core of his doctrine, which is well illustrated by the anecdote of how on his way to T’ang China he spent a night in a cave and drank water from what he supposed to be a bowl, but in the morning discovered to be a skull. From the comparison between his gratitude for the drink at night and his revulsion from the skull in the morning he learned the subjective nature of purity and corruption, good and evil.

Wango ch’ŏnch’uk kukchŏn  往五天竺國傳  Hyejo  慧超  (704-787)  Written about 727.

This “Account of Visits to the Five Lands of India” was written by the monk Hyejo after his ten years of journeyings as a scholar pilgrim to India and its adjacent countries, and T’ang China. It was rediscovered in 1908 by the French orientalist Paul Pelliot in the caves of Tun-huang in Kan-su province, China. The two volumes he discovered are now kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. They are invaluable sources of information for historians.

Kyewŏn p’ilgyŏngjip  桂苑筆耕集  Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn  崔致遠  (857-?).

“Pen Ploughings in the Gardens of Cinnamon” is the collected works of Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn, the poet, writer and scholar of Silla whose fame reached even the T’ang court. He is the first great Korean scholar of Chinese. His style lacks robustness, but his stature derives from his delicacy and the beauty of his work. This collection was also published in China.

Ch’ont’ae sa kyoŭi  天台四教儀  Chegwan  諦觀  Written about 970.

An account of the four modes of teaching of the T’ien-t’ai sect of buddhism, written in the Koryŏ period by the able monk Chegwan. It sets out in simple language the division of Buddha’s teaching into five periods and eight kinds, which are the distinctive classification of the T’ien-t’ai school. It was a widely studied summa of buddhist thought, popular in Japan as well as in Korea.

Taegak kuksa mun jip  大覺國師文集  Uich’ŏn  義天  (1055-1101)  Date of publication unknown.
The collected works of Taegak, the son of King Munjong of Koryŏ, who became a buddhist prelate. Woodblocks of this work dating from Koryŏ times are preserved at Haein-sa in South Kyŏngsang. There are 20 volumes in the main text with 13 appendix volumes. In his attempt to return to Sakyamuni’s authentic doctrine, Uich’ŏn was much influenced by the works of Wŏnhyo. He wished to reject all the mutually opposing and negative elements in the doctrines of the sects and regain a unified buddhist thought, but recognized the absolute value inherent in many of their positive teachings. He held to the T’ien-t’ai point of view.

*Sanguk Sagi* 三國史記  Kim Pusik 金富祿 (1075-1151)  Published 1145.

The sole ancient literary source for the history of the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla. It was edited in the reign of King İnjong of Koryŏ by Kim Pusik and others, using records of earlier times and Chinese sources. It is regarded as heavily coloured by Kim’s confucian point of view, but is nonetheless a prime historical source for the period.

*Susim kyŏl* 修心訣  Chinul  知訥 (1158-1210)  Written about 1200.

A book of buddhist spirituality written by the Koryŏ monk Chinul, also known as Moguja. In 1467 it was translated into Korean by Sinmi (also known as Hyegak-chonja), and in 1500 published at Pongsŏ-sa in South Kyŏngnam. It has been translated into Chinese, Japanese, and other foreign languages and is much read outside Korea. It teaches that man is essentially buddha and therefore has no need of much study, but needs only to discover what is in his own heart. Buddhahood is discovered in a man rather than attained by him. Because men lack a clear standard for living, each man seeks his own opinion and thus peace is unattainable. The human tragedy springs from our lack of mutual trust and mutual knowledge. Respect for humanity is the sole remedy for the situation. The whole book is a treatise on buddhist asceticism.

*Haedong kosŏng chŏn* 海東高僧傳  Kakhun 覚訓  Published 1215.

The earliest buddhist biographies from Korea, written by the monk Kakhun at the order of the king in 1215. It contains the lives of Sundo, Mangmyŏng, Pŏpkong, Pŏbun, Kaktŏk, Wŏn’gwang, and other eminent monks. It is an important source of information on the early tradition of buddhism from India and China and its establishment in Korea.

*P’ahan chip* 破閑集  Yi Illo 李仁老 (1152-1220)  Published 1260.

A collection of stories by Yi Illo collated and published by his son Yi Sehwang in 1260. The stories and poems include gleanings from the works of forgotten poets as well as original compositions. The accounts of life in Kyŏngju, sites in P’yŏngyang and palaces and temples in Kaesŏng and the like, make it an important source of material for the study of the Koryŏ dynasty.

*Tongguk Yi Sangguk chip* 東國李相國集  Yi Kyubo 李奎報 (1168-1241)
Published 1241.

The collected works of the Koryŏ scholar Yi Kyubo, edited and published by his son Yi Ham in 1241. During the militaristic regime of Koryŏ, unlike most literary characters, Yi Kyubo had a successful political career. He is regarded as the outstanding man of a time when the forms of Chinese literature were used to express the peculiar point of view of Koreans.

**Samguk yusa 三國遺事 Iryon 一然 (1206-1289)** Republished 1512.

This book was composed by the Koryŏ period buddhist prelate Iryŏn, also known as Pogak. The original edition no longer exists, and was indeed already very scarce at the time of the re-edition of 1512. The contents of the book are relics of the three kingdoms of Koguryŏ, Paekche and Silla, but there are records also of more primitive eras (Tan’gun Chosŏn, Wiman Chosŏn, and the Samhan). Some materials missing from the *Samguk sagi* are included. Legends, inscriptions, myths, place-name origins, family names, religious elements. and materials quoted from contemporary works give the book a unique value. The 14 examples of early Korean poems known as *hyangga* are known only through the *Samguk yusa*.

**Nagong pisŏl** [sic: *Yŏgong p’aesŏl*] 櫟翁稗說 Yi Chehyŏn 李齊賢 (1287-1367) Written 1342. Published 1693.

Essays of the much troubled Koryŏ statesman and diplomat writer Yi Chehyŏn, containing many reflections on men and books, many poems and art criticisms which are not to be found in other sources. The collection of Yi’s own poems and the inscription he composed for the grave of Mogŭn (Yi Saek) make this one of the great books of Korean literature.

**P’oŭn chip** 國隱集 Chŏng Mongju 鄭夢周 (1337-1392) Published 1439.

The collected writings and poems of Chŏng Mongju, a philosopher and statesman of the end of the Koryŏ period. His son Chŏng Chongsŏng collected the materials from scattered sources and published them in 1439. The poems are vividly descriptive and the memorials to the throne are irradiated by political honesty. When the dynasty fell he resisted all temptations and remained steadfast in his loyalty to the old house, so that he has become a legendary symbol of loyalty for all Koreans. But the value of his writings is independent of his deeds: they remain an essential record of the life and history of the period.

**Mogŭn chip** 牧隱集 Yi Saek 李穡 (1328-1396) Date of publication unknown.

The collected works of a notable philosopher of late Koryŏ, Yi Saek. The poems were edited from the manuscripts by his son, Yi Kyejŏn, in 6 volumes, to which his grandson Yi Tŏksu added the remaining material. His political career ended in the failure of the dynasty, but as a writer and educator he left his mark on a host of disciples. However, it was a period when Buddhism and Confucianism were in continual tension, and his works show signs of a synthesis between the two which was not popular in later times. Therefore his works were neglected and there are
now problematic points in their study.

