

KOREAN HERITAGE

SUMMER 2021 VOL. 53

KOREAN HERITAGE

SUMMER 2021 Vol. 53

Cultural Heritage Administration

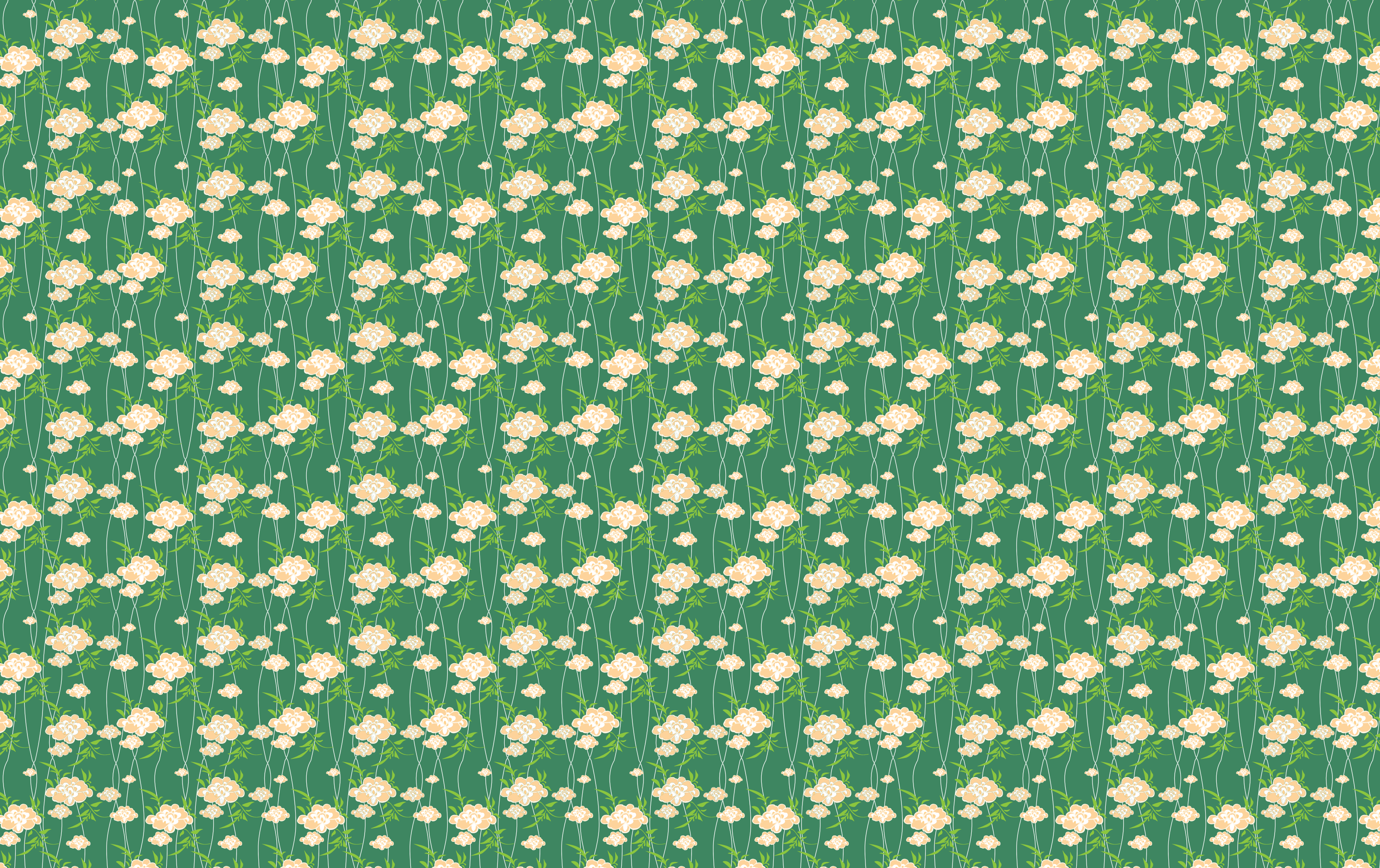
The pattern decorating the covers is a traditional Korean sun design expressed in the form of a flower. The motif was provided by the Korea Culture Information Service Agency.



Cultural Heritage Administration
www.koreanheritage.kr
ISSN 2005-0151
Government Publications Registration Number 11-1550000-000639-08



Cultural Heritage Administration



Date of Publication

June 17, 2021

Published by

Cultural Heritage Administration Republic of Korea

Publication Management

Jo Dongjoo, Director of International Cooperation Division

Content Coordination

Kim Byung-yun, Moon Suree

Advisory Board

Jo Sang-sun, Kim Young-beom,
Lee Hee-young, Pang Inah, Park Su-hee

Translation

Park Jung-eun

Copy Editing

Bill Sharp

Coordination by

Ch121

Editorial Assistant

Choi Min-young

Printed by

Daehan Printech Co., Ltd.

Cultural Heritage Administration

189 Cheongsu-ro, Seo-gu,
Daejeon, Republic of Korea

Tel 82-42-481-4737

Fax 82-42-481-4759

Contact suree@korea.kr

Website www.koreanheritage.kr

KOREAN HERITAGE is also available on the website (www.koreanheritage.kr) and smart devices. You can also download its PDF version and subscribe to our newsletter to receive our latest news on the website.

* The articles featured in this magazine only reflect the contributing authors' opinions.

* Photographs in this issue that are not marked with their providers are stock images.

Cultural Heritage Administration, 2021
This publication is copyrighted. No part may be reproduced by any process without written permission.
Copyright © Cultural Heritage Administration

Featured



02 CULTURAL SPACES
A Scholar's Studio with
Its Own Identity



08 TRADITIONAL SOCIAL RELATIONS
The Confucian
Transformation of
the Family



12 CULTURAL ROOTS
K-logistics
Speedy and Reliable
Delivery in South Korea



22 LOCAL HERITAGE GUIDE
Ancient Tombs
in Gyeongju

Contents

32	KOREAN ENTERTAINERS	Do You Know <i>Gwangdae</i> ?
38	HERITAGE FOR THE FUTURE	Immersive Cultural Heritage Experiences
44	CHANGING TIMES	Riverside Pools at the Hangang
48	HERITAGE ISSUES TODAY	Improving Legal Framework for Natural Heritage Conservation
52	CHA HEADLINES	Opening a Heritage Analysis Center with a Comprehensive Dating Capacity <i>Maekgeolli</i> -making to Become National Intangible Cultural Heritage

A Scholar's Studio

with Its Own Identity

In traditional Korean society, the literati expressed their intellectual achievements and artistic tastes through their studios. The studio was where the scholarly life began and ended. It was, of course, commonly overflowing with scores of books, paintings, and calligraphic works. Most importantly, each studio was given its own name, and a scholar would often be known by the name of his studio. This shows just how important a studio was to a scholar's identity.

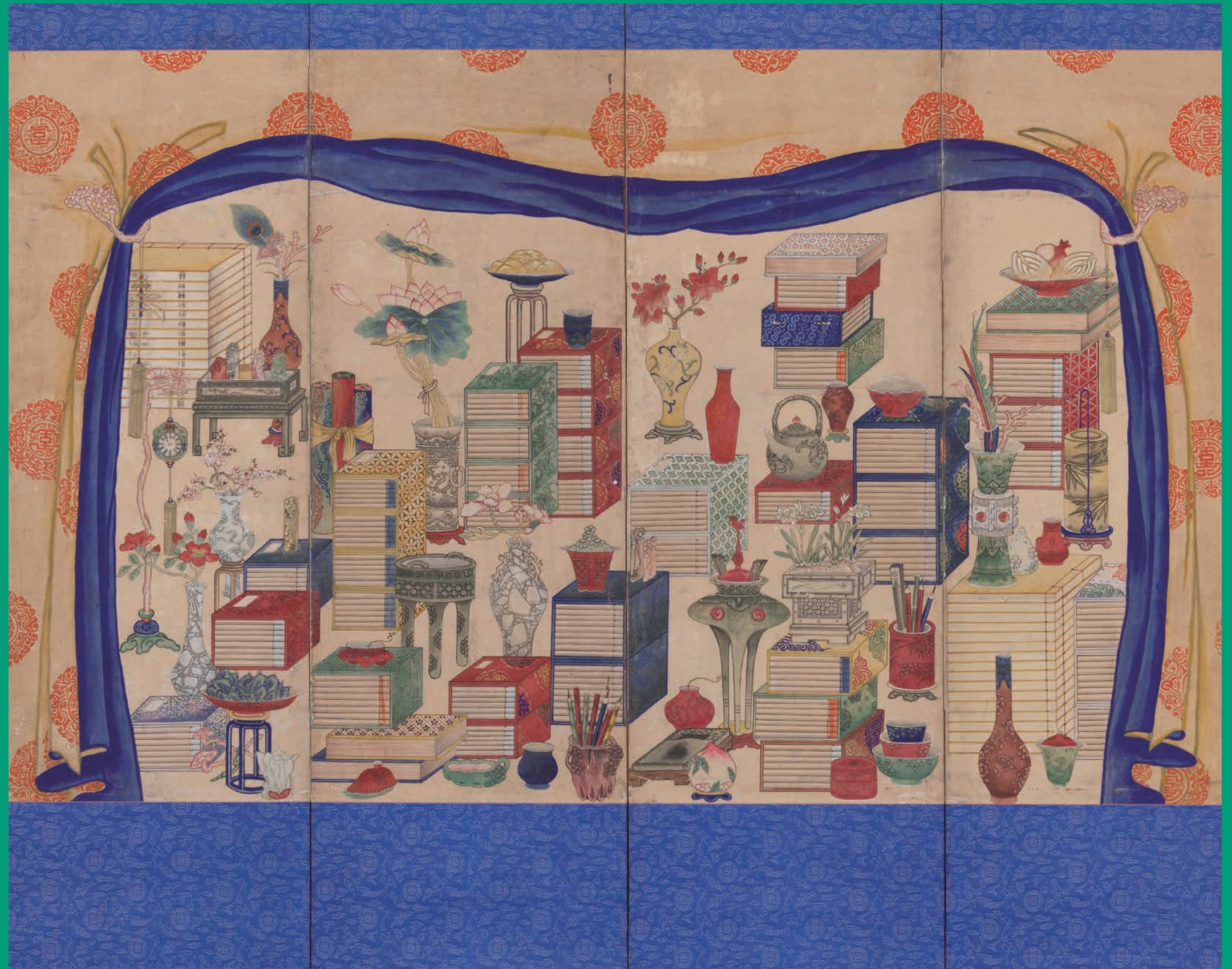
Text by Park Chul-sang, Research Institute of Traditional Korean Literature