**Chosŏn wangjo sillok** 朝鮮王朝實錄 Compiled by the Royal Archives Commission [춘추관] 春秋館 (1413-1865).

The compendious and bulky annals of the Yi dynasty, compiled daily, monthly and yearly, from the beginning of the dynasty in 1392 until the reign of Ch’ŏlchong (1863). This is the basic quarry for all information about Korea in the Yi period, from historic events to customs and conditions. Its chief defect is its concentration on events and life within the palace and royal household.

**Hyangyak chipsŏngbang** 鄉薬集成方 Edited by Yu Hyot’ong and others 盧孝通 等 Published 1433.

A compendium of Korean medical knowledge in the fifteenth century. It was compiled by Yu Hyot’ong, No Chungnye, Pak Yundŏk and others between the autumn of 1431 and the summer of 1433. It contains descriptions of diseases and remedies, acupuncture techniques, and herbal medicines. It records the development of folk medicine in the period immediately after Koryŏ. It represents an amalgamation of the native Korean tradition with Chinese medicine and a significant point in the development of Korean medical practice.

**Nongsa chiksŏl** 農事直說 Chŏng Cho 鄭招 (?-1434) Published 1429.

The earliest extant Korean treatise on agriculture. It was written in 1429 at the command of King Sejong, as part of his agrarian policy. The materials were gathered by inspectors in all the provinces of the country. The section on dry-field rice growing still merits attention today.

**Uibang yuch’wi** 醫方類聚 Edited by royal command. 世宗命 Completed in 1445.

A medical treatise compiled at the order of King Sejong by Kim Yemong, Yu Sŏngwŏn, and others and supervised by Prince Anp’yon, Yi Sach’ŏl, and others. The material was drawn from earlier Chinese texts, and reflects Sejong’s benevolent government policies. It is an important document for the study of historiographical methodology.

**Hunmin chŏngŭm** 訓民正音 King Sejong 世宗大王 (1397-1450) Compiled 1446.

The document explaining the native Korean alphabet, promulgated in 1446. The sole existing copy of this book is reckoned a national treasure. The book contains an account of the phonetic principle of the alphabet, based on the use of the speech organs, and the forms and method of use of the 28 letters. It is an indispensable part of the Korean language’s heritage. It bases the development of the language and its literature on the needs of the common people.
Completed 1447, published 1448.
A dictionary of Chinese characters arranged according to their rhymes, compiled by Sin Sukchu, Sŏng Sammun and others at the request of King Sejong. The pronunciation of Chinese characters in Korea had come to differ from that in use in China. A new standard for the pronunciation of Chinese characters in Korea was created in this work by reference to Hung-wu’s phonetic works and other Chinese authorities. The project was closely connected with the invention of the new Korean alphabet. It was based on a scientific analysis of sounds and is now our sole source of information concerning the pronunciation of Chinese characters in mediaeval Korea.

Wŏrin ch’ŏn’gang chi kok 月印千江之曲 King Sejong 世宗大王 Published 1449.
After Sejong had seen the Sŏkpo sangjŏl, written by Prince Suyang (later King Sejo), in 1447 he composed this paean in praise of Sakyamuni. It was published in three volumes in 1449. It tells of the enlightening acts of Buddha in a song called Wŏrin ch’ŏn’gang. It was the second book to be written in the newly invented alphabet, the first having been The Yongbiŏch’ŏn ka. It is of prime importance as an example of Korean language and script.

Tongguk pyŏnggam 東國兵鑑 Compiled by order of King Munjong 文宗 (1019-1083)命撰 Edited in 1450, date of publication unknown.
A military history of Korea. It recounts the battles with continental forces from the time of Wu-ti of Han until the end of Koryŏ. More than 30 wars, including the wars with the Jurchen, are described in chronological order.

Chinhŏp 陣法 King Sejo 世祖王 (1417-1468) Written in 1453.
A military treatise written for King Munjong at his request by Prince Suyang (later King Sejo). It was printed in small type in 1455 and again in larger type in 1459. In 1492 the two volumes were combined in one under the present title. It is a treatise on strategy and tactics.

Pyŏnghak t'ong 兵學通 King Chongjo 正宗王 (1752-1800) Published 1776.
A military treatise composed by the scholarly King Chongjo, with the help of Chang Chihang, Sŏ Myŏngsŏn, and others. Among the many questions with which it deals are deployment of troops, night operations, sieges, and sea warfare.

Pyŏngjang sŏl 兵將說 King Sejo 世祖王 Date of publication unknown.
A military treatise by King Sejo annotated by Sin Sukchu, Chŏng Inji, Kang Hŭimaeng and others. It is systematically arranged and easy to refer to.

Chesŭng pangnyak 制勝方略 Kim Chongsŏ 金宗瑞 (1390-1453) Date of publication unknown
An account of the defence of the eight commanderies of Hamgyŏng Province. It
was written by the distinguished commander Kim Chongsŏ, of the beginning of the Yi dynasty, and augmented in 1670 by Yi Il. Yi Sŏn published it in 1670. It describes the topography and system of defences of the commanderies.

Koryŏ sa 高麗史 Chŏng Inji 鄭麟趾 (1396-1478), Kim Chongsŏ 金宗瑞 (1390-1453) and others. Published 1451.
The official history of the Koryŏ dynasty, covering the whole of the period 918 to 1392. The collation and editing of the Koryŏ annals was committed by the first king of the Yi dynasty to Chŏng Tojŏn and others, but the result was not satisfactory, so another attempt was made under King T’aejong (1367-1423). The work was not completed until the reign of Sejong when it was completed by Chŏng Inji and others in 1451, and publication undertaken in 1454. The form of the book is the traditional division into annals, monographs, chronological tables, and biographies of outstanding personalities. Its value is less in the organization of the material than in its preservation of authentic records of the Koryŏ period.

Wŏrin Sŏkpo 月印釋譜 King Sejo 世祖王 Published 1459.
A conflation of the Wŏrin ch’ŏn’gang chi kok and the Sŏkpo sangjŏl published by Sejo in 1459. The former stands as the basic text with the appropriate parts of the latter appended as annotations. It was the first annotated buddhist book published in the new alphabet and is of cardinal importance for the history of the Korean language.

Kyŏngguk taejŏn 經國大典 Ch’oe Hang 崔恆 (1409-1474) and others. Completed 1469.
The basic code of laws of the Yi dynasty, compiled by Ch’oe Hang, No Sasin, and others at the order of King Sejon 1460. The Revenue Code was finished in 1460, the Criminal Code in 1461, and the remaining four parts (Civil Code, Military Code, Ritual Code, and Code of Public Works) by 1469. By 1485 the whole had been revised and emended. Although it took nearly thirty years to complete, it remained the standard law of the whole dynasty and is a basic text for the study of the period. It describes the administrative system, the public examination system, the army, regulations for marriage and burials, punishments, slavery, and civil engineering, as well as the laws relating to property and persons.

Yongbi ŏch’ŏn ka 龍飛御天歌 Kwŏn Choe and others 權踶 等撰 Compiled 1445.
An encomium of the six immediate ancestors of the the founder of the Yi dynasty, written by Kwŏn Choe, Chŏng Inji, and others at the command of King Sejong. It was used at court celebrations. Although written in verse form, it is a rough metre, owing nothing to tradition, but it is important as a source for fifteenth century language studies.

Tongmun sŏn 東文選 Sŏ Köjong 徐居正 (1420-1488) and others. Edited 1478.
An anthology of Korean verse in Chinese from Silla times to the reign of
Sukchong (18th century). First compiled by Sŏ Kŏjŏng at the king’s command, it was extended in the reign of Chungjong and re-edited in the time of Sukchong. It is the basic collection of Korean poetry written in Chinese characters.

**Maewŏl-dang chip** 梅月堂集 Kim Sisŭp 金時習 (1435-1493) Published 1602.

The collected works of Kim Sisŭp, who was a skillful writer from his youth, but in disgust at the usurpation of the throne by Sejo and the murder of the boy-king Tanjong left the world and lived as a wanderer and cynical observer of society. His rigid ideals of loyalty and his cynicism show through in his writings.

**Sinjŭng Tongguk yŏji sŭngnam** 新増東國輿地勝覧 Compiled by order of King Chungjong 中宗命撰 Edited 1481, published 1531.

A geography of Korea, describing the topography and way of life of each province. The original work was called Tongguk yŏji sŭngnam but the present work is the enlarged edition of 1531. It is a gazetteer of 15th century Korea and a rare book of historical geography.

**Akhak kwebŏm** 樂學軌範 Sŏng Hyŏn 成俔 (1439~1504) and others. Edited 1493.

A treatise on music compiled at the order of King Sŏngjong in 1493. It describes and classifies instruments and kinds of music, the principles of music, dress of musicians, sacrificial, ritual and court music, including dancing and singing. Several songs in Korean script are included, and the book is invaluable both for the study of the history of music and for the study of Korean language and literature.

**Yongjae ch’onghwa** 慵齋叢話 Sŏng Hyŏn 成俔 Written about 1500.

The collected essays of Yongjae (Sŏng Hyŏn). It ranks among the finest of the belles lettres of the Yi period, containing essays on books, painting, poetry, personalities and many other subjects. It was written in an age of peace and prosperity and reflects happy times.

**Sasŏng t’onghae** 四聲通解 Ch’oe Sejin 崔世珍 (1473-1542) Published 1517.

A Chinese language book giving the ancient, contemporary, correct and colloquial pronunciations of Chinese characters, written in Korean script. It is in effect a dictionary. Together with the same author’s Hunmong chahoe it is a basic text for the study of the history of the Korean language.

**Hunmong chahoe** 訓蒙 字會 Ch’oe Sejin 崔世珍 Written in 1527.

A primer of Chinese characters, written with the intention of providing a textbook less remote from daily life than the traditional classic texts had become. The vocabulary treats very largely of domestic and everyday material. It is of prime importance for the historical study of Korean.
Hwadam chip 花潭集 Sŏ Kyŏngdŏk 徐敬德 (1489-1546) Published 1605.
The collected writings of Sŏ Kyŏngdŏk, a philosopher of the time of king Chungjong. Chiefly concerned with the philosophy of nature, it represents a synthesis of mechanistic and teleological theory.

T’oegye munjip 退溪文集 Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501-1570) Published 1599.
The collection, in 59 volumes, of the writings and poems of the great Yi philosopher, Yi T’oegye, or Yi Hwang. His philosophy begins with the finding of truth in all the objects of daily life and extends into a practical moral philosophy of effort in the quest for authenticity. Much of it is the fruit of his fourteen years of philosophical controversy. His influence on Korean thought has been unparalleled in its impact.

Sinjŭng Yuhap 新增類合 Yu Hŭich’un 柳希春 (1513-1577) Compiled 1576.
A textbook of Chinese characters, designed as supplementary text for youngsters in the reign of Chungjong (1488-1544). The name of the author of the original yuhap is not known with certainty. It was widely used but had many defects. These were made good in the emended and expanded edition edited by Yu Hŭich’un, under the title of Sinjŭng Yuhap. An important source for the history of Korean.

Chŏng Kamnok 鄭鑑錄 Author unknown 著者未詳 Date unknown.
A book of prophecies which became current in the middle part of the Yi period. It was surreptitiously passed on, because it contains much material connected with superstitions, folk-beliefs and mystical prophecies which could be interpreted as seditious. It suggests that after some hundreds of years of the Yi dynasty, there would be a Chŏng dynasty founded at Kyeryŏng-san (near Taejŏn), followed after some centuries by a Cho dynasty centred on Kaya-san, a Pŏm dynasty near Chŏnju, and so on for several others. These prophecies are mingled with prophesies of natural and social disasters. After the times of Kwanghae-gun and Injo nearly all revolutionary movements took some colouring from the hopes of the Chŏng dynasty at Kyeryŏng-san.

T’ojŏng pigyŏl 土亭祕訣 Yi Chiham 李之菡 (1517-1578) Date of publication unknown.
A fortune-telling book for discovering the events of any given year on the basis of the time and date of a person’s birth, written by Yi Chiham, whose pen-name was T’ojiing. It represents the efforts of the polymath T’ojong to collate the tradition of such books as were extant in the earlier part of the dynasty. He made much use of Chinese sources. The book was not widely distributed until late in the dynasty, and is worthless from a literary point of view, but of considerable interest in the study of Korean popular thought.

Yulgok chŏnsŏ 栗谷全書 Yi I 李耳 (1536-1584) Published 1744.
The collected writings of the great mid-dynasty confucian scholar Yi I, whose
pen-name was Yulgok. His writings had been collated under various categories
(poems, essays, etc) but were collected together and printed with type by Yi Chae
in 1744. It is a work of first importance not only for the study of Korean
confucianism, but also of Yi dynasty politics, thought and society.

_Nansŏrhŏn chip_ 蘭雪軒集  Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn 許蘭雪軒 (1563-1589) Published
1608.

The collected poems of Hŏ Nansŏrhŏn, the wife of Kim Sŏngnip, collated by her
elder brother, Hŏ Kyun, It contains poems in various styles, and a preface by the
one-time envoy to Ming China, Yang Yunyŏn. It is the earliest example of the
work of a poetess in Korea, and therefore of special interest.

_Songgang kasa_ 松江歌辭  Chŏng Ch’ŏl 鄭澈 (1536-1593) Published 1747.

A collection of Korean language poems in _sijo_ and _kasa_ form, written by Chŏng
Ch’ŏl (pen-name Songgang), the statesman and politician of the reign of Sŏnjŏ.
He is unequalled in his ability to exploit the resources of the Korean language,
and his work is the earliest preserved collection of Korean language poems by a
single author. He still ranks as the outstanding poet of the nation, dwarfing almost
all that came after him.

_Nanjung ilgi_ 亂中日記 Yi Sunsin 李舜臣 (1545-1598) Written 1592-1598.

The war diaries of Admiral Yi Sunsin (posthumously honoured with the name
Ch’ungmu Kong) who from 1592 to 1598 was chiefly responsible for the success
of the Koreans in repelling the invading forces of the Japanese. He invented a
form of armoured warship, known as the “turtle-boat”, and revolutionised sea
warfare through his new techniques. He is perhaps the greatest of all Korean
national heroes. His written style leaves nothing to be desired. The _Nanjung ilgi_
is equally important for history and for literature.

_Imjin rok_ 壬辰錄  Author unknown 作者 未詳  Written about 1600.

The author and date of this fanciful novel about the Japanese invasions of the
sixteenth century are unknown, but it can hardly have been written very long after
the events it describes. It displays an ardent desire for revenge on the Japanese,
and is remarkable among old Korean novels in that it is based on historical events.
It occupies an important place in the Korean folk-tradition.

_Sŏn’ga kwigam_ 禪家龜鑑 Hyujŏng 休靜 (1520-1604) Published 1564.

An introduction to buddhism, written by the monk Sosan, also known as
Hyujŏng. It was republished in 1610 and is still widely used.

_Chingbi rok_ 懲毖錄 Yu Songnyŏng 柳成龍 (1542-1607) Published 1633.