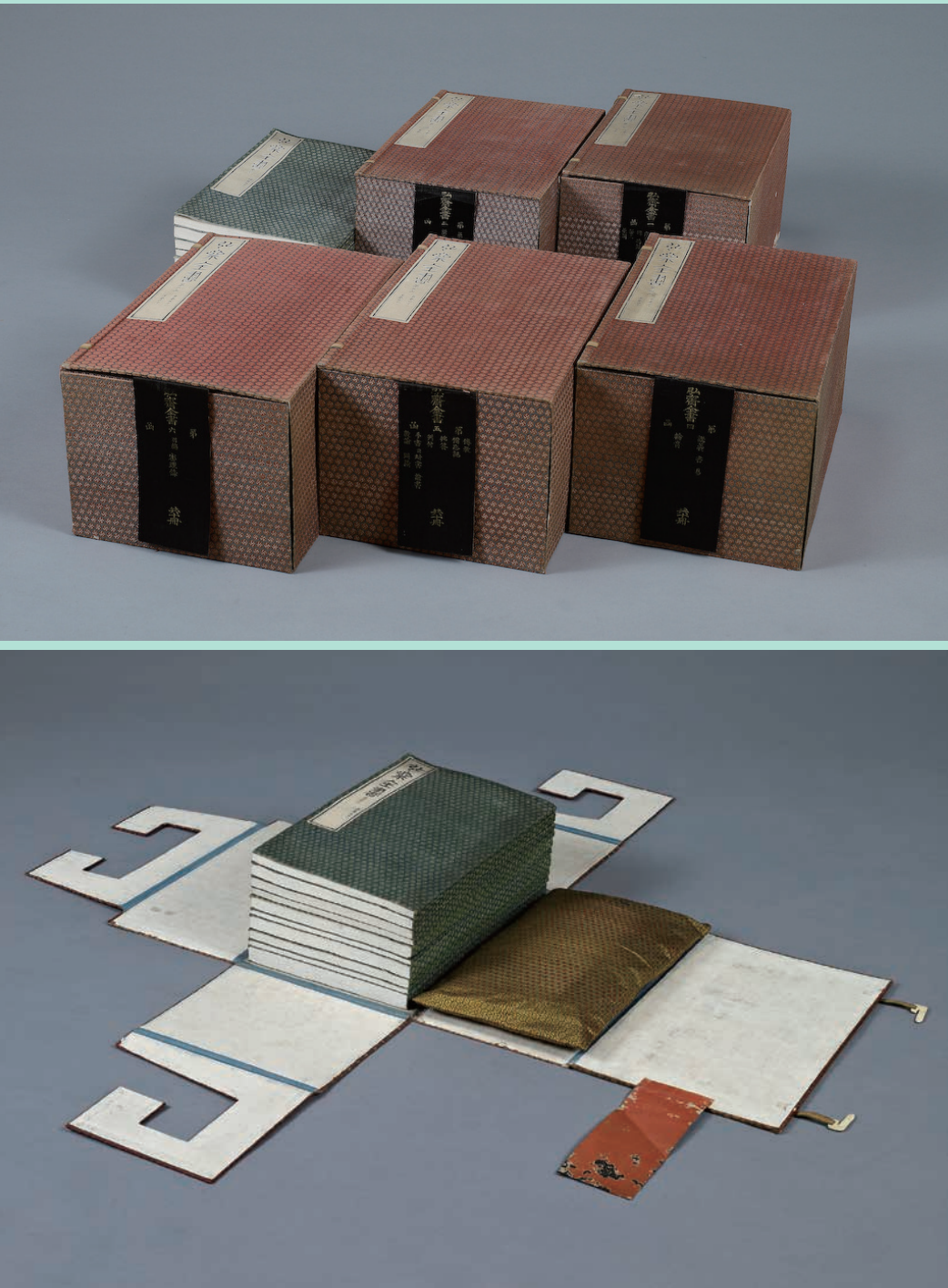
Photos by the National Palace Museum of Korea, the Seoul Museum of History, and the Namyangju-si City Government

Folding screen mounted with a painting of a scholar's accouterments

This painting features books, brush holders, and inkstones set within a space created by pulling back a curtain decorated with red medallions conveying wishes for longevity. Along with the objects reflecting a scholar's academic pursuits and artistic tastes, there are various flowers and fruits that represent prosperity, fertility, and fidelity.

(Photo courtesy of the National Palace Museum of Korea)





Hongjae jeonseo (The Complete Works of Hongjae)
Titled based on King Jeongjo's penname, Hongjae, this collection presents the literary works, edited compilations, and royal messages produced by the king from when he was named crown prince until the end of his reign.
(Photo courtesy of the Seoul Museum of History)

A Constant Reminder of
Benevolent Governance

King Jeongjo (r. 1776–1800), the 22nd monarch of the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), spearheaded a renaissance in the society of the time. He served as both a political leader and as an academic mentor for his ministers. This remarkably scholarly monarch dedicated himself to the birth of a new cultural era. He safeguarded the traditional social order while adopting advanced ideas and technologies from China. His reformist vision was materialized in the creation of new kinds of metal type, the publication of new books, and the import of important volumes from China. All of these undertakings were designed to further his lofty aspirations to establish a culture in Korea commensurate to that of China. His life demonstrates that King Jeongjo was nothing less than one of the great scholars of his time. Clear evidence of this can be found in *Hongjae jeonseo* (The Complete Works of Hongjae), a 100-volume compilation of his literary efforts. *Hong-jae*, or “house of great benevolence” is the name he gave to his studio while he was still a child. He took the word *hong* from the ancient Chinese book *Analects of Confucius*, which relates:

Zengzi stated, “A scholar should have a mind full of *hong* (great benevolence) and resolve. His mission is of immense importance and takes a long time to accomplish. How great a burden must it be to bear the responsibility for practicing benevolent governance? How long is the journey ahead of him since he cannot set down his mission until his death?”

A monarch was born with the grave responsibility of actualizing the principles of benevolent governance. He could never step away from this royal duty during his lifetime, bearing it carefully until his death. King Jeongjo adopted the ideal of “great benevolence” from this notion and named his studio after it. Seeing the nameplate bearing the term *hongjae* hanging in front of his studio, he must have reminded himself of the importance of benevolent governance. King Jeongjo dearly cherished this monarchic ideal throughout his life. As both a politician and an academic, he went to great lengths to achieve every imaginable boon for his subjects through his books and publications. The name *Hongjae* vividly conveys the degree to which he strived to fulfil his responsibility for benevolent governance.

*The name
Hongjae vividly
conveys the
degree to which
he strived
to fulfil his
responsibility
for benevolent
governance.*



Yeoyudang Hall The studio of Jeong Yak-yong, still stands at his natal house in Namyangju, Gyeonggi-do Province. A wooden plaque with the name Yeoyudang hangs at the center of the building's front. (Photo courtesy of the Namyangju-si City Government)

Lessons on Cautious Behavior

Jeong Yak-yong (1762–1836) was a prominent scholar in the late Joseon period. The name of his studio was *Yeoyudang*, roughly meaning “hall of careful animals.” Jeong Yak-yong was one of King Jeongjo’s favorite officials. Passing the civil service examination in his early 20s, he was quickly appointed to a chain of important government posts. However, a potential calamity was always lurking in the form of the interest he took in Catholicism before entering the officialdom. The Catholic Church was banned in Korea at the time, but members of Jeong’s family were among the first in the country to convert. Although he never involved himself with it

after entering the civil service, his past haunted him as an effective means of attack by his political rivals. As his political situation gradually went from bad to worse toward the end of the 18th century, he soon packed his things and left central politics to return to his hometown. Back in his childhood home, Jeong devoted himself to studying alongside his brothers. He hung a wooden plate in his studio inscribed with the name Yeo-yu-dang. When selecting a name for his study, Jeong must have reflected back on his life. He must have been asking himself why a promising official and beloved subject of the king ended up expelled from the royal court? In his case, it was a reckless interest in a forbidden religion.

The actions that we undertake as members of

Scholars’ studios from the Joseon era can provide a window into their master’s decisions, tastes, and opinions.

society can be categorized into two types. The first is the things we are obliged to do regardless of our personal desires. We cannot give them up even if we want to. The other is the things we do because we are happy to do them. With this type of undertaking, we can decide to walk away as we please. For Jeong Yak-yong, Catholicism fell into this latter category. He picked up Catholicism out of curiosity and could have moved on from it at any time. However, he did not, and it undermined his future and that of his family. Jeong Yak-yong might have attributed what happened to him as a result of his incautions actions. Jeong was brave, but he lacked strategic long-term thinking. He was quick to put ideas into action, but he was not likely to look back on his decisions and be fearful or even doubtful of their results. If he had entertained second thoughts, he could have further distanced himself from his interest in such a risky endeavor. However, he maintained his curiosity for some time. While pondering these deficiencies in his personality, Jeong Yak-yong recalled a phrase from the *Tao Te Ching* by the ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi:

Like a *yeo* crosses a stream in winter,
Like a *yu* is fearful of all around it.

Both the *yeo* and *yu* in this phrase refer to animals. *Yeo* is thought to indicate an elephant. What would happen if such a massive creature attempted to walk across a frozen body of water? The ice would certainly break, plunging the elephant into the frigid water. Therefore, an elephant should take all possible care when it crosses a stream in winter. The animal described as *yu* is believed to be some kind of deeply wary character. It behaves with extreme caution, as if being watched from all sides. Jeong Yak-yong named his studio after these careful and suspicious animals. It shows how bitterly he regretted his mistakes. Despite his deep remorse, one year after he returned to his hometown he was banished for his earlier association with Catholicism. He remained in exile for a full 18 years. His eventual realization of the importance of caution never left him through all those years, and is clearly embodied in the 500 or more books he wrote in exile.

Scholars’ studios from the Joseon era can provide a window into their master’s decisions, tastes, and opinions. Their names inform about individual intellectuals, and also the eras in which they lived. For those seeking to learn more about the Joseon period, scholars’ studios may be a good starting point. Over the process, they will definitely gain fresh viewpoints for evaluating the times in which we are living.

The Confucian Transformation of the Family:

Popular Images and Actual Realities



Most contemporary Koreans might conjure up a similar picture when they imagine a family during the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910). They envision a male-dominated social unit consisting of a strict father as the head of the family, a compliant mother who sacrifices herself for her husband and children, a son preparing hard for social advancement, and a daughter who has married into another household and is no longer considered an official member of her natal family. This image conveys an upper-status Joseon family, reflecting the principle of male-and-female separation and other Confucian values. However, it would be wrong to conclude that this picture tells the full story of the Joseon period. As with other aspects of society, the family was continuously transforming in terms of both form and content throughout the 500 years of the Joseon era. The best way to deepen our understanding of the Joseon institution of the family is to familiarize ourselves with its various facets.

Text by Moon Sook-ja, Law Research Institute of Seoul National University

Illustration by Yoo Hwan-young

Marriage and Settlement

The prominent Confucian scholar Yi I (1536–1584) was born in a house known as Ojukheon (Black Bamboo House) in Gangneung, Gangwon-do Province. It was the natal home of his mother. Like most members of the upper class (*yangban*), Yi I was born and raised in his mother's home. This experience was deeply associated with the practice of marriage at the time. In Korean culture, marriage is described with the expression “going to his wife's house” in the case of men and “going to her husband's house” for women. “Going to his wife's house” was the norm in the earlier centuries of the Joseon era. The groom went to the bride's family home, completed the marriage ceremony, and resided there for a period of time. It was only natural to have children and raise them in the bride's home.

The diary of the scholar-official Yu Hui-chun describes a similar story. Yu was born in Haenam in 1513 and, at the age of 24, married a woman from Damyang with the surname Song. After their marriage, Yu and his wife started out living in their respective hometowns of Haenam and Damyang. This period of separation extended as Yu underwent unexpected twists in his life.

He passed the civil service examinations two years after his marriage and quickly joined the civil service in Seoul. He faced banishment for political reasons after holding a series of official posts, but later rejoined the officialdom. It was only in their later years that Yu and his wife were able to settle down together in the same place. They ended up in Damyang, his wife's hometown. As Yu's wife had resided at her natal house, the children of Yu and Song grew up in their matrilineal grandparents' home.

This custom of living in the bride's home after the wedding was closely connected with another social phenomena in the 15th–16th centuries. This was the period when families of *yangban* status were required to select a particular village to establish their permanent residence, and most frequently they chose the wife's hometown. These social practices of holding a wedding ceremony at the bride's house, living there for a certain period of time, and establishing permanent residence in the wife's hometown—although it was hard to untangle causes from effects—occurred concomitantly, defining the traditions of a family in the initial centuries of the Joseon Dynasty.

Perpetuation of a Lineage

The top priority of a family as a group of people tracing their decent from a common ancestor was the perpetuation of the family. People in the Joseon era pursued this through the means of property inheritance and ancestor worship. A useful example can be found in the documents on the inheritance of property by the Yi family of Jaeryeong. Their inheritance documents spanning six generations from 1494 to 1664 dictate the principle of equal bequeathal among all children. No difference in the amount of property bequeathed is made between the firstborn and other sons or even between sons and daughters. An equal inheritance among siblings was the norm at the time, as confirmed in the inheritance documents of other families. The principle of equal inheritance was actually prescribed by the National Code of the Joseon Dynasty (*Gyeongguk daejeon*).

These sons and daughters equally fulfilled the obligations for ancestor worship. The Confucian scholar Gwon Ho-mun (1532–1587) asked his children in his will to observe ancestral rites for three prior generations, namely their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. This would have amounted to a great number of rites every year. They needed to be held on the death anniversaries of individual ancestors and on seasonal holidays such as New Year’s Day, the Fifth Day of the Lunar Fifth Month, Cold Food Day, and Chuseok (the Korean Thanksgiving Day). Added to these occasions were various kinds of services to be performed at graves.

The heavy burden of ancestor worship was not laid on one particular child, however, but equally distributed among all the children, both sons and daughters. The sons and sons-in-law took turns every year to shoulder the duty of ancestor worship.

As each person was supposed to take over the ritual duties every several years, there could be a high risk of inadvertently missing the proper dates for ancestral rites. To prevent this, those sharing ancestor worship obligations created a document known as “not-forgetting records” (*bulmanggi*) to list the dates for ancestral rites and the order of ritual masters. Ancestor worship was the foremost ritual priority for a yangban family, and it was shared equally among individual sons and daughters.

Imagination and Reality

Up until a certain point in the Joseon Dynasty, the social institution of the family operated differently from what might be imagined today. A newly married couple resided at the bride’s house, and their children were naturally brought up in the maternal grandparents’ home. No discrimination existed between sons and daughters in inheriting property or in taking on ancestor worship obligations. Research has revealed that some of the elements underpinning this early-Joseon familial practice were handed down from the previous dynasty, Goryeo, and some were newly introduced. However, it is difficult to pin down the one moment when all of these elements



fully joined to give rise to this form of family. What is more certain is when it began to transform. This early-Joseon style of family experienced signs of change in the second half of the 17th century. Many assume that this shift took a linear trajectory toward the ultimate destination of perfectly respecting the Confucian dictums.

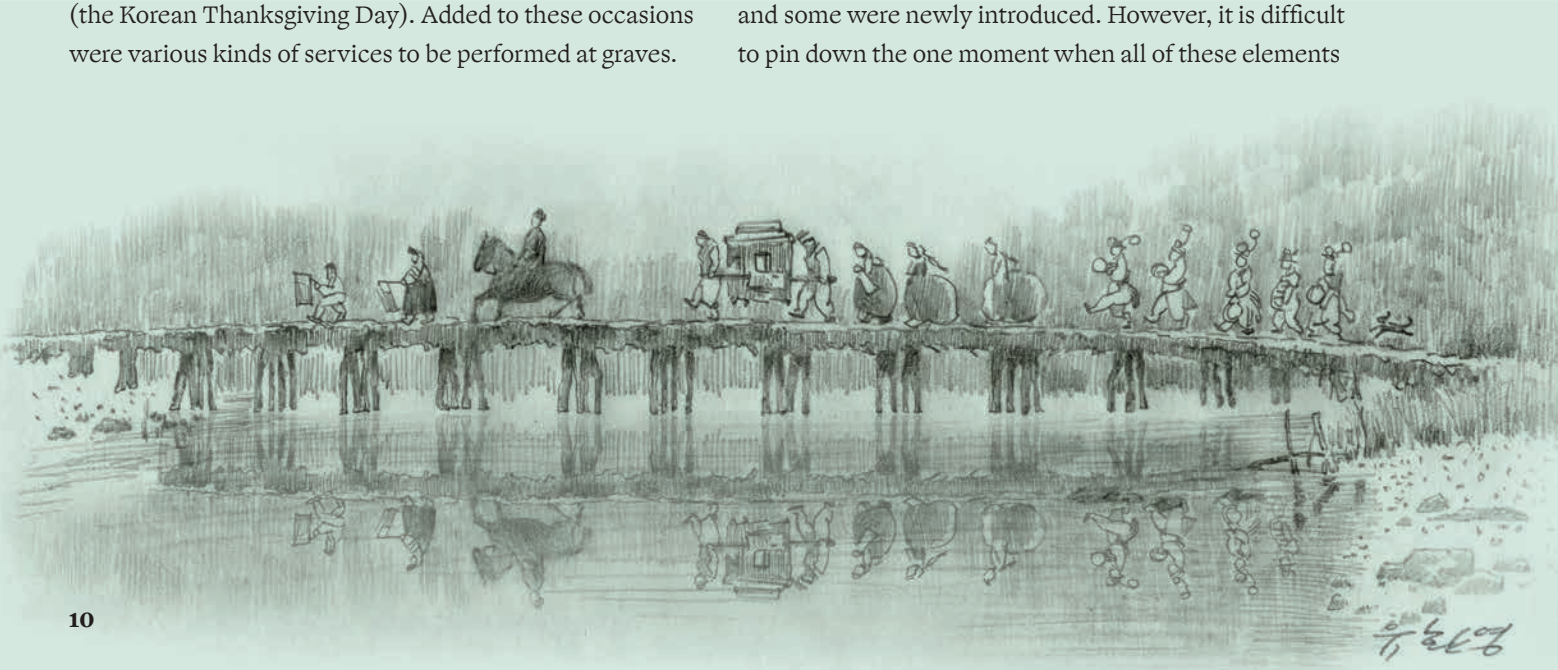
If they are right, this transformation should have proceeded directly from “going to his wife’s house” to “going to her husband’s house” for a wedding ceremony, from living at the bride’s home to living at the groom’s home, from equal inheritance to the primogeniture system, and from rotating ritual obligations to laying all the responsibilities on the firstborn son. This vision of the transformation of the family supports the emergence of the stereotypical male-dominated image of Joseon family held widely across the nation today.

However, this was not precisely what happened: The transformation was less clear in its direction. The first item to look at is the place for the wedding and after-marriage residence. The form of marriage preferred by Confucianism involves bringing the bride to the groom’s house, holding the wedding, and then residing there. This Confucian form of marriage was not perfectly practiced, but it was in fact adapted to local customs to bring about a hybrid type of Confucian marriage. In this new version, the groom still went to the bride’s house for the wedding, but the couple did not reside there after the ceremony. After the wedding ceremony the groom returned to his natal home, and months or sometimes years later the bride would come to the groom’s house, perform a *pyebaek* ceremony (a Korean ritual officially introducing the bride

to the groom’s family), and began living there. According to studies, the temporal span between the official wedding and *pyebaek* ceremony grew shorter with time, but the practice of conducting the wedding at the bride’s house continued as the norm in rural areas into the mid-20th century.

Next, property inheritance and ritual obligations did not show a clear path of evolution in the expected direction. The previous practice of sharing both the right to property inheritance and the duty of ancestor worship equally across all children had been scrapped by the end of the 17th century, but the rule of agnatic primogeniture did not take root until the 19th century. There are examples of inheritance documents from the 18th century and later that ask for the participation in ancestral rites of the grandchildren of sons and daughters. In a yangban family in the Jeolla region, the parents demanded that their children return to the former practice of rotating ritual obligations.

Conventional wisdom has it that the transformation experienced by Joseon society starting in the 17th century is neatly defined by the entrenchment of the Confucian dictums and the subsequent establishment of a patriarchal form of family. In actual practice, however, the imported Chinese philosophy of Neo-Confucianism merged with local traditions to alter the institution of the family in Korea. The transfer to an agnatic primogeniture system was piecemeal and was still in process well into the 19th century. It can be concluded that the Confucian transformation of the Korean institution of the family was less about a pure reflection of the Confucian dictums and more about negotiation and adaptation. This process resulted in a family institution that cannot be defined by any single image. When taking into consideration the dynamics occurring in classes below the yangban, any attempt to represent the realities of Joseon families through a particular stereotype becomes impossible. Premodern families must have been as diverse in form as those of the present. It seems to be time that we drop our fixed image of Joseon family institutions and set out to explore their diversity and dynamics.



K-Logistics

Speedy and Reliable Delivery in South Korea

Text by Choi Min-young from the *Korean Heritage* publication team

Photos by the National Folk Museum of Korea, the Kansong Art and Culture Foundation, CJ Logistics, and Jung meen-young



In South Korea, nearly anything can be delivered from one place to another within 24 hours. The country's well-developed express delivery companies are known as *taekbae*. This door-to-door domestic delivery concept continues to evolve along with changes in lifestyles: An even quicker version of *taekbae* called "early morning delivery" has recently been unveiled, promising the delivery of groceries in as little as seven hours in time for breakfast. Delivery is not a modern innovation in Korea. Among the various forms of delivery in traditional Korean society, *bobusang*, or "peddler merchants," were the most prominent in terms of their impact on people's lives. In this issue, Lee Chang-sik from Semyung University and Choe See-young from Ajou University talk about the delivery services of the past and today's *taekbae* system.

Proof of identity for *bobusang*

Peddlers carried this to prove their Proof of identity for *bobusang* organization.
(Photo courtesy of the National Folk Museum of Korea)



Lee Chang-sik

Professor of Semyung University

Diverse Forms of Traditional Delivery Service

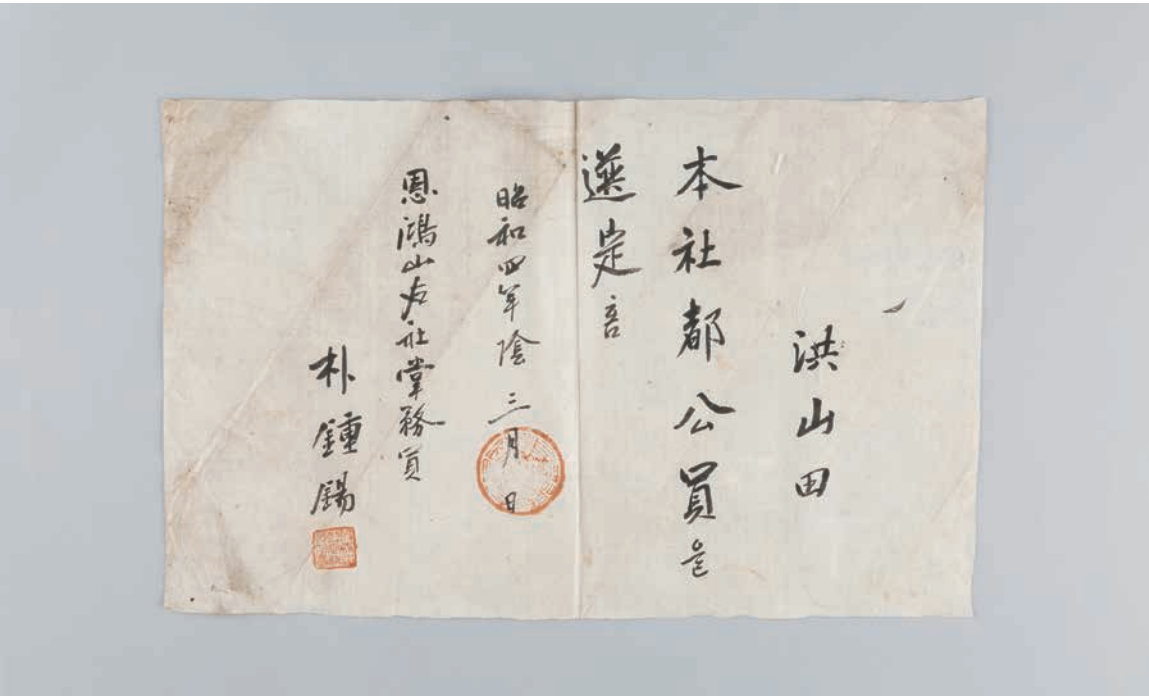
Historical documents indicate that delivery services were operating at least as far back as the Joseon era (1392-1910). The late-Joseon scholar Hwang Yun-seok writes in his *Ijaenango* (Miscellaneous Writings by Hwang Yun-seok) that in July 1768, the day after taking the civil service examination, he and the people he was celebrating with enjoyed a delivery of chilled buckwheat noodle soup (*naengmyeon*). Another late-Joseon scholar, Yi Yu-won, relates in *Imhapilgi* (Collection of Writings by Yi Yu-won) that on one day in the year 1880 King Sunjo ordered *naengmyeon* in the middle of his nightly walk. The king and his soldiers ate the chilled noodle soup together. *Haedongjukji*, a collection of poetry by the calligrapher Choi Yeong-nyeon published in 1925, recounts that "people living within the walls of the Gwangju fortress in Gyeonggi-do Province are known for their superb skill in making *hyojonggaeng* (a soup good for treating hangovers). The soup is made at night, stored in a jar wrapped

in cotton, and sent to the capital. It can arrive at the recipient's house by dawn next day." Professor Lee Chang-sik from Semyung University explains:

"There were a number of practices and institutions in traditional Korean society that involved delivery. Examples include offering local specialties to the king as tribute, crafting and transporting made-to-order goods to Buddhist temples, buying local specialties in one place and selling them in another, and distributing party foods among neighbors. These traditions have come down to the present to impact today's delivery culture in South Korea."