An account of the Imjin wars, written by a prime minister during the years of
his retirement, describing the events of the years 1592 to 1558. It deals with the
causes and course of the wars. Some of the author’s own documents relating to
the subject are appended. It is widely read, particularly as a primary source for the

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history of the times.

**Yanggŭm sinbo** 梁琴新譜 Yang Tŏksu 梁德壽 Published 1610.
Musical scores for the Korean stringed instrument called *kŏmun’go*. It describes the tuning and playing of the instrument, using an original form of notation. It is an essential work of reference for traditional Korean music.

**Tongŭi pogam** 東醫寶鑑 Hŏ Chun 許浚 (1597-1615) Published 1613.
The most important medical compendium of the Yi period, combining Chinese and Korean medical writings. It was written by the physician Hŏ Chun at the command of King Sŏnjo. begun in 1597 and completed in 1611, although not published until two years later. It describes all manner of sicknesses and diseases and their healing, including pediatrics, gynecology, acupuncture, medicine, and surgery. It was introduced into China and Japan.

**Samyŏng-dang tæsa chip** 四溟堂大師集 Yujŏng 惟政 (1544-1610) Published 1612.
A collection of poems by the monk Yujŏng, also known as Songun and Samyŏng-dang, collated and published by his disciples in 1612. It tells of how the author became a soldier-monk during the Japanese invasions, and is important not only for its immediate historical content but also for the light it throws on Korean buddhist thought.

**Pibyŏnsa tŭnok** 備邊司謄錄 Edited by the Pibyonsa 備邊司編 1617-1892.
The daily records of the chief matters discussed at the Pibyonsa, the joint civil and military council of the government. It is not clear when these records first began to be kept, but nothing has survived from before 1617. The extant sections are a primary source for national history.

**Kosan yugo** 倉山遺稿 Yun Sŏndo 尹善道 (1587-1617) Published 1798.
The collected writing of Yun Sŏndo, consisting mainly of poems. He was for the most part a quiet poet of nature, but his technique still exercises an influence over Korean poets. His poems in *sijo* form, in particular, are highly prized. Some critics would regard them as the finest creations in the Korean language.

**Hong Kiltong chôn** 洪吉童傳 Hŏ Kyun 許筠 (1569-1618) Written about 1610.
A typical Korean romance. It tells of a man, Hong Kiltong, who was a great disadvantage in society because he was the son of a concubine, how he became an outlaw, heading a robber band which preyed on the rich to help the poor, and how in the end he set up a utopian kingdom of his own. There is a distinct theme of egalitarianism, but the story is full of fanciful interludes.

**Sŏngjŏng-wŏn ilgi** 承政院日記 Recorded by the Sŏngjŏng-wŏn 承政院 1623-1610.
The daily records of the royal office known as the Sŏngjong-wŏn, a secretariat which dealt with all royal commands and messages sent to the king. There are 3,245 volumes. Since they deal with the relations of all government departments to the throne and with many palace matters, there were kept secret during the Yi dynasty. Some parts are missing for the times of the Japanese and Manchu invasions. A cardinal historical source.

**Akchang kasa** 樂章歌詞 Pak Chun 朴浚 (date unknown).

The oldest book of Korean song lyrics, containing 24 pieces. Although it seems to have been designed chiefly for court use, it preserves a few important examples of the popular songs of the Koryŏ period.

**Chibong yusŏl** 芝峰 類說 Yi Sugwang 李晫光 (1563-1628) Published 1633.

This was the first Korean encyclopaedia. It included information about other Asian countries, and even about Europe, arranged in 20 volumes. It profoundly influenced Korean thought in many fields.

**Nogye chip** 蘆溪集 Pak Illo 朴仁老 (1561-1642) Published 1800.

A three-volume collection of the writings of Nogye. The third volume, containing 7 long poems in the Korean language (kasa) and 60 short poems (sijo), is especially important. The writer did not begin to write poetry until he was 40 years old, but is reckoned as one of the three greatest poets of Korea. (The other two are Songgang and Kosan). His work is rugged and sturdy, as befits a military official.

**Pan’gye surok** 磚溪隨錄 Yu Hyŏngwŏn 柳馨遠 (1622-1673) Completed 1670.

A critical account of the administration of Korea in 26 volumes. The section on agricultural management is of particular importance and interest. The writer was a fore-runner of the Sirhak-p’a, or Pragmatists, of two centuries later.

**Yorowŏn yahwagi** 要路院夜話記 Pak Tuse 朴斗世 (1654-?) Published 1678.

A novel composed of pieces describing the faults and corruptions in the Yi dynasty system. It takes the form of conversations between nobility from Seoul and the countryside meeting for the night in an inn called the Yorowŏn.

**Kuun mong** 九雲 夢 Kim Manjung 金萬重 (1637-1692) Published 1689.

The finest of the old novels of Korea. The theme of the whole work is the transience of human life. The hero is a buddhist monk who, with eight fairy women, transmigrates into the world where he attains riches and honour and marries all eight women only to wake up at the end and realize that it was all a dream. It is said that the book was written to entertain the author’s mother when they were in exile together.

**T’aengni chi** 擇里志 Yi Chunghwan 李重煥 (1690-?) Published 1714.
This book can be considered the earliest Korean treatise on human geography. The first volume treats of the eight provinces of the country with their climate, history, products, and other relevant topics. The second volume treats of favourable natural conditions for human prosperity. The influence of early sirhak (pragmatism) is seen in this work.

_Sallim kyŏngje_  山林經濟  Hong Manson 洪萬選 (1643-1715) Date of publication unknown.

The first Korean text on natural science, written in the 17th century. It deals with such matters as agriculture, housing, horticulture, sericulture, animal husbandry, food production, medicine, forestry, and gives clear information on the state of the national development in such fields at that time.

_Kusuryak_  九數略  Ch’oe Sŏkchŏng 崔錫鼎 (1646-1715) Date of publication unknown.

The only old Korean book dealing with mathematics. It is our source for traditional Korean reckoning methods, and had more attention been paid to it the scientific aspect of the nation’s genius might have been developed long before it was.

_Hŭngbu chŏn_  兴夫傳  Author and date unknown.

An example of popular literature in which virtue is rewarded and vice is punished. It belongs to the _pansori_ (minstrels’ tales) and marks the transition from an aristocratic literature to a popular literature. The two leading characters are the good Hŭngbu and his bad elder brother Nolbu. In reward for mending the broken leg of a swallow Hŭngbu receives a gourd-seed, which eventually produces a gourd full of gold and jewels. Nolbu tries to gain the same advantage by deliberately breaking a swallow’s leg and then mending it. He also eventually gets a gourd, but it contains only filth and hobgoblins.

_Sim Ch’ŏng chŏn_  沈淸傳  Author and date unknown.

The most proletarian of all Korean novels. It tells of the trials and tribulations of the girl Sim Ch’ŏng in her efforts to restore the sight of her blind father. In the guise of a tale of filial piety it presents a sometimes satirical account of the common people’s life and condition.

_Ch’unhyang chŏn_  春香傳  Author and date unknown.

The greatest and best-known of all old Korean stories. It exists in upwards of a hundred different versions. The theme is the love story of the low-born girl Ch’unhyang and the highly-born Yi Mongnyong. The tale not only shows how love triumphs over social difficulties, but gives expression to the growing awareness of the rights of the common folk.

_Ch’ŏnggu yŏng’on_  青丘永言  Edited by Kim Chŏnt’aek 金天澤編  Published 1728.
One of the three great anthologies of Korean language poetry. It contains 1,015 sijo songs by 140 authors, ranging from kings to entertaining women, and has notes on the authors. The earliest songs are traditionally ascribed to the later Koryŏ period. The collection contains the best of the genre and thus enshrines the national poetic spirit up to the date of its compilation.

**Haedong kayo** 海東歌謠 Edited by Kim Sujang 金壽長編 (1690-?) Published 1763.
The eighteenth century was remarkable for the attention paid to the development of singing. The compiler of this anthology of sijo spent 30 years in amassing his material. It contains 566 poems of which 117 were written by the compiler. One result of this is that more of his sijo remain than remain from the output of any other writer.

**Sŏngho Sasŏl** 星湖儒說 Yi Ik 李稷 (1681-1763) Date of publication unknown.
The thirty volumes of this magnificent work contain an account of the life and times of the Chinese people from Han times to Ch’ing times, and describe the history, life and institutions of the Korean people, giving an account of their view of the western world in the early eighteenth century. The author stressed the practical usefulness of study, and gave critical attention to his own country and period.

**Han-Han-Ch’ong mun’gam** 韓漢淸文鑑 Kim Chinha 金振夏 Date of publication unknown.
A dictionary made by collating extracts from Han and Ch’ing Chinese books and appending grammatical assistance in Korean script A book of great importance in the study of the Korean language.

**Chŭngbo munhŏn pigo** 增補文獻備考 Compiled by order of King Kojong 高宗命撰 1907.
A vast encyclopaedia of Korean matters from the earliest times to the end of the Korean empire, comprising 250 volumes. The work done by Yi Manun in 1770 was a revision of the earlier Tongguk munhŏn pigo. It was further revised and printed in 1907.

**Ilsŏng rok** 日省錄 Edited in the Kyujang-gak 奎章閣編 (1760-1800)
630 volumes, compiled during 140 years by the royal library. They give detailed accounts of the doings of the kings, and are a primary historical source.

**Tamhŏn sŏ** 湛軒書 Hong Taeyong 洪大容 (1731-1783) Published 1939.
An important work of geography and other sciences. It included an exposition of the theory that earth revolves on its axis.

**Tŏngsa kangmok** 東史綱目 An Chŏngbok 安鼎福 (1712-1791) Published
1778.
A history of Korea from Kija to the end of Koryŏ from the confucian point of view, written in 20 volumes on the pattern of Chu Hsi’s work on Chinese history. Regarded as a good example of objective writing.

**Haedong myŏngjang chŏn** 海東名將傳 Hong Yangho 洪良浩 (1724-1802) Published 1816,
A collection of biographies of great Korean generals from the Three Kingdoms period onwards. It is of some value and interest for historical purposes.

**Muye tobo t’ongji** 武藝圖譜通志 Compiled by order of King Chŏngjo 正宗王 (1752-1800) 命撰 Published 1790.
An illustrated work on Korean military arts. It was composed at the command of King Chŏngjo and covers archery, swordsmanship, horsemanship and other warlike skills, explained by pictures. It is of great interest as showing the Korean methods of dealing with these subjects.

**Yŏrha ilgi** 熱河日記 Pak Chiwon 朴趾源 (1737-1805) Written 1780.
A typical example of a Korean diary of travels in China. It is the finest of such works, and its style and contents have been much praised. It contains information about the history and customs of China as well as account of the journey.

**Yŏllyŏ-sil kisul** 燃藜室記述 Yi Kŭngik 李肯翊 (1736-1806) Date of publication unknown.
A history of the Yi dynasty written in 29 volumes. It is written with remarkable detachment from the partisan feeling of the period, and is most important source of accurate information.

**Oryun haengsil to** 五倫 行實圖 Yi Pyŏngmo 李秉模 (1742-1806) Published 1797.
This book enshrines the principal ethical tenets of the Yi dynasty, aimed at the right government of the nation through correct confucian-style relations between sovereign and subject, father and son, friend and friend, and so on. 120 characters appear in the work but only 77 of them are Koreans: the remainder are Chinese.

**Haedong yŏksa** 海東繹史 Han Ch’iyun 韓致龠 (1765-1814) Date of publication unknown.
A history of Korea compiled from more than 550 Chinese and Japanese sources. The author was unable to finish the work and it was completed after his death. It consists of 85 volumes. In spite of its eclectic character and pastiche technique, it added a new dimension to historiography by including attention to geographical and other aspects as well as annals. It is still of value to historians.

**Han chung rok** 閒中錄 Princess Hyegyŏng (of the Hong family) 惠慶宮 洪氏
(1735-1815) Written 1795.
A typical example of writings in pure Korean script according to the style of
speech of the royal palaces. It tells of the life of the Princess Hyegyong after the
murder of her husband, Prince Sado, by his father, whose hatred of him was
pathological. (The 28-year-old prince was shut up in a chest and died of
starvation and suffocation). The work was finished when she was 72 years old. It
is elegant, remarkably clear and touching.

Pukhak ŭi 北學議 Pak Chega 朴齊家 (1750-?) Published 1778.
“Pukhak” or “Northern Learning” denotes Pak’s idea that the introduction of
more ideas from Ch’ing China into Korean affairs would improve the country’s
situation. His concern for economic growth in many ways foreshadowed the
modernisation process of the twentieth century.

Chasan ŏbo 鉅山魚譜 Chŏng Yakchŏn 丁若銓 (1758-1816) Written 1815.
Like many of the literati of the period Chŏng Yakchŏn spent part of his life in
exile in the provinces. This book was written during a sixteen year exile in the far
south of the country. Living by the sea, he became interested in marine biology
and produced this book, covering fish, crustaceans, plants and mammals. It exists
in a single manuscript volume.

Sŏn’gwan chi 書雲觀志 Sŏng Chudŏk 成周應 (1759-?) Published 1818.
The writer worked for over a decade in the Sŏn’gwan, which was the weather
and calendar bureau of the Yi dynasty, where he was chiefly concerned with the
drawing up of the calendars. He used the materials he gathered during that period
to write this account of the equipment and principles involved in the work of the
Sŏn’gwan, including some indications of how they had developed historically. It
marked a new stage in the growth of Korea’s age-old concern about astronomy
and meteorology.

Mongmin simsŏ 牧民心書 Chŏng Yagyóng 丁若鏞 (1762-1836) Date of
publication unknown.
The 48 volumes of this famous work are the best presentation of the thought of
Chŏng Tasan, or (Chŏng Yagyong) who is now recognized as the foremost mind
of his day. The book is in effect a manual of administration, but it contains much
criticism of the selfish and irresponsible administration which was all too typical
of the times. Tasan saw that the safety and prosperity of the realm, as well as the
human dignity of the people, depended on a just appreciation of the fundamental
rights of the peasants.

Onmun chi 諺文志 Yu Hŭi 柳僖 (1773-1837) Published 1824.
One of the very small number of important books about the Korean language
dating from the times when Chinese grammar and script were the current vehicle
of Korean writing. As such it is invaluable. It contains a discussion of Korean
phonetics (initial, medial, and final sounds), the origin of the Korean script and
other points favouring the extended use of the alphabet.

**Oju sŏjong 五洲書種 Yi Kyugyŏng 李圭景 (1788-?)**  Written 1839.
An encyclopaedic account of the practical sciences of Korea. It deals with metals, gems, glass, bone, pottery, stone, ivory, pearls, military equipment, boats, and a whole museum-like collection of subjects.