There were services taking advantage of the sense of prestige among the *yangban* upper class as well. Examples include the "water sellers from the Bukcheong area" (*bukcheong muljangsu*) and "book middlemen" (*chaekkwae*).

"Those Bukcheong water sellers drew water from right in the middle of the Hangang River, the part considered to have the highest water quality, and sold it to members of the upper class. This water caught on among the *yangban*, creating a group of loyal customers. *Chaekkwae* middlemen did not just deliver ordered books. They also offered services such as analyzing a customer's literary taste, making appropriate



A certificate of appointment issued by the *bobusang* organization
This document dated March 1929 appoints the merchant Hong San-jeon to a leadership position in the *bobusang* organization.
(Photo courtesy of the National Folk Museum of Korea)

recommendations, and securing rare books.”

There were also merchants specializing in the delivery of such diverse items as firewood, cosmetics and jewelry, and glutinous rice cakes. The first example of a food delivery advertisement can be found in the early-modern daily newspaper *Mansebo* from 1906.

According to professor Lee Chang-sik, no discussion of Joseon-era delivery services is complete without mentioning the peddlers called *bobusang*. These merchants operated within an area that could be covered in a single day, buying products in one place and selling them in another. Markets held every five days at different villages were a major commercial venue for these *bobusang*.

“Bobusang came in two categories: *bosang*, or ‘sack peddlers,’ who dealt in small but valuable items such as crafted goods, ginseng, and ramie

cloth, and *busang*, or ‘bundle peddlers,’ who sold more voluminous and daily items such as earthenware jars and wooden products. Speed was the top priority for these travelling merchants. This explains why the carrier they wore on their back had shorter legs than normal. They did not want to waste time in taking off and putting on the carrier when they rested. With a short-legged back carrier, they could sit down anywhere for a quick break with their load still on their back.”

Bobusang Merchants
in a National Network

Although acting individually within their given territories, the *bobusang* united to form a national organization. They collected membership fees



Peddler
This painting by the late-Joseon artist Gwon Yong-jeong presents a peddler, or *bobusang*, resting with his load of clay vessels still strapped to his back.
(Photo courtesy of the Kansong Art and Culture Foundation)

and selected their leadership through democratic elections. This national network of merchants made rules against hoarding and cornering markets, breaching commercial ethics, and committing fraud. Anyone breaking these rules faced punishment.

“At the peak of the Joseon market economy, there were 264 local branch offices for peddler merchants. The *bobusang* at each local office elected a leader who was charged with maintaining fairness and honesty in the market. *Bobusang* merchants helped each other out through this organized national network. They shared information for safely delivering goods on time.

Although not related by blood, they gathered to hold a collective rite whenever a colleague died. It was a very strong professional organization.”

This robust organizational ability of the *bobusang* helped them ensure good treatment in society and regular state support. The development of the *bobusang* organization was based on the trust these individual peddler merchants developed within society. It was uncommon in other parts of the world for delivery services to demonstrate the level of reliability the *bobusang* established during the Joseon era.

“*Bobusang* merchants made every effort to secure the items on their order lists and deliver them on



Professor Lee Chang-sik stresses that the development of the *bobusang* organization was based on the trust built up by individual peddler merchants in Joseon society.

The two main characteristics of the bobusang, reliability and speed, are also the pillars underpinning today's South Korean domestic delivery system.

time to customers in a good condition. They were not just profit-oriented sellers. These travelling merchants would spread news from other areas and could even serve as matchmakers between families. All this helped the *bobusang* earn considerable public trust.”

The two main characteristics of the *bobusang*, reliability and speed, are also the pillars underpinning today's South Korean domestic delivery system. With direct contact discouraged during the current global pandemic, *taekbae* delivery services have been recognized for their new social function. They are playing a critical role in connecting otherwise isolated people and maintaining a sense of community.



Each person in South Korea is estimated to use a *taekbae* service 65 times per year on average. This photo shows CJ Logistics' Megahub Gonjiam, the largest warehouse in Asia. (Photo courtesy of CJ Logistics)

Choe See-young
Professor of Ajou University

Birth and Growth of Express Delivery Services

Among the many forms of delivery service currently available in South Korea, *taekbae* are the most popular. *Taekbae* provide express door-to-door delivery taking approximately one day to complete the entire process from picking up a package to placing it in the hands of a recipient. This one-day delivery service has become established as an indispensable element in Korean commerce. Professor Choe See-young from Ajou University adds:

“*Taekbae* service was introduced in 1992. There

were just two parcels on the first day. Now, the industry has grown to 11.3 million packages and 25 billion KRW in revenue every day. This translates into an annual volume of 3.3 billion packages and yearly revenues of 7.5 trillion KRW. It is estimated that each South Korean use this service 65 times per year on average. The number of people employed in the *taekbae* industry has reached 55,000 and is still rising. This express delivery business has seen dramatic growth over the last 30 years.”

The Korean government is working to support this fast-expanding industry by providing a suitable legal framework. A separate law has been enacted this year to deal with matters related to *taekbae* service. It is fair to say that contemporary Korean life could not function as it does without these



Above_ The fundamental rule of the *taekbae* service is next-day delivery, accounting for about 95 percent of the volume.
Below_ The foundation of the *taekbae* industry is the complete public trust in the promised punctuality of the service.

deliveries.

“The fundamental rule of *taekbae* service is next-day delivery. When a package is picked up today, it should be dropped off at its destination tomorrow. About 95 percent of *taekbae* volume falls within this type. There are other varieties of service as well, like a quicker service providing two-to-three-hour delivery, same-day delivery completing the order on the same day it is picked up, and those allowing the designation of a desired time or day for delivery.”

People can have all sorts of things delivered to a wide variety of places. They can order the delivery of not only everyday commodities and groceries, but also jewelry, documents, and artworks. Holidaymakers can order things sent to their vacation destinations by *taekbae*. Credit card companies take advantage of the service to deliver newly issued cards to their customers. When people need to move their belongings or send a gift of money to a friend’s wedding, they use a *taekbae* service. The list of different forms of *taekbae* is long and always growing.

The recently developed early morning delivery is quickly gaining popularity. With this service, orders placed up until midnight can be delivered by 7:00 the next morning. This service was initiated by the online grocery service Market Kurly in 2015 and has been spreading to other companies.

“An ordinary form of *taekbae* takes around one full day since things need to be picked up at their place of production. In the case of early morning delivery, items are picked up right from stock maintained at a warehouse. Items are ready for departure within two hours of the order. This kind of service is only possible in areas equipped with such warehouses—such as Seoul and the surrounding areas and other big cities. However, there are companies aiming at establishing a nation-wide network. Making this service available at every corner of the country may not be

a far-fetched dream.”

The availability of delivery reducing service time to as little as seven hours is yet another indicator of how far the *taekbae* industry has come since the business opened 30 years ago.

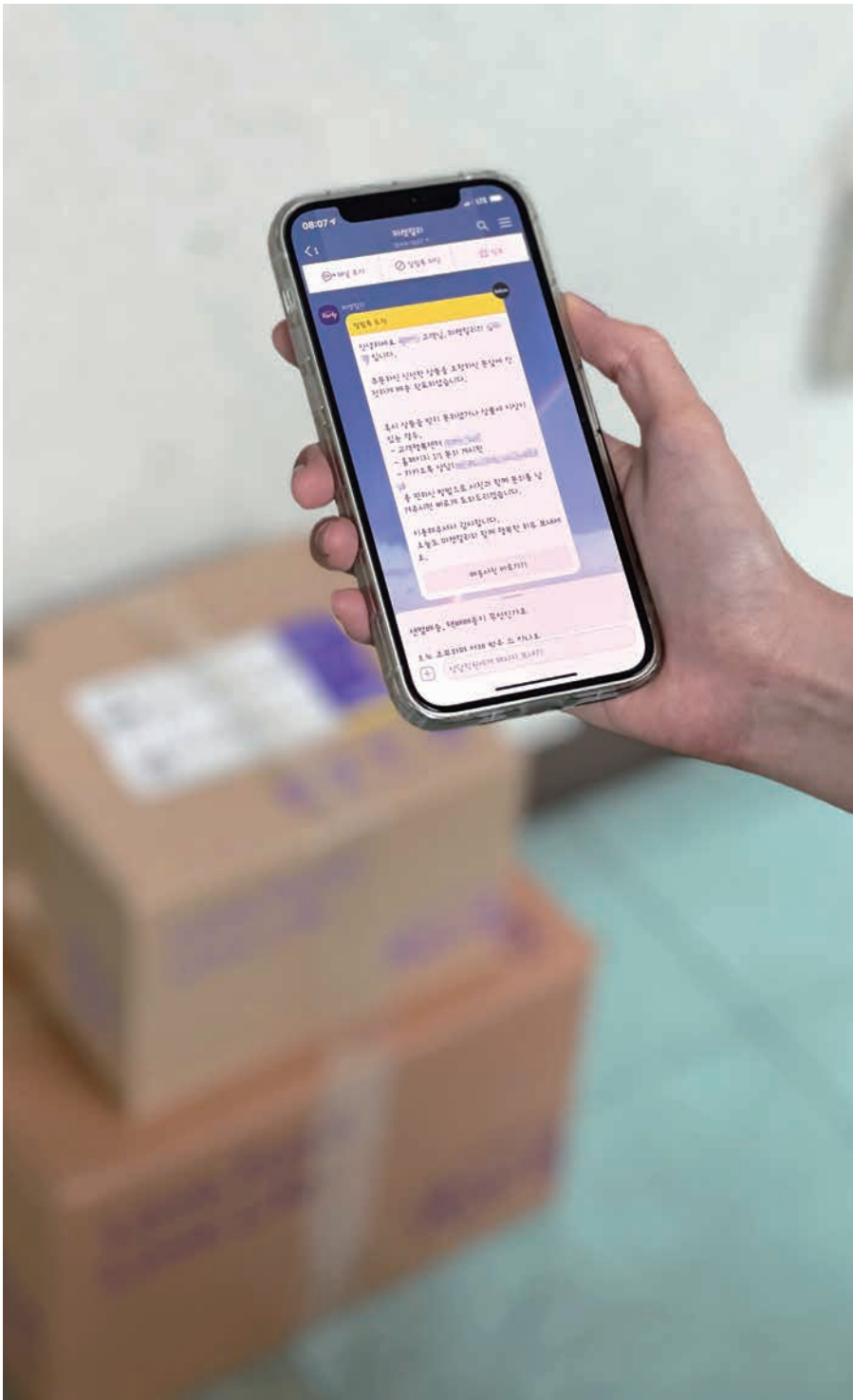
Taekbae and Korean Life

“The primary force supporting the rapid development of the *taekbae* industry is information technology. The phenomenal growth of e-commerce has driven the need for delivery services. Women are increasingly participating in economic activities and convenience is ever-more important, making up another reason. To satisfy these social changes and prepare for future ones, the *taekbae* industry has never ceased to evolve. Various forms of delivery have been developed to offer customized services, and continuous efforts have been made to reduce delivery times and improve the process of tracking parcels. Above all, the dedication shown by delivery people towards their work is by far the most important factor in the industry’s development.”

Professor Choe suggests that the bedrock underpinning the *taekbae* industry is the strong public trust in the promised punctuality of the service. People in this business work furiously to maintain this trust at every step of the delivery process, from picking up parcels to sorting them and transporting them to the doorstep of customers.

“A *taekbae* customer gets a text message from their delivery person announcing a scheduled delivery time. Most of the time, the package arrives right when promised. The customer can track the package’s progress online. *Taekbae* people doing early morning delivery take a picture of the delivered package to let the customer know of its arrival. All of this is based on the efforts made

The primary force supporting the rapid development of the taekbae industry is information technology. The phenomenal growth of e-commerce has driven the need for delivery services.



Taekbae customers receive a message notifying the arrival of their packages. The taekbae industry is making constant efforts to maintain and improve public trust in its delivery services.



Professor Choi See-young highlights how taekbae service has become an inseparable part of Korean life. He adds that people working in the taekbae industry are making concerted efforts to provide the best possible quality of service, contributing to enriching people's lives and bringing them closer.

by the industry to earn and maintain customers' trust. Customers are delighted to have such a reliable delivery service available."