**Imwŏn simnyuk chi 林園十六志 Sŏ Yugu 徐有榘 (1764-1845) Date of publication unknown**
A handbook of industry, concerned chiefly with agriculture. Only part of it is extant, and it is probable that the author never completed his work. It treats of rural housing and field systems and all aspects of the farmer’s life in a way unequalled elsewhere.

**Tongguk sesi ki 東國歲時記 Hong Sŏngmo 洪錫謨 Date unknown. Published 1849.**
A book of folklore, describing local annual festivals and foods and many kinds of wine. Many customs now extinct, such as cart fighting and torch fighting, are described according to the localities where there were observed. The relations between the customs and the agricultural year become obvious from the accounts given. The descriptions cover even minor observances in remote places.

**Yi Ch’unp’ung chŏn 李春風傳 Author and date unknown. 作者,年代未詳**
One of the few old novels in what would now be called short-story form. It tells of Yi Ch’unp’ung, the son of a wealthy family, who after the death of his parents wastes his patrimony on wine and women. He borrows money from the government, and goes to P’yŏngyang, shaking off the entreaties of his wife and squandering this fortune too on women. However his wife adroitly regains the lost money and Yi is restored to happy family life. Interest in the status of women is obvious in this amusing and attractive tale.

**Ch’ŏnggu to 靑邱圖 Kim Chŏngho 金正浩 (?-1867) Written 1834.**
Two volumes of maps, the first work to be completed by Kim Chŏngho. Making use of the influence of modern concepts of latitude and longitude as he had learned of them from Chinese sources, he made enlarged and reduced versions of maps. He gives a gazetteer and illustrations of the towns and cities of Korea. It was a significant publication in the history of Korean map-making.

**Taedong chiji 大東地志 Kim Chŏngho 金正浩 Published 1864.**
A book in 32 volumes which expands and enlarges the topographical part of the Ch’ŏnggu to. A single exemplar remains in the library of Koryŏ University. It adds to that work considerations of mountains and rivers and other natural features, and includes interesting material relating to the history of placenames.
Taedong yŏji to 大東輿地圖 Kim Chŏngho 金正浩 Written 1861.
A somewhat simplified and revised version of the Ch’ŏnggu to. It is in the form of a folded book, so that some features, such as roads and streams, can be presented at length and without interruption at the edge of the pages. The network of the road system is marked off with ten-li points, indicating distances accurately. The author had made another step forward in the scientific approach to his fatherland.

Tonggyŏng taejŏn 東經大全 Ch’oe Cheu 崔濟愚 (1824-1864) Published 1880.
The scriptures of Ch’ŏndo-gyo. It was published in one volume by the second leader of the cult, Ch’oe Sihyŏng, after the author’s execution. The text was dictated from memory by Ch’oe Sihyŏng, and kept secret for some years, while the sect was being persecuted.

Yongdam yusa 龍潭遺詞 Ch’oe Cheu 崔濟愚 Published 1909.
The songbook of Ch’ŏndo-gyo, based on the form of Christian psalms and containing altogether 227 songs. The religious content is a syncretistic mixture of confucianism, buddhism, and taoism, with a strong purpose for the development of Korean society.

Kagok wŏllyu 歌曲 源流 Edited by Pak Hyogwan 朴孝寬 (1800-1880) and An Minyŏng 安玟英 (1816-1885) 1876.
A collection of sijo edited by master and disciple in collaboration. It contains 857 songs, 192 of them for women singers. It is reckoned one of the most accurate anthologies.

Kich’ŭkch’e ui 氣測體義 Ch’oe Han’gi 崔淇綺 (1803-1879) Published 1836.
A book expounding a scientific philosophy in opposition to the widely known taoist attitude to reality, and asserting the real value of sense experience. Even though it was based on works published in China, it was nevertheless a notable advance in Korean thinking. It represents a move away from metaphysics towards a more pragmatic attitude.

Tongŭi suse powŏn 東醫壽世保元 Yi Chema 李濟馬 (1837-1900) Published 1901.
The original description of the now well-known sasang ŭihak, or theory by which people are divided into four classes by a principle derived from the yang-yin theory and the four classes are given different treatments for the same diseases because the essential natures of the patients differ. The principle in much used in traditional Korean medicine today and has affinities with psychological and other developments in modern western medical treatment.

A six-volumes private chronicle, indicting the countries which have tried to
deprive Korea of her sovereignty and deriving its pathos from the fact that the author as an old man saw the country being annexed to the Japanese empire. It came to light at the time of the liberation in 1945, and is one of Korea’s classics of patriotism.

**Sŏyu kyŏnmun** 西遊見聞 Yu Kilchun 倖吉濬 (1856-1914) Published 1895.
A record of what the author saw and learned during travels in Europe and America. It was the first book to be written in a mixture of Chinese characters and Korean alphabet (*kukhanmun*). It was also the first serious attempt to consider the possibility of discovering a peculiarly Korean form of modernisation.

**Kugŏ munbŏp** 國語文法 Chu Sigyŏng 周時經 (1876-1914) Published 1910.
The pioneering work on Korean grammar, which began the structural analysis of the language. It was a remarkable achievement for a man who died at a comparatively early age.

**Marŭi sori** 말의 소리 Chu Sigyŏng 周時經 Published 1914.
The first book on Korean grammar to recommend the writing of Korean with the letters set side by side (as in the Roman alphabet) instead of in the traditional form of “syllable clusters”. It was many years ahead of its time in its appreciation of the functions of phonemes and morphemes. The writer was a valiant opponent of the Japanese.

**Hyŏrŭi nu** 血의淚 Yi Injik 李人稙 (1862-1916) Published 1907.
Regarded as the first of the “modern novels”, this story deals with a freer marriage system, study in universities overseas, and other aspects of twentieth-century Korean life. It was a novel of the “enlightenment”. It tells the story of Ku Wansŏ and his fiancee Ongnyŏn during ten years beginning with the Sino-Japanese war. It clearly represents Yi Injik’s great importance in the transition from the writing of “old novels” to the writing of “modern novels”.

**Han’guk t’ongsa** 韓國痛史 Pak Unsik 朴殷植 (1857-1925) Published 1946.
A work of Korean history written in Chinese and originally published in Shanghai in 1915. It was a patriotic contribution to the Independence Movement.

**Chosŏn sanggo-sa** 朝鮮上古史 Sin Ch’aeho 申采浩 (1880-1936) Published 1948.
A history of the Three Kingdoms period, originally published in serial form in the *Chosŏn Ilbo* newspaper in 1931. It rates Koguryŏ more highly than Silla. The author was a patriot as well as an historian.

**Chosŏn pulgyo yusin ron** 朝鮮佛教維新論 Han Yongun 韓龍雲 (1879-1944) Published 1913
A critique of Korean Buddhism, then in a moribund condition, expressing hope
for the emergence of a reforming leader. It was written by a famous monk, who was also a poet and an independence movement leader.

*Paek p’al pŏnnoe* 百八煩惱 Ch’oe Namsŏn 崔南善 (1890-1957) Published 1926.

The first anthology of modern Korean poems in *sijo* form, full of love of the fatherland. The author was the founder of modern studies of Korean literature and history and also a poet.

*Mujŏng* 無情 Yi Kwangsu 李光洙 (1892-?) Published 1918.