Choe See-young emphasizes that taekbae service is an inseparable part of Korean life. This express delivery service has saved people the time needed to go out and fetch goods and allows companies to concentrate on the production side of their business. This industry has been creating more than 5,000 jobs per year as well.

"Whether they are in parcel-collecting, sorting, or delivery, people working in the taekbae industry are making concerted efforts to provide the best possible quality of service. They contribute to enriching Koreans' life and connecting people."

Joseon-era peddler merchants and today's

taekbae service workers share prioritizing rapid transportation and maintaining trust with customers. This earnest striving for reliability will keep Korean delivery moving forward well into the future.

Ancient Tombs in Gyeongju

Any sovereign nation, however high it has risen, must eventually ebb with the passage of time. In its absence a new one is established. Although historical eras come and go, culture accumulates in layers and endures through time in diverse forms. One element of this is tombs. Ancient tombs stand today as a memoir of the times in which they were constructed. The surviving traces of an historical era in Korea taking the form of ancient tombs are most vividly on view in Gyeongju, the one-time capital of the Silla Kingdom. This ancient state persisted for about 1,000 years in the southeastern portion of the Korean Peninsula until its demise in 935.

Text and photos by Roh Jae-hak, Photographer



1	2
	3

1. The three royal tombs on Mt. Namsan
2. Tombs in Seoak-dong
3. Stone animal figures at the burial site of, possibly, King Wonseong

Gyeongju was once called Seorabeol, meaning “a sacred land where the morning sunshine first reaches.” This holy land of light was packed with Buddhist temples and pagodas, as if it aspired to become an earthy representation of the Buddha land. The Korean history *Samguk yusa* (Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) describes Gyeongju as a city where temples were scattered like stars in the sky and pagodas were lined up like wild geese in flight. Besides these manifestations of Silla’s thriving Buddhist culture, its 1,000-year passage through history gave birth to tomb clusters as another striking form of heritage. The city of Gyeongju is freckled with

high-mounded tombs, creating a unique urban landscape interweaving the legacy of ancient deaths with the day-to-day lives of contemporary people.

Tomb clusters are present in today’s city center, for example those in Nodong-dong, Noseo-dong, Hwangnam-dong, Gyo-dong, and Hwango-dong. There are others located rather farther from the central areas of the city, such as the Seoak-dong Tombs and Geumcheok-ri Tombs. While there are cases where some tombs stand alone, the strong tendency is for clusters of dozens or even hundreds. There are more than 100 such tomb clusters around Gyeongju.

Among these, the one at Hwangnam-dong, called Daereungwon (Great Tumuli Park), merits particular attention. This Great Tumuli Park is home to 23 high-mounded tombs. They include the Tomb of King Michu, the 13th ruler of Silla, and the Cheonmachong, or “Heavenly Horse Tomb,” named after the birch-bark saddle flaps painted with flying horses found within. The most astonishing example of a Silla tomb is Hwangnamdaechong, or “Great Tomb of Hwangnam.” This monumental example of Silla tomb architecture consists of twin burial mounds connected in a gourd shape, running 120 meters from north to south and

reaching 23 meters at its highest point. It is thought to be the burial place of a royal couple. The Great Tomb of Hwangnam is dated to somewhere between the fourth and sixth centuries. This span roughly corresponds with the period when Silla was ruled by a succession of supreme leaders titled *maripgan* who exercised considerable personal authority and laid the foundation for the further development of Silla. The mounded tombs in the center of Gyeongju are the burial sites for members of the royalty and nobility from this *maripgan* period.

The tombs in the city center comprise part of the World Heritage property “Gyeongju Historic Areas.” Inside these tombs have been found a wide array of artifacts ranging from gold crowns, ornate belts, comma-shaped jade pieces, glass beads, earthenware, and glassware to swords with large pommels and various horse trappings. These artifacts provide a medium to deliver the stories on the ancient kingdom of Silla to the present. It would not be much of an exaggeration to call each of these tombs an ancient history museum unto itself.

The tomb clusters at Hangnam-dong, Nodong-dong, and Noseo-dong had private homes in their surroundings until the dwellings were relocated as part of an urban development project in the 1970s. These burial mounds housing the bodies of the ancients were an integral part of the living environment of Gyeongju’s citizens. They went to these ancient graveyards for walks or even picnics. A range of grasses, flowers, and trees took root on the burial mounds, adding to the pleasant mood in these ancient graveyards. Life and death were inseparable here where they so closely intermingled.

The numerous mounded tombs in Gyeongju give rise to an undulating landscape where no dividing line between life and death or culture and nature can be found. These ancient tombs exist as evidence of death and the past, but they create an atmosphere amenable to life and the present.

Daereungwon (Great Tumuli Park)



	2	1. Tombs in Hwangnam-dong
1	3	2. The underwater burial site of King Munmu and the surrounding area
		3. Tombs in Gyo-dong





Great Tomb of Hwangnam (Hwangnamdaechong)
in the Great Tumuli Park

Do You Know *Gwangdae?*



© Suwon Cultural Foundation; collected at the Bibliothèque nationale de France

Korea boasts a splendid repertoire of traditional forms of performance, including *pansori* (an oral tradition often compared to Western operas), farmers' instrumental music, tightrope walking, and mask-dance dramas. There is instrumental music as well involving the *piri* (a small double-reed pipe), *daegeum* (a bamboo transverse flute), *gayageum* (a twelve-string zither), or *haegeum* (a double-string zither). All of these entertainments required professional performers, or *gwangdae* in Korean. *Gwangdae* was a collective name given to all those who engaged in professional performances in traditional Korean society. They were also known as *changu* or *jaein*. These entertainers have long been at the heart of the transmission of Korean performances.

Text by Son Tae-do, Hoseo University **Photos by** Son Tae-do, and Suwon Cultural Foundation



This painting dated to 1580 shows a royal feast held for successful candidates in the civil service examination. It features *gwangdae* entertainers putting on a celebratory performance.

Sandae and *Gwangdae*

The traditional Chinese texts *Liezi* and *Chu Ci* describe three sacred mountains floating in the sea on the back of a vast turtle, namely Mt. Penglai, Mt. Fangzhang, and Mt. Yingzhou. When peace reigns supreme, this mountain-supporting sea creature was believed to perform a dance. This legend was widely disseminated across East Asia and inspired a common performance tradition. When there was cause to celebrate in China and other East Asian states, structures were built in the shape of a mountain and music, dance, theater, acrobatics,

and martial arts were performed on and around these structures. It was designed to reference the dancing of the legendary turtle. This entertainment tradition of offering a variety of performances on a mountain-shaped stage was called *sandae*, or “entertainment on a mountain-like stage.”

This all-inclusive form of entertainment involving a mountain-shaped structure was introduced to Korea no later than 572 during the reign of King Jinheung of Silla, and was actively practiced all the way through the Goryeo era (918–1392). During this period it was held at state-level Buddhist ceremonies such as Yeondeunghoe

(Lantern-lighting Festival) and Palgwanhoe (Festival of the Eight Vows) and on the occasion of the arrival of foreign envoys. During the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910), *sandaehui* were practiced at times of major state celebrations and diplomatic visits from China. As they were considered an integral part of welcoming Chinese emissaries, *sandaehui* continued to be practiced into the later years of the Joseon era.

As confirmed in a record from the mid-Joseon era, each *sandaehui* was a massive event demanding the mobilization of around 600 professional entertainers. There were no private performance groups in Korea at the time capable of managing an event of this scale, so the responsibility for maintaining the required pool of *gwangdae* fell to the state. The situation differed in the neighboring states of China and Japan: The Chinese private sector could provide sufficient entertainers for large-scale events, and Japan did not receive Chinese envoys and had less demand for such large celebratory occasions. Therefore, the social class of entertainers was dissolved in China and Japan in 1164¹ and 782², respectively. In Korea, however, it was only in 1894 that the *gwangdae*, categorized among the lowest class in Joseon society, were emancipated from their social status as follows:

Men serving at the post stations (*yeokjol*), entertainers (*changu*) and butchers (*baekjeong*) should be liberated from their social status as the lowest caste.

From the entry into the *Gojong sillok* (Annals of King Gojong) on July 2, 1894

These state-affiliated entertainers normally took on the role of playing musical instruments for government agencies and, when an occasion arose, could serve as singers, dancers, actors, or acrobats. The size of this hereditary occupational group gradually increased through intraclass marriage until reaching the tens of thousands toward the end of the Joseon Dynasty. Hereditary *gwangdae* entertainers had no possibility of climbing the social ladder and no right to own land. This professional entertainer group was allowed to do nothing but perform.

Celebrations for New Civil Servants

During the Goryeo and Joseon periods, membership in the political leadership of Korea was determined by state examinations. Similar merit-based institutions were also in place in China from 587 to 1904 and in Vietnam from 1034 to 1888. In Korea, those who passed the civil service examination were provided a series of celebrations—a royal banquet at the palace (*eunyeongyeon*), a street parade lasting for three to five days (*yuga*), municipal-level festivities in their hometowns (*yeongchinyeon*), and parties in their individual households (*muhiyeon*). All these events needed *gwangdae* to complete the celebration. These events began with the introduction of the civil service examination in 958 and persisted until the examinations were abolished in 1894 in Korea.

The civil service examination was held every three years. On top of these regular events, irregular examinations were organized to celebrate important state occasions. It is estimated that irregular



Above_ This painting produced in 1693 shows a household party held by the Joseon scholar Gwon Yang for his sons who had successively passed the civil service examination.

Below_ This Buddhist painting at Heungguksa Temple dated to 1868 portrays a tightrope artist walking double ropes, one of the regular performances included in a *sandaehui* event during the late Joseon period.

1. For more information, see p. 28 in the PhD thesis “Song-geumdae jageuk wonbon yeongu” (Study on *Jageuk* Texts during the Song and Jin Periods) by An Sang-bok.

2. For more information, see the book *Ilbon yeongeuksa (sang)* (Development of Japanese Theatre Art, Volume 1), written by Kawataka Shigetoshi and translated by Lee Eung-su.

examinations were held every nine months during the Joseon era. During the Goryeo Dynasty, each examination selected 33 civil officials and 28 military officials. Another component was added to the existing examination system for low-level civil officials in the Joseon era to allow two new types—classics licentiates (*saengwon*) and literary licentiates (*jinsa*). One hundred candidates were selected for each category. This expanded the number of civil servants produced from each regular and full-scale irregular examination (*jeunggwangsi*) to around 260. If five entertainers were required to fete each successful candidate, simple math indicates that more than 1,000 of them were needed. Moreover, the number of military officials selected greatly increased from the previous 33 to hundreds and sometimes even thousands or tens of thousands toward the end of the Joseon Dynasty³.

As celebrations for passing the exam were held not only in the capital but also in the candidates’ hometowns, the entire nation became immersed in a festive mood. In particular, the celebration held in individual households usually lasted for several days and nights and provided a venue for various performances. One of the most popular types of entertainment featured in this days-long household party was *pansori*, a form of narrative song performed for several hours by a vocalist to the accompaniment of a double-headed barrel drum. Open to people of all classes, these household celebrations led to the development of the *pansori* epic chant into a popular but sophisticated form of performing art. During the Joseon era *pansori* was enjoyed by all status groups from the royalty to commoners.

The Donghak Movement and *Gwangdae*

Korean peasants took up arms in 1894 inspired by the spirit of Donghak (Eastern Learning), a new religion founded in 1860 with opposition to Western culture and a belief in the equality of all people at its theological center. During the uprising by the Donghak peasant army that began in Jeolla-do Province, the *gwangdae* aligned themselves with both sides of the rebellion. With their employment based on their affiliation with the government, some joined the government troops sent to suppress the Donghak rebels. On the other hand, there were many in this low-status group who deeply sympathized with the Donghak tenets, particularly its principle of equality, and became deeply involved in the rebellion. In the initial phase of the Donghak movement, *gwangdae* served as combat soldiers both in the government forces and the rebel army, as seen in the following:

The military officers Yi Jae-seop and Song Bong-ho marched toward Gobu, Jeolla-do Province with a 1,000-strong force under their command. These newly drafted soldiers were all of mubu (husbands of shamans) status⁴.

From pages 141–143 in the book *The History of Donghak* written by Oh Ji-yeong and annotated by Lee Jang-hui

The Donghak leader Kim Gae-nam organized a military unit with more than 1,000 *changu* and *jaein* recruited from Jeolla-do Province and treated them with respect in an effort to get the best out of them.