The first novel to break away entirely from the old style of literary language and write in a modern idiom. It also shows young Koreans in love relationships derived from western thought. The author has been considered the greatest of twentieth century Korean novelists and founded the modern Korean novel.
2017 Annual Report
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
KOREA BRANCH

President’s Report for 2017

The year 2017 was a good one for our Society, with lectures well-attended and a small but rewarding program of excursions, to say nothing of our other activities. The most important event was the decision of our Manager, Yonjoo Hong, to begin full-time studies for a Ph.D. in September. This meant that she could not continue to work for us and we were obliged to begin a search for a replacement. I want to express our deep gratitude to Yonjoo for the long hours she spent ensuring the continuing survival and prosperity of the RAS.

Fortunately our former Vice-President and long-term member, Tom Coyner, offered his services, together with those of his wife, Yeri Choi, to serve as joint General Managers. With their extensive business experience, and their long association with the RAS, they have been able to take charge of every aspect of the life of RAS Korea with great efficiency. We are most grateful for their enthusiasm and dedication, especially when it comes to ensuring that our members are fully informed about upcoming activities, as well as looking after our financial affairs.

We were very grateful to the staff of the US Embassy who allowed us to hold our Garden Party in the grounds of the Ambassador’s residence, despite there being currently no ambassador. It was a very successful party, enjoyed by many members and guests in beautiful weather. We are grateful to all who helped prepare and run it.

I am now in my eighth year as RAS Korea President and I want to express my deep gratitude to our officers and Council members. It is they who ensure the continued renewal of all our activities, finding new destinations and leaders for our excursions, leading study groups, helping to find interesting lecturers, and sometimes identifying a potential sponsor.

Our financial situation is not an easy one. Membership dues are our chief source of revenue, and we are always hoping for more new
members to join us. Our organization is not so well-known or prestigious that it can easily obtain funding from businesses or foundations. We were extremely grateful to Naver for a year’s very generous support but that has now ended. Seoul Cyber University continues to be very kind to us. As also the Korean division of Chevron. Thank you so much. Very special thanks are due to the management of Somerset Palace for allowing us to use their Lounge for our lectures, year after year. It is a very great gift. We are most grateful

One new activity in recent years has been the result of our relationship with the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History. When the Museum holds a special exhibition, it invites our members for a private guided tour led by a curator, after which the group is offered sandwiches and coffee, then an RAS member gives a further talk on the topic of the exhibition. These visits have been well attended and are much appreciated.

Our excursions are now mainly composed of walking visits to areas of Seoul. In this way we are able to avoid the heavy weekend traffic out of and back into Seoul, and offer shorter events at a time when everyone seems to be busier than before. By contrast, we are most grateful to Tom Coyner for organizing an overseas in-depth excursion at the Lunar New Year. In 2017 and again in 2018 this meant a week or so spent in the beautiful land of Bhutan, with highly qualified guides. The 2017 visit, especially, involved a very large group of nearly 30 people. Those who have gone on these adventures have been unanimous in their praise and we hope to continue to offer overseas excursions in future.

Another shared activity is the Seoul Colloquium in Korean Studies, which the RAS launched some eight years ago. We now have regular monthly sessions in the Asiatic Research Institute, Korea University, cohosted with the École Française d’Extrême-Orient. Usually one speaker presents a topic from some part of Korean Studies, followed by a discussion. Next year Korea will be celebrating the centenary of the March 1 Movement. Perhaps it will be possible to have some RAS lectures on topics related to that, or even help organize a larger conference.

I want to welcome new members who have recently joined the RAS and thank those of you who renew your membership year by year. These signs that our activities are worthwhile are reassuring and we will continue to provide what we hope are interesting activities for you to enjoy.

Brother Anthony
President, RAS Korea
The year 2017 was a pivotal year. After five years of Ms. Yonjoo Hong commendably transforming the administration of our Society from the 20th century of pencils, postage, paper and faxes to the 21st century of email and cloud-based business applications, she chose to further her studies to pursue her Ph.D. at Ajou University. After a false start in finding a replacement, Tom Coyner and his wife Yeri Choi volunteered to assume responsibilities and duties of general administration. Unlike the past, to simplify matters in terms of taxes and employer liabilities, the general administration was for the first time outsourced to Soft Landing Korea, a business consulting company owned by Tom and Yeri. This move greatly simplified taxes and removed severance accrual and payment necessities.

Financially, the year was a good one. We would have broken even, but since in previous years we had neither accrued the pension payout obligation on the books nor funded the same on an annual basis, when Ms. Hong left the RAS-KB, we paid out in full measure the legally mandated severance pay. The amount of the severance payout coincidentally came to amount of the 2017 deficit. Fortunately, we had adequate reserve funds. Again, from the time we outsourced the administration of the Society, there has not been nor will there be this liability.

Due to changes of the marketplace with book sales commonly being placed through Internet websites and the greater acceptance of e-books, our books sales have plummeted. We still have the largest selection (and inventory) of books in English on Korea. We expect this trend to continue and liquidation/removal of our book inventory is likely to be an increasing concern.

In the early part of 2017, some of our members openly expressed their concern that we were attracting inadequate numbers of young people and our topics for excursions and even lectures may be becoming too limited. This November, we conducted the first ever members’ opinion survey that greatly confirmed our concerns as well as produced new ideas for improvement.

From this year, 2018, we are continuing with tried and true topics for lectures and excursions. But we are also adding new and more contemporary topics and activities, such as a lecture on the LGBTQ community in Korea, going out to experience the unique excitement of a Korean baseball game, and enjoying an evening of Korean jazz, where
almost all of the musicians were originally classically trained.

We are also reaching out to other expatriate organizations, such as the German Club, and other like social clubs to help create a greater sense of community. While we remain fundamentally a Korean Studies research forum, we recognize the need for additional fellowship that is an integral part of any society. Our goal is to attract and retain about five new members a month, with a special focus on young foreign and Korean people. At the same time, we will strive to further serve our more senior members by providing the services they have come to expect. That includes our unilateral decision in early 2018 to reduce overseas biannual membership fees from $75 to just $50. At the same time, we plan to raise our current student annual membership from the long-time, current rate of just W30,000. Furthermore, we plan to increase the participation fees for non-members as we have discovered several non-members rationalizing it is cheaper to remain as a non-member and pay the little extra money of the upcharge for non-members whenever they participate in our fee-charging activities.

Lastly and very importantly, we work to improve on what we are doing today by regularly questioning whether our current procedures and practices are still relevant and essential – while considering what else is needed for the Society to move to the completion of its second one hundred years. In so doing, we hope to attract sponsorships as well as new members. Part of the challenge is lifting the bushel off our bright light as Korea becomes more relevant around the world with each passing year. Not only for us, but also for many other worthwhile causes, sponsorships are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. Less often sponsorships are given out simply for the sake of the community and global good, but more often to advance the sponsor’s brand or products. We have no argument with that thinking, but do find this rationalization creating more challenges than in the past. We at the RAS-KB remain uniquely positioned on the ground to provide English language coverage of Korea in the widest array of expanding perspectives. As such, we endeavor to further promote our reputation and thereby earn support from outside parties in Korea and from other parts of the world.

Tom Coyner.
RAS Lectures 2017

January 10, Andrew Salmon

January 24, Robert Neff
Ghostly Encounters of Modern Korea

February 7, Se-Wong Koo
The Meaning of Park Geun-hye: South Korean Democracy at the Crossroads

February 28, Kim Dong-Jin
Homer B. Hulbert, Hidden Hero of Korea and Pride of America

March 14, Kathryn Weathersby
The Joint Communiqué of July 4, 1972: Korea’s First Agreement on Unification: What was behind it?