From page 23 in the third manuscript of the early modern history *Ohagimun* by Hwang Hyeon



Sandae, or “mountain-like stage,” came in diverse sizes in either a mobile or fixed form. The one shown in this picture is a small mobile *sandae*.

The Donghak leader Son Hwa-jung selected *jaein* and formed a unit, asking Hong Nak-gwan to lead them. Under the supreme command of Son Hwa-jung, Hong Nak-gwan, a *jaein* from Gochang, Jeolla-do Province, had thousands of nimble and belligerent soldiers following his leadership. Although usually considered comparable to the troops under Jeon Bong-jun and Kim Gae-nam, Hong’s unit was in fact the best.

From page 35 of the third manuscript of the early-modern history *Ohagimun* by Hwang Hyeon

Given the records above, it appears there were thousands of *gwangdae* in Jeolla-do Province alone at the time of the Donghak movement. It seems that their numbers totaled in at least the tens of thousands nationwide. As the movement progressed, *gwangdae* increasingly sided with the rebels. Among the three commanders immediately under head commander Jeon Bong-jun (namely, Kim Gae-nam, Son Hwa-jung, and Hong Gye-gwan), Hong Gye-gwan was of *gwangdae* status. As seen above, his brother Hong Nak-gwan was the leader of an elite *gwangdae* combat unit.

Korea might be unique in the globe in having maintained such large numbers of professional entertainers as a particular social class until the early-modern period. The survival of these professional entertainers nurtured the advancement of Korean performing traditions. The reforms of 1894 liberated the *gwangdae* from their low social status. However, many of them remained in their traditional profession and continued giving performances. It should come as no surprise that many of the senior masters of traditional performance in the present are of *gwangdae* descent. The stories of Joseon professional entertainers are still highly relevant for understanding today’s performances.

3. For more information, see pp. 157–161 in the book *Hanguui gwageojedo* (Civil Service Examination in Korea), written by Lee Seong-mu.

4. *Gwangdae* were also called “husbands of shamans,” or mubu. It was derived from the practice of recruiting the spouses of female shamans as entertainers that dated to the late Goryeo period. For more information, see the Jeong Do-jeon section in the “Yeoljeon” (Biographies) of the 15th-century history *Goryeosa* (History of Goryeo).

Immersive Cultural Heritage Experiences

A wide range of choices is now available to those wishing to digitally experience cultural heritage. Efforts to produce digital content began in earnest at the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) in 2011. It has advanced to the point of providing various kinds of immersive content, a style of digital content drawing users into a story and providing diverse sensory experiences that make them feel as if they are within it. For this issue of *Korean Heritage* we met online with two experts to hear their thoughts about the present and future of immersive content based on cultural heritage. Presented below is a conversation between Kim Yong-gu from the Cultural Heritage Education Team at the Cultural Heritage Administration and Woontack Woo from the Graduate School of Cultural Technology at the Korea Institute of Science and Technology.

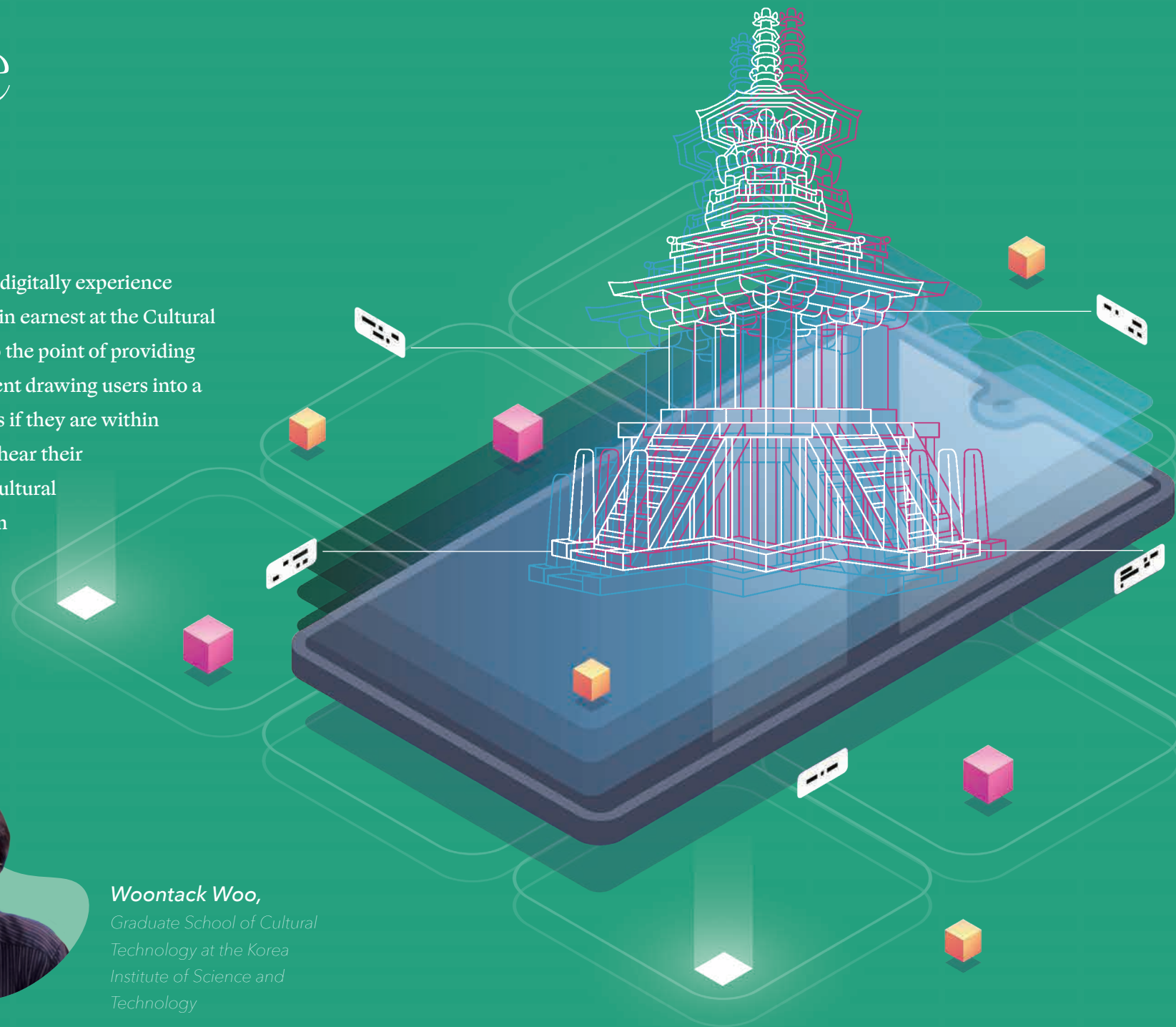
Transcription by Kwon Da-in from the *Korean Heritage* publication team
Photos by the Cultural Heritage Administration



Kim Young-gu,
 Cultural Heritage
 Education Team at
 the Cultural Heritage
 Administration



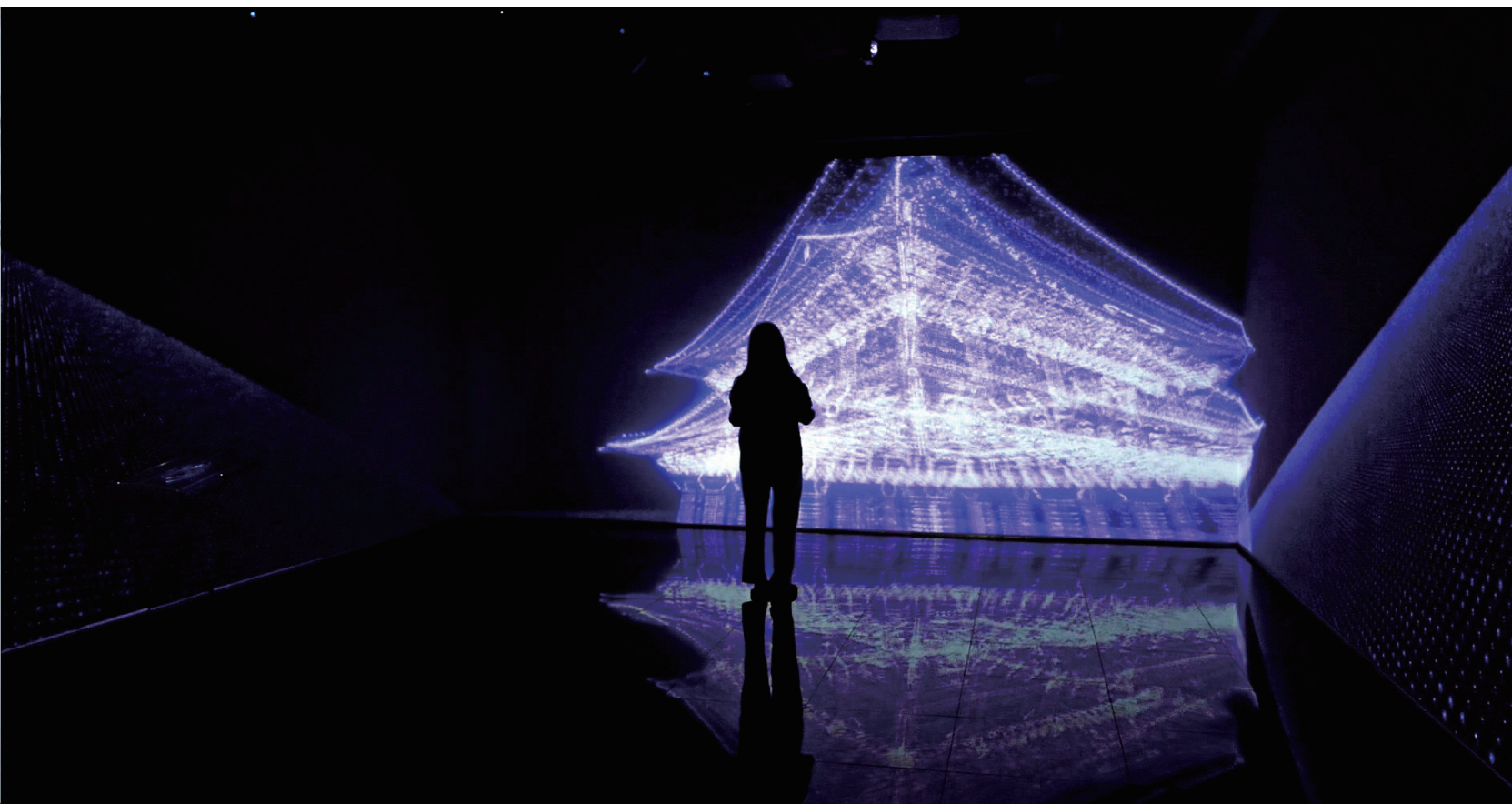
Woontack Woo,
 Graduate School of Cultural
 Technology at the Korea
 Institute of Science and
 Technology



Digital Conservation and Appreciation of Heritage

Kim Young-gu: Ever since 2011, the CHA has been pouring considerable efforts into developing digital content. While the early projects were mainly focused on non-interactive 3D content and holograms, we gradually expanded into virtual and augmented reality. With the introduction of 5G technology last year, immersive content has emerged as a fascinating new area. All of these kinds of digital heritage content using different levels of information technology are geared toward the intertwined purposes of recording the authentic state of cultural heritage and allowing the public easier access to and better appreciation of it.

Woontack Woo: Immersive experiences are related to the human senses. An experience is created based on information delivered through sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste. This includes the mood or ambience of a given setting. I suspect that the digital content currently produced by the CHA is too concentrated on the visual. I hope further efforts will be made in coming years to create other forms of content that can stimulate additional senses.



Kim: That is precisely what we have been working on recently when developing digital content at the CHA. I believe we are making progress. One of the heritage education projects currently in the pipeline is about enabling people with visual impairments to experience cultural heritage through touch using 3D printer technology. Regardless of the means or senses, what is key is offering more opportunities to enjoy heritage.

Woo: I have no doubt that the CHA is doing a wonderful job when it comes to creating

wider opportunities for heritage appreciation. There is a range of digital content available that can capture people’s interest. However, I think more systematic efforts are required in the recording of cultural heritage. Sincere expert discussion and consultation is required when making decisions on how to establish heritage information databases and how to conserve heritage in digital form, and everything should be systematic and organized from the first stages of collecting raw data. We need to remember that this is also heritage that we are going to transmit to future generations.

Kim: The CHA has been recording major elements of Korean cultural heritage—for example, World Heritage sites and other nationally designated Treasures and National Treasures. The datasets so far accumulated were made freely accessible to the public last year so that private businesses can utilize them for educational and other purposes. This decision to open government-collected data for private use is expected to boost the creative endeavors of the private sector toward the development of heritage content.

The Story is What Matters

Kim: Not all elements of cultural heritage are amenable to quality immersive experiences, so candidate sites should be selected carefully. Next, a series of decisions has to be made regarding the best way to apply digital technology to each site or object. Another important factor in developing immersive content is what story to tell. Good stories can go beyond technological shortcomings to touch the hearts of audiences.

Woo: That is exactly right. The story—along with the space,

technology, and the audience—is one of the primary elements comprising an immersive experience. A promising technology worth considering in this regard is digital twinning, the technique for creating virtual representations of things in a digital space. Museums are adopting this technology to offer visitors a more interactive experience of artifacts.

Kim: I would like to note that the CHA has been working on its “Time Travel at the Seoul City Wall” project, a three-year endeavor to establish a dataset spanning the 600-year history of this walled

Digital content allows people to enjoy an immersive experience of Changdeokgung Palace. This immersive content entitled “Media Art: Walk through the Records of Changdeokgung” provides artistic interpretations of the past, present, and future of the royal palace while enabling users to freely appreciate the historic buildings. Anyone can take part in this immersive experience in the Digital Heritage Room next to the National Palace Museum of Korea.



Using immersive content, people can immediately experience faraway heritage sites. This photo shows immersive content on Seokguram Grotto.



Donuim, the west gate of the Seoul City Wall, was pulled down in 1915 to make way for streetcars. It is the only main portal in the city wall that has not been restored to its original appearance. Instead, the Cultural Heritage Administration has reconstructed this gate in a digital space using augmented reality technology to allow an opportunity to appreciate this vanished heritage in a virtual form. The CHA carried out this project in cooperation with the Seoul Metropolitan Government and the private companies Woomi Construction and Cheil Worldwide.

enclosure. The project is aiming to create a digital space connected to the historical architectural environment within the Seoul City Wall. As part of the project, immersive content has been produced on Gyeongbokgung Palace and the surrounding areas and is currently being made available to the public on a pilot basis.

Woo: It is regrettable the way so much digital media is being underused. These digital assets have failed to capture and hold users' interest. People might try them once out of curiosity, but they won't use it again if it is not fun. For a positive example, the Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York City is great at creating different stories and programs based on the same collection of artifacts, and they keep visitors interested. Good digital content enables and motivates users to interpretate the given content in diverse ways from the perspective of their own experiences. This is an important point worth considering when developing digital content.

A New Vehicle for Cultural Development

Woo: I think that good stories are fundamentally about the delivery of culture. Creating digital content conveying stories about culture is a complex job that requires a great deal of different kinds of effort. This is why nurturing a talented pool of experts is a critical issue. Korea

boasts a great number of capable scientists and engineers, but they are more interested in other industries than in the heritage sector. We need to convince them that heritage is also a promising field and we must invest more actively in relevant education programs so that talented scientists and engineers can be drawn toward the development of digital heritage content.

Kim: Nurturing people is important. I have learned from my experience of cooperating with the private sector that there are cases where the technology is not a problem, but understanding the heritage is a challenge. The CHA is working to produce a skilled pool of professionals through the National University of Cultural Heritage. Currently, however, I don't think we have an adequate system to fully utilize these people's potential. Of course, the digital heritage content industry and other relevant industries have seen considerable growth. However, I think establishing a well-functioning ecosystem for the industry is another matter. We need to build a working industrial ecosystem for digital heritage content that allows for a continual cycle of creation and consumption.

Woo: What underpins any functioning ecosystem is digital platforms. A platform is the stage on which new businesses can be launched. Any platform that distributes digital heritage content should be supported by open

communication among the relevant organizations and should guarantee easy access. Protecting intellectual property rights and observing digital ethics is also important.

Kim: Preparations are underway at the CHA to open a Digital Heritage Museum in Sejong City by 2026. It will host a wide range of immersive and other forms of digital heritage content that will provide the public more fulfilling experiences of digital heritage.

Woo: Korean culture has mostly become known to the wider world through TV shows. Digital heritage content is a new and powerful tool we can use to further disseminate our culture. We have a timeless and boundless virtual world in front of us. I believe that we can create quality digital content by combining advanced technology with our cultural stories.

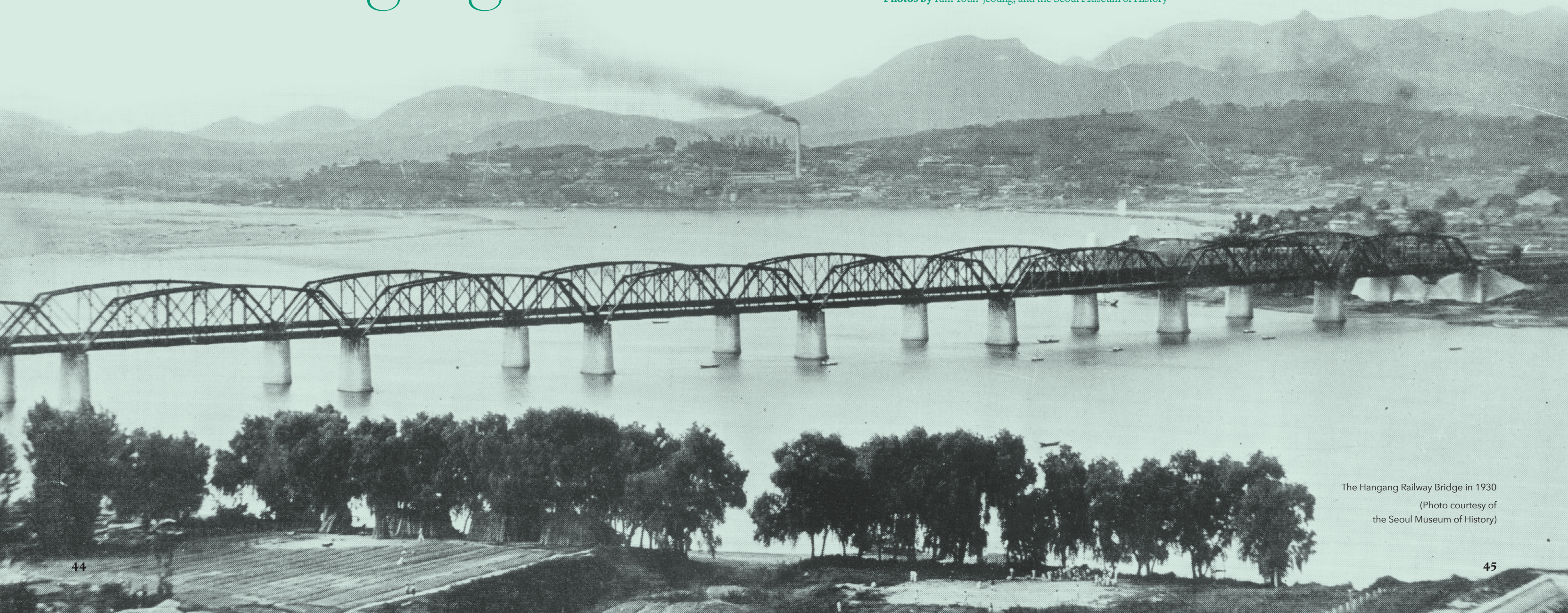
Kim: Cultural heritage leaves a stronger mark in the minds of people when it blends with their personal memories. Digital heritage content is expected to play a critical role in rendering heritage experiences more individual and memorable. The CHA is planning to conduct a consumer satisfaction survey this year and will reflect the results in future projects. I hope all these efforts we are making at the CHA will contribute to bringing digital heritage content closer to the public.

Riverside Pools at the Hangang

Let's turn back the clock in Korea about a century. How did people manage the scorching summer heat in those days? They might hide from the sun under the shade of eaves or a tree, create a personal breeze with a handheld fan, or try to reduce their body temperature by consuming icy water. When none of these was sufficient, they left their homes to seek out a fresh wind and cooling water. For people living in the capital of Korea at the time (today's central Seoul) the closest place to beat the heat was the Hangang River. The river was as central to everyday life in the past as it is for modern Seoulites seeking to escape the summer heat.

Text by Kim Youn-jeoung, External Relations Research Institute, Dongguk University

Photos by Kim Youn-jeoung, and the Seoul Museum of History



The Hangang Railway Bridge in 1930

(Photo courtesy of
the Seoul Museum of History)

Gaining Popularity as a Recreational Place

For people in the early 20th century, taking refuge in water was an essential method for avoiding summer heat. Seoul is encircled by mountains on which a number of streams descend through shaded valleys. Immersing the feet or even the whole body in these mountain creeks was a popular summer scene at the time.

Besides mountain streams, the Hangang River running through Seoul was another source of recreational water for people in the city. Going out to the riverside was not considered a special occasion for people living in the capital of Korea, but rather a part of everyday life. Fishing and swimming in the Hangang River were reported in a newspaper article from 1913. This was years before the opening of a first pool at the Hangang riverside. It is not easy to find accounts of summer at the Hangang River among the records from before the colonial period (1910–1945) since the unremarkable nature of the practice did not require any special notice.

The traditional summer practice of cooling down at the Hangang River became widespread in the 20th century with advancements in Seoul's transportation system. Various swimming spots along the river became easily accessible by

streetcar or train.

Another reason for the river emerging as a popular recreational destination in summer was the bridges built across it. The banks of the Hangang River were first connected by the Hangang Railway Bridge in 1910, and then by a bridge for cars and pedestrians (currently called the Hangang Bridge) immediately alongside it in 1917. These two feats of modern engineering were considered wonders by the Koreans of the time. The only types of a bridge they had ever seen crossing the Hangang were temporarily versions made by linking multiple wooden boats to allow royal processions across. The modern bridges were more than just a spectacle: They created shade underneath, and the hundreds of electric lights attracted people at night.

As streetcars expanded south from the city center, people could visit the Hangang River and return the same day. They could disembark at the final stop, Sin Yongsan (New Yongsan), and take a pleasant walk toward the river, even enjoying the moon's reflection on the surface of the river and the gentle breeze of a summer night. Young men and women packed the areas under the Hangang Railway Bridge and the guardrails on either side of the Hangang Bridge.

The popularization of summer recreation at the Hangang River was also connected to the introduction of swimming in the modern sense of

People swimming in the Hangang River near the West Ice Storage
(Photo courtesy of the Seoul Museum of History)



Left_ Boat rides on the Hangang River from the April 13, 1936 edition of the *Dong-A Ilbo* (Photo courtesy of Kim Youn-jeoung)

Right_ A pool at Seoul Public Middle School (today's Seoul High School). The pool was opened on June 12, 1932 and is believed to have been closed some time before 1944 when an air-raid shelter was constructed on the site. (Photo courtesy of the Seoul Museum of History)



the word. International swimming strokes were introduced to Korea in the 1890s for training cadets at the Korea Military Academy, the first modern educational institution for military officers. The Hangang River was an ideal place for swimming practice or races among these future officers.

Popular Spots on the Hangang River

There were three prominent points along the Hangang riverside with swimming pools for people living in Seoul: in front of the West Ice Storage (Seobinggo), around the Hangang Railway Bridge, and at Ttukseom Island, one of the islets formed along the river. The West Ice Storage pool was the first swimming pool in Korea. To encourage public access, discount round-trip tickets were issued for students and teaching staff at the nine elementary schools associated with the Seoul School Union, and extra trains were dispatched to carry people to the pool.

In addition to swimming and taking nighttime promenades, boating was very popular on the river. People took paid boat rides along the Hangang River to appreciate the scenery. More affluent citizens hired a ferryman and enjoyed drinking on

boats to the accompaniment of dance and music.