March 28, Robert Fouser
The 386 Generation and the Quest for the “Good Country”

April 11, Michael Breen
Public Sentiment and its Place in Modern Korea

April 25, Adrian Buzo
Do we learn nothing from writing history? Ten reflections after writing a modern history of the two Koreas

May 10, Christian Barde
Seoul Global City in a pan-organizational environment

May 23, Yi Song-Mi
Korean Art in East Asian Contexts

June 7, David Fields
A Mere Scrap of Paper: The 1882 Korean-American Treaty, Syngman Rhee, and the Division of Korea

June 27, Viktoriya Kim
Re-visiting the 1937 deportation of ethnic Koreans to Central Asia

July 11, Eugene Y. Park
The Progeny of Fallen Royals: The Gaeseong Wang in Joseon Korea

July 25, Jin Y. Park
Women and Buddhism: Engaging Zen Master Kim Iryŏp

September 12, Andrei Lankov
The cracks in the alliance: the Soviet Union and North Korea in 1955-1960

September 26, David Straub
Anti-Americanism in Contemporary South Korea
October 17, Ross King
“I thank Korea for her books:” James Scarth Gale, Korean Literature in hanmun, and Allo-metropolitan Missionary Orientalism

October 31, William Mako
IMF 20 years

November 14, Daniel S. Oh
Remembering Yongsan Garrison: An Urban Memory Archive Project

November 28, David Mason
The Dragon King

December 5, Woo-seok Kong
The Korean Red Pine: a companion from cradle to grave

December 19, Brian Myers
North Korea’s Unification Drive

2017 Excursions 2017

Saturday, February 18,
Visit to the House of Sharing

Wednesday, March 1,
Sungkyunkwan’s Confucian ceremony (Boudewijn Walraven, Jon Dunbar)

Saturday, April 15,
Petroglyphs and Other Ancient Remains of Ulsan

Sunday, April 22,
Exploring the Eastern Sections of Seoul Fortress Wall (Robert Fouser)

Wednesday, May 3,
Buddha’s Birthday in Seoul (Jeremy Seligson)

May 20-21
Tea in Jirisan (Br Anthony)

Saturday, June 10,
Garden Party

Saturday, June 24,
Cheollipo Arboretum & Seosan (Veronica Kang, Seoul Gastro Tours)

Saturday, July 29,
Goseong County DMZ Tour (Steven Tharp)
September 2-3,
   Woraksan National Park, Gosu Cave & Chungju Lake (Sue Bae)
Saturday September 23,
   Seonunsa and a traditional Onggi potter’s studio (Br Anthony)
November 4,
   SAN Museum (Kathryn Weathersby)

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**National Museum of Contemporary Korean History**

April 19,
   Coming Home After 67 Years

July 12,
   Democracy Achieved: The Power of People

October 25,
   The Portrait of Youth

December 20,
   Korean Sports, History Written in Sweat

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**Business & Culture Club 2017**

_The Business & Culture Club meeting is held at midday every 3rd Tuesday of the month for people with little spare time._

February 21,    The Money Museum at the Bank of Korea
March 21,       Seoul Station Overpass from Above
April 18,       Royal Tombs & Gwangtonggyo Bridge
May 16,         The Alleys of Jongno
June 20,        Seoullo 7017
September 19,   Deoksugung Perimeter
October 24,     Wongudan
November 21,    Bosingak Bell Tower Ringing
December 19,    Seoul City Hall

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**Reading Club**
Met most months in 2017 in the library of Jongno District Office to talk about a Korean short story read in advance in English translation.

January 2, “The Night Nobody Returns Home” by Kim Soom
February 6, “Sad Contradiction” by Yang Geon-sik
March 6, “Guide to Seoul Cave” by Kim Mi-wol
April 3, “That Woman’s Autobiography” by Kim In-Suk
May 15, “In the Mood for Love” by Gu Hyo-seo
June 12, “The Battle of Dragon with Dragon” by Sin Ch’ae-Ho
July 3, “Variations on Darkness” by Kim Wŏn-il.
November 6 “Blooms of Mold” by Ha Seung-nan.

Photography Workshops by Tom Coyner

April 14 Basics of Photography Refresher
May 3 Photographing Festivals (on Buddha’s Birthday)
June 3 Principles of Composition
July 8 Basic Portraits
September 2 Street Photography
October 14 Principles of Great Landscapes

Culinary Club

May 13 Jeondaegamdaek
May 26 North Korean food at Cheogajip
July 6 Summer Beer Sampling
October 26 Special Night of Traditional Korean Drinks & Foods

RAS-KB Librarian’s Report Jan 2017-May 2018

I am pleased to report that, as of February 2018, the RAS Library currently has over 3,300 items (including duplicate items). The catalogue for the Library is online at https://goo.gl/ZRknZW. Use the find function under the Edit tab to search for items. The RAS library is housed in the RAS office, where books can be consulted by prior appointment.

We welcome contributions from our members to help our collection grow.
During the past eighteen months, the RASKB Library has received the 2016 and 2017 editions of the following journals from research institutions and fellow branches of the Royal Asiatic Society:

*Diplomatic White Paper* Ministry of Foreign Affairs
*Japanese Religions* Christian Center for the Study of Japanese Religions
*Journal of Contemporary Korean Studies* National Museum of Korean Contemporary History
*Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the R.A.S.* MBRAS (Royal Asiatic Society, Malaysia Branch)
*Journal of the RAS Hongkong Branch* Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Hong Kong Branch
*Korea Journal* Korean National Commission for UNESCO
*Tenri Journal of Religion* Tenri Daigaku
*Transactions of Asiatic Society of Japan*  
*Zinbun* Institute for Research in the Humanities, Kyoto University

A partial list of acquisitions purchased for the Library:

*Ambassadors’ Memoir: U.S.-Korea Relations Through the Eyes of the Ambassadors.*  
*Anti-Americanism in Democratizing South Korea.* Straub, David  
*Day in the Life of Kubo the Novelist, A.* Pak, Taewon; Park Sunyoung (trans)  
*From Dolmen Tombs to Heaven’s Gate: Understanding World Heritage in Korea.* Kim, Young Hoon  
*From Pusan to Panmunjom.* Gen. Paik, Sun Yup  
*Hidden History of the Korean War.* Stone, I. F.  
*Korean Business Etiquette.* de Menthe, Boye Lafayette  
*Korean History 1945-1948.* Lee, Wan-bom; Chong Kyongran, trans  
*Korean Spirituality.* Baker, Don  
*No Fire Next Time: Black-Korean conflicts and the future of America’s cities.* Joyce, Patrick D.  
*Olympic Boulevard.* Lee, Phillip Ohno; Cha, John, trans  
*Once Around the Sun.* Steyn, Melanie  
*Seoul’s Historic Walks.* Cho, In-souk; Koehler, Robert  
*Seoul Sub-Urban.* Usher, Charles
In addition to the list above, in January 2017, the RAS Library received various donations from members, including a donation from Mr. Lowell Heskin, who sent books from the estate of Charles Norman Nelson, a former teacher at Seoul American School. Among the books in the donation was a first edition of the book *Japan Inside Out*, written by Syngman Rhee. In March 2018, the RAS Library received a generous donation of books from the current RASKB Secretary, Ms. Elizabeth-Gay Kraft, numbering about fifty items that include several books and speeches written by the presidents of Korea. We thank Mr. Heskin and Ms. Kraft for their donations.

If members have any books of interest that they would like to donate to the RASKB, please contact the Librarian at the address below or contact our office manager at royalasiatickorea@gmail.com. We would prefer not to be sent duplicate copies of books already in the library, since the space available is limited.

Michael T. Welles  
Librarian, Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch  
mtwelles@gmail.com