Ttukseom Island served as a port before the development of the overland transport system. Goods bound for the Gangwon and Chungcheong regions mainly departed from the Ttukseom port. With the advancement of roads and railways, however, the cargo handled at Ttukseom Island gradually dwindled. Its decline was accelerated by a devastating flood in 1925. Starting in the 1930s, the riverside island gained new fame as a spot for swimming and other leisure activities. The sharp increase in excursionists to Ttukseom Island in the 1930s was largely credited to the opening of a new railway line spanning the four kilometers from the Wangsimni area to the island.

The Hangang River has long been engrained as an important part of the lives of Seoulites. Particularly in the summertime, the river offered a vital resource for fighting the intense heat: swimming pools. The gentle riverside breeze and refreshing waters presented by the Hangang River were a critical source of comfort for those who had to sweat all day under the sun to make ends meet. Koreans of the early 20th century were no different from people today in seeking a source of inspiration and refreshment at the Hangang River.



A projection of the future National Natural Heritage Center

Improving Legal Framework for Natural Heritage Conservation

Text and Photos by Hwang Kwon-soon,
Natural Heritage Division of the Cultural
Heritage Administration

The Republic of Korea created its legal foundation for the conservation of its cultural heritage in 1962 with the enactment of the Cultural Heritage Protection Act. This framework law initially made no distinction between cultural and natural heritage. Instead, all forms of historical remnants were subject to national protection under the rubric of “cultural property.” This concept was intended as a general term covering not only historical monuments, heritage sites, time-honored artifacts, and traditional crafts/performances, but also natural elements of the Korean Peninsula such as its flora and fauna, geological features, and natural landscapes.

A Separate Conservation System for Natural Heritage

The inclusive heritage conservation system established in 1962 served the country well into the 2000s. In 2015, matters related to the protection and transmission of intangible forms of heritage were separated from the blanket Cultural Heritage Protection Act based on a separate law, the Act on the Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Five years previously, in 2010, the Act on Protection and Inspection of Buried Cultural Heritage had been legislated in an effort to independently regulate the survey and investigation of archaeological sites. It appears that the country is gradually shifting to a more individual approach to areas of heritage conservation that can meet the distinctive needs and characteristics of respective types of heritage.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) maintains a catalog of heritage places (known as the World Heritage List) under the World Heritage Convention. As the flagship program of this international organization, the World Heritage List conceptualizes heritage as three categories: cultural, natural, and mixed. While a State Party to the World Heritage Convention, the Republic of Korea has been implementing this international heritage protection instrument without an explicit legal basis for the concepts of natural or mixed heritage.

In an effort to narrow the gap

between the international system and its domestic practices, the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) has been working to promote an Act on the Conservation and Utilization of Natural Heritage. The CHA has sought input from a wide range of natural heritage professionals over the last year and used this guidance to draw up a draft of an act and submit it to the legislature for review. Under this new law, a definition of natural heritage as “elements of heritage that have been culturally formed in close interaction with natural objects and natural settings” is suggested as a broad conception incorporating both natural heritage elements and those formulated under a combination of natural and cultural forces. The new law envisions a spectrum ranging from animals, plants, geological features, and natural reserves to natural and cultural landscapes all considered as natural heritage.

This view of natural heritage including an intermediary classification spanning both cultural and natural heritage can be considered analogous to the concept of “cultural landscape” in UNESCO’s World Heritage system. This idea was introduced in the 1990s as a new category of heritage that represents works of both people and nature. Humanity and the natural world have long been considered intertwined in traditional Korean culture. Koreans have long been fond of building a second home in an agricultural area and nurturing their minds through close communion with nature. It was a common practice among traditional

Korean scholars to immerse themselves in scenic landscapes in an attempt to understand laws of nature and through this realize Confucian ideals. These traditional practices reflect the ideas underpinning the concept of cultural landscape in the World Heritage system.

Even those elements that might seem to be purely natural are not completely independent of human influence, representing at least minor cultural elements in their makeup. This may be why cultural and natural values are gradually becoming understood in a more interconnected manner in the World Heritage system rather than as two distinct areas existing in isolation. The interactive relationship between humanity and nature is gaining greater attention in the evaluation process for the inscription of natural properties on the World Heritage List.

The interactive relationship between humanity and nature is also a fundamental factor in the domestic heritage designation process for animals, plants, and geological features. The cultural and historical interaction between a particular element of nature and the Korean nation is considered of great importance when registering elements on the national heritage list such as animal species and certain historical trees.

The new law takes a further step in strengthening the relationship between natural heritage and its surrounding communities. It introduces a “community commitment” method as an



Top_ This pine tree is designated Natural Monument No. 103. Legend has it that this tree lifted a branch to allow smooth passage to a palanquin carrying King Sejo. The king was deeply moved by the event and endowed the pine tree with the third highest rank in officialdom.

Middle_ The maple trees growing on either side of the mountain road leading to Munsusa Temple in Gochang have been designated Natural Monument No. 463. This grove is comprised of about 500 maple trees ranging from 100 to 400 years in age.

Bottom_ The Sapsaree, a native Korean breed of dog, has been designated Natural Monument No. 368. Sapsaree are believed to have the power to chase away evil spirits. They are vigilant and faithful.



instrument to actively engage local citizens in conserving and promoting natural heritage. Under this system, village rites for tutelary deities are promoted and used as a platform for further enhancing and solidifying the natural heritage-community relationship.

Multifaced Conservation Endeavors

Seventy species of fauna are currently registered on the national heritage list as Natural Monuments. It is estimated that each year at least 3,000 members of these 70 nationally designated species fall victim to natural or human-caused disasters. Injured animals are transferred to local wildlife rescue centers or veterinary hospitals for medical treatment and returned to the wild if possible.

However, about half of the animals found injured every year are left with permanent disabilities and are unable to be returned. A lack of the resources required for their long-term care has to date sadly resulted in such animals being euthanized. This



is never the preferred outcome from the perspective of animal rights or ethics. In response, the Cultural Heritage Administration is making arrangements for protecting these injured Natural Monuments until their natural death. Under this care system to be implemented later this year, local zoos meeting certain conditions will allocate a portion of their space as an Animal Conservation Center for Natural Monuments. These Conservation Centers will be equipped with the required facilities and personnel to provide long-term care to injured animals. The participating zoos take disabled animals transferred from veterinary hospitals into their Animal Conservation Centers and can use them for disseminating the significance of Natural Monuments and raising awareness about the danger of reckless human intervention in nature.

Natural properties run a chronic risk of sustaining damage from human activities but, at the same time, sometimes fail to reach their full potential for appreciation due to their inaccessibility. The CHA is making efforts to address these problems as well. Strong countermeasures are in place to mitigate any impact on nature by human activities. Visitation is legally prohibited in especially vulnerable natural properties. Even for natural properties open to the public, planned development activities in the vicinity are strictly regulated. The law prescribes that any proposed development that could harm the integrity of a

natural property must be subject to a thorough deliberative process by experts following an exhaustive field survey.

For properties located in remote areas and/or where the construction of road infrastructure is not allowed, a range of information and communication technologies is being actively utilized. Drone cameras, 3D laser scanning, and virtual reality and augmented reality technologies are being applied to collect data on inaccessible natural properties and create cultural content that allows people to virtually enjoy their beauty. The concept of “digital heritage” contains a great potential for improving public appreciation of these otherwise inaccessible natural properties.

Natural heritage is a comprehensive field of research encompassing zoology, botany, geology, and geography. For the conservation of natural heritage, in-depth research within each of these areas and collaborative academic endeavors are required. Research is not immediately translated into financial returns, however, and therefore can lose momentum when left completely to the private sector. This is certainly a global issue and not one limited to Korea. To address it, the CHA has prepared provisions in the new law for the establishment of a National Natural Heritage Center as a public organization committed to matters related to natural heritage ranging from research and survey to exhibition, education, and international dissemination. The

National Natural Heritage Center is expected to promote the systematic management and conservation of natural properties throughout the Republic of Korea.

Plans have been made to draw natural heritage deeper into the everyday lives of people. Places of natural beauty can serve as an invaluable resource for the healing and refreshment of all of us exhausted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To this end, heritage interpreters specializing in natural properties will be nurtured and regularly retrained. These interpreters will contribute to enhancing the public appreciation of natural properties and they can also serve as on-site caretakers for scenic sites. Efforts will be made to expand the populations of nationally recognized animal and plant species as well.

The best policy for the conservation of natural heritage is to build awareness in every single mind of the significance of flora and fauna, geological features, and cultural landscapes. Legal regulations and other measures can only go so far. Heightened awareness and enhanced understanding by the public and voluntary participation are the ultimate end of all natural heritage conservation efforts. The new natural heritage law prepared by the CHA will make great contributions to involving people in natural heritage conservation efforts, marking a milestone in the country’s shift toward community-centered conservation for natural heritage.

Opening a Heritage Analysis Center with a Comprehensive Dating Capacity

The National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH), the research arm of the Cultural Heritage Administration, opened a heritage analysis center on April 15 in a newly built five-story building within its Daejeon campus. This center (called the Cultural Heritage Analysis and Information Center) is the first domestic institution that comprehensively manages all the processes relevant to the chronological dating of historical materials from pretreating archaeological samples to analyzing their substances and overseeing the data.

Alongside the conventional materials

subjected to heritage research, such as stone, wood, fired clay, paper, and textiles, the center includes in its mandate the analysis of human and animal bones, a type of archaeological find that has previously been excluded from the CHA's efforts due to its lack of heritage status. The new analysis center is planning to offer its services to the various organizations under the umbrella of the CHA and also to local governments.

Each floor of the five-story building is dedicated to a particular function: The first floor is reserved for examining materials using carbon dating and other various dating methods; the second and

third floors function as an analysis/storage space respectively for human and animal remains and for inorganic samples and materials; the fourth is used to analyze the components of, for example, soil and food remains and the DNA in human or animal bones and to study the pigments or glues used on the surface of a painting; and on the top floor analysis is performed using X-ray machines and electron microscopes.

In addition to its heritage analysis role, the center will play a critical part in the NRICH's effort to collect existing analysis results and make them publicly accessible in an online database.

Makgeolli-making to Become National Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Cultural Heritage Administration has a new listing on the national intangible heritage list: the traditional Korean alcoholic beverage *makgeolli* and its associated culture. This element will include the skill of making the lightly effervescent milky rice beer and the cultural practices associated with its sharing. *Makgeolli* is conventionally brewed by cooking rice, mixing it with water and *nuruk* (a fermentation starter created by germinating fungi on starchy grains), and running the mash through a sieve after a few days of fermentation. *Makgeolli* literally means "roughly or swiftly sifted." It is a term with a pure Korean etymology that highlights the process through which the beverage is

made.

The tradition of making and sharing *makgeolli* has been considered worthy of entry onto the national intangible heritage list for the following reasons: its transmission across the Korean Peninsula over many centuries; its historical support in documents; its presence as an interesting subject of study in diverse academic fields such as history, food science, and folklore studies; its association with a wide range of farmers' songs, folkloric sayings, and literary works that contributes to deepening the understanding of Korean culture; its distinctive local characteristics based on the *makgeolli* breweries dispersed across

the country; and its ongoing practice in diverse communities such as local breweries, research organizations, and individual families.

The designation of *makgeolli*-making and -sharing as National Intangible Cultural Heritage is particularly meaningful since the inspiration came from a public proposal. In 2019 the Cultural Heritage Administration made a widespread call for candidates for the national intangible heritage list by organizing a public contest and using an established online channel for civil petitions. It is the first case of the listing of an intangible heritage element being initiated through civic participation.



I miss you by Shin Sun-mi

Hanbok, or "Korean clothing," holds an important place in the collective identity of the Korean people. The origins of *hanbok* date back to the Three Kingdoms period, but many changes have taken place in the details over the passage of time. However, the fundamental two-part composition of a jacket and trousers for men and jacket and skirt for women has remained constant. *Hanbok* is not simply an outfit, but a medium for conveying the maker's warm feelings for the wearer. The diverse decorative motifs featured on *hanbok* deliver wishes for longevity, fertility, and prosperity. For example, clouds symbolize long life, grapes and pomegranates represent numerous offspring, and peony and lotus flowers stand for wealth. Various traditional skills related to *hanbok* making are registered on the national intangible cultural heritage list, including needlework, quilting, natural dyeing, embroidering, gold leaf imprinting, and decorative knotting. (Excerpt from the *Encyclopedia of Hanbok*